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Uganda: President Museveni should reject US impunity agreement

Amnesty International is concerned that President Yoweri Museveni is considering signing an illegal impunity agreement with the United States of America.

"President Museveni should uphold Uganda's obligations as a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by rejecting such an agreement," Amnesty International urged.

The Ugandan President reportedly plans to sign the agreement with the US today while on an official visit to the United States. The agreement would commit the government of Uganda not to surrender US nationals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes to the new ICC.

"These agreements are illegal as they violate Uganda's duty to cooperate with the ICC and the obligations of all states to ensure that the people responsible for these crimes, as the most serious crimes under international law, are brought to justice," Amnesty International pointed out.

Background

The US initiative is part of a worldwide campaign to undermine the International Criminal Court and ensure impunity for US nationals. As of 12 June 2003, 37 states are known to have signed impunity agreements and parliaments in four states have approved ratification of impunity agreements.

The US is demanding that any person accused of these crimes should be returned to the USA, without any commitment that they will be prosecuted by US courts and without any recourse if US courts fail to fulfill their responsibilities. In fact, in many cases US courts will not be able to do so as US law does not include many of the crimes under international law as defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

In 2002, Uganda became a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which has been ratified by 90 states.

Public Document

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