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COMPILATION PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 15(B) OF THE ANNEX TO HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION 5/1

Burundi

This report is a compilation of the information contained in the reports of treaty bodies, special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, and other relevant official United Nations documents. It does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), other than those contained in public reports issued by OHCHR. It follows the structure of the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council. Information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes. The periodicity of the review for the first cycle being four years, most documents are dated after 1 January 2004. In the absence of recent information, the latest available reports and documents have been taken into consideration, unless they are outdated. Since this report only compiles information contained in official United Nations documents, lack of information or focus on specific issues may be due to non-ratification of a treaty and/or to a low level of interaction or cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.

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I. BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

A.	Scope	of i	international	obligations ¹
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Date of ratification, accession or succession	Declarations /reservations	Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies
27 Oct 1977	None	Individual complaints (art. 14): No
9 May 1990	None	
9 May 1990	None	Inter-State complaints (art. 41): No
8 Jan 1992	None	
18 Feb 1993	None	Inter-State complaints (art. 21): No Individual complaints (art. 22): Yes Inquiry procedure (art. 20): Yes
19 Oct 1990	None	
6 Nov 2007	None	
24 June 2008	Binding declaration under art. 3: 18 years	
	accession or succession 27 Oct 1977 9 May 1990 9 May 1990 8 Jan 1992 18 Feb 1993 19 Oct 1990 6 Nov 2007	accession or succession /reservations 27 Oct 1977 None 9 May 1990 None 9 May 1990 None 9 May 1990 None 19 May 1990 None 18 Feb 1993 None 19 Oct 1990 None 6 Nov 2007 None 24 June 2008 Binding declaration

Core treaties to which Burundi is not a party: ICCPR-OP1, ICCPR-OP2, OP-CEDAW (signature, 2001), OP-CAT, ICRMW, CPD (signature, 2007), CPD-OP (signature, 2007), and CED (signature, 2007).

Other main relevant international instruments	Ratification, accession or succession
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	Yes
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court	Yes
Palermo Protocol ³	No
Refugees and stateless persons ⁴	Yes, except 1954 and 1961 Conventions on statelessness
Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocols thereto ⁵	Yes, except Additional Protocol III
ILO fundamental conventions ⁶	Yes
UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education	No

1. Burundi was encouraged to ratify OP-CEDAW, ICRMW, CPD and CED by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)⁷; OP-CAT by the Committee against Torture (CAT);⁸ and OP-CRC-AC by the Committee and the Rights of the Child (CRC) (which it did in June 2008).⁹

B. Constitutional and legislative framework

2. Following her visit to Burundi in May 2007, the High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that the adoption of a new Constitution in 2005 and the elections held the same year had marked a turning-point, which had led to the establishment of a more inclusive and open political space.¹⁰

3. In 2006, CAT recommended that Burundi clarify the status of the Convention against Torture in domestic law, to enable persons claiming to have been subjected to torture to invoke it before judicial and administrative authorities.¹¹ In 2008, CEDAW welcomed the incorporation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women into the Constitution.¹²

C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure

4. The United Nations Integrated Management Team in Burundi (UNIMT) noted that the Government discussed in June 2008 the draft law establishing a national independent human rights commission.¹³ For the independent expert on the human rights situation in Burundi (thereafter the independent expert), it remains to be seen whether that law will provide a strong mandate according to the Paris principles.¹⁴ He called for the approval of the draft law and its presentation to the Parliament without delay.¹⁵ The United Nations Peace Building Commission made similar recommendations in 2008.¹⁶

5. While welcoming the adoption of a National Gender Policy in 2003, CEDAW recommended that Burundi put in place the planned monitoring mechanisms and provide them with adequate human and financial resources.¹⁷

D. Policy measures

6. UNIMT indicated that the Government did not adopt yet a national human rights plan of action but developed sectoral plans, for example on justice and on orphans and vulnerable children.¹⁸

II. PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE GROUND

A. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

Treaty body ¹⁹	Latest report submitted and considered	Latest concluding observations	Follow-up response	Reporting status
CERD	1997	August 1997		Eleventh to fifteenth reports overdue from 1998 to 2006 respectively
CESCR				Initial report overdue since 1992
HR Committee	1994	July 1994		Second to fourth reports overdue from 1996 to 2006 respectively
CEDAW	2006	January 2008		Fifth and sixth reports due in 2013
CAT	2005	November 2006	Overdue since Nov 2007	Second report due in 2008
CRC	1998	September 2000		Second to fourth reports overdue from 1997 to 2007 respectively, received in 2008
OP-CRC- SC OP-CRC-AC				Initial report due in 2009 Initial report due in 2010

1. Cooperation with treaty bodies

2. Cooperation with special procedures

Standing invitation issued	No
Latest visits or mission reports	The independent expert on the human rights situation in Burundi has undertaken 10 visits since 2004. ²⁰ Latest visits: 29 May-10 June 2006, ²¹ 7- 14 October 2006 and 14-27 January 2007, ²² 20-26 May 2007, ²³ 2-8 December 2007 and 29 June-12 July 2008. ²⁴ Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons (6-11 February 2000); ²⁵ independent expert on human rights and extreme poverty (1999). ²⁶
Visits agreed upon in principle	None

