Part IV:

Implementation Mechanisms for Human Rights in Africa
Chapter 11
The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

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1 Introduction

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (Commission)\(^1\) is the most important international body established in Africa for the realisation of human rights. The Commission monitors human rights developments in all the 53 member states of the African Union (AU). The Commission is primarily responsible for monitoring the implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Charter) and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa.\(^2\)

2 Composition, Sessions and Headquarters

As noted in chapter 1, the African Charter was adopted on 27 June 1981 and entered into force on 21 October 1986. By 1999 all the 53 AU member states had ratified the Charter. The first members of the 11-member African Commission were elected by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Assembly following the entry into force

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\(^1\) In this chapter the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights is referred to as the Commission or African Commission, while the Commission of the African Union (the AU Secretariat in Addis Ababa) is referred to as the AU Commission.