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Situation of human rights in Burundi

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi, Fortuné Gaetan Zongo*

Summary

The Human Rights Council, in paragraph 11 of its resolution [57/22](#) of 10 October 2024 on the situation of human rights in Burundi, decided to extend for one year the mandate of Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi and requested the Special Rapporteur to submit a comprehensive report thereon to the Council at its sixtieth session.

* Agreement was reached to publish the present report after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



I. Introduction

1. The Human Rights Council, in paragraph 11 of its resolution [57/22](#) of 10 October 2024 on the situation of human rights in Burundi, requested the Special Rapporteur to submit a comprehensive report thereon to the Council at its sixtieth session. In 2025, the Special Rapporteur continued to discharge his mandate in a context marked by a persistent lack of cooperation on the part of the Burundian authorities. Despite the impossibility of conducting a visit to Burundi, the Special Rapporteur discharged his mandate in accordance with a rigorous methodology and in compliance with the standards applicable to reports by special procedure mandate holders. He drew on a variety of sources, including confidential interviews with victims and witnesses of human rights violations, human rights defenders, journalists and representatives of regional and international institutions. The information gathered was systematically cross-checked against credible public sources, including reports of non-governmental organizations, publications of United Nations bodies and official press releases. This approach ensured the impartiality and factual soundness of the analyses contained in the present report. The Special Rapporteur reiterates his appeal to the Burundian authorities to engage in constructive dialogue with him, in a spirit of cooperation and respect for the country's international human rights commitments.

II. Recent developments

A. Visit by the Belgian Minister

2. On 26 and 27 April 2025, Maxime Prévot, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Development Cooperation of Belgium, conducted a visit to Burundi¹ as part of diplomatic initiatives to de-escalate tensions in the Great Lakes region, in a context of persistent security and humanitarian challenges.

B. Impact of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the situation of human rights in Burundi

3. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has had significant humanitarian and security repercussions in Burundi, affecting the exercise of a number of rights. The country continues to face a series of challenges, particularly with regard to respect for fundamental freedoms and the protection of vulnerable groups.²

4. Burundi maintained its political and military support for the Democratic Republic of the Congo by continuing to deploy troops in South Kivu³ and expressing support in the United Nations Security Council and in African regional and subregional bodies. However, this involvement has generated internal tensions, as illustrated by the conviction of 272 Burundian soldiers who refused to be deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo because of poor conditions of service.⁴ They received sentences of up to life imprisonment. Furthermore, according to information gathered by the Special Rapporteur, in August 2024 Imbonerakure members underwent paramilitary training in Cibitoke with a view to deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This represents further militarization of the movement, which is affiliated with the ruling party. Youth recruitment operations were also observed throughout the country. The recruits were sent to training centres in the Ngozi, Cankuzo, Bururi and Muramvya military camps.⁵

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/BEEmbassyBurundi/posts/1117623010405450>.

² <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/burundi?utm>.

³ https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/m23-rebels-face-burundian-forces-eastern-congo-heightening-war-fears-2025-01-31/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

⁴ <https://www.trtafrika.com/fr/africa/burundi-des-soldats-condamnes-a-la-prison-pour-leur-refus-de-combattre-les-rebelles-en-rdc-18177074>.

⁵ <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2024/08/17/cibitoke-formation-paramilitaire-pour-des-imbonerakure-avant-leur-deploiement-en-rdc/>.

5. The security situation was marked by allegations that three members of the group *Résistance pour un État de droit au Burundi* (RED Tabara) were killed between 6 and 9 October 2024 in a detention centre in the Province of Cibitoke, where they had reportedly been tortured.⁶ Although the authorities have denied the accusations, the absence of independent investigations has heightened concerns about the security services' impunity and the State's failure to comply with its international obligations in terms of preventing torture.

