



Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Twenty-ninth session
15–26 January 2018

Compilation on Burundi

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a compilation of information contained in reports of treaty bodies and special procedures and other relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies^{1, 2}

2. On 11 October 2016, the Government of Burundi suspended all cooperation and collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Burundi (OHCHR-Burundi), thereby hindering the fulfilment of the latter's mandate. Moreover, the human rights situation was growing worse. OHCHR-Burundi therefore encouraged Burundi to expedite its negotiations on a memorandum of understanding that would allow it to promptly resume working with the Government.³

3. In October 2017, an official from Burundi stated that the Government of Burundi had categorically rejected the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, established by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 33/24, declaring it to be biased and politically motivated. The State party also threatened to "bring to justice" the authors of the report for defamation and attempted destabilization of Burundian institutions. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights informed the Government that he found it unacceptable for the members of a commission mandated by the Council to be threatened with prosecution for having performed the task set for them by the Council. He stated that the threat by the Government constituted a clear violation of article VI of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, which applied to experts performing missions for the United Nations. The High Commissioner urged the

* Reissued for technical reasons on 6 December 2017.



Government to review its policy of refusing to cooperate with the independent Commission and to cease threatening its members.⁴

4. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women regretted the intention of Burundi to withdraw from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; its rejection of the independent investigation on Burundi carried out pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-24/1, and the consequent declaration of the independent experts as *persona non gratae* in Burundi; its rejection of cooperation with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi; and its ongoing reassessment of its cooperation with and the presence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the State. The Committee called upon Burundi to ensure unhindered access by United Nations entities, including OHCHR and the Commission of Inquiry, to all areas and to continue cooperating with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.⁵

5. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders stated that Burundi had yet to sign the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty; the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.⁶

6. The same Special Rapporteur reported that Burundi had been examined under the universal periodic review in January 2013. During the review, 174 recommendations had been made, 146 of which had been accepted by the Government. The remaining recommendations had been rejected by the Government, including 14 relating to freedom of expression and association.⁷

7. The independent experts who conducted the independent investigation on Burundi carried out pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-24/1 (the independent experts), recommended that Burundi immediately ratify, without reservations, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.⁸

8. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) encouraged Burundi to ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education.⁹

9. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that Burundi had acceded in 1963 to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and in 1971 to its 1967 Protocol. However, despite applying a flexible approach and having inclusive policies towards refugees, Burundi had made reservations to the Convention that limited refugees' freedom of movement, access to wage-earning employment and right to education.¹⁰

III. National human rights framework¹¹

10. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Burundi allocate the human, technical and financial resources necessary to ensure the implementation of the national gender policy, and establish its monitoring mechanisms, including the National Gender Council.¹² It also recommended that Burundi effectively implement the national plan to combat gender-based violence (2010).¹³ The Committee welcomed the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, covering the period 2012-2016.¹⁴

11. OHCHR-Burundi regretted that the National Independent Human Rights Commission was to be downgraded from A to B status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, and invited the Commission to work with the Office to ensure its independence.¹⁵

12. The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders urged the newly appointed members of the Commission to do their utmost to regain the confidence of human rights defenders and ensure that the Commission was a strong, independent institution capable of

credible and impartial scrutiny of the State's human rights obligations.¹⁶ In addition, the Commission must be consulted in processes undertaken to establish human rights protection mechanisms, in particular in the implementation of a programme to protect human rights defenders.¹⁷

IV. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

A. Cross-cutting issues

1. Equality and non-discrimination¹⁸

13. The Human Rights Committee was concerned by reports that homosexuals were faced with threats to their physical integrity, intimidation and discrimination in various spheres of life. In particular, the Committee was concerned by the fact that homosexuality was defined as an offence in the Criminal Code; the fact that students considered to be homosexuals might be barred from their schools; and the obstacles faced by homosexuals seeking to found associations. The Committee recommended that Burundi decriminalize homosexuality.¹⁹

14. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern that Burundi had done little to amend existing laws that discriminated against women, including the Code of the Person and the Family (arts. 38, 88, 122 and 126), the Nationality Code (art. 4), the Labour Code (title 4) and the Criminal Code (arts. 353–357, 363 and 539). It recommended that Burundi accelerate its law reform process and, within a specific time frame, repeal all discriminatory provisions and harmonize all laws in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and ensure their effective implementation.²⁰

2. Development, the environment, and business and human rights

15. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed that gender equality was a first priority of the strategic framework on combating poverty and that the strategic framework had established a fund to finance agricultural activities of rural women. The Committee was concerned that most women still faced barriers to their economic empowerment, given their poor socioeconomic condition, the stereotypes against them, their limited access to credit for failure to meet banks' requirements and the unequal inheritance rights regarding the right to land tenure.²¹

B. Civil and political rights

1. Right to life, liberty and security of person²²

16. OHCHR-Burundi reported that with Nkurunziza's victory in the presidential elections, a phase of intensifying violence had begun.²³ The independent experts stated that, on 25 April 2016, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court had started a preliminary examination on alleged crimes under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court committed in Burundi since April 2015. The preliminary examination focused on allegations of killing, imprisonment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as cases of enforced disappearances.²⁴

17. The independent experts reported that the attacks of 11 December 2015 by armed groups on four military camps, three in Bujumbura and one in the province of Bujumbura Rural, had been followed by operations during which security forces had allegedly committed massive violations of human rights, notably a high number of extrajudicial executions of young people.²⁵ They recommended that Burundi immediately cease using the intelligence services and the police force, in particular, as armed instruments in defence

of a partisan political project,²⁶ and that all non-State actors prioritize the protection of civilians and refrain from human rights abuses.²⁷

18. Between 26 April 2015 and October 2016, OHCHR-Burundi documented 580 cases of persons killed in connection with the crisis: civilians, members of the opposition, members of civil society, police officers, Imbonerakure, members of the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces de défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD) and members of the military. In some cases, the extrajudicial executions documented by OHCHR-Burundi had been preceded by enforced disappearances, as the victims were abducted before being killed and later discovered.²⁸ OHCHR-Burundi recommended prosecuting those responsible for human rights violations in order to end impunity.²⁹

19. From April 2015 to October 2016, OHCHR-Burundi documented at least 9,568 persons arrested and detained in relation to the crisis. At least 5,321 detainees had been released. The majority of those arrests and detentions had been carried out by the police and the National Intelligence Service, with the help of Imbonerakure. The victims were members of the opposition and of civil society who were against the President's additional term in office, and journalists.³⁰

20. The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders noted many cases in which human rights defenders and journalists had been killed, assaulted, forced into exile, arbitrarily arrested, detained, threatened, harassed, stigmatized or defamed in the media. He recommended that the Government of Burundi carefully consider allegations and reports of violence, intimidation, harassment and surveillance on human rights defenders, conduct prompt and impartial investigations accordingly and hold perpetrators accountable, including for acts committed during the pre- and post-election periods in 2015.³¹

21. The Committee against Torture was concerned by the 651 cases of torture that had been documented by OHCHR-Burundi between April 2015 and April 2016. It was also concerned at the increase in acts of torture associated with the political crisis, as reported by the Secretary-General and the independent experts after their second visit to Burundi. The Committee remained deeply concerned by the discrepancy between the information issued by the Government and the numerous cases of torture documented in the report of the High Commissioner (A/HRC/32/30), which would seem to indicate that not all allegations of torture had been the subject of an investigation.³² The independent experts recommended that the Government establish as a priority an effective torture prevention mechanism, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.³³

22. OHCHR-Burundi had visited the 11 prisons and police holding cells in Burundi and observed overcrowding resulting from the waves of arrests of protesters opposed to a new term for the President, members of the opposition and civil society, and persons suspected of joining rebel movements in Rwanda or the United Republic of Tanzania. OHCHR-Burundi had observed that, in some cases, detainees had not been given food for several days and had further observed that children were rarely held separately from adults in police holding cells and in the National Intelligence Service.³⁴

23. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was seriously concerned about the exacerbation of violence against women in Burundi since the onset of the internal conflict in April 2015. It had received disturbing reports that members of the ruling party's youth league, the Imbonerakure, had repeatedly gang-raped women who were family members of perceived government opponents. The Committee had also received reports that had consistently documented different forms of violence against women, including physical abuse, rape and other forms of sexual violence, mutilation and torture, perpetrated by the security forces, including during house searches, mass arrests and flight from the country. It recommended that Burundi immediately issue orders to the police, military and the Imbonerakure prohibiting all forms of violence against women; that it ensure that sexual violence was raised early and consistently in the resolution of the conflict and, ultimately, was addressed adequately in a peace agreement; and that it continue to reject amnesties for gender-based crimes, in particular sexual violence.³⁵

24. The same Committee noted with concern that 45 per cent of women in prison were held in pretrial detention, indicating the inefficiency of the criminal justice system. It was

also concerned about the conditions of detained women, including overpopulation in prisons, the lack of systematic separation from male detainees and from convicted inmates, as well as inadequate access to adequate food and health care. It was further concerned at the number of women detained with infants and young children and the lack of any social care and protection measures for the children of detained women who were separated from their mothers.³⁶

2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law³⁷

25. Most of the human rights violations documented by OHCHR-Burundi, including summary executions, enforced disappearances, torture and the alleged sexual violence committed by members of the defence and security forces or the Imbonerakure, had not led to prosecution. Hundreds of people arrested during the demonstrations, or following the fighting between the security forces and armed men, had remained in detention without trial.³⁸ OHCHR-Burundi recommended that the Government of Burundi should conduct an immediate review of the legality of detentions, release arbitrarily arrested people and ensure that everyone arrested in the context of the current crisis had the right to a fair trial.³⁹

26. The Human Rights Committee was concerned about the numerous failures and shortcomings in the judicial system of Burundi, in particular the insufficient number of judges and prosecutors, the shortage of resources, the serious backlog of cases in the court system and the lack of independence of the judicial branch owing to interference from the executive branch in the administration of justice. The Committee recommended that Burundi ensure the independence of the judiciary.⁴⁰

27. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was concerned that the security of judges' tenure was not adequately guaranteed, which could seriously undermine their independence. It recommended that Burundi ensure that judges were selected and appointed in an open and transparent manner based on the candidates' integrity and competences and that it strengthen guarantees of their independence.⁴¹

28. The Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence reported that, by the end of April 2015, concerns about the 2015 electoral process had deepened.⁴² He expressed concern that discussions in the area of criminal justice for massive violations had come to a halt. Delaying discussion on the set-up of judicial mechanisms until the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work meant that justice would be foregone in a great number of cases.⁴³ The Special Rapporteur recommended that Burundi immediately resume discussions, without waiting for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to complete its work and with the participation of civil society, including victims, on proposed concrete models for a judicial mechanism to prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or other gross human rights violations or serious violations of international humanitarian law; and to immediately undertake preparatory work for judicial investigations and prosecutions.⁴⁴

29. The same Special Rapporteur stated that reparation initiatives, thus far, had focused mainly on the restitution of land, while other forms of reparation, particularly rehabilitation of victims, had been excluded.⁴⁵ He recommended that Burundi initiate broader land reform to overcome pre-existing patterns of discrimination and, in that respect, increase access to land by women, through a comprehensive revision of existing legislative provisions on inheritance rights, registration and titling. On the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he recommended that Burundi initiate discussions, with the involvement of civil society, including victims, on a feasible comprehensive reparation programme.⁴⁶

30. The independent experts stated that the accountability mechanisms were exceedingly weak and impunity was endemic, which allowed cycles of violence to continue unabatedly. Furthermore, virtually nothing was being done by way of effective remedy to victims, including bringing perpetrators to justice, or to prevent the recurrence of the violations.⁴⁷

