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Burkina Faso

Compilation of information prepared by 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 outcome of the previous review.¹ It is a compilation of information contained in relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

2. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families recommended that Burkina Faso ratify, as soon as possible, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).²

3. According to the United Nations country team, ILO recommended that Burkina Faso ratify the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).³

4. On 6 October 2021, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Government of Burkina Faso signed an agreement on the opening of a country office that would be responsible for, among other things, observing the human rights situation in the host State and providing assistance to the relevant authorities, civil society organizations and other competent bodies with a view to promoting and protecting human rights.⁴ The first official visit to Burkina Faso by a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights took place on 1 December 2021.⁵

5. On 26 December 2022, the Secretary-General of the United Nations expressed his confidence in the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, who had been ordered by the Government to leave the country. The Secretary-General reiterated that the doctrine of *persona non grata* does not apply to United Nations officials.⁶

6. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) noted some progress that had been made in Burkina Faso. In September 2019, Burkina Faso had ratified the 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and the Additional Protocol thereto.⁷ The country



team also reported that the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) had welcomed the signing, on 12 September 2022, of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Government of Burkina Faso on the transfer and care of children encountered during security operations.⁸

III. National human rights framework

1. Constitutional and legislative framework

7. The members of the Security Council expressed serious concern about the unconstitutional change of Government in Burkina Faso on 30 September 2022.⁹

2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures

8. The Committee against Torture recommended that Burkina Faso continue its efforts to ensure that the members of the National Human Rights Commission are fully independent, from a personal and an institutional standpoint, by providing the Commission with adequate and predictable human and material resources to enable it to fully perform its duties as a national institution and as the national preventive mechanism in an independent, impartial and effective manner, and that Burkina Faso request accreditation for the Commission from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.¹⁰ The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that information on this institution is disseminated among migrant workers.¹¹

9. The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that the national preventive mechanism is provided by law with a sufficient budget of its own and sufficient qualified staff, and that its members are independent.¹²

IV. Promotion and protection of human rights

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

1. Equality and non-discrimination

10. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that persons with albinism continued to be subjected to discrimination, rejection, social marginalization and even verbal and physical abuse because of beliefs, myths and entrenched social and cultural attitudes. There was heightened stigmatization of children with albinism, who were sometimes rejected by their own families. Persons with albinism were also at high risk of developing skin cancer or experiencing vision impairment, faced serious risks associated with exposure to the sun and encountered significant obstacles in obtaining adequate health care. UNICEF indicated that these were all factors that contributed to the children’s dropping out of school, limited social and professional integration, social exclusion and death rate.¹³

2. Right to life, liberty and security of person, and freedom from torture

11. According to the United Nations country team, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF noted that the continued deterioration in the sociopolitical and security situation had caused a significant worsening of the protection environment and the living conditions of the civilian population. In part owing to the level of activity of non-State armed groups, the military operations against these groups, the establishment of “areas of military interest” in several regions of the country and opportunistic crime, there had been a considerable increase in violations of the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to security of person and in the abuse of these rights. Consequently, the number of protection incidents had increased from 817 in the first half of 2022 to 1,293 in the second half of 2022. There had, in particular, been a sharp rise in abductions in 2022. The threat of improvised explosive devices had gradually spread to a

number of regions, with 9 of the country's 13 regions being affected by the end of December 2022.¹⁴

12. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that operations to combat violent extremism had often given rise to allegations of violations of the rights to life and to physical and moral integrity, particularly violations committed against the Fulani community and taking the form of summary and extrajudicial executions, abductions and torture. There had been an increasing number of reports, verified by the United Nations, of cases of extrajudicial executions, including of children, involving the defence and security forces and their civilian auxiliaries, the *Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie*.¹⁵ According to the country team, UNHCR and UNICEF also noted an increase in violations of the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to security of person and in the abuse of these rights after the transitional Government decided in October 2022 to launch a recruitment campaign for 50,000 new members of the *Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie*. There had also been a surge in reprisals by non-State armed groups against internally displaced persons and communities whose members had joined the *Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie*.¹⁶

13. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that children were paying a high price for the security operations. In 2021 and 2022, the United Nations had verified an increasing number of cases where, as a result of indiscriminate shooting and bombardment, children had been murdered or mutilated by the defence and security forces.¹⁷

14. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Population Fund and UNHCR noted that the deteriorating protection situation in Burkina Faso disproportionately affected women and girls, who continued to be subjected to rape, sexual assault, physical abuse, forced marriage and psychological abuse and be denied access to resources, services and opportunities. The United Nations Population Fund and UNHCR also noted an increase in the number of incidents of gender-based violence, which had risen from 3,448 in 2020 to 3,585 in 2021 and then to 6,065 in 2022. Acts of violence against women and girls were committed primarily by persons bearing weapons. Intimate partners and other community members were also perpetrators of such acts.¹⁸ The Secretary-General of the United Nations strongly condemned the abduction of some 50 women and girls on 12 and 13 January 2023, in the surroundings of Arbinda, in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, reportedly by unidentified armed groups.¹⁹

15. The Committee against Torture indicated that Burkina Faso should ensure that the competent authorities routinely launch an investigation whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture has been committed and see to it that suspects are duly brought to justice and, if they are found guilty, receive sentences commensurate with the seriousness of their acts.²⁰ The Committee urged Burkina Faso to: (a) stop delegating the sovereign prerogatives that are exclusively incumbent upon it, or otherwise encouraging or supporting non-State armed groups to carry out missions to maintain security;²¹ (b) establish a mechanism to identify and monitor the actions of the *Koglweogo*; and (c) strengthen the presence and the manpower of the national security and defence forces, as necessary.²²

16. The Committee against Torture urged Burkina Faso to allocate a sufficient budget to the prison reform policy and improve material conditions of detention, ensuring that detainees have access to adequate and sufficient food, adequate health care and decent sanitary conditions; step up its efforts to reduce prison overcrowding, first and foremost by effectively applying existing alternatives to detention, such as reduced sentencing, judicial supervision or community service; ensure that persons in pretrial detention are separated from convicted persons and that both categories are treated in a manner that is in accordance with their legal status; and strengthen judicial supervision of conditions of detention.²³ The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture has made detailed recommendations that are similar to these.²⁴

3. Human rights and counter-terrorism

17. According to the Committee against Torture, Burkina Faso should ensure that its counter-terrorism measures and legislation are in conformity with the prohibitions against torture and ill-treatment set out in the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and that all allegations of torture and ill-treatment of

persons accused of involvement in terrorist acts are promptly, impartially and effectively investigated and that the perpetrators are prosecuted and duly punished.²⁵

18. According to the United Nations country team, UNODC recommended that Burkina Faso develop the necessary policies and strategies for an effective mechanism for the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with terrorist groups to be put into place, with the effective participation of non-governmental organizations able to support gender mainstreaming.²⁶

19. The Committee against Torture recommended that Burkina Faso expedite trials in terrorism cases, and to do so, provide the counter-terrorism unit with the human, material and financial resources necessary to investigate and prosecute cases within a reasonable time.²⁷

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

20. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that, because of the deteriorating security situation, seven courts had suspended their activities or had been closed or relocated, depriving the public, including children in contact with the law in the affected localities, of their right of access to justice. UNICEF stressed that there were significant delays in the processing of cases, despite the establishment in 2017 of a special judicial unit responsible for the prosecution of terrorist acts. UNICEF indicated that, even though automated processing had been introduced for certain routine measures, the risk of the prolonged processing of criminal cases, and consequently the extension of some periods of pretrial detention, remained a major concern.²⁸

21. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF indicated that the abolition of juvenile courts in 2019 raised concerns that the juvenile justice system could become dysfunctional and that violations of the rules and standards regarding the detention of children, particularly those relating to the separation of children and adults, could arise as a result. UNICEF highlighted its concerns about the children encountered during security operations who continued to be held in a high-security prison without having been brought to trial.²⁹

22. According to the United Nations country team, OHCHR noted that, under article 125 of the Constitution, the judiciary was the “custodian of individual and collective freedoms”. However, the effectiveness of this judicial protection was hampered by the lack of a judicial culture, citizens’ ignorance of their rights, the exorbitant legal costs, the shortage of courts and the small number of judicial officials and public defenders. On top of this, there was corruption and interference by the executive branch in certain judicial decisions, in particular through the intimidation of judges. It was also difficult to enforce court decisions in certain sensitive cases involving national security, wealthy or influential individuals and representatives of the Government. According to the country team, OHCHR noted a reluctance on the part of defence lawyers to represent people facing criminal charges related to terrorism, both because of the lack of funds to pay for an ex officio defence counsel and because of the stigma involved.³⁰