Visits requested and not yet agreed upon	None
Facilitation/cooperation during missions	The independent expert on the human rights situation in Burundi thanked the government for its cooperation during his visits ²⁷ .
Follow-up to visits	
Responses to letters of allegations and urgent appeals	17 communications were sent between 1 July 2004 and 30 June 2008. In addition to communications sent for particular groups, 55 individuals, including 11 women, were covered by these communications. Between 1 July 2004 and 31 June 2008, Burundi replied to no communication.
<i>Responses to questionnaires on thematic issues</i> ²⁸	Burundi responded to none of the 12 questionnaires sent by mandate holders ²⁹ between 1 July 2004 and 30 June 2008, within the deadlines.

3. Cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

7. The OHCHR Burundi office was established in 1995 and was integrated in 2007 in the human rights component of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) which, inter alia, supports efforts to combat impunity, to prepare reports to treaty bodies, to strengthen the justice system, to establish a human rights institution and transitional justice mechanisms, to promote women and children's rights, to combat gender based violence and to provide human rights training.³⁰ It also assists the Government in setting up a national human rights plan of action.³¹

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

1. Equality and non-discrimination

8. According to the independent expert, women are amongst the most affected by the conflict and growing poverty, and are disadvantaged due to lack of material means, ignorance of their rights and traditional obstacles in rural areas.³²

9. UNIMT stressed that negative cultural practices serve to perpetuate women's subordination in the family and society.³³ CEDAW urged Burundi to take measures to eliminate discriminatory practices and stereotypes and invited it to increase its efforts to implement education and awareness-raising programmes.³⁴

10. The Code of the Person and Family contains many discriminatory rules, as indicated by UNIMT.³⁵ CEDAW recommended the adoption of a uniform family code ensuring equality with regard to inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts.³⁶ The independent expert added that discussions on the draft family and inheritance law have been ongoing for more than eight years and that the Government should submit it to the Parliament as soon as possible.³⁷

11. CEDAW was concerned that a Burundian woman married to a foreigner cannot transmit her nationality to her husband or children on the same basis as a Burundian man married to a foreigner.³⁸

12. In 2000, CRC was deeply concerned at gross violations of the right to be protected from discrimination in Burundi, and noted that discrimination takes different forms, including by ethnic origin, gender, geographical origin (within the country) and social status. It noted that killings and other acts committed in the armed conflict, and which have affected children, have frequently been perpetrated on the basis of ethnic origin.³⁹

13. The High Commissioner for Human rights stated that the authorities should work to eliminate discriminatory practices against the Batwa, including bondage.⁴⁰ The independent expert stressed that this community is discriminated against in all areas of life.⁴¹

2. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

14. UNIMT mentioned that death penalty is applicable, although a moratorium was decided. 42

15. The independent expert and UNIMT noted that there was an improvement concerning the right to life over past years,⁴³ in particular since the September 2006 ceasefire agreement between the Government and the Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple Hutu - Forces nationales pour la libération (Palipehutu-FNL).⁴⁴ However, violations remain relatively common, and when hostilities resumed in April-May 2008, violations of the right to life and physical integrity considerably increased.⁴⁵ UNIMT added that the National Burundian Police (PNB) is involved in many more cases than the National Defence Force (FDN) and the National Intelligence Service (SNR).⁴⁶ The independent expert noted in 2008 that several cases of violations were committed by law enforcement agencies as well as the rebel movement.⁴⁷ For the Secretary-General, the human rights situation in the country remains a source of deep concern.⁴⁸

16. In particular, the Secretary-General noted in 2008 a significant number of politically motivated human rights violations and some targeted assassinations.⁴⁹ Such cases were mentioned by UNIMT.⁵⁰ The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and CAT referred to reported murders of people suspected of supporting FNL.⁵¹

17. CAT was deeply concerned at the reported high number of forced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and incommunicado detentions, the main perpetrators of which were allegedly officials of the SNR.⁵² Concerned at reports of arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment, the independent expert called for respect of international human rights and humanitarian law.⁵³ He noted that arbitrary arrests include cases of prolonged stay in police custody, detention in illegal places and lengthy pre-trial detention. Cases include detention for minor charges on instruction from administrative authorities, mostly commune administrators and chiefs of zones and collines.⁵⁴

18. The independent expert noted a lack of institutional will to shed light on the forced disappearance and execution of 30 persons in the province of Muyinga, accused of being members of FNL.⁵⁵ He was also very concerned about the lack of interest of the Government regarding the Gatumba massacre, perpetrated in August 2004.⁵⁶ He urged Burundi to conclude the investigation and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice,⁵⁷ a recommendation also made by CAT.⁵⁸ The High Commissioner for Human Rights regretted the lack of political will to make public the findings of high-profile investigations in these two cases.⁵⁹ The Secretary-General, while welcoming the authorities' renewed commitment to fight impunity, urged the Government to make public the report on the Gatumba massacre and step up efforts to bring to justice those accused in the Muyinga massacre.⁶⁰ UNIMT noted that the Muyinga, Gatumba and Kinama (2006) massacres did not lead to any court decisions so far.⁶¹