6. The Special Rapporteur notes that the humanitarian situation has deteriorated as a result of the considerable decline in international aid. Since February 2025, the country has seen a massive influx of Congolese refugees fleeing the violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over 67,000 refugees were registered between mid-February and mid-March 2025. Although the authorities initially welcomed these refugees, discriminatory practices were later reported, particularly against Banyamulenge and Tutsis, who were suspected of interacting with Rwanda or the M23 group. Cases of arbitrary arrest have been reported, including among Congolese students living in Bujumbura.⁷

7. The management of refugee camps, particularly the one in Rugombo, Cibitoke, is also a cause for concern. The partial dismantling of the site in March 2025 for reasons of overcrowding and border security has created a humanitarian crisis. The refusal of some refugees to be rehoused, for fear of precarious living conditions in other camps, bears witness to the lack of coordination and the shortage of resources mobilized; this situation has been exacerbated by the decline in international financing.⁸ On 17 March 2025, the Special Rapporteur noted that, in response to the rapidly worsening humanitarian crisis, the European Union had allocated 200,000 euros in emergency humanitarian aid to support the thousands of Congolese asylum-seekers arriving in Burundi with urgent needs.⁹

C. Promotion mission of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

8. Representatives of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights visited Burundi from 18 to 21 March 2025. According to the Commission, one of the objectives of the mission was to open a dialogue with the Burundian Government and the various stakeholders on the legislative, institutional and other measures taken to give effect to the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the other instruments regularly ratified by Burundi.¹⁰ While such a visit is to be welcomed as a positive step towards the establishment of constructive dialogue, several civil society organizations regretted the lack of inclusive communication prior to the mission and the lack of critical analysis of the State's human rights obligations in the conclusions published at the end of the visit.

D. Election of Burundi as a member of the Economic and Social Council

9. The Special Rapporteur notes that Burundi continues to participate in multilateral forums. After chairing the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, Burundi was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council in June 2025 for a three-year term starting on 1 January 2026.

⁶ [https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/database?location\[\]=3&created=.](https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/database?location[]=3&created=)

⁷ [https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/en/2025/02/18/bujumbura-wave-of-arrests-and-expulsions-sow-panic-among-congolese-students-and-the-banyamulenge-community/?.](https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/en/2025/02/18/bujumbura-wave-of-arrests-and-expulsions-sow-panic-among-congolese-students-and-the-banyamulenge-community/)

⁸ [https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2025/03/27/cibitoke-fermeture-forcee-du-site-de-transit-des-refugies-congolais-a-rugombo-un-retour-risque-vers-la-rdc/?.](https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2025/03/27/cibitoke-fermeture-forcee-du-site-de-transit-des-refugies-congolais-a-rugombo-un-retour-risque-vers-la-rdc/)

⁹ [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burundi/lue-alloue-200-000-%E2%82%AC-daide-humanitaire-aux-demandeurs-dasile-congolais-au-burundi_fr?.](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burundi/lue-alloue-200-000-%E2%82%AC-daide-humanitaire-aux-demandeurs-dasile-congolais-au-burundi_fr?)

¹⁰ [https://achpr.au.int/index.php/en/news/press-releases/2025-03-25/press-release-promotion-mission-republic-burundi.](https://achpr.au.int/index.php/en/news/press-releases/2025-03-25/press-release-promotion-mission-republic-burundi)

E. Cooperation of Burundi with international and regional human rights mechanisms

10. During the period under review, the Special Rapporteur sent requests for visits to the Governments of Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania but received no reply. A preliminary version of the present report was also transmitted to the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

11. The Special Rapporteur took part in the eighty-third session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, held in Banjul from 2 to 22 May 2025. On that occasion, he met with representatives of several African human rights mechanisms, regional human rights organizations and civil society organizations. He participated in two side events, one on enforced disappearances in Burundi, organized by the Forum pour la conscience et le développement, and the other on the situation of human rights defenders in Burundi, organized by DefendDefenders.

12. The Special Rapporteur thanks the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for the warm welcome extended to him and for the establishment of a framework for collaboration with the various African mechanisms under the Addis Ababa road map.

13. Burundi submitted its combined eleventh to nineteenth periodic reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.¹¹ This step is a positive sign of the Burundian authorities' willingness to interact with United Nations treaty mechanisms after many years of limited cooperation. It should be noted, however, that the Committee's session, originally scheduled for mid-2025, has been postponed to November/December 2025, resulting in a delay in the State's interactive dialogue with the Committee.