23. According to the United Nations country team, OHCHR did however note that, if there were deficiencies in domestic courts, citizens could, under certain conditions, petition certain recognized international bodies. This was the case with the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States, which citizens could turn to even before approaching national courts. Remedies were also available through the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the Court of Justice of the West African Economic and Monetary Union.³¹

24. The Committee against Torture recommended that Burkina Faso reduce the maximum length of police custody, ensuring that its renewal is limited to duly justified exceptional circumstances and respects the principles of necessity and proportionality, and providing for judicial review of the legality of the detention.³² The Committee also recommended that Burkina Faso provide for effective oversight of the practice of pretrial detention, ensuring that it complies with the provisions establishing its maximum duration and that its use is as short as possible and is exceptional, necessary, and proportionate.³³

25. According to the Committee against Torture, Burkina Faso should ensure that no immunity is granted to intelligence officers who have committed acts of torture or ill-treatment.³⁴

26. Referring to the at least 1,076 victims of violations and abuses documented by OHCHR over the last six months of 2022, with armed groups being responsible for most of these incidents, but the military's operations also taking a growing toll on civilians, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights urged the authorities to listen to the grievances that people had regarding impunity.³⁵

5. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life

27. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR noted that, following the coup of 30 September 2022, the activities of political parties and civil society organizations had been suspended. This measure seemed to be applied in a discriminatory manner. While demonstrations in support of the transitional Government were authorized, demonstrations by political parties or civil society organizations perceived as hostile to it continued to be prohibited.³⁶

28. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR indicated that the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief had been severely hampered since the beginning of the security crisis in 2015. Clerics, religious and lay people and places of worship were frequently the target of attacks by non-State armed groups. UNHCR referred to emblematic cases.³⁷

29. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR expressed concerns about the effective enjoyment of the freedom of the press, citing cases of intimidation and attacks on journalists, the rise in hate speech and community stigma and the restrictions on access to the Internet and certain social media. On 3 December 2022, the Government had ordered Radio France Internationale broadcasts immediately suspended until further notice. On 7 February 2023, the television network France 24 had been put on notice by the High Council for Communication.³⁸ The High Commissioner for Human Rights was deeply troubled by restrictions on media and civic space in Burkina Faso after the suspension of media outlets and expulsion of two foreign correspondents from the country, amid wider curbs on freedom of expression in the country.³⁹

30. According to the United Nations country team, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations asked the Government to respond to allegations by six national trade union confederations of persistent obstacles to the right to organize and trade union freedom, including acts of anti-union discrimination against trade union activists and leaders, the administrative suspension of two trade unions in the transport sector and the ban on the activities of a prison officials' union.⁴⁰

6. Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons

31. According to the United Nations country team, UNODC noted that Burkina Faso was a country of origin, transit and destination for trafficking in persons, including trafficking for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation. The same was true for the smuggling of migrants to European countries.⁴¹

32. According to the United Nations country team, UNODC noted that, despite the efforts made, many challenges remained, including those relating to the inability of the National Watchdog and Monitoring Committee to function effectively; awareness-raising among target groups; the identification of victims of trafficking in persons and the assistance provided to them; and the dismantling of trafficking networks with a view to prosecuting the traffickers before the competent courts. UNODC also noted the insufficient capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, National Solidarity and the Family to implement innovative and effective solutions in the absence of a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons.⁴²

33. According to the United Nations country team, UNODC recommended that Burkina Faso finish preparing its national reference document on combatting trafficking in persons and commit to implementing the necessary reforms, which include, namely, bringing its legal

and regulatory framework on combating trafficking in persons into line with international standards.⁴³

34. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso: (a) develop and implement a new national action plan to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, together with indicators and measurable objectives, providing for the systematic collection of disaggregated data on human smuggling or trafficking; (b) intensify prevention campaigns, particularly in the border areas where most trafficking victims are found, and provide the National Watchdog and Monitoring Committee with adequate financial and human resources to allow it to fulfil its mandate; and (c) strengthen existing legislative and other measures and take new ones to ensure that legal proceedings are taken, by strictly applying its legal framework so that those responsible for smuggling and trafficking are brought to justice and duly punished, with the aim of enforcing the fight against trafficking in persons and making the prosecution of traffickers more effective.⁴⁴