19. No reply was received by the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances from Burundi regarding 53 outstanding cases, 31 of which allegedly concern Hutus arrested by members of the security forces. The majority of cases occurred in November-December 1991, and the remaining between 1995 and 1997.⁶²

20. While welcoming the planned revision of the Criminal Code, CAT was concerned at the lack, in the existing Code, of provisions containing an explicit definition of torture and criminalizing torture. Burundi should ensure that any statement made as a result of torture may not be directly or indirectly invoked as evidence in proceedings.⁶³

21. In 2006, CAT was alarmed at reports, which were not challenged by the delegation, that torture is widespread in Burundi.⁶⁴ In 2006 and 2007, the independent expert raised similar concerns.⁶⁵ He noticed a slight improvement during the second half of 2007, which might be the result of intensive advocacy and training sessions organized by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and BINUB. However, during the first half of 2008, allegations of ill-treatment committed by the security forces and the combatants of Palipehutu-FNL remained a great concern.⁶⁶ CAT was concerned at the absence of impartial inquiries to establish the individual responsibility of perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment, a situation that fostered a general climate of impunity.⁶⁷

22. In 2006, CAT was alarmed at reports of large-scale sexual violence against women and children by State officials and members of armed groups, and at the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war, which constitutes a crime against humanity.⁶⁸ In 2004, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture raised similar concerns.⁶⁹ Parmi les femmes les plus vulnérables figureraient notamment les femmes non accompagnées, les mères célibataires, les déplacées de guerre à l'intérieur du pays, les handicapées et les petites filles seules.⁷⁰

23. UNIMT noted in 2008 that sexual violence against women and children, mainly girls, tends to be pandemic, with an increase in cases noticed over the past five years. A large majority of cases do not involve State agents but individuals, who belong to the victims' family, are acquaintances or are persons living close to them.⁷¹

24. The independent expert urged Burundi to take measures to deal with sexual violence, and believed that a visit by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women was highly desirable.⁷² He stressed that this phenomenon will not be ended until the criminal justice system is reformed and laws are in line with international human rights standards; current laws have contributed to impunity for rape.⁷³ CEDAW, CAT, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture also expressed concern about the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of sexual violence.⁷⁴ Adequate compensation⁷⁵ and necessary support⁷⁶ should be provided to the victims.

25. CAT and CEDAW were concerned at the extrajudicial or amicable settlement of rape cases, including by the administrative authorities, when emphasis is placed on practices such as marriage between rapist and victim.⁷⁷ Seriously concerned about sexual violence and the scale of domestic violence, which is not prohibited in law, CEDAW urged Burundi to adopt a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women, and to enact legislation on domestic violence and all forms of gender-based violence.⁷⁸ According to CAT, the Criminal Code should include a provision criminalizing acts of violence, including domestic violence and sexual violence, especially rape.⁷⁹

26. In 2006, the independent expert noted that the situation of children remains extremely worrying.⁸⁰ Violations particularly affect children victims of war, children living and/or working in the street, child soldiers, minors in prison and AIDS orphans.⁸¹ Specific legislation guaranteeing child rights is needed.⁸²

27. UNIMT indicated that between 2004 and 2006, 3,013 child soldiers recruited by the signatory armed forces or groups were demobilized and reintegrated into families. In 2007, 220 additional children were separated from the alleged Palipehutu-FNL dissidents. The Government is ready to demobilize any child, who may still be in the ranks of the Palipehutu-FNL, although there is no available list or estimates.⁸³

28. In 2007, the Secretary General indicated that the PNB, the FDN and the SNR continued to be the main perpetrators of child rights violations such as torture, physical abuse, arbitrary arrest and illegal detention. A significant increase in violations by members of national security forces and of Palipehutu-FNL was observed. Reports of ongoing child recruitment by FNL were submitted.⁸⁴ The Secretary-General requested that the recruitment of children by armed groups such as Palipehutu-FNL cease immediately without precondition, that all children still associated with armed groups be released, regardless of progress made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, and that relevant parties proceed with the immediate and full release of all affected children.⁸⁵

29. CAT was concerned at the length of police custody, which could last 14 days. It recommended amending the Code of Criminal Procedure to guarantee the right of persons held in police custody to habeas corpus, their right to inform a close relation and their right to consult a lawyer and physician of their choice or an independent physician during the first hours in police custody, as well as access to legal aid for the most disadvantaged persons. Burundi should bring the practice of pre-trial detention into conformity with international standards and should ensure that trials take place within a reasonable time.⁸⁶ The independent expert noted that the revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure started in March 2007.⁸⁷

