

**STATEMENT BY THE KENYAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION
OF JURISTS (ICJ KENYA) ON THE GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN
AFRICA**

OBSERVER STATUS NO. 118

Presented at the Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in Dakar, Senegal, on 12 - 17 October 2026.

Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Commissioners, State Delegates, Members of the National Human Rights Institutions and Fellow Civil Society Representatives

The Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists, a member-based organisation of jurists established in 1959, appreciates this opportunity to address the Commission's 89th Ordinary Session and joins all delegates in commemoration of 40 years of the Charter.

Sudan

Honourable Chairperson, we are alarmed by the deepening conflict in Sudan that has now persisted for more than four years. The joint virtual fact-finding mission has documented widespread violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. In El Fasher, and now in El Obeid, the warring parties are bombing densely populated areas, blocking humanitarian corridors, using starvation as a weapon of war, and committing widespread conflict-related sexual violence. External networks sustain both sides of the warring parties with weapons and funding in exchange for Sudan's natural resources. Despite declarations of war crimes and crimes against humanity, accountability remains non-existent.

We urge the Commission to sustain its push for implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Virtual Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan, especially the establishment of appropriate mechanisms to support urgent healthcare and rehabilitation measures for affected victims and survivors, continued documentation, investigations and accountability for ongoing crimes and violations.

Repression and electoral insecurity in East Africa

Across East Africa, in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, state authorities are increasingly weaponising security and criminal justice systems to suppress civic and political space. A highly coordinated mechanism of transnational repression has emerged, creating a terrifying context of surveillance, crackdowns, and unlawful rendition of human rights defenders, activists, journalists and opposition leaders. In country, law enforcement actors respond to public protests with excessive and lethal force,

arbitrary abductions, enforced disappearances and prolonged pre-trial detention of human rights defenders, journalists and citizens.

Equally concerning is the growing pattern of internet shutdowns timed around elections and protests, violating citizens' rights to seek, receive and impart information. Colonial-era sedition and defamation laws, together with vaguely drafted cybercrime statutes, are persistently being used to silence dissent.

We urge the Commission to remind Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania of their obligations under the African Charter to uphold fundamental freedoms of assembly, association and expression; safeguard democratic and electoral processes; ensure genuine investigations and accountability for documented violations targeting citizens, human rights defenders, activists, political actors and journalists; and urge the States to release those detained unlawfully or under trumped-up charges.

In Kenya, recurring incidences of political violence, including documented cases of state-sponsored violence and recruitment of vigilante gangs by politicians to intimidate opponents, disrupt civic spaces and terrorise communities, are extremely concerning, particularly as the country prepares for General Elections in August 2027. These patterns are reminiscent of the pre-electoral context that preceded the fateful 2007-08 post-election violence.

We urge the Commission to deploy its mechanisms to engage in preventive monitoring and interventions to mitigate the risks of potential election-related violence in Kenya.

Honourable Chairperson, ICJ Kenya underscores the concern that in all these spheres, impunity persists as the primary driver of gross human rights violations. The Commission's mandate therefore remains pertinent for ensuring that States uphold their obligations to guarantee accountability as an essential preventive measure for future atrocities.

Thank you, Honourable Chairperson.

Christine Alai,



Chairperson, ICJ Kenya.