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

35. According to the United Nations country team, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations noted that the labour inspection services had not filed any violation report with the courts and that, according to the annual reports on the activities of these services, the number of fines imposed (that is, where the follow-up was administrative rather than judicial) remained small in comparison to the number of violations identified: there had been 134 fines for 109,867 violations noted in 2019 and 152 fines for 93,001 violations noted in 2020.⁴⁵

8. Right to social security

36. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that migrant workers who have contributed to the social security system are able to transfer their pension benefits to the country of their choice.⁴⁶

9. Right to an adequate standard of living

37. According to the United Nations country team, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs indicated that civilians living in areas besieged by armed groups, particularly in the Nord, Est and Centre-Nord Regions, had increasingly limited access to basic goods and services, farmland, grazing areas and humanitarian assistance.⁴⁷

10. Right to health

38. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF indicated that violations of the right to health and the abuse of this right had taken the form of threats, the abduction and targeted killing of health workers, the looting of drugstores and the destruction of health-related training centres. By 31 December 2022, 619 health facilities in eight regions (or 42 per cent of the facilities in those regions) had been affected by violence and insecurity: 211 were not operating and 408 were operating at a minimum level, leaving over 2 million people unable to exercise their right to health.⁴⁸

39. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR noted that, in addition to the growing scarcity of health centres, the lack of safety on the roads made evacuations difficult and reduced the possibility of referring refugees and internally displaced persons to specialized centres.⁴⁹

40. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that all migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, have access to the health-care system.⁵⁰

41. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR indicated that the country's security situation had resulted in food insecurity, explaining the nationwide increase in the rate of severe and moderate acute malnutrition among internally displaced persons and refugees.⁵¹

42. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Population Fund recommended that Burkina Faso ensure the provision of maternal, sexual and reproductive

health care for women by applying standard methods and implement a strategy to guarantee the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people by fighting female genital mutilation and by reducing maternal mortality related to unsafe abortions.⁵²

11. Right to education

43. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF stressed that the right to education had remained one of the targets of violent extremism since such extremism had appeared in Burkina Faso. The attacks on this right had taken the form of assaults, physical violence and threats against educators, targeted killings, the burning of school facilities and the destruction of teaching and educational materials and had led to the closure of a number of schools at all levels of education. By 31 December 2022, more than a million students were unable to enjoy their right to education owing to the closure of 6,253 schools.⁵³

44. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF indicated that all schools in the country had closed on 16 March 2020 because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, affecting more than 5 million students. That crisis had added to the many pre-existing structural problems, including the low quality of teaching, that placed children's equitable access to education in jeopardy. The lack of school facilities adapted to children with disabilities, combined with the lack of financial resources to enrol them in specialized centres, was a barrier to their schooling.⁵⁴ The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that all children of migrant workers, irrespective of their status, enjoy access to preschool, primary and secondary education on an equal footing with nationals of Burkina Faso, in compliance with article 30 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.⁵⁵

B. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women

45. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Population Fund noted that women continued to be victims of discriminatory practices, gender-based violence and harmful practices. The United Nations Population Fund also noted that, while the prevalence of female genital mutilation had fallen from 75.8 per cent in 2010 to 62.5 per cent in 2016, there was resistance with respect to giving up the practice in some regions.⁵⁶

46. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Population Fund indicated that the persistence of sexual violence (rape and sexual assault) against women and girls infringed their right to decide freely what to do with their bodies, sometimes leading to injury or unwanted pregnancy and resulting in emotional distress and stigmatization. These human rights violations undermined the participation of women and girls in mechanisms to prevent conflicts and restore peace.⁵⁷

47. According to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Population Fund noted that the persistent denial of resources and opportunities infringed the economic rights of women and girls⁵⁸ and increased their vulnerability and exposure to gender-based violence. In 2020, 40 per cent of the land developed by the State had been awarded to women. With regard to the right to employment, the United Nations Population Fund noted that, according to government data, women accounted for only 33.5 per cent of public servants in 2019. According to the country team, ILO recalled that the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations had, in comments published in 2017, emphasized the need to amend section 37 of the Labour Code to ensure that sexual harassment resulting from a hostile working environment was covered in the labour legislation.⁵⁹

