

## REGIONAL YOUTH CONSULTATIONS ON AU PROJECT 2016 CONCLUDE IN TUNIS

For Immediate Release  
Tunis, Tunisia  
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Tunis is host to the fourth and final Regional Youth Consultation on the African Union's Project 2016 which opened under the theme, '*Promoting Young People's Rights towards the Attainment of Agenda 2063*'. Ambassador Theodore Njikam, ECCAS representative to the African Union, who opened the meeting, urged participants to seize their rights and exercise them, adding '*we must together build the Africa we want and need.*'

The Consultations have been hosted by the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Union Commission's Department of Political Affairs in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) over the past four weeks. These consultations are taking place as a lead up to November's Fifth Annual High Level Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance; as well as a contribution to the African Union's Project 2016, themed '*the Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women*'.

The Regional Youth Consultations were designed to engage young Africans across the continent's five regions and to date, consultations have taken place in in Accra, Ghana (23-24 Aug), Windhoek, Namibia (8-9 Sep) and Kampala, Uganda (23-24 Sep) respectively. The final gathering in Tunis brought together young people from across North Africa from 29-30 September.

The consultations provide a platform for aggregating youth concerns, insights and perspectives, building capacity as well as showcasing youth initiatives that advance human rights on the continent. The consultations also seek to create an avenue for interactions and exchanges between participants and AU Organs, Regional as well as National Human Rights Mechanisms towards the advancement of human and peoples' rights in Africa.

The consultations provided an opportunity for youth to provide input to the African Union's 10 Year Human Rights Strategy. The Strategy will be a guiding framework for collective action by the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member states to strengthen the African human rights system and address the current challenges of the African human rights system.

**Note to Editor**

**The African Governance Architecture (AGA)** is a mechanism for dialogue between stakeholders that are mandated to promote and strengthen democratic governance in Africa as a way to deepen coherence, synergy and coordination. The AGA is the overall political and institutional framework for the promotion, protection and sustenance of democracy, governance, human rights and humanitarian assistance on the continent. The principle objective of AGA is implementation of AU Shared Values and in particular the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). Established in 2011 AGA is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in the AU Headquarters with the AGA Platform Members across Africa.

The African Union's African Governance Architecture (AGA) - Youth Engagement Strategy (AGA-YES) sees youth as leaders, beneficiaries and partners and is focused on elevating African youth voices on issues that highly affect their present as well as their future. As this year commemorates the "African Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women" it is important to give these issues high ground as they are the center piece for the respect and protection of fundamental human rights in the continent.

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