

INITIATIVE FOR STRATEGIC LITIGATION IN AFRICA

OCTOBER 2026

DAKAR, SENEGAL



ISLA PARTICIPATION AT THE ACHPR

89TH

ORDINARY SESSION

OVERALL FRAMING

ISLA's participation will focus on strengthening Africa's human rights architecture, protecting hard-won standards from regression, and countering anti-rights actors seeking to use law, institutions and narratives about family, sovereignty and "African values" to narrow rights. The 89th Ordinary Session is an opportunity to defend the independence and effectiveness of the African human rights system while ensuring that new regional standards build on, rather than weaken, existing protections.

ISLA will pursue this framing through mutually reinforcing engagements. Work on Article 59(1) and the Litigants Group will strengthen access, transparency and accountability within the ACHPR's protective mandate. Engagement on AU CEVAWG will apply the principle of non-regression and press for clear, enforceable protection for women and girls. The ACSE and civil society strategy spaces will connect legal analysis with coordinated advocacy to challenge anti-rights lawfare, protect civic space and build sustained collective action during and beyond the Dakar session.

ISLA PROGRAMME

8

OCT, THU

10:00 GMT

Article 59 (1) Strategic Consultation: Pathways for a Progressive Interpretation of Article 59 of the African Charter

SAMA HOTEL, DAKAR (HYBRID)

A strategy consultation to unlock a progressive reading of Article 59(1), improve transparency and equal access in the ACHPR communications process, and agree viable advocacy and legal pathways after two years of limited progress.

Partners : Article 59(1) Campaign and Litigants Group.

10

OCT, SAT

9:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M. GMT

Member State Dialogue on AU CEVAWG

SAMA HOTEL, DAKAR (HYBRID)

A dialogue on whether the AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls strengthens existing protections. ISLA and its co-conveners will advance the Pause for Purpose case for independent review, meaningful consultation and revision where interpretation cannot cure gaps or restrictive provisions.

Partners : Convened by the Pause For Purpose Campaign.

11

OCT, SUN

10:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M. GMT

Holding the Line: Safeguarding Africa's Human Rights Frameworks

SAMA HOTEL, DAKAR

A side event linking threats to ACHPR independence with the rollback of progressive standards. ISLA will contribute analysis on AU CEVAWG and anti-rights lawfare, and help develop strategies to protect institutional independence, equality and access to justice.

Partners : Hosted by African Civil Society Engagement.

11

OCT, SUN

1:30 P.M. TO 5:30 P.M. GMT

Litigants Group General Meeting

SAMA HOTEL, DAKAR (HYBRID)

A working meeting for litigants to review developments in the ACHPR communications procedure, share experience from cases and jurisprudence, strengthen practical knowledge of the Rules of Procedure, and agree priorities and follow-up action to improve access, consistency and implementation.

Partners : Litigants Group members and participating civil society organizations.

FLN FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA

Our Feminist Litigation Network – Francophone West Africa (FLN-FWA) team will be at the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Dakar from 10–15 October. We're keen to connect with feminist lawyers, women's rights organisations, human rights defenders, and partners across Francophone Africa to strengthen feminist lawyering, build partnerships, and explore strategic litigation opportunities before national, regional, and African human rights mechanisms. Reach out to our FLN-FWA team to book a meeting and explore how we can work together to advance feminist litigation and women's and girls' rights across Francophone Africa.

Lesline@the-isla.org