14. Nonetheless, a number of reports have yet to be received, including the report under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, due on 31 October 2020; the report under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, due on 24 July 2010; and the report under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, due on 6 December 2009.

15. The establishment of a national mechanism for the prevention of torture, recommended since 2014 by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, has not yet been carried out.

16. In addition, the Special Rapporteur on minority issues has made an official request to visit Burundi, to which no reply has been received to date.

III. Governance institutions and national human rights mechanisms

A. Judicial system

17. Judicial independence remains a real challenge in the absence of genuine reforms, as the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi and the Special Rapporteur have already indicated in their reports. These reports are consistent in noting the persistence of political pressure, particularly in sensitive cases such as land disputes, human rights cases and electoral disputes. Cases have been reported in which judges have been transferred as a punitive measure or have been dismissed for issuing decisions deemed unfavourable to the Government. The Judicial Service Commission, which is supposed to guarantee the independence of judges, continues to be perceived as largely dependent on the executive branch, owing to its composition and mode of operation.

18. The authorities have repeatedly referred to the need to strengthen the efficiency of the judicial system and bring justice closer to the people. Specific measures have been taken,

¹¹ CERD/C/BDI/11-19.

such as the appointment of new judges and the opening of local courts. However, announcements of such measures are more reflective of political communication than of in-depth structural reform. No substantial changes have been observed with regard to laws guaranteeing judicial independence, transparency of appointments or the budgetary autonomy of the judicial branch. Moreover, internal disciplinary mechanisms remain opaque and seem to be used mainly to control or retaliate against judges perceived to be critical.

19. Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the Constitution, but in practice it is strictly limited by draconian press laws and a dangerous operating environment for media professionals, who receive threats and are victims of harassment and arrest. The Special Rapporteur remains concerned about the persistent attacks on freedom of expression, illustrated in particular by the case of Sandra Aline Muhoza, a journalist arrested in April 2024 for comments made in a WhatsApp group in which she criticized the alleged distribution of machetes to young members of the ruling party. Accused of “undermining the integrity of the national territory” and making “ethnically charged remarks”, she was sentenced in December 2024 to 21 months’ imprisonment. Her lawyers reported numerous irregularities, including the lack of territorial jurisdiction of the trial court, which was the Mukaza High Court, even though the facts and the arrest had taken place in Ngozi. On 30 May 2025, the Bujumbura Court of Appeal recognized its lack of jurisdiction and referred the case to a competent court. This case highlights the abusive prosecution of expression on social media and the impediments to the right to a fair trial, as well as the worrying use of national security-related criminal charges to punish criticism in relation to sensitive issues.

B. Ombudsman

20. Article 6 of Act No. 1/04 of 24 January 2013 amending Act No. 1/03 of 25 January 2010 on the organization and operation of the Office of the Ombudsman sets out a wide range of tasks incumbent on the Ombudsman, including an explicit mandate to protect human rights. The Ombudsman has broad powers to conduct investigations and make recommendations to the relevant authorities.

21. The Special Rapporteur recalls that, although the mandate of the Ombudsman’s Office enables it, in theory, to contribute to the protection of human rights, in reality it plays a marginal role owing to a lack of independence, resources, political will and effective commitment.

22. In the current context of mistrust of State institutions, it remains necessary to strengthen this institution by ensuring its independence, expanding its powers and promoting transparency and accountability so that it can become a credible player in the promotion and defence of human rights in Burundi.

23. In the Special Rapporteur’s view, the Ombudsman is often perceived as an institution aligned with the executive branch. The appointment process is largely controlled by the powers that be, and incumbents have regularly avoided taking a stand on the most sensitive human rights issues, including violations committed by the security forces and cases of torture, land appropriation, arbitrary detention or enforced disappearance. The proximity of the Ombudsman’s Office to the authorities severely limits its ability to play a crucial or protective role, particularly in a context of political repression and closure of civic space. Few reports are made public, and the Ombudsman’s interventions remain marginal and are often limited to administrative mediation or general statements. The Ombudsman does not seem to engage in any structured cooperation with international human rights protection mechanisms or with other national human rights institutions such as the National Independent Human Rights Commission, or regional mechanisms. This lack of cooperation reduces the effectiveness of the Ombudsman’s role in dealing with human rights violations.