30. The appalling detention conditions, which amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment, were a matter of deep concern for CAT.⁸⁸ The independent expert noted that prisons remain overcrowded, and that the system is faced with serious challenges in terms of lack of capacity and equipment.⁸⁹ CAT recommended that Burundi adopt practices in conformity with the United Nations Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and take immediate steps to reduce overcrowding in prisons.⁹⁰

31. CAT was deeply concerned about widespread sexual violence against women and children in detention.⁹¹ Burundi should ensure that minors and women are segregated from adults and men respectively, and that those in pre-trial detention are segregated from convicted prisoners.⁹² CEDAW, the independent expert, the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture and CRC expressed concern in this regard.⁹³

32. CAT recommended that Burundi urgently bring all places of detention under judicial control, consider establishing a national system to monitor all places of detention, and facilitate access of NGOs to places of detention,⁹⁴ while the independent expert called for unhindered access of human rights observers to all detention facilities.⁹⁵

33. The Secretary-General, UNIMT, CAT and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture shared their concerns about the absence of a juvenile justice system.⁹⁶ CAT recommended that Burundi raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility (currently 13 years), and guarantee the proper functioning of a juvenile justice system in conformity with the United Nations standards.⁹⁷ The Special Rapporteur on the question of torture and UNIMT noted that about 400 children are detained in jails.⁹⁸ More than 75 per cent of them are reportedly held in pretrial detention for months, or even for years.⁹⁹ According to UNIMT, a few hundreds more are kept in police cells.¹⁰⁰

34. CEDAW was concerned about the absence of effective measures to combat trafficking in women for the purposes of prostitution, and that the draft revised Penal Code establishes that prostitution is an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of one to six months and a fine of 5,000 to 20,000 francs.¹⁰¹

35. In 2000, CRC recommended the adoption of appropriate measures to end corporal punishment. 102

3. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

36. UNIMT noted that a main issue is to deal with crimes from the past, more precisely crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The Government accepted to establish transitional justice mechanisms, namely a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) and a Special Tribunal (ST),¹⁰³ as recommended by the Security Council in its resolution 1606 (2005) and by CAT.¹⁰⁴

37. In May 2007 the High Commissioner for Human Rights praised the unambiguous consensus which had emerged in favour of the principle of the non-applicability of the amnesty to crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.¹⁰⁵

38. In November 2007, the Government and the United Nations signed a framework agreement on the establishment of the Tripartite Steering Committee for National Consultations on Transitional Justice Mechanisms. After some delay, the project was signed on 18 June 2008.¹⁰⁶ Difficulties faced by the Steering Committee were reported by the Secretary–General.¹⁰⁷ The independent expert learnt that the Steering committee had been faced with the problem of lack of funds and logistics and did not work properly because of lack of respect of the November 2007 agreement. Some representatives were reportedly under pressure from the Government to focus the work of the steering committee on national reconciliation of the populations rather than on the TRC and the ST.¹⁰⁸

39. CEDAW recalled that women should be involved in the truth and reconciliation process on an equal footing with men, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).¹⁰⁹

40. The independent expert and the Peace Building Commission recommended that Burundi bring all perpetrators of human rights violations to justice.¹¹⁰ The protection of victims and witnesses against retaliation should also be a priority.¹¹¹

41. CAT was concerned at the judiciary's de facto dependence on the executive,¹¹² and that State prosecutors are free to decide not to prosecute perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment involving law enforcement officers or even to order an inquiry.¹¹³

42. The independent expert stressed that the administration of justice needs to be reformed, and that the justice system is still weak owing to lack of equipment, poor training of staff, interference by politicians and corruption.¹¹⁴

4. Freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and right to participate in public and political life

43. The independent expert indicated that progress made towards the normalization of the political climate has been eroded by the rising intolerance of the Government and ruling party towards the opposition, as illustrated by the constant harassment by security forces of political opponents and critics of the Government, and in some cases arrests of political opponents.¹¹⁵

44. Freedom of expression and assembly are a great concern for opposition parties, as noted by the independent expert. Only the ruling party can reportedly organize meetings without authorization. The Government seems determined to muzzle any political party that may challenge the ruling party during the coming elections in 2010. The independent expert urged the Government to allow all political parties to carry out their political activities without any undue restrictions, and to allow their registration in compliance with the Constitution.¹¹⁶

45. The independent expert also noted that a culture of free flow of information has been virtually absent under each succeeding government. Following a period of intense conflict, during which a number of journalists were arrested, beaten up and imprisoned, the media is now free to report on public interest matters.¹¹⁷ In February 2008, there were several cases of intimidation against journalists, UNIMT reported.¹¹⁸

46. CAT noted with concern allegations of reprisals, serious acts of intimidation and threats against human rights defenders.¹¹⁹ In 2006, a number of communications were sent to Burundi by the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in this regard.¹²⁰ In 2006 the Special Representative underlined that the work of human rights defenders was difficult and risky. She regretted not receiving information about the implementation of the Declaration.¹²¹

