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**FACT-FINDING MISSIONS OR OMISSIONS?: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS**

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an analysis of the conduct of fact-finding missions by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The analysis is enriched by comparison with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). The impetus of the article is the controversy arising out of the response of the Government of Zimbabwe to the ACHPR in its 17th Annual Activity Report. The author examines in good measure the nature, origins and purpose of fact-finding missions. Through a juxtaposition of fact-finding in the African System and the Inter-American System, he identifies a number of fact-finding related issues arising out of the controversial Government of Zimbabwe report, on which his analysis is based. It is argued that the ACHPR must always be ready to borrow lessons from other human rights systems. The article makes several recommendations to the ACHPR.