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REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace-Work-Fatherland

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Maseru / Kampala

Prof James Mouangue Kobila on a mission to ensure that the Rights of the Child are upheld and Sustainable Development initiatives are successful

Prof James Mouangue Kobila, the Chairperson of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC) and Vice-Chairperson of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), is raising the profile of Cameroon's National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) at two major conferences on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. The first conference is in Maseru, the capital of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and the second is in Kampala, Uganda.

On 7 April 2025, the Chairperson of the first National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) to be affiliated to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) delivered a statement on 7 April 2025, the first day of the 45th Ordinary Session of ACERWC. The session was chaired by the Angolan Wilson Almeida Adão, the Chairperson of this African human rights mechanism. This statement, which was both persuasive and precise, and which accurately reflected the current situation with regard to human rights, was a strong message from NHRIs. It was a notable highlight of the session, emphasising the need for increased mobilisation to ensure the rights and well-being of African children are fully realised.

Following the speeches and statements by the main actors on child's rights, the session was organised in group work. The session's three highlights were: i) the presentation of the *Study on the Implementation of the Committee's Decisions and Recommendations*, ii) the presentation of the *Study on Climate Change and the Rights of the Child in Africa*, and iii) discussions on the sensitive issues of *Children in Conflict*, *the Elimination of Practices Harmful to Children*, and the *Prevention of the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children on our Continent*.

Prof Mouangue Kobila travelled to Kampala on 9 April to take part in the 11th session of the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (ARFSD-11). He left Mrs Same Marie Chantal Messenga Mendo, the Child's Rights Focal Point, to follow up the CHRC participation in the work of the ACERWC, which ends on 12 April. The forum, which ends on 11 April, is organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union, the African Development Bank, several UN institutions and the

Ugandan government. It is being held five years ahead of 2030, the deadline set for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The first day of ARFSD-11 was opened by a speech from the President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who highlighted the theme of the conference: Stimulating job creation and economic growth through sustainable, inclusive, science-based and evidence-informed solutions. The Chairperson of the CHRC took the floor on Day 2 during the plenary session to emphasise on three points: i) the futility of tax giveaways for promoting investment in Africa, ii) the fact that the (real) challenge of climate change is not "*the greatest challenge facing Africa*", and iii) the need to prioritise entrepreneurship to combat unemployment in Africa and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

In addition to the CHRC, a dozen Cameroonians representing Parliament, the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), the National Youth Council and CSOs participated in the plenary sessions and workshops.