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

47. UNIMT indicated that working conditions remain precarious in Burundi. In May 2007, an increase by 34 per cent of all civil servants' salary was announced but not implemented, which gave rise to several strikes organised by various unions.¹²²

48. The independent expert referred to cases where populations were subjected to forced labour by some local administrators and police and military authorities.¹²³ BINUB registered sporadic cases of forced labour committed by either the FDN or the PNB, targeting respectively the local population and detainees.¹²⁴

49. In June 2008, a one-week-long campaign on the worst forms of child labour was organized by the Government with the support of UNICEF.¹²⁵

50. CEDAW noted with concern the persistence of inequalities in the labour market, the high unemployment rate and the lack of secure employment for women and their concentration in the informal sector.¹²⁶

6. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living

51. UNIMT indicated that about 70 per cent of the population live below poverty line. Access to drinking water and other commodities is not guaranteed for the large majority.¹²⁷ A UN-HABITAT report noted that, in 2001, 65.3 per cent of the urban population was living in slums.¹²⁸ CEDAW recommended that Burundi elaborate poverty-reduction strategies integrating a gender perspective and taking account of the needs of older women.¹²⁹

52. Food security is a perennial problem, according to the independent expert.¹³⁰ UNIMT added that this may cause potential social instability.¹³¹

53. The independent expert noted major concerns in the area of health care: Limited access to services, poor quality of service delivery, and the Government's reduced capacities for

monitoring and early warning. Response to epidemic cycles of malaria, cholera and meningitis depends heavily on resources of United Nations agencies and NGOs.¹³² In 2006, the Government started a programme to provide free health care for expectant mothers and children under five years of age.¹³³ In 2008 however, hospitals and health centres were waiting for the allowance from the Government.¹³⁴

54. CEDAW remained concerned about the low level of access for women to adequate health-care services, and the high maternal mortality rate.¹³⁵ According to WHO, the maternal mortality ratio exceed the average ratio in the African region,¹³⁶ and in 2005, 34 per cent of births given were attended by skilled health personnel.¹³⁷ Burundi should continue its efforts to improve the health infrastructure; integrate a gender perspective into all health sector reforms; and improve the availability of sexual and reproductive health services.¹³⁸

55. While congratulating Burundi for its efforts, CEDAW was alarmed at the increased HIV/AIDS infection rate among women, which is one of the major causes of mortality.¹³⁹ Sex education focusing on sexually transmitted diseases should be widely promoted, and HIV/AIDS prevention policies implemented.¹⁴⁰ According to WHO, the implementation of a 2004 action plan for universal access to antiretroviral therapy yielded positive outcomes.¹⁴¹

56. There are cases of patients forcibly kept in hospitals because they cannot pay their medical fees, as reported by UNIMT.¹⁴² In 2006, the Special Rapporteur on the right to health and the Special Rapporteur on the right to education sent a communication regarding one such case.¹⁴³

57. CRC requested Burundi to review the situation of children with disabilities, in relation to health care, education services and employment opportunities and to establish a programme of action.¹⁴⁴

7. Right to education and to participate in the cultural life of the community

58. The independent expert noted that the primary education sector faces important problems, mostly related to insufficient or poorly maintained infrastructure and acute shortages of teachers.¹⁴⁵ He commended the Government for putting in place a programme of free primary education,¹⁴⁶ as did CEDAW.¹⁴⁷ UNIMT stressed, however, that many people cannot afford secondary education for their children.¹⁴⁸

59. According to UNIMT, measures were adopted to almost reach net enrolment parity between boys and girls in primary education. However, in secondary and higher education, significant disparities remain,¹⁴⁹ as also stressed by CEDAW.¹⁵⁰

8. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

60. UNIMT indicated that in addition to hosting several refugee camps, Burundi is facing a massive return of Burundian refugees. In 2008, in partnership with the Government Project for the Reintegration of War-Affected Persons, UNICEF and UNHCR started a joint programme to assist these persons with their reintegration.¹⁵¹

61. The independent expert stressed that long-standing issues relating to land property, land scarcity, and the lack of economic alternatives to agricultural activities are important bottlenecks in the economic reinsertion of returning refugees.¹⁵² This remains a cause of rising conflict, as noted in a UNHCR report.¹⁵³ The launch of the National Commission on Land and Other Properties in 2006 aims to solve problems faced by returnees in recovering their property,¹⁵⁴

although UNIMT raised concern about the backlog of pending cases.¹⁵⁵ The Peace Building Commission recommended the establishment of a framework for dialogue at the national and local levels to facilitate consultation on land reform.¹⁵⁶

62. In 2007, a law on asylum was adopted with the support of UNHCR, as indicated by UNIMT. However its promulgation is still pending and further arrangements need to be found.¹⁵⁷ Burundi is committed to resolve statelessness. The new law on asylum refers to statelessness, but does not deal specifically with this issue. There is still no mechanism to gather information on stateless persons.¹⁵⁸

63. CAT remained concerned that, in June 2005, some 8,000 Rwandan asylum-seekers were returned to their country. It recommended measures to prohibit the expulsion, return or extradition of persons to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that they would be in danger of being subjected to torture.¹⁵⁹

