

FROM ARCHAIC TO MODERN LAW: UGANDA'S REFUGEES ACT 2006 AND HER INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS

By Jamil Ddamulira Mujuzi

ABSTRACT

Uganda enacted its first law to deal with refugees in 1955, which was repealed in 1960 by the Control of Alien Refugees Act. While the 1960 law was still in force, Uganda ratified international and regional human rights instruments. In 1995 a new Constitution with a comprehensive Bill of Rights was promulgated. These developments made the 1960 Act incompatible with Uganda's international, regional and national human rights obligations. As a result, in May 2006 Uganda passed the Refugees Act which integrates its international and regional obligations into the refugee legal regime. This article critically reviews the 2006 Refugees Act and Uganda's refugee obligations in light of its international human rights obligations. The article argues that the 2006 Refugees Act substantially reflects Uganda's international and regional obligations under the relevant refugee and human rights instruments, but finds that some questions, such as the definitions of 'spouse' and 'public order' remain unanswered.