

AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

CHILD-FRIENDLY VERSION




FOREWORD

It is with a sense of urgency and hope that I welcome this essential child-friendly version of the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU CEVAWG). The full realization of this landmark Convention, which upholds girls' rights to safety, health, dignity, education, participation and protection from all forms of violence and discrimination, is essential for achieving the healthy empowered girls envisioned in Agenda 2063, The Africa We Want, and is fully aligned with the aspirations of Agenda 2040 for an Africa fit for its children.

While the Convention establishes a vital continental framework for protection, its complex legal language can remain inaccessible to the very rights-holders it seeks to empower; our children. This child-friendly version is, therefore, not merely a complementary resource, but a strategic imperative. It bridges the gap between highlevel policy commitments and lived realities by translating legal principles into clear, engaging and accessible concepts that children can understand, claim and advocate for.

The importance of this initiative is multifaceted. First, it empowers children through knowledge, equipping girls and boys with a clear understanding of their rights to safety, health and dignity. Second, it fosters agency and participation, recognizing children not as passive victims but as active agents in preventing violence within their schools, families and communities. Third, it promotes inclusivity by speaking to the diversity of African girls, whether in rural or urban settings, in school or displaced, with or without disabilities, affirming that protection and dignity are universal and non-negotiable.

I commend this timely initiative for delivering a powerful tool that transforms legal commitments into a catalyst for dialogue, prevention and generational change. By ensuring that our children are informed, engaged and empowered, we invest in a healthier, more just and resilient future. I urge all partners to support the wide dissemination and use this resource, as empowering our youngest citizens remains the surest path to sustainable well-being for all.



AMB. AMMA ADOMAA TWUM-AMOAH
AUC COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH, HUMANITARIAN
AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PREFACE

Violence against women and girls remains one of Africa's most pervasive human rights violations, with devastating impacts on health, education, and wellbeing. Children, especially girls, are among the most vulnerable due to age, dependence, and limited access to protection. To address this, the African Union adopted the Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU CEVAWG) during its 38th Ordinary Session in February 2025, marking a historic commitment to eliminate all forms of violence.

Yet, legal documents often use technical language that children and young people find difficult to understand. To bridge this gap, the AU Liaison Office, in partnership with the AU Women, Gender and Youth Directorate, developed this Child-Friendly Version of AU CEVAWG. It simplifies the original text into accessible language and visuals, making it engaging and culturally relevant for children and adolescents across Africa.

This resource aims to educate, empower, and inspire action, helping children understand their rights, advocate for themselves and others, and contribute to a violence-free world. This document is a tool for awareness and participation, affirming that children are active agents of change in families, schools, and communities. We invite children, caregivers, educators, and policymakers to use this guide to foster dialogue, strengthen protection systems, and advance an Africa where every woman and girl lives free from violence.

Messages from World Vision AU Liaison Office and AU Women, Gender and Youth Directorate



Every child deserves a world free from violence and fear. By making this Convention accessible, we invest in a future where children understand their rights and actively shape a safer, more equitable Africa.

Sam Norgah,
World Vision AU Liaison Office

The African Union is committed to ensuring no woman or girl suffers in silence. This child-friendly version reflects our dedication to inclusion and empowerment, ensuring children are informed and engaged in building a continent where dignity and equality prevail.

Prudence Nonkululeko
African Union Gender, Women and Youth Directorate

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this Child-Friendly Version of the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU CEVAWG) was made possible through the unwavering commitment, collaboration, and expertise of numerous individuals and organizations.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the children from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, whose active participation in the validation process ensured that this version authentically reflects their voices and perspectives.

We express our profound gratitude to the esteemed contributors from the African Union for their invaluable support: Dr. Ayalew Getachew Asseffa, Dr. Musavengana Chibwana, Dr. Olubusayo Akinola, Nena Thundu, Twambo Ronah Mumba, and Lindiwe Ngwenya. Special acknowledgement to Victoria Maloka for her leadership and guidance, which were instrumental during the conception of this initiative.