31. OHCHR-Burundi reported that many NGO members had been victims of intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, physical assault, extrajudicial execution and murder.⁴⁸ OHCHR-Burundi recommended continuing to make efforts to expand civil liberties by putting an immediate end to the suspensions of and other sanctions against

NGOs defending human rights, the media and civil society in general and by facilitating their work.⁴⁹

3. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life⁵⁰

32. The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders expressed concern about reports of threats and acts of harassment and intimidation against journalists and human rights defenders by the police and the Imbonerakure. He recommended that the situation of human rights defenders, in particular the most targeted and vulnerable defenders, be constantly monitored, and that support for their work be provided in order to allow civil society to operate safely.⁵¹

33. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the constitutional quota of 30 per cent representation of women in Government, in Parliament and in the Senate and the resulting increase in the participation of women in political life.⁵² The Human Rights Committee was concerned by the fact that there were so few women representatives in public affairs at the provincial and local levels.⁵³ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Burundi pursue sustained policies aimed at the promotion of women's full and equal participation in decision-making at the national and local levels.⁵⁴

34. The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders noted with concern reports that political parties and other groups had been prohibited from demonstrating in Burundi and that demonstrators had been intimidated and harassed. He further noted with concern that, on the basis of the principle of maintaining public order, the authorities had arbitrarily banned all public demonstrations organized by certain civil society organizations that had been regularly denouncing human rights violations since 2009.⁵⁵

35. Constitution, freedom of expression must be guaranteed and the State must respect freedom of religion, belief, conscience and opinion. However, the Press Act of 4 June 2013 curtailed freedom of expression and contained several provisions contrary to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other international instruments. The Act provided for a broad exception to the right of journalists not to reveal their sources in cases involving national security, public order, defence secrets and the physical or mental integrity of one or more persons.⁵⁶

36. Freedom of expression remained restricted. Activities of media critical of the Government had been suspended, while independent media professionals had suffered arbitrary arrests, torture and enforced disappearance. OHCHR-Burundi recommended that the Government uphold freedom of expression.⁵⁷

37. Human rights defenders had been intimidated and ill-treated by security forces. OHCHR-Burundi recommended that a national mechanism of protection of human rights defenders be set up and operationalized.⁵⁸

4. Prohibition of all forms of slavery⁵⁹

38. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the 2014 law on the prevention and repression of trafficking in persons and the protection of victims of trafficking and noted its implementation through a multisectoral action plan for the period 2014–2017 and the establishment of a national committee. It recommended that Burundi provide continuous capacity-building for law enforcement officials on the early identification, referral and rehabilitation of trafficking victims, and that it prevent, prosecute and adequately punish traffickers and perpetrators of related human rights violations and adopt gender-specific protection measures for women and girl victims.⁶⁰

5. Right to privacy and family life⁶¹

39. The Human Rights Committee was concerned by the fact that men and women were not treated equally with regard to inheritance, matrimonial regimes and bequests. It also noted that article 88 of the draft personal and family code still provided for different minimum ages of marriage for men and women. It recommended that Burundi amend the

Personal and Family Code so that it set the same minimum age of marriage for men and women, in accordance with international standards.⁶²

C. Economic, social and cultural rights

1. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

40. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the revision of the Labour Code to strengthen women's rights at work and eliminate the persistent wage gap. It further noted the existence of an advanced draft law protecting the right to work for persons with disabilities. It recommended that Burundi expedite the revision of the Labour Code and ensure that it guaranteed substantive equality of women and men, prohibited labour discrimination and enshrined the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.⁶³ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights made similar recommendations.⁶⁴

41. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was concerned about the lack of the protection of domestic workers from exploitation and sexual abuse, that child labour had not yet been banned and that girls continued to be exploited, particularly in domestic work. It recommended that Burundi strictly prohibit child labour and raise the minimum age of employment.⁶⁵

42. The independent experts stated that half of young people in Burundi were estimated to be unemployed. The majority of the demonstrators against the third presidential mandate had been young people, and the high unemployment rate might provide a large source of recruitment for nascent rebel movements and the Imbonerakure. The agricultural sector, which employed 90 per cent of the economically active population, had been affected both by displacement of persons and by the land conflicts that such displacement generated.⁶⁶

