



# UNHCR

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## **UNHCR welcomes first ratification of AU Convention for displaced**

UNHCR warmly welcomes the Republic of Uganda's ratification of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). This first ratification, coming within the first four month's of the Convention's adoption, is an important milestone.

UNHCR also notes with satisfaction that twenty-five nations – or nearly half of the African Union Member States – have now signed the Convention, which was adopted during the first African Union Special Summit on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons convened in Kampala in October 2009.

UNHCR encourages other AU Member States to follow Uganda's example and ratify this historic Convention and – as called for by African leaders during the Special Summit – bring it in to force by the end of 2010. A total of fifteen ratifications are needed to achieve this.

The Convention is the first legally-binding international instrument on internal displacement having continental scope. Its adoption has come at a time when Africa is faced with complex and persistent internal displacement challenges affecting millions of people. When ratified and implemented, the Convention will provide a critically important legal framework for protecting, assisting and finding solutions for millions of IDPs in Africa, as well as for the prevention of future displacement by addressing the root causes.

At the beginning of last year, an estimated 11.6 million people were internally displaced by conflict in Africa, nearly 45 % of the world's IDPs.

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