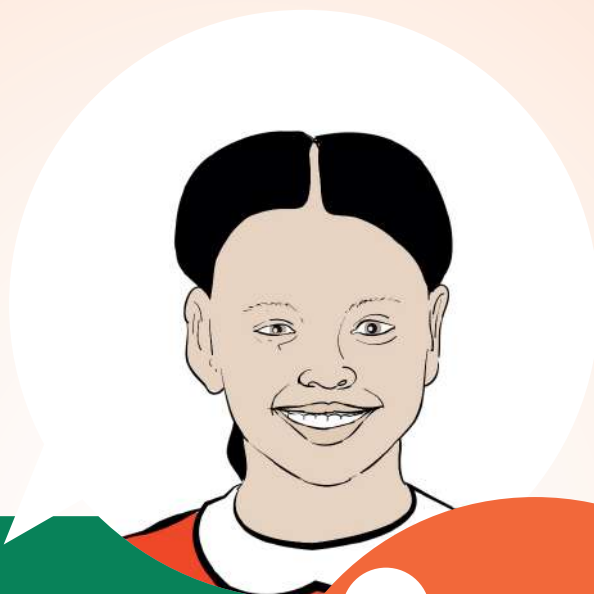
Additionally, we acknowledge staff from the following organizations for investing their time to review the draft versions: Eletschew Aynalem (UN Women), Zemzem Jemal (Plan International), and Mwila Malama (Save the Children).

Special thanks are due to our colleagues at World Vision for their dedication and contributions in various capacities: Malak Gibreel, Molly B. Kyomyisha, Tsion Hunde, Margaret Maidei Phiri, Shamiso Matambanadzo, Sakhile Dlamini, Imelda Simo Happe, Ntokozo Magaya, Sharon Mwitari, Joyce Kivata, Milkah Mwangi, Sam Norgah, Temesgen Aklilu, and Addiskidan Nigussie.

Finally, we extend our sincere appreciation to the World Vision Regional Directors for their steadfast support and endorsement of World Vision's involvement in this project.

This achievement underscores the strength of partnership and our collective commitment to advancing child rights across Africa. Together, we reaffirm our dedication to creating safe, inclusive, and empowering spaces for every child, ensuring their voices inform the policies and frameworks that shape their lives.

WHY THIS CONVENTION EXISTS



1.

African leaders want Africa to be a safe place for women and girls.

2.

They know women and girls can be hurt at home, school, work, in the community, or online.

3.

They believe every woman and girl should live without fear, pain, or unfairness.

4.

They also believe boys and men should help make the world safer.

ARTICLE 1 - WORDS WE NEED TO KNOW

1. **Convention:** A set of rules that countries agree to follow to keep women and girls safe.
2. **Court:** A place where judges decide what is right or wrong.
3. **Cyberspace:** The internet, where people chat, learn, and share using phones or computers.
4. **Family:** People who love and care for each other, like parents, children, relatives, or caregivers.
5. **Femicide:** When a woman or girl is killed just because she is female.
6. **Gender:** What people think boys and girls should do in society.
7. **Girl:** A female under 18 years old.
8. **Harmful Practices:** Any behaviour or traditions that hurt women and girls or take away their rights.
9. **Positive Masculinity:** Teaching boys and men to be kind, fair, and respectful to girls and women.
10. **Safe Home:** A place where women or girls in danger can stay safely and get help.
11. **Victim-Centred Approach:** Always putting the person who was hurt first and treating them with care.
12. **Violence Against Women and Girls:** Any action or word that hurts women or girls at home, school, work, or online.
13. **Women:** A female who is 18 years or older.
14. **Women and Girls Human Rights Defender:** Someone who speaks up to protect the rights of women and girls.

QUIZ CORNER

WORDS WE NEED TO KNOW

Quiz (Multiple Choice):

1. What does “Convention” mean?

- a. A party
- b. A set of rules countries agree to follow
- c. A school subject

2. What is “Femicide”?

- a. When a girl wins a prize
- b. When a woman or girl is killed just because she is female
- c. A type of celebration

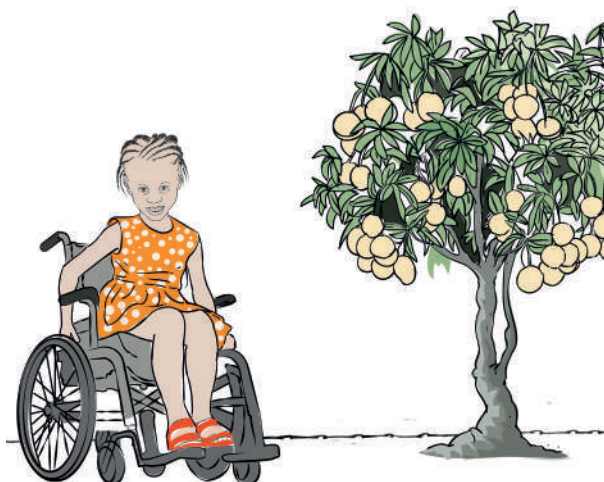
3. What is “Positive Masculinity”?

