

Guild leaders want charter ratified to cure volatile politics

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KAMPALA. Student guild leaders from various universities have asked for the ratification and domestication of the African Charter on Democracy, Election and Governance (AC-DEG) to address problems of democracy, election and governance issues in the country.

The meeting was organised by ActionAid and African Governance Structure (AGA), an

African Union structure set up to ensure implementation of ACDEG.

More than 80 student guild leaders were in Kampala yesterday. The students said the government has remained reluctant on ratifying the charter, which was adopted in 2007 by 45 African Union member States as the main normative instrument to set standards for better governance on the continent.

At least 20 African countries are yet to ratify and domesti-

cate the charter.

Mr Michael Aboneka, the AGA project coordinator, an African Union structure set up to ensure implementation of AC-DEG, said the failure by government to demonstrate the charter has held the country back on the principles of democracy.

"If a country has signed the charter, what reasons do they give for not ratifying it and domesticating it?" Mr Aboneka wondered. Uganda signed the charter in 2008,

Some of the objectives for

the adoption of the charter include ensuring effective participation of citizens in democratic processes, transparency and fairness in management of public affairs, holding regular, transparent, free and fair elections and promotion of the principle of separation of power in Africa.

By press time, we had not got a response from the Attorney General, Mr William Byaruhanga as he was reportedly held up in a meeting for most of the day.