2. Right to social security

43. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights noted with concern that, despite the adoption of a national social protection policy and the establishment of the Social Protection Support Fund, a large part of the population of Burundi lacked any kind of social protection.⁶⁷

3. Right to an adequate standard of living⁶⁸

44. The same Committee was concerned that, despite the launch of strategic frameworks for poverty reduction, much of the population did not enjoy an adequate standard of living. Poverty was highest among the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups in Burundi, including women, the Batwa and internally displaced persons.⁶⁹

45. The Committee noted with concern that, despite the launch of the National Agricultural Strategy and the National Agricultural Investment Plan, much of the population lived in a situation of food insecurity. It was also concerned by the high levels of chronic child malnutrition. It recommended that Burundi step up efforts to ensure the right to adequate food and to address hunger and child malnutrition, in particular in rural areas.⁷⁰

4. Right to health⁷¹

46. The Committee was concerned that, despite the efforts by Burundi to improve access to health services through such means as the medical assistance card, disadvantaged or marginalized individuals and groups, in particular the Batwa and internally displaced persons, continued to encounter obstacles in gaining access to health services. It recommended that Burundi allocate sufficient resources to the health sector and continue its efforts to guarantee the accessibility, availability and quality of health services, in particular in remote rural areas.⁷²

47. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was concerned about the persistently high ratios of maternal and infant mortality, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women who worked as prostitutes and in rural areas, and the acute

malnutrition affecting women. It recommended that Burundi reduce maternal mortality by improving access to basic prenatal and postnatal care, emergency obstetric services, skilled birth attendance and post-abortion care, and access to specialist care, throughout its territory.⁷³

48. The same Committee recommended that Burundi decriminalize abortion and expand the grounds on which abortion was permitted to include cases of rape, incest, risk to the life and health of the mother or severe malformation of the fetus, and prepare guidelines on post-abortion care to ensure that women who were pregnant as a result of rape or incest had free access to safe abortion services.⁷⁴

5. Right to education⁷⁵

49. UNESCO reported that Burundi had taken steps to improve school enrolment rates for girls. However, measures unfavourable to girls continued to exist, such as the requirement that girls who gave birth must wait for one year before returning to school, a requirement which severely hindered their educational opportunities. Moreover, girls continued to be the victims of violence, including sexual violence, on their way to school and in school facilities. UNESCO recommended that Burundi should pursue its efforts to increase girls' enrolment in schools in order to ensure that they had equal access to education, and should eliminate discrimination and violence against girls.⁷⁶

50. UNESCO noted that the principle of non-discrimination, enshrined in the Constitution, was not observed, since children with specific needs, internally displaced persons, refugees, children of the Batwa minority, and children with albinism had faced major challenges in accessing education, mainly because of discrimination and inability to pay school fees. UNESCO recommended that Burundi should take steps to eliminate discrimination against children with specific needs, internally displaced persons, refugees, children of the Batwa minority and children with albinism,⁷⁷ and that it should pursue efforts to improve literacy by developing and strengthening relevant partnerships.⁷⁸

D. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women⁷⁹

51. UNHCR reported that the risk of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, had worsened. Communities had disclosed feelings of insecurity, particularly single women, widows, adolescent girls and female heads of households, who were more vulnerable to sexual exploitation because of the erosion of protective family and community structures, the lack of access to livelihoods and the dysfunction of the judicial and administrative system, which often led to impunity. In addition, female refugee returnees might face higher risks of sexual violence owing to political stigmatization.⁸⁰ UNHCR recommended that Burundi strengthen the capacity of the criminal judiciary and enhance access to legal assistance for survivors of gender-based violence, without any discrimination, in order to promote a system of effective justice, and of prevention and response to gender-based violence.⁸¹

52. The independent experts stated that the crisis had exacerbated the already prevalent issue of sexual and gender-based violence in Burundi. Furthermore, they had obtained credible information indicating that many Burundian women and girls related to males who had opposed the third term, or had been perceived as political dissidents, had become the targets of physical and sexual violence by elements of the security forces.⁸²