- a. Boys being stronger than girls
- b. Teaching boys and men to be kind, fair, and respectful
- c. A sport

Exercise:

- a. Draw a picture of what a “Safe Home” looks like to you.

QUIZ CORNER



ARTICLE 2 - RIGHT TO LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE

1.

Every woman and girl has the right to live safely and without being hurt in any way.

2.

No one should scare, hurt, or treat them unfairly because they are women or girls.

3.

This right is connected to other important rights, like freedom, respect, and safety.

4.

Everyone including families, schools, communities, leaders, and Governments should help protect women and girls.

SAY
NO TO
VIOLENCE



QUIZ CORNER

RIGHT TO LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE

Quiz (True/False):

- a. Every woman and girl has the right to live safely.
- b. Only governments should protect women and girls.

Exercise:

- a. Role-play: In pairs, act out how a teacher, friend, or family member can help protect someone from harm.
- b. Write one sentence: "I can help keep girls safe by..."



**QUIZ
CORNER**

ARTICLE 3 - WHEN AND WHERE THESE RULES APPLY



1. These rules protect women and girls from violence everywhere; at home, school, work, in the community, and online.



WHEN PEACEFUL



DURING CONFLICT



AFTER DISASTER

2. They apply at all times; when things are peaceful, during conflicts, after disasters or in any difficult situations.

QUIZ CORNER

WHEN AND WHERE THESE RULES WORK

Quiz (Fill in the Blank):

These rules protect women and girls at.....,,
..... and

Exercise:

Create a poster showing that protection applies during peace.

ARTICLE 4 - WHAT THESE RULES AIM TO ACHIEVE



1. Help families, countries, and organizations stop violence by using step-by-step information gathered about different groups of women and girls.



2. Teach families, schools, and communities to respect women and girls and avoid harmful beliefs.



3. Give help to victims such as emergency support, counselling, and safe homes.



4. Ensure doctors, police and courts handle cases quickly and fairly.

QUIZ CORNER

WHAT THESE RULES AIM TO ACHIEVE

Quiz (Multiple Choice):

1. What is one aim of the Convention?

- a. To ignore victims
- b. To stop violence against women and girls
- c. To make new games

Exercise:

- a. Group discussion: How can schools teach respect for girls?
- b. Write a short slogan: Say “No” to Violence by...

**QUIZ
CORNER**



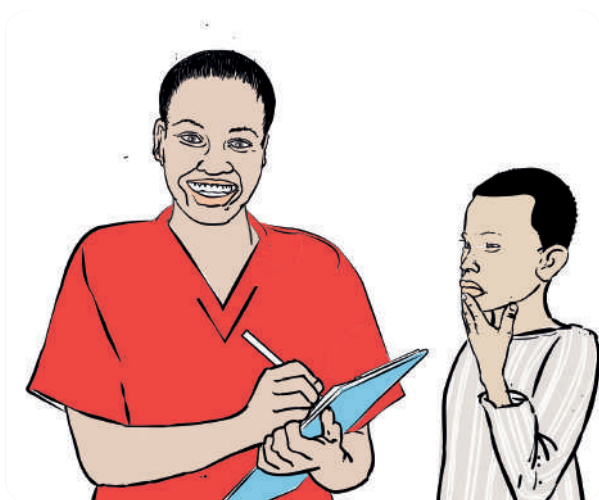
ARTICLE 5 - WHAT GOVERNMENTS SHOULD DO



1. Make and enforce **strong laws** to stop violence, even online.



2. Make sure police, doctors, and courts **help survivors** and give justice.



3. **Collect information about violence** to understand it and plan better.



4. Provide money to **support programs** that keep women and girls safe.

QUIZ CORNER

WHAT GOVERNMENTS SHOULD DO

Quiz (True/False):

- a. Governments should make strong laws to stop violence.
 - b. Governments should not collect information about violence.
-

Exercise:

Imagine you are a leader. Write 3 things you would do to protect women and girls.