9. Internally displaced persons

64. According to the independent expert, the return flow of displaced persons has been continuous since early 2004.¹⁶⁰ Most still live in sites in the central and northern provinces, where their willingness to return home is still conditioned by concerns relating to security, stability and inter-ethnic relationships in their zones of origin.¹⁶¹ Though temporary displacement of populations due to the armed conflict decreased, several incidents of residents being temporarily displaced were reported.¹⁶² UNIMT indicated that in April-May 2008, new forced displacements were registered due to combat in northern provinces and around Bujumbura.¹⁶³

III. ACHIEVEMENTS, BEST PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

65. CAT welcomed the 2006 ceasefire.¹⁶⁴ It welcomed the establishment of the Ministry of Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender, the Government Commission on Human Rights and the Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights and the Prevention of Genocide.¹⁶⁵

66. UNIMT noted that despite the long period of conflict and widespread poverty, Burundi endeavours to implement international human rights standards. Still, much needs to be done.¹⁶⁶

IV. KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES, INITIATIVES AND COMMITMENTS

67. In 2006, CAT requested Burundi to provide, within one year, information on measures taken in response to its recommendations related to: police custody; reported widespread torture; conditions of detention; the reported murder of persons suspected of being supporters of FNL; the absence of impartial inquiries of acts of torture and ill- treatment; compensation to victims of torture; and allegations of reprisal, serious acts of intimidation and threats against human rights defenders.¹⁶⁷ A response is overdue since 2007.

68. Recommendations of UNIMT relate to legal reform (Burundi should adopt the draft revised criminal and criminal procedure codes; a new law on inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts; a Children's Act; and amend the Code of the Person and Family); institutions (Burundi should adopt the law on the Independent National Human Rights Commission; ensure better coordination on sexual gender based violence, orphans and vulnerable children, and justice; reinforce the National Commission on Land and Other Properties); human rights policies (Burundi should adopt a national human rights plan of action; and a land national policy and reform); transitional justice (Burundi should organize national consultations to establish transitional justice mechanisms; ensure special protection measures for children); sexual violence (Burundi should adopt an integrated national

policy and plan of action), child soldiers (Burundi should ensure close follow up, monitoring and support to reintegrated child soldiers; ensure that demobilization centres and implementing partners respect international standards relating to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and child protection rules and that relevant staff is appropriately trained and skilled).¹⁶⁸

V. CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

69. CEDAW encouraged Burundi to seek technical support from the United Nations Population Fund with regard to women's access to health care and health-related services¹⁶⁹. Burundi was recommended to seek technical assistance from WHO and UNAIDS on HIV/AIDS prevention.¹⁷⁰

70. CEDAW encouraged Burundi to seek support from the international community and donors with regard to equal access for girls and women to education.¹⁷¹ UNIMT indicated that UNESCO runs a programme for the education of street children, and that UNICEF rehabilitated, equipped, and built new classrooms.¹⁷²

71. UNODC participated in the development of programmes as part of the "Human Rights and Justice Joint Programme" in Burundi.¹⁷³

Notes

 $^{^{2}}$ The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

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ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or
	Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child
	pornography
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and
	Members of Their Families
CPD	Convention on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CPD	Optional Protocol to Convention on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities
CED	Convention on the Protection of Persons from Enforced Disappearance
col to Provent Supr	press and Punish Trafficking in Parsons Especially Woman and Children supplementing

³ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

⁵ Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Convention); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Convention); Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Convention); Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Convention); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of

¹ Unless indicated otherwise, the status of ratifications of instruments listed in the table may be found in *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General: Status as at 31 December 2006* (ST/LEG/SER.E.25), supplemented by the official website of the United Nations Treaty Collection database, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, http://untreaty.un.org/.

⁴ 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, 1954 Convention relating to the status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.

⁶ International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour; Convention No.105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour, Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize; Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organize and to Bargain Collectively; Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value; Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation; Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, paras. 8, 41 and 44.

⁸ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 29.

⁹ CRC/C/15/Add.133, para. 72.

¹⁰ High Commissioner for Human Rights, press statement, 23 May 2007. On the adoption of the new Constitution, see also reports of the independent expert on the human rights situation in Burundi (A/60/354, para. 5 and E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 78).

¹¹ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 8.

¹² CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para 6.

¹³ United Nations Integrated Management Team consisting of UN agencies such as BINUB, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNESCO and OHCHR having country offices in Burundi. UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 8.

¹⁴ A/HRC/9/14, para. 43. Principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris principles), General Assembly resolution 48/134.

¹⁵ A/HRC/9/14, para. 43.

¹⁶ Recommendations of the biannual review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi, PBC/2/BDI/9, 24 June 2008, para. 23.

¹⁷ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, paras. 21-22.

¹⁸ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 11.

¹⁹ The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

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CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HR Committee	Human Rights Committee
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CAT	Committee against Torture
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CMW	Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families

²⁰ A/62/213, para. 2. For the mandate of the independent expert, see Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/82, para. 23.

