



ACHPR
African Commission on
Human and Peoples' Rights

Concept Note

Panel on forced displacement on the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the African Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention): Review and prospects

Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa

I. Background

1. This year marks 15 years since the African Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. This Convention is considered to be the only legally binding instrument on internal displacement in the world. To date, 33 countries have signed and ratified the Convention, 11 countries have only signed it, while there are still 11 other countries that have neither ratified nor signed the Convention.
2. Over the past year, there has been a 13% increase in the number of displaced Africans. It is estimated that some 40.4 million Africans are forcibly displaced. This figure includes internally displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers, but more than 77% of these 40 million people are internally displaced.¹
3. The figures for the first quarter of 2024 are even more alarming, with almost 20 million internally displaced people already living in very precarious conditions and, in some regions, with no access to aid or humanitarian assistance.
4. The increase in the number of displaced persons brings with it many other challenges, particularly with regard to the long-term care of displaced persons. Initially intended to be temporary, internal displacements are becoming increasingly permanent and are on a larger scale than cross-border displacements. This is due in particular to the many causes of displacement, which often prevent people from returning to their original homes.

¹ <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/plus-de-40-millions-de-personnes-deplacees-par-les-conflits-en-afrique/>

5. These causes include natural disasters, climate change, conflict and political violence. This is compounded by the fact that the means and solutions adopted to meet the needs of internally displaced persons, including their return to their homes of origin, are often inadequate and dependent on changes in the very causes that led to the displacement. This is not always controllable by those responsible for providing solutions, in particular governments and humanitarian actors, but also displaced persons themselves when they are involved in the search for appropriate solutions to their situation.
6. The Kampala Convention, which was adopted by the African Union in 2009 and came into force in 2012, provides for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and its main objective is to tackle the serious situation of IDPs on the continent. States, humanitarian actors, the various stakeholders and displaced persons themselves are all required to seek lasting solutions to this phenomenon, including voluntary return, local integration or resettlement in another part of the country. But in reality, preventing new displacements is just as difficult as resolving existing displacement situations. In a number of African countries, internally displaced persons are living in situations of prolonged displacement, as the search for a lasting solution has failed.
7. Even if the Kampala Convention did not achieve all its objectives, it nevertheless made African governments aware that recognising the human rights of IDPs and accepting primary responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling these rights are essential elements in the fight against internal displacement and its devastating effects.
8. Fifteen years after its adoption, it is important to ask what real impact the Kampala Convention has had on the situation of IDPs in Africa. Has the Convention made it possible, beyond its theoretical framework, to improve the lives of internally displaced persons in any way, despite the constant challenges posed by this phenomenon? What measures have been taken and what measures need to be taken to ensure that the Convention really does have a positive impact on the situation of IDPs and is implemented more effectively?

II. Objectives

9. The objectives of this panel are as follow:
 - To discuss the real impact of the Kampala Convention on the situation of IDPs and the strategy to be undertaken to achieve universal ratification of the Convention
 - To assess the progress made thanks to the adoption of the Kampala Convention
 - Present the key measures taken by States to implement the Kampala Convention
 - To discuss the actions to be taken in order to give greater impact to the implementation of the Kampala Convention and,

III. Panellists

- **Ms Salma Sassi-Safer**, Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa.

- **Mr Ibrahima Kane**; OSF, Special Adviser to the Executive Director of the Open Society Foundation in charge of advocacy on the African Union.
- **Mr Junior Safari Runiga**, Adviser to the National Human Rights Commission of the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- **Mr Jean d'Amour Maniraguha**, Block Leader in the Kanyaruchinya camp
- **Ms Céline Croon**, Regional Advisor on Internal Displacement and Migration for Africa (ICRC)

IV. Programme : Duration 1h30

5 min	Introductory remarks	Hon. Commissioner Salma Sassi-Safer Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa.
10min	The progress achieved through the adoption of the Kampala Convention and the strategies to be undertaken to achieve its universal ratification	Mr Ibrahima Kane ; OSF, Special Adviser to the Executive Director of the Open Society Foundation in charge of advocacy on the African Union.
10min	Key measures taken by States to implement the Kampala Convention	Mr Junior Safari Runiga , Adviser to the National Human Rights Commission of the Democratic Republic of Congo.
10min	The real impact of the Kampala Convention on the situation of IDPs: Testimony of an internally displaced person	Mr Jean d'Amour Maniraguha , Block Leader in the Kanyaruchinya camp
10min	Actions to be taken to increase the impact of the implementation of the Kampala Convention.	Ms Céline Croon , Regional Advisor on Internal Displacement and Migration for Africa (ICRC)
20min	General debate	General debate - Débat général Open debate Order of speakers : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioners • States • NHRIS • CSOs, NGOs, academics, etc.
7 min	Concluding remarks -	- Panelists' concluding remarks
3 min	Concluding remarks	Hon. Commisioner Salma Sassi-Safer Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa.

Venue: Banjul, Gambia (Virtual)

Date and Time: 18 May 2024 - 12:00 to 13:30

Organiser: Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.