

**AFRICAN UNION**

**الاتحاد الأفريقي**



**UNION AFRICAINE**

**UNIÃO AFRICANA**

---

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone : 517 700

Fax : 517844

website : [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org)

---

### **PRESS RELEASE No. 48/2006**

**Monday, October 02, 2006** - The Judges of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights held their Second Meeting from 18 to 21 September 2006, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. His Excellency, Patrick Mazimhaka, Deputy-Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, opened the Meeting. He stated that the AU Commission is trying to assist the Court to be effectively operational and carry out its mandate. To this end he stated that a mission to the United Republic of Tanzania had been already undertaken by the AU Commission to inspect the Seat of the Court and hold discussions with the Host Government on the requirements of the Court in conformity with the expectations of the AU.

The main objective of the Second Meeting of the Judges was to elect the Bureau of the Court, namely its President and Vice-President, as provided for in Article 21 (1) of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights that provides for the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The Office of the Legal Counsel (OLC) of the African Union Commission, in the absence of the Rules of Court which are yet to be adopted, had provided the Court with guidelines for the voting procedure that were subsequently adopted and used by the Court. The Court agreed that the Elections should be presided over by any of the Judges who were not running for any of the positions. The consensus reached was that Judge Jean Emile Somda would chair the electoral session. Ms. Djeneba Diarra, Deputy Legal Counsel and Acting Registrar of the Court, provided assistance as the Returning Officer.

In a closely contested election after two (2) rounds of votes for the Presidency and three (3) for the Vice-Presidency, Judge Gérard Niyungeko and Judge Modibo Tounty Guindo were elected President and Vice-President of the Court, respectively.

Under the Chair of the newly elected President, the meeting proceeded with the new Bureau adopting a working programme of action.