**QUIZ
CORNER**

ARTICLE 6 - MAIN IDEAS BEHIND THIS LAW

Countries that agree to follow this Convention should remember these important ideas:

1.

Respect and Protect rights of women and girls.

2.

Anyone who is hurt should be put first and given care, safety, support and justice.

3.

Everyone should work together - families, schools, communities, and governments - to stop violence.

4.

All women and girls should be treated fairly and equally, no matter their age, background, disability, or beliefs.

5.

Boys and men should be kind and respectful.



QUIZ CORNER

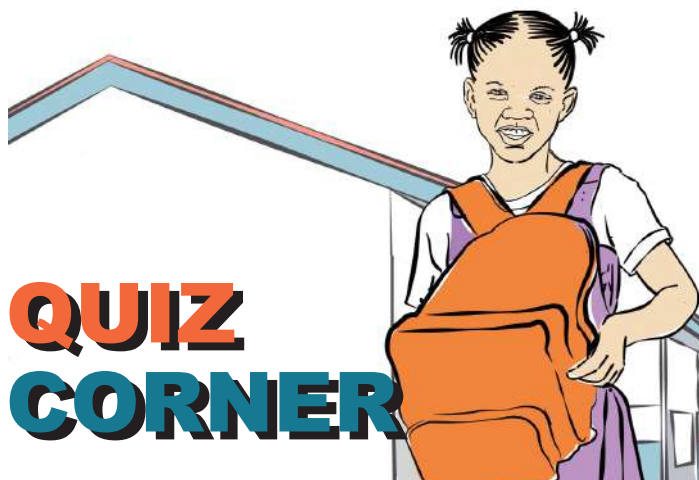
MAIN IDEAS BEHIND THIS LAW

Quiz (Multiple Choice):

1. Who should work together to stop violence?
 - a. Only families
 - b. Families, schools, communities, and governments
 - c. Just boys
-

Exercise:

- a. Circle words that show fairness: respect, equality, kindness.
- b. Write/draw: "Boys and men should be..."



ARTICLE 7 - SUPPORTING WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO NEED EXTRA HELP

Some women and girls who are persons with disabilities, poor, refugees, widows, and elderly are not safe. Countries should:



1. Give **health care, safety, social and emotional support.**

2. **Treat** all women and girls with respect.



3. **Protect** older women from abuse.

4. Help refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced women.



5. Make laws to protect **women and girls with disabilities.**

6. Make sure people who hurt women and girls **are punished.**

QUIZ CORNER

SUPPORTING WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO NEED EXTRA HELP

Quiz (True/False):

- a. Refugees and women with disabilities should get special protection.
 - b. Older women do not need respect.
-

Exercise:

- a. Write a thank-you card to someone who helps vulnerable women.
- b. Brainstorm: What can communities do to support widows or refugees?

**QUIZ
CORNER**



ARTICLE 8 - PROTECTING WOMEN AT WORK

1.

Stop all forms of violence at work, including online.

2.

Make work safe and supportive.

3.

Protect women in all jobs.

4.

Ensure equal pay and chances, leadership roles, leave for parents and childcare.



ARTICLE 9 - PROTECTING GIRLS AT WORK

Some women and girls who are persons with disabilities, poor, refugees, widows, and elderly are not safe. Countries should:



1. Stop girls from doing dangerous work.

2. Fix reasons why girls have to work in unsafe places.



3. Check progress in keeping girls safe at work.

QUIZ CORNER

PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS AT WORK

Quiz (Multiple Choice):

1. What should be stopped at work?
 - a. Violence
 - b. Equal pay
 - c. Childcare

2. Girls should not do _____ work.
 - a. Dangerous
 - b. Safe
 - c. Fun

Exercise:

- a. Draw two workplaces: one unsafe, one safe.
- b. Write: "A safe workplace has..."