²¹ A/61/360.

- ²² A/HRC/4/5.
- ²³ A/62/213.
- ²⁴ A/HRC/9/14.

²⁵ E/CN.4/2001/5/Add.1.

²⁶ E/CN.4/2000/52.

²⁷ A/HRC/9/14, para. 2 and A/62/213, para. 3.

²⁸ The questionnaires included in this section are those which have been reflected in an official report by a special

procedure mandate-holder. ²⁹ See (a) report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education (A/HRC/4/29), questionnaire on the right to education of persons with disabilities sent in 2006; (b) report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (A/HRC/4/24), questionnaire on the impact of certain laws and administrative measures on migrants sent in 2006; (c) report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (A/HRC/4/23), questionnaire on issues related to forced marriages and trafficking in persons sent in 2006; (d) report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders (E/CN.4/2006/95 and Add.5), questionnaire on the implementation of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms sent in June 2005; (e) report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (A/HRC/6/15), questionnaire on the human rights of indigenous people sent in August 2007; (f) report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children (E/CN.4/2006/62) and the Special

Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (E/CN.4/2006/67), joint questionnaire on the relationship between trafficking and the sent in July 2005; (g) report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education (E/CN.4/2006/45), questionnaire on the right to education for girls sent in 2005; (h) report of the Working Group on mercenaries (A/61/341), questionnaire concerning its mandate and activities sent in November 2005; (i) report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (A/HRC/4/31), questionnaire on the sale of children's organs sent on July 2006; (j) report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (E/CN.4/2005/78), questionnaire on child pornography on the Internet sent in July 2004; (k) report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (A/HRC/7/8), questionnaire on assistance and rehabilitation programmes for child victims of sexual exploitation sent in July 2007; (1) report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises (A/HRC/4/35/Add.3), questionnaire on human rights policies and management practices. ³⁰ Security Council resolution 1719 (2006) and OHCHR 2007 report on activities and results; High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan 2008-2009; S/2008/330, paras. 76-77. See also UNICEF, Short-duration country programme document, E/ICEF/2007/P/L.4, 2 April 2007, para 2. ³¹ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 12. 32 A/60/354 , para. 32. ³³ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 14. ³⁴ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 18. ³⁵ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, p. 3 ³⁶ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 14. ³⁷ A/HRC/9/14, para. 57. See also UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, p. 1. ³⁸ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 29. ³⁹ CRC/C/15/Add.133, para. 26. ⁴⁰ High Commissioner for Human Rights, press statement, 23 May 2007. ⁴¹A/HRC/4/5, para. 63. See also UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 16. ⁴² UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 17. ⁴³ A/62/213, para. 22; UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 17. ⁴⁴A/62/213, para. 22. ⁴⁵ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 17. ⁴⁶Idem. ⁴⁷ A/HRC/9/14, para. 44. ⁴⁸ S/2008/330, para. 61. ⁴⁹Idem. ⁵⁰ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 17. ⁵¹A/HRC/4/20/Add.1, pp. 52-53; CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 20. ⁵² CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 10. ⁵³ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 85. ⁵⁴A/62/213, para. 29; A/HRC/4/5, para. 26; A/61/360 para 49 ⁵⁵A/HRC/4/5, paras. 57-62; see also A/62/213, para. 40. On this case, see also A/HRC/9/14, paras. 61-67, and S/2008/330, para 62. ⁵⁶ A/HRC/9/14, paras. 58-60; E/CN.4/2006/10, para. 23. ⁵⁷A/61/360 para. 113. See also A/HRC/4/5, para. 82 and A/62/213, para. 60. ⁵⁸ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 21. ⁵⁹A/62/213, para. 13. See also High Commissioner for Human Rights, press statement, 23 May 2007. ⁶⁰ S/2008/330, para. 93 ⁶¹ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 17. ⁶² E/CN.4/2006/56, paras. 121-126. ⁶³ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, paras. 8 and 24. ⁶⁴ Ibid., para. 10. ⁶⁵ A/61/360, para. 40; A/HRC/4/5, paras. 23 and 25. ⁶⁶ A/HRC/9/14, para. 46. ⁶⁷ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 21. ⁶⁸ Ibid., para. 11. ⁶⁹ E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.1, para. 36. ⁷⁰Idem. ⁷¹ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 21. See also, on the increase of rapes since the beginning of 2008, S/2008/330 para. 63 ; S/2007/686, para. 9. ⁷²A/61/360 para. 114; E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 81.

