

**THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS
WITHIN THE AFRICAN UNION (AU)**

Resolution on the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders in Africa, adopted by the General Assembly, during its 38th Ordinary Session, held from 21st November to 5th December 2005 in Banjul, The Gambia

The General Assembly,

Recalling its mandate to promote human and peoples' rights and ensure their protection in Africa under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights;

Mindful that in the Grand Bay (Mauritius) Declaration and Plan of Action, the Organisation of African Unity (African Union) called on Member States "to take appropriate steps to implement the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in Africa";

Reaffirming the importance of the observance of the purposes and principles of the African Charter for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Reaffirming the commitment of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in the promotion and protection of the rights of human rights defenders;

Recognising the crucial contribution of the work of human rights defenders in promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Africa;

Recalling the Resolution adopted at the 35th Ordinary Session held from 21 May to 4 June 2004 in Banjul, The Gambia by which the African Commission appointed the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa;

Considering that the term of Mrs. Jainaba Johm as a Member of the African Commission came to an end along with her mandate as Special Rapporteur on the 21 November 2005;

Appreciating the work that Mrs. Jainaba Johm has done as Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders;

Emphasizing the importance of the work of the Special Rapporteur as regards the search for solutions to the problems arising from the protection of human rights defenders;

Decides to appoint Commissioner Reine Alapini-Gansou as the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa for a period of two years effective 5th December 2005.