QUIZ CORNER



ARTICLE 10 - STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HAPPENS



1. Make laws and rules to stop violence.
2. Do not use culture, tradition, or religion to excuse violence.



3. Respect women and girls' rights.
4. Teach people about African values, respect, and equality.



5. Train judges, police, and leaders to handle violence properly.
6. Give real punishments for violence.



7. The media and social media should help spread messages about stopping violence.

QUIZ CORNER

STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HAPPENS

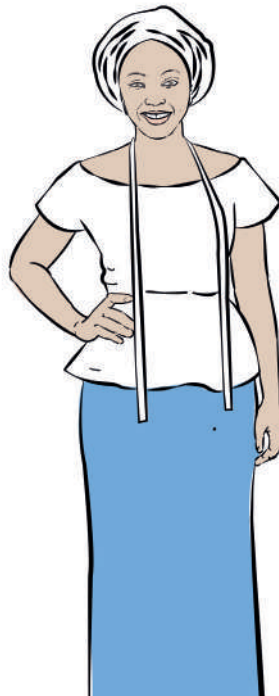
Quiz (True/False):

- a. Culture or tradition can excuse violence.
- b. Media should help spread messages about stopping violence.

Exercise:

- a. Create a short chant: "Respect women, respect girls!"

**QUIZ
CORNER**



ARTICLE 11 - PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS



1. Make it safe for women and girls to report violence and **give them safe places, medical care, counseling, and legal help.**

2. **Women should take part in development,** and their property should be protected to keep them safe.



3. Countries should support and protect women's rights defenders **and work with women's organizations who speak up to stop violence.**

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ARTICLE 12 - ACCESS TO JUSTICE

1.

Your government should ensure women and girls are treated fairly and respected in court.

2.

Police and courts should handle cases quickly and correctly.

3.

Victims, families, and witnesses should be kept safe.

4.

Victims' information should stay private.

5.

Victims should get support, protection orders, and compensation.

6.

Those who cause harm should be punished and helped to change.



QUIZ CORNER

PROTECTION, SUPPORT & JUSTICE

Quiz (Fill in the Blank):

- a. Victims should get, and.....
 - b. Courts should handle cases....., and.....,
-

Exercise:

- a. Write a short letter encouraging someone to report violence.
- b. Draw a “Justice Shield” showing protection for victims.



ARTICLE 13 - WORKING TOGETHER

1.

Make sure government, non-government groups, communities, and the private sector work together to prevent violence and support survivors.

2.

Build partnerships that link community support with police, health, and justice services.

3.

Strengthen working together between countries and institutions to end violence against women and girls.



QUIZ CORNER

WORKING TOGETHER

Quiz (Multiple Choice):

1. Who should work together to prevent violence?
 - a. Only governments
 - b. Governments, civil society, communities, and private sector
 - c. Just schools

Exercise:

- a. Group activity: Build a “support chain” by linking arms and saying how each group helps.



ARTICLE 14 - HOW THESE RULES ARE APPLIED

1.

Your leaders promise to follow the rules and keep the African Commission updated on what they are doing to protect you.

2.

The African Commission makes sure the rules are correctly followed.

3.

If there is a disagreement about the rules, the African Commission can take it to the African Court.

4.

The African Court can help solve problems about how the rules are used.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights - This is a group that helps protect people's rights and reminds governments to treat everyone fairly.

African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights - This is a court that helps protect people's rights and ensures governments follow the rules.



ARTICLE 15 - KEEPING WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFE NO MATTER WHAT

1.

Nothing in these rules can be used to weaken or reduce the fight against violence.

2.

If any rules seem to conflict, we always choose the one that best protects women and girls from violence.



ARTICLE 16 - SIGNING AND AGREEING TO THE CONVENTION

1.

Any African Union country can sign and agree to be part of this Convention.

2.

Each country should follow its own laws when deciding to sign.

3.

After signing, the country should send an official document to confirm its agreement.

4.

This document is given to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, who keeps the records.



ARTICLE 17 - WHEN THE CONVENTION BECOME ACTIVE

Here's a quick breakdown of how the Convention officially comes into action:

1.

