

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



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**“ENACTING LEGISLATION TO GOVERN, AND ENSURE
RESPECT FOR, SOCIAL LIFE IN AFRICA”**

(Item Proposed by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

**REQUEST BY THE GREAT SOCIALIST LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA FOR
INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE 7TH ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION DUE TO TAKE PLACE IN
BANJUL, THE GAMBIA, IN JULY 2006**

I. **Item Proposed for Inclusion in the Agenda of the 7th Session of the
Assembly of the Union**

In conformity with Rule 8, paragraph 2 (d) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Union, the Great Libyan Arab Jamahiriya hereby requests the inclusion in the Agenda of the 7th Ordinary Session of the Assembly scheduled to take place in Banjul, The Gambia, in July 2006, an Item entitled: **“Enacting Legislation to Govern, and Ensure Respect for, Social Life In Africa.”**

II. **Justification**

Africa is faced with an extremely serious problem: the continent accounts for the highest number of orphaned, disabled and fatherless children, in the world. Reports and statistics, indeed, confirm that in Africa, it is women that bear the greatest brunt of the responsibility of taking care of children, owing to the fact that the men often abandon and even disown women, leaving the task solely to the latter.

Other equally serious phenomena are widespread in Africa where social life is characterized by unregulated marriages and divorce, and by the absence of family planning, all resulting in the inordinately high number of abandoned children. Men's disregard for social life is particularly evident in the fact that they make women to take on the task of looking after and educating a large number of children, without according the latter the minimum of socio-economic rights. This tragic situation is compounded by the poverty faced by women-headed families whose human rights and values are subjected to interpretations from diverse quarters, without these rights being really addressed. The effect is that the African woman finds herself confronted with one of the most difficult situations, as well as the toughest and most crippling living condition in today's world, in relation to women in other regions of the world.

For the above reasons, in keeping with the Constitutive Act of the African Union, specifically Article 4, paragraph (l) thereof, which enshrines the promotion of gender equality; and paragraph (n) which stipulates the promotion of social justice to bring an end to the painful reality lived by the African woman who is the first school for the child – tomorrow's man, student, producer, physician, lawyer, economist, politician, etc, the Great Libyan Jamahiriya requests that the item defined in the title be included in the Agenda to enable Member States of the Union, in the absence of appropriate individual State laws, to enact legislation committing them to provide for the people of Africa (men, women and children alike) a decent social life which takes into account human, socio-economic and moral values and concepts. The proposed legislation should spell out the legal guarantees for the rights and responsibilities arising from family relations, place the interest of children over and above all other considerations, and pay special attention to the most vulnerable women in our societies such as divorced and single mothers, widows, disabled women and women

heading their families. The legislation should also seek to reform, rehabilitate and sanitize the legal system so as to eliminate all the constraints militating against the realisation of justice and equity for women, victims of divorce and other social ills. Lastly, the proposed legal instrument should help African societies to overcome all the obstacles on their way and to embrace radical transformation in order to wipe away the scandal of this bitter reality that is the hallmark of the life of the African woman.

2006

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