

The African Union's human rights body has raised alarms over agreements between Rwanda, Uganda, and the United States that allow deportees to be sent to these African nations.

On Monday, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) urged the countries involved, as well as other African states, to ensure transparency in such deals, protect the rights of deportees, and avoid policies that could turn the continent into a "drop-off zone" for arbitrary expulsions.

"These agreements reflect a logic of externalizing migration responsibilities and put the individuals involved at greater risk of violations of their fundamental rights," the ACHPR said. The commission warned that deportations under these arrangements may violate the principle of non-refoulement, the ban on collective expulsions, and the rights to dignity and asylum guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other international and regional treaties.

Uganda recently became the latest African country to reach a temporary agreement with the US to accept third-country nationals denied asylum. The East African nation joins Rwanda, Eswatini, and South Sudan, which have participated in similar arrangements since the Trump administration began seeking African countries as destinations for deportees.

Rwanda confirmed last week that the first group of seven migrants from the US had arrived, part of a plan to accept 250 deportees. In July, former President Donald Trump pressed leaders from Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, and Senegal to receive third-country migrants deported from the US.

Responses across Africa have been mixed. Some countries have agreed to accept deportees, while others, including Nigeria, have resisted pressure to take in Venezuelans and other third-country nationals expelled from the US.

The ACHPR's statement highlights growing concern across the continent about the potential human rights risks posed by these agreements, and the broader trend of shifting migration responsibilities from Western countries to Africa.