



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

The Board		
About the Board	MRT103486.E	10 May 2010
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Mauritania: Situation of Afro-Mauritians who left in 1989 and returned from Senegal since 2007; whether Mauritania is accepting the returnees and is granting them citizenship; the situation of those who return (March 2009 - May 2010)	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References		
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	A United Nations (UN) article states that the tripartite repatriation agreement signed by Senegal, Mauritania and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in November 2007 indicates that repatriated Mauritians are supposed to obtain their citizenship documents within three months of their return to Mauritania (UN 26 Nov. 2008). However, the United States (US) Department of State <i>Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009</i> indicates that "the majority of Afro-Mauritanian returnees were unable to obtain identity cards" (US 11 Mar. 2010, Sec. 2d). <i>Country Reports 2009</i> further states:	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions	During the year the HSC [High State Council] and President Aziz's administration continued the national reconciliation program for the repatriation of Afro-Mauritanian refugees from Senegal and Mali, in coordination with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). On December 31, repatriation operations were successfully ended with the arrival of the last group from Senegal. (US 11 Mar. 2010, Intro.).	
Forms		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program		
National Documentation Packages	According to UNHCR, approximately 17,130 Afro-Mauritanian refugees returned during the year as part of a national repatriation program. These were among the estimated 25,000 to 34,000 Afro-Mauritians who took refuge in Senegal and Mali during the 1989-91 expulsion. (<i>ibid.</i> , Sec. 2d).	
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests	The government cooperated with UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, returning refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern; however, the government lacked resources to effectively support these persons. However, reintegration of returnees into communities was challenging due to deficient sanitation, health, and education infrastructure, as well as land disputes. (<i>ibid.</i>)	
Recent Research		
Media Centre		
News		
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure	A <i>Jeune Afrique</i> article states that land disputes are numerous and have occurred in regions where the refugees have returned to their villages of origin only to find that their former lands are occupied (<i>Jeune Afrique</i> 4 Mar. 2010). In January 2010, in the Fada village in the Trarza region, some of the female returnees who attempted to farm their former lands were arrested by the police (<i>ibid.</i>). The African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (Forces de libération africaines	

de Mauritanie, FLAM), an exiled Mauritanian opposition group that advocates for the rights of black Mauritians (UN 3 Mar. 2006), indicates in a statement obtained by PANApres (PANA) that refugees in Mauritania who were repatriated since January 2008 from Senegal are in "a precarious situation, marked by humiliations and frustrations, while remaining at the outskirts of their villages and (away from) their confiscated properties" (PANA 27 Apr. 2010).

The 4 March 2010 *Jeune Afrique* article states that the returnees also lack sufficient employment and that the language of instruction in their children's schools is partially Arabic, which is not always suitable for the Afro-Mauritians who are francophones.

Information on whether Mauritania is fulfilling its agreement to grant citizenship to the refugees who left in 1989 and who are returning to Mauritania could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Jeune Afrique. 4 March 2010. Marianne Meunier. "Après l'exil, la désillusion." <www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAJA2563p052-053.xml0/mauritanie-mohamed-ould-abdelaziz-foncier-rapatriementapres-l-exil-la-desillusion.html> [Accessed 3 May 2010]

PANApres (PANA). 27 April 2010. "Mauritanian Body Deplores Condition of Repatriated Refugees." (Afrique en ligne) <www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news/mauritanian-body-deplores-condition-of-repatriated-refugees-2010042748352.html> [Accessed 5 Mar. 2010]

United Nations (UN). 26 November 2008. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). "Mauritania: Thousands of Returnees Await Legal Status." <<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=81682>> [Accessed 7 May 2010]

_____. 3 March 2006. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). "Mauritania-Senegal: Ahead of Visit, Exiled Group Calls for Help for Refugees." <<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?reportId=58327>> [Accessed 5 May 2010]

United States (US). 11 March 2010. Department of State. "Mauritania." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009*. <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135965.htm>> [Accessed 3 May 2010]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Nouakchott did not respond to requests for information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sources, including: AfricaFiles, Afrol News, *Al-Ahram Weekly* [Cairo], Al Bawaba, AllAfrica.com, Al Jazeera, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), *L'Expression* [Alger], *Forced Migration Review* (FMR), *La Gazette du Maroc* [Casablanca], Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Middle East Online, Minority Rights Group International (MRG), Pambazuka News, Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Refworld,

ReliefWeb.


[Top of Page](#)

[Important Notices](#)

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.