

## Preface

By creating the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Ouagadougou Protocol did not only inaugurate a new human rights institution in Africa. It inaugurated an era of strengthened judicial protection of human rights on the continent, of which the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights had been the main player during the previous two decades. Through the Advisory Opinion that it issued on the standing of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Court confirmed the extension of the African system for human rights protection to this third institution.

To give substance to this filial relationship due to their nature, the three institutions have, in recent years, developed an increasingly active cooperation, of which the *African Human Rights Yearbook* is one of the most tangible manifestations. Human rights litigation is an impressive tool of protection. Promotion is a tool of no less might because it contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and, consequently, a constant intellectual dialogue on the state of human rights.

In the first issue of the *Yearbook*, which is in the hands of the reader, the three institutions have endeavored to open a new avenue of reflection on the status of the standards, the functioning of the institutions, and women's and children's rights in Africa. By compiling the writings of academics, practitioners and civil society activists from different backgrounds, whether in Africa or beyond, this first issue also focuses on the participation of women in the academic thinking on human rights in Africa. Such an approach is positioned in the continued celebration of the year 2016, which the African Union specially dedicated to the rights of women on the continent.

It is hoped that, in its subsequent volumes, the *Yearbook* becomes the platform *par excellence* for reflection not only on human rights but also on the related themes such as the rule of law, democracy and governance in Africa.

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