53. The dissemination, with a view to the effective implementation, of Act No. 1/1013 of 22 September 2016, on the prevention, protection of victims and suppression of gender-based violence, had been a challenge, especially for lawyers and others involved in the criminal justice system. The information documented the cases of girls (and women) who were victims of rape and who experienced pressure from their families or local administrative representatives to agree to out-of-court settlements. As a result of such pressure, as well as intimidation by the perpetrators of the abuses in question, victims

renounced their right to justice. Victims rarely appealed to care services owing to a lack of information or out of fear of stigma and reprisals.⁸³

54. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Burundi ensure protection for rural women workers, especially those working in the informal sector, in social protection policies, especially social security, maternity and retirement under the national social protection plan, and that it ensure women did not encounter any legal or administrative impediments in exercising their constitutional right to landownership.⁸⁴

2. Children⁸⁵

55. UNHCR reported that a greater number of children were at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation, including sexual exploitation and trafficking, owing to the socioeconomic situation and the high rate of school dropout. Furthermore, there were concerns over the systematic practice of police round-ups targeting street children — leading to the detention of the minors and their forced return to their supposed areas of origin — and over house searches. It recommended that Burundi convert the current practices of police control and repression against street children into a prevention and protection response system, with the aim of granting adequate reception, assistance, family reunion and other durable solutions.⁸⁶

56. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights noted with concern that corporal punishment was not explicitly prohibited in the home and that such punishment was widely tolerated and practised in Burundian society, including in schools, alternative care settings and prisons.⁸⁷

3. Minorities and indigenous peoples⁸⁸

57. According to OHCHR-Burundi, the Batwa still suffered from discrimination in equal access to land, education and health services. The Office urged Burundi to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in order to better protect minority rights.⁸⁹

4. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons

58. UNHCR reported that Burundian authorities did not fully acknowledge the presence of persons who had been internally displaced owing to the 2015 sociopolitical crisis and related violence. Incidents of arbitrary arrest and illegal detention of returnees upon their arrival in Burundi had been reported. Moreover, new displacement situations had been generated by evictions and security operations. UNHRC recommended that Burundi discontinue the practice of systematic arrest and detention of returnees at the border, while introducing procedural safeguards for any security control.⁹⁰

59. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted that the political instability and security situation in Burundi since April 2015 had resulted in more than 50,000 persons being internally displaced and 320,000 persons seeking refuge outside the country, the majority of whom were women and children. It further noted that more than 50,000 refugees from neighbouring countries resided in Burundi.⁹¹

60. The same Committee had received consistent reports indicating that women and girls in contexts of internal and external displacement were at heightened risk or had been subjected to sexual violence and exploitation. It was concerned that no preventive measures were being taken by Burundi to ensure protection against forced displacement, as well as access to basic services by displaced women and girls.⁹²

5. Stateless persons

61. UNHCR recommended that Burundi finalize the ratification process of the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, and that it reform the Nationality Law with a view to reinforcing the *jus soli* clauses and removing any discrimination between men and women in their ability to transmit their nationality *jure sanguinis*.⁹³