24. In a previous report, in 2023, the Special Rapporteur already urged the Ombudsman to deal with cases of human rights violations.¹² The Special Rapporteur notes that the Ombudsman presented her 2024 report to the National Assembly on 17 February 2025. The institution had received 525 cases and processed more than 93 per cent of those found

¹² See [A/HRC/54/56](#).

admissible.¹³ However, those cases did not involve key issues such as civil liberties or refugee rights.

C. National Independent Human Rights Commission

25. There is no formal collaboration between the Special Rapporteur and the National Independent Human Rights Commission. All correspondence sent to the Commission has remained unanswered, including a call for contributions to the present report. The Special Rapporteur also notes that the Chair of the Commission, Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, left the country on 18 April 2025 after a police search of his residence. According to some sources, this situation resulted from internal dissension within the Commission and allegations of corruption. According to others, it stemmed from growing pressure on dissenting voices in the run-up to the legislative, senatorial and local elections to be held between June and August 2025. At its plenary meeting of 24 June 2025, the National Assembly examined the final audit report of the Court of Auditors on the management of the financing granted to the National Independent Human Rights Commission by its technical and financial partners. The audit revealed a number of irregularities in the Commission's administrative and financial management, including non-compliance with the manual on administrative, financial and accounting procedures; expenses that were incorrectly charged or not supported by proper documentation; and implementation of activities not provided for in the financing agreement.¹⁴

26. These findings highlight systemic weaknesses in governance within the National Independent Human Rights Commission, which is supposed to promote standards of accountability and integrity.

27. Under article 13 of Act No. 1/04 of 5 January 2011 establishing the National Independent Human Rights Commission, the commissioners' term of office is four years, renewable once. It is fixed and irrevocable except in the cases expressly provided for in that law or in the Commission's rules of procedure. The Special Rapporteur notes that, contrary to this legal provision, on 11 April 2025 the President of the National Assembly published a call for candidates to replace the members of the National Independent Human Rights Commission. The new members of the Commission were elected by the National Assembly at its plenary meeting of 5 May 2025, even though the term of office of the members previously elected to the Commission had not yet expired. This measure clearly violated the principle that the term of office is fixed unless it can be shown that the conditions for revocation laid down in the law or the rules of procedure have been met. The call for candidates issued by the President of the National Assembly, with no transparency on the legal grounds for the commissioners' early replacement, shows that there is political interference in the governance of the Commission, undermines respect for the principle of the Commission's non-subordination to the executive and legislative branches and harms its credibility as an independent mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights. The principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) require, among other things, that members of national human rights institutions be appointed under a transparent procedure that ensures pluralism and that they be protected against arbitrary dismissal.

D. Truth and Reconciliation Commission

28. The Special Rapporteur notes with deep concern the recent developments affecting the operation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up as the central pillar of the transitional justice process in Burundi under the provisions of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi of 28 August 2000. In January 2025, the Truth and

¹³ <https://assemblee.bi/2025/02/18/rapport-2024-de-lombudsman-burundais-bilan-et-perspectives-davenir/>.

¹⁴ <https://abpinfo.bi/2025/07/03/analyse-par-lassemblee-nationale-du-rapport-definitif-daudit-de-la-cour-des-comptes-sur-la-gestion-du-financement-de-la-cooperation-suisse-a-la-cnidh/?>.

Reconciliation Commission was confronted with overt acts of political interference that are likely to compromise its independence and undermine its institutional credibility.

29. According to information reported by Iwacu and SOS Médias Burundi, two members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, namely Vice-Chair Noé Clément Ninziza and communications commissioner Aloys Batungwanayo, left the country in early 2025 in a context of growing institutional tensions. Public statements by leading political figures may have been perceived as stigmatizing one of the commissioners by associating him with serious acts such as treason, although no legal proceedings have officially been brought and no evidence has been made public, even to this day. According to the same sources, in this climate of increased political pressure, one of the commissioners reportedly handed in his resignation before leaving the country, citing reasons linked to the preservation of his physical and psychological integrity.

