AIDS 2014 Delegates Ask for Asylum in Australia

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At least 25 delegates to the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014), which ended July 25 in Melbourne, Australia, have asked for asylum, The Age reports. The men and women are mostly from Africa, including countries such as Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia.

It is not clear if any of the AIDS 2014 delegates seeking asylum are HIV positive. One man told a local news outlet that he feared imprisonment over politics and another man feared violent persecution over ethnicity. Local refugee support agencies are giving assistance to all of the asylum seekers.

In 2006, more than 130 HIV-positive South African women asked for asylum in Canada after the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto. Similar asylum requests also occurred after the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and the 2008 World Youth Day in Sydney.

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