Notes

- ¹ Tables containing information on the scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies for Burundi are available at www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/BIIndex.aspx.
- ² For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.1–126.17.
- ³ See OHCHR submission for the universal periodic review of Burundi.
- ⁴ See OHCHR press briefings of 21 November 2017, available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22421&LangID=E.
- ⁵ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 8–9.
- ⁶ See A/HRC/31/55/Add.2, para. 9.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 10.
- ⁸ See A/HRC/33/37, para. 152.
- ⁹ UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Burundi, p. 5, recommendation 1.
- ¹⁰ UNHCR submission for the universal periodic review of Burundi, p. 1.
- ¹¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.39–126.45.
- ¹² See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 16–17.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, para. 25 (e).
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, paras. 10–11.
- ¹⁵ See OHCHR submission.
- ¹⁶ See A/HRC/31/55/Add.2, para. 100.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 103.
- ¹⁸ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.46, 126.62 and 126.82–126.84.
- ¹⁹ See CCPR/C/BDI/CO/2, paras. 8–9.
- ²⁰ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 12–13.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, paras. 40–41.
- ²² For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.53–126.111.
- ²³ See A/HRC/32/30, para. 6.
- ²⁴ See A/HRC/33/37, para. 119.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 43.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 144.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 153.
- ²⁸ See A/HRC/32/30, paras. 10 and 16.
- ²⁹ See OHCHR submission.
- ³⁰ See A/HRC/32/30, para. 18.
- ³¹ See A/HRC/31/55/Add.2, paras. 52 and 103.
- ³² See CAT/C/BDI/CO/2/Add.1, paras. 12–13.
- ³³ See A/HRC/33/37, para. 143.
- ³⁴ See A/HRC/32/30, paras. 24–25.
- ³⁵ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 26–27.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, paras. 48–49.
- ³⁷ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.44, 126.87–126.100 and 126.114–126.131.
- ³⁸ See A/HRC/32/30, para. 51.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 67 (d).
- ⁴⁰ See CCPR/C/BDI/CO/2, para. 19.
- ⁴¹ See E/C.12/BDI/CO/1, paras. 7–8.
- ⁴² See A/HRC/30/42/Add.1, para. 98.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, para. 103.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, paras. 110 (a) and (c).
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 104.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, paras. 111 (b) and (d).
- ⁴⁷ See A/HRC/33/37, paras. 126 and 130.
- ⁴⁸ See A/HRC/32/30, para. 39.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 67 (e).
- ⁵⁰ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.110 and 126.140–126.150.
- ⁵¹ See A/HRC/31/55/Add.2, para. 105.
- ⁵² See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 30–31.
- ⁵³ See CCPR/C/BDI/CO/2, para. 10.
- ⁵⁴ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 30–31.
- ⁵⁵ See A/HRC/31/55/Add.2, para. 81.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, paras. 20–21.

-
- ⁵⁷ See OHCHR submission.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.30 and 126.94.
- ⁶⁰ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 28–29.
- ⁶¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.128–126.129.
- ⁶² See CCPR/C/BDI/CO/2, para. 11.
- ⁶³ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 36–37.
- ⁶⁴ See E/C.12/BDI/CO/1, paras. 19–20.
- ⁶⁵ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 36–37.
- ⁶⁶ See A/HRC/33/37, paras. 93–94.
- ⁶⁷ See E/C.12/BDI/CO/1, paras. 33–34.
- ⁶⁸ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.153 and 126.158.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, paras. 43–44.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, paras. 49–50.
- ⁷¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.159–126.163 and 126.170.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, paras. 51–52.
- ⁷³ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 38–39.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁵ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.68–126.70.
- ⁷⁶ UNESCO submission, paras. 11 and 12, and recommendation 2.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5, para. 13, and recommendation 3.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5, recommendation 4.
- ⁷⁹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.35, 126.57, 126.63, 126.86–126.93, 126.97 and 126.151.
- ⁸⁰ UNHCR submission, p. 3.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁸² See A/HRC/33/37, paras. 56 and 58.
- ⁸³ See OHCHR submission for the Universal Periodic Review of Burundi.
- ⁸⁴ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 42–43.
- ⁸⁵ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.31, 126.36–126.37, 126.60–126.61, 126.63, 126.69, 126.86, 126.88, 126.90–126.91, 126.96, 126.98, 126.135–126.136 and 126.165–126.170.
- ⁸⁶ UNHCR submission, pp. 3–4.
- ⁸⁷ See E/C.12/BDI/CO/1, paras. 39–40.
- ⁸⁸ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/23/9, paras. 126.46 and 126.170.
- ⁸⁹ See OHCHR submission.
- ⁹⁰ UNHCR submission, pp. 4–5.
- ⁹¹ See CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/5-6, paras. 44–45.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*
- ⁹³ UNHCR submission, p. 6.
-