



## Promotion and protection of human rights and democracy in Central Africa

### Background

The development in May 2000 of the regional strategy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Central Africa and Great Lakes region contributed to the establishment of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, based in Yaoundé, Cameroun. The Centre was created at the initiative of Member States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and by decision of the United Nations General Assembly in its resolutions 53/78 of 5 December 1998 and 54/55 of 1 December 1999.

The United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa opened its doors in Yaoundé, covering 11 countries of the Central African sub-region in March 2001 and was officially inaugurated by the then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson in June 2002.

### Mandate

In accordance with its mandate, the Centre focuses on the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy. It provides national and regional human rights capacity building for Government representatives, democratic institutions, national human rights institutions, administration of justice structures, security forces, civil society organizations and United Nations Country Teams in countries of the sub-region, including Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Sao

Tomé and Príncipe. The Centre implements training activities, offers technical assistance and facilitates sub-regional thematic discussions, engaging in particular with countries in the sub-region without a United Nations national human rights presence, including in Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo and Sao Tomé and Príncipe. The Centre also cooperates closely with and facilitates coordination amongst other field presences of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### Thematic priorities for 2010-2011

*The Centre's strategic thematic priority areas for the 2010-2011 biennium are:*

- Combating discrimination, in particular against persons with disabilities, migrant workers and their families, and against indigenous peoples
- Promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights, including their justiciability and a human rights based approach to development
- Strengthening the rule of law, with a focus on transitional justice
- Promotion of democracy and good governance, especially related to elections and human rights
- Reinforcing national human rights protection and promotion capacities, including through reinforced cooperation with international, regional and national human rights mechanisms.



## Planned activities

In course of the 2010-2011 biennium, and in line with the thematic priorities stated above, the Centre has planned to carry out the following activities:

- Support to national human rights institutions to comply with the Paris Principles and to monitor economic, social and cultural rights
  - Human rights training for security forces, including the police, at national levels
  - Sub-regional workshop on the role and responsibilities of media professionals in election processes
  - Sub-regional dialogue on migration and human rights, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the International Convention on the Protection of Human Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families
  - Sub-regional training for members of national electoral institutions on human rights and democratic processes
- Training for members of parliaments on human rights promotion and protection, including in relation to electoral processes
  - Training for representatives of Governments, civil society, United Nations Country Teams and national human rights institutions on human rights reporting and follow-up to recommendations of human rights mechanisms
  - Sub-regional workshop on the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
  - Communication and public information activities intended to sensitize a larger public on human rights issues including on the occasion of International Women's Day (**8 March**), World Press Freedom Day (**3 May**), International Day of the World's Indigenous Populations (**9 August**), International Democracy Day (**15 September**), International Day of Persons with Disabilities (**3 December**) and International Human Rights Day (**10 December**).



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