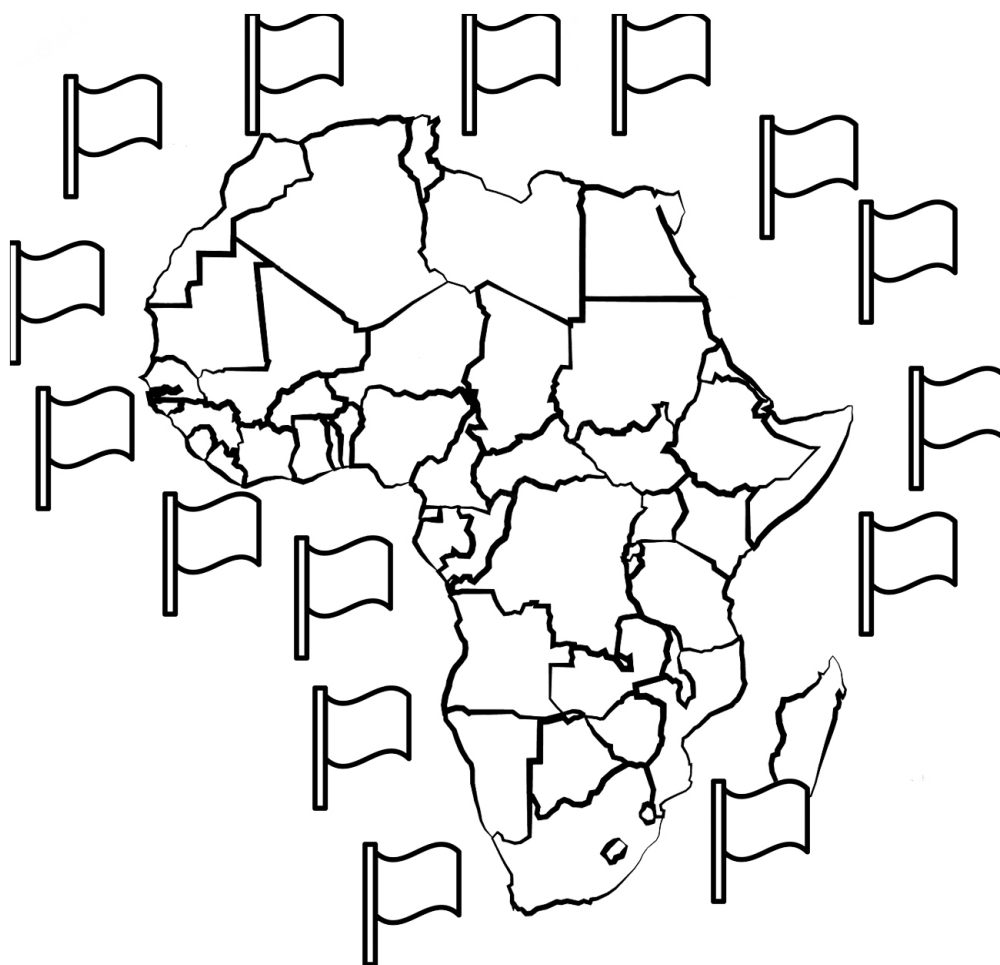
15 African Countries Agree.

2.

After 30 days, it becomes official.

3.

African Union Commission tells countries it is now operational.



Can you identify your country from the map?

ARTICLE 18 - HOW THESE RULES CAN BE CHANGED

1.

Any African country that has joined the Convention can suggest changes to the rules.

2.

These suggestions are shared with all countries and should be reviewed within one year.

3.

The African Union decides if the changes should be accepted.

4.

New changes only start working after all steps in Article 17 are followed.



ARTICLE 19 - CONCERNS FROM COUNTRIES

1.

A country can make a concern if it has a problem with a part of the rules.

2.

A country can remove its concern at any time.

3.

The African Union should be told in writing if the concern is removed.

4.

This concern should not go against the goal of ending violence against women and girls.



ARTICLE 20 - PRESERVATION AND RECORDS OF THE CONVENTION

1.

Your leaders need to send their official joining papers to the African Union so they can be part of the team that protects your rights.

2.

Any country may leave the Convention by giving one year's notice.

3.

The African Union shares all information on signatures, changes, withdrawals, and provides official copies to all African countries.



QUIZ CORNER

APPLYING, SIGNING, CHANGING RULES

Quiz (True/False):

1. Who should work together to prevent violence?
 - a. Countries should obey the rules and report to the African Commission.
 - b. The Convention starts after 15 countries sign.
-

Exercise:

- a. Imagine you are a country leader. Write why you would sign the Convention.
- b. Create a timeline showing how the Convention becomes active.
- c. Write/draw: "A world where women and girls are safe looks like..."
- d. Group pledge: Each child writes one promise to help keep women and girls safe.

QUIZ CORNER



FINAL MESSAGE

“ Everyone should keep women and girls safe and treat them with respect. When we all work together, the world becomes a better place.



WRITE YOUR NOTES HERE



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