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Zambia becomes the 25th state party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance but fails to make crucial declarations

Amnesty International welcomes Zambia's ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on 4th April 2011, but is concerned that Zambia did not recognize the competence of the Enforced Disappearances Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims and other states.

By becoming a state party to the Enforced Disappearance Convention, Zambia commits to ensuring that those who arrest, detain or abduct a person and refuse to acknowledge that deprivation of liberty, are investigated and prosecuted in a fair trial if there is sufficient admissible evidence.

By ratifying the Enforced Disappearance Convention Zambia becomes the 25th state party to it and the 6th African state to become a party to this fundamental human rights treaty.

However, Zambia's failure to recognize the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims or by other states is a major shortcoming that the government should promptly correct.

Zambia must now make the declarations under Articles 31 and 32 of the Convention and implement it effectively into domestic law in a public, transparent and participatory process in which civil society should play a key role.

Amnesty International urges Zambia to take further positive steps by ratifying the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court.