2. Children

48. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that the 2019–2021 operational action plan of the national strategy to end child marriage had been adopted and implemented. Despite these efforts, child marriage remained a major problem in Burkina Faso, where there were 2.8 million married children, of whom 548,200 had been married

before the age of 15. UNICEF recommended expediting the adoption of the new Persons and Family Code, repealing all discriminatory provisions against women and raising the minimum age for marriage to 18 for men and women, without exception.⁶⁰ UNESCO made a similar recommendation.⁶¹

49. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict reported that from 2018 to December 2022 there had been an alarming increase in grave violations against children. It formulated the following recommendations for the transitional authorities in Burkina Faso: (a) comply with their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law and take all necessary measures to protect children during military operations, in line with the principle of precaution, and to avoid confrontations in areas where civilians and children are present; (b) provide armed and security forces, including the Special Forces Unit, with adequate training on child protection, including during military operations, and disseminate command orders to prevent grave violations against children; (c) systematically implement the handover protocol for the transfer of children allegedly associated with armed groups to civilian child protection actors, and its action plan, including treating children associated with armed groups primarily as victims and releasing all detained children; (d) ensure that children detained on charges of association with armed groups are treated primarily as victims and are handed over to child protection services for reintegration purposes, that detention is only used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, with alternatives to detention being prioritized, and that children are not detained or prosecuted solely for their association with or membership in any armed group and that any prosecution of children respects internationally recognized standards of juvenile justice; (e) ensure accountability for grave violations against children and bring perpetrators of all grave violations against children to justice; and (f) ensure that adequate and child-friendly programmes are accessible to all survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence.⁶²

50. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF indicated that child labour at gold-panning sites and artisanal quarries had increased as a result of the mining boom. The security crisis and humanitarian emergency had made internally displaced children particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour and to exploitation. The closure of schools due to violent extremism had mainly affected this segment of the population, which faced the risk of never returning to school.⁶³

51. According to the United Nations country team, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations observed with concern in its latest comments on the implementation of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), published in 2022, that the number of cases, prosecutions and convictions relating to trafficking in children remained low when compared with the number of presumed child victims of trafficking. With regard to children in particularly vulnerable situations, the Committee noted that, according to 2020 data from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, an estimated 83,000 children had lost their parents to HIV/AIDS, which was more than in 2015.⁶⁴

3. Persons with disabilities

52. According to the United Nations country team, UNICEF noted that, despite the adoption of a regulatory framework and the establishment of the Multisectoral Council for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its permanent secretariat in 2012 and 2014, respectively, persons with disabilities continued to face discrimination and stigmatization. They still faced obstacles in obtaining basic social welfare services and social and professional integration services.⁶⁵

4. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

53. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR indicated that, as a result of the situation of insecurity, schools, as well as health centres and secondary registration centres, had been closed or destroyed and new ones could not be opened, which reduced refugees' access to these basic social welfare services, particularly in the Sahel Region, where most refugees were living. The heightened insecurity and the ongoing war in Ukraine kept

inflation high and continued to eat away at the purchasing power of the public, including refugees.⁶⁶

54. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR noted that the Government had continued to raise awareness among key regional stakeholders so as to foster inclusion and increase tolerance of refugees.⁶⁷

55. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Burkina Faso ensure that all children born abroad to migrant workers from Burkina Faso are registered at birth and are issued with identity documents by consular services, and that birth registration is made easy and free of charge everywhere and under all circumstances, in accordance with target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals.⁶⁸

56. The Committee on Migrant Workers also recommended that Burkina Faso: (a) raise the awareness of migrant diasporas of the need to contribute to the national development process through their investments, and develop a specific policy to facilitate the transfer of remittances, create conditions conducive to investment and attract investments to productive areas with a view to improving the country's economic situation; and (b) swiftly take measures to facilitate the transfer of remittances by migrant workers in Burkina Faso to their countries of origin, with preferential transfer and reception fees, in accordance with target 10.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and make savings abroad more accessible to migrant workers and members of their families in Burkina Faso.⁶⁹

5. Internally displaced persons

57. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR noted that the number of internally displaced persons had risen sharply: from 47,029 in 2018 to 560,033 in 2019, 1,074,993 in 2020, 1,579,976 in 2021 and 1,882,391 in December 2022. UNHCR also noted that women and children continued to account for the majority of all internally displaced persons. Since the end of 2022, UNHCR has observed a reluctance on the part of local authorities to provide humanitarian actors with figures on internally displaced persons.⁷⁰ According to the country team, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted that, in Burkina Faso, periods of displacement were becoming increasingly long. Furthermore, the needs of internally displaced persons remained very high.⁷¹