⁷³ A/HRC/9/14, para. 56. ⁷⁴ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 23; CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 11; Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Special Rapporteur on the question of torture, E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.1, paras. 36-37. ⁷⁵ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 11. ⁷⁶ A/60/354, para. 56. ⁷⁷ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 11; CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 23. ⁷⁸ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, paras. 23 and 24. See also PBC/2/BDI/9, para. 22. ⁷⁹ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 11. ⁸⁰ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 55. ⁸¹ A/60/354, para. 34. ⁸² E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 58. ⁸³ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 19. ⁸⁴ S/2007/686, para. 9. ⁸⁵Ibid., para. 51. ⁸⁶ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 9. ⁸⁷ A/62/213, para. 44. ⁸⁸ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 17. ⁸⁹ A/HRC/9/14, para. 69. ⁹⁰ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 17. ⁹¹ Ibid., para 18. ⁹² Ibid., para 17. 93 CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para 26; A/HRC/4/5, para. 42; A/HRC/7/3/Add.1, para. 26; CRC/C/15/Add.133, paras. 73-74. 94 CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, paras. 10 and 19. ⁹⁵ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 85. ⁹⁶ S/2008/330 para 69; UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 25; CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 13; A/HRC/7/3/Add.1,para 26, page 32. ⁹⁷ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 13. ⁹⁸ A/HRC/7/3/Add.1, para. 26; UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 25. 99 A/HRC/7/3/Add.1, para. 26. ¹⁰⁰ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 25 ¹⁰¹ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 27. ¹⁰² CRC/C/15/Add.133, para. 40. ¹⁰³ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 18. ¹⁰⁴ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 21. ¹⁰⁵ High Commissioner for Human Rights, press statement, 23 May 2007. ¹⁰⁶ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 18. See also S/2008/330, para. 71; and PBC/2/BDI/9, para. 19. ¹⁰⁷ S/2008/330, para. 71. ¹⁰⁸ A/HRC/9/14, para. 37. ¹⁰⁹ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 16. ¹¹⁰ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 87; PBC/2/BDI/9, para. 21. See also A/60/354, para. 56; on violence against women and children, see PBC/2/BDI/9, para. 22. ¹¹¹ PBC/2/BDI/9, para 21. See also CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 21. ¹¹² CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 12. ¹¹³ Ibid., para 22. ¹¹⁴A/HRC/4/5, para. 39 and A/62/213, para. 41. ¹¹⁵ A/61/360, paras. 20 and 23. See also Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, A/HRC/4/27/Add.1, paras. 88-93. ¹¹⁶ A/HRC/9/14, paras. 50-53 and 80. ¹¹⁷A/HRC/4/5, para. 9. ¹¹⁸ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 26. ¹¹⁹ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 25. ¹²⁰ A/HRC/4/27/Add.1, paras. 88-93. ¹²¹ E/CN.4/2006/95/Add.5., paras. 268 -278. ¹²² UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 29. ¹²³ A/HRC/4/5, para. 33; A/62/213, para. 35. ¹²⁴ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 31. ¹²⁵ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 30. ¹²⁶ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 33.

¹²⁷ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 32. ¹²⁸ UN-HABITAT, Global Report on Human Settlements 2007, p. 352. 129 CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 40. ¹³⁰A/HRC/4/5, para. 66. ¹³¹ UNIMT submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 47. ¹³² E/CN.4/2006/109, para 63. ¹³³ A/HRC/4/5, para. 68. ¹³⁴ A/HRC/9/14 para. 74. ¹³⁵ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 35. ¹³⁶ WHO, Statistical Information System, available at www.who.int/whosis/data/Search.jsp?countries=[Location].Members. ¹³⁷Ibid. ¹³⁸ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 36. ¹³⁹ Ibid., para. 37. ¹⁴⁰ Ibid., para 38. ¹⁴¹ WHO Country Cooperation Strategy at a Glance, 2006, available at http://www.who.int/countryfocus/cooperation_strategy/ccsbrief_bdi_en.pdf . ¹⁴² UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 32. ¹⁴³ RA/HRC/7/11/Add.1, para.17. ¹⁴⁴ CRC/C/15/Add.133, para. 53. ¹⁴⁵ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 62. ¹⁴⁶ A/HRC/4/5, para. 67. ¹⁴⁷ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 31. ¹⁴⁸ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 16. ¹⁴⁹Ibid., para. 14. ¹⁵⁰ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 31. ¹⁵¹ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 39. ¹⁵² E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 65. ¹⁵³ UNHCR, Global Appeals 2007, Geneva, 2007, p. 96 ¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 96 ¹⁵⁵ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, paras. 10 and 42 ¹⁵⁶ PBC/2/BDI/9, para. 25. ¹⁵⁷ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 3. ¹⁵⁸ Ibid., para. 43. ¹⁵⁹ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 14. ¹⁶⁰ E/CN.4/2006/109, para 50. See also UNICEF, Short-duration country programme document, E/ICEF/2007/P/L.4, 2 April 2007, para. 6. ¹⁶¹ E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 50. ¹⁶² Ibid., para. 51. ¹⁶³ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 44. ¹⁶⁴ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 3. ¹⁶⁵ Ibid., para. 5. ¹⁶⁶ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 45. ¹⁶⁷ CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 31. ¹⁶⁸ UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, paras. 48-53. ¹⁶⁹ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 36. ¹⁷⁰ Ibid., para. 38; CRC/C/15/Add.133, para. 61. ¹⁷¹ CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4, para. 32. ¹⁷² UNIMT, submission to the UPR on Burundi, para. 35. ¹⁷³ UNODC, submission to the UPR on Burundi, p. 4.