6. Stateless persons

58. According to the United Nations country team, UNHCR indicated that the number of people at risk of statelessness was estimated to be over 2 million. UNHCR noted that, in a number of cases, the regions affected by the crisis of insecurity were those with some of the lowest birth registration rates. Because of forced displacement and the weakening of civil registry services, this situation had led in part to an increase in the risk of statelessness in these areas. Attacks by armed groups had caused the destruction of civil registry records, the closure of civil registration centres and the movement of populations to more secure areas, with their civil status and/or identity documents being abandoned or destroyed.⁷²

Notes

¹ A/HRC/39/4, A/HRC/39/4/Add.1 and A/HRC/39/2.

² CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 14.

³ United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of Burkina Faso, p. 13.

⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/10/un-human-rights-office-open-country-office-burkina-faso>.

⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/press-releases/2021/12/un-high-commissioner-human-rights-michelle-bachelet-concludes-her-official> (in French).

⁶ See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1132017>.

⁷ United Nations country team submission, p. 7.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15057.doc.htm>.

¹⁰ CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, paras. 24 (a) and (b).

¹¹ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 20.

- ¹² CAT/OP/BFA/ROSP/1, para. 22. See also CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 26.
- ¹³ United Nations country team submission, p. 5.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁵ See also <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/press-releases/2023/01/turk-urges-prompt-transparent-investigation-after-28-people-found-killed> (in French); <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2023/04/burkina-faso-killing-civilians>; and https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCAT%2FFUL%2FBFA%2F47135&Lang=en.
- ¹⁶ United Nations country team submission, p. 6.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ See <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21660.doc.htm>.
- ²⁰ CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 14 (a).
- ²¹ See also CAT/OP/BFA/ROSP/1, para. 165 as well as CCPR/C/BFA/QPR/2, para. 13.
- ²² CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 18 (a)–(c).
- ²³ *Ibid.*, para. 22 (a) and (c)–(e).
- ²⁴ CAT/OP/BFA/ROSP/1, see recommendations under V. A to C.
- ²⁵ CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 20.
- ²⁶ United Nations country team submission, p. 8.
- ²⁷ CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 12 (d).
- ²⁸ United Nations country team submission, p. 7.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 10 (b). See also CAT/OP/BFA/ROSP/1, paras. 55, 58, 60, 64 and 65.
- ³³ CAT/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 12 (a).
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 16.
- ³⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/03/global-update-high-commissioner-outlines-concerns-over-40-countries>.
- ³⁶ United Nations country team submission, p. 8.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/04/burkina-faso-un-human-rights-chief-troubled-further-curbs-media-and-civic>.
- ⁴⁰ United Nations country team submission, pp. 8 and 9.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 62 (a)–(c).
- ⁴⁵ United Nations country team submission, p. 13.
- ⁴⁶ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 42.
- ⁴⁷ United Nations country team submission, p. 6. See also United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) submission for the universal periodic review of Burkina Faso, paras. 13–17.
- ⁴⁸ United Nations country team submission, pp. 9 and 10.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ⁵⁰ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 44.
- ⁵¹ United Nations country team submission, p. 10.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 9. See also UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Burkina Faso, para. 16.
- ⁵⁴ United Nations country team submission, p. 9.
- ⁵⁵ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 48 (a). See also UNESCO submission, para. 16.
- ⁵⁶ United Nations country team submission, p. 4.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 6 and 7.
- ⁵⁸ See also UN-Habitat submission, paras. 9–12 and 17.
- ⁵⁹ United Nations country team submission, p. 5.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4 and 5.
- ⁶¹ UNESCO submission, para. 16 (v).
- ⁶² Input for the universal periodic review of Burkina Faso by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.
- ⁶³ United Nations country team submission, p. 12.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ CMW/C/BFA/CO/2, para. 46 (a).

⁶⁹ Ibid., para. 56 (a) and (b).

⁷⁰ United Nations country team submission, pp. 10 and 11. See also UN-Habitat submission, paras. 1–7.

⁷¹ United Nations country team submission, p. 11.

⁷² Ibid.