30. The rapid replacement of the two members, approved at the plenary meeting of 13 February 2025, took place with no transparency or prior consultation with civil society or stakeholders in the transitional justice process, raising serious concerns about the growing politicization of that body. The ensuing appointments, in the absence of open debate, have heightened fears regarding the lack of procedural safeguards in the management of this institution.

31. The Special Rapporteur considers that these incidents fundamentally call into question the impartiality, independence and legitimacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The climate of fear created, including the prospect of judicial reprisals against commissioners who express disagreement with the official line, directly hinders the aims of establishing the truth and collecting credible testimony. This climate reinforces the dynamics of impunity, erodes public trust in the reconciliation process and exacerbates community divisions.

32. These events must be understood in the broader context of a worrying shrinkage of civic and institutional space in Burundi, where State mechanisms for promoting truth and justice come under political influence, contrary to the principles of the rule of law and the country's international human rights commitments.

33. The Special Rapporteur notes that, on the sidelines of the seventy-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, Zéphyrin Maniratanga, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations, officially called for recognition of the genocide perpetrated against the Hutus in 1972. This position was publicly supported by the Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pierre-Claver Ndayicariye.

IV. Civil and political rights

A. Right to take part in public affairs

34. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution [57/22](#) of 10 October 2024, extended the mandate of Special Rapporteur for a further year and called upon the Government of Burundi to create the conditions necessary for the holding of inclusive, transparent and credible parliamentary elections in 2025, in accordance with its international obligations and commitments. The Special Rapporteur notes that, while efforts have been made to meet the Government's commitment to hold elections within the time frames laid down in the Constitution, many concerns remain regarding the inclusiveness, transparency and fairness of the electoral process, both in the pre-election period and during the elections themselves.

35. The Special Rapporteur recalls that the new Electoral Code was adopted by the National Assembly on 9 April 2024 and by the Senate on 18 April 2024. Among the principal changes introduced are an increase in the amount of the deposit required from candidates, a reduction in the length of the election campaign and the definition of conditions for independent candidates.

36. Despite the unilateral nature of the process of drafting the new Electoral Code, the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, Martin Niteretse, stated in his explanatory memorandum that this bill, which took into account the

recommendations of the 2020 evaluation of the electoral process, was intended to solve the problems encountered by the Independent National Electoral Commission in the implementation of certain provisions of the Electoral Code in force at the time.

37. The revision of the legal framework without prior consensus or dialogue with all sectors of Burundian society remains controversial. The new legal framework reinforces existing obstacles to participation in public affairs and excludes, by law, the leader of the main opposition party, Agathon Rwasa.

38. The Special Rapporteur notes that, apart from the establishment of a legal framework that excludes a number of potential candidates, including Agathon Rwasa, other methods are being used to weaken and harass the opposition, as indicated in his previous report.¹⁵ One such action was the interference by the Administration in the ousting of the head of the political party *Congrès national pour la liberté* and the destruction of opposition party premises. For example, the *Front pour la démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU) office on Butembe hill in the commune of Mpanda, Province of Bubanza, was damaged on the night of 9 September 2024.¹⁶ Premises of the *Congrès national pour la liberté* have also been destroyed.¹⁷

39. The Independent National Electoral Commission's rejection of the electoral lists of the Burundi Bwa Bose opposition coalition is part of a series of decisions that reflect a clear desire to reduce the political space open to the opposition. Although justified by considerations of compliance with administrative requirements, this exclusion had the direct effect of ensuring that the main opposition grouping structured around Agathon Rwasa, a central player in the political opposition for over ten years, was sidelined from the electoral process.

40. In response, the coalition took the matter to the Constitutional Court, which granted a three-day deadline for the revision of the electoral lists. While this decision may have been seen as a compromise, it did not result in the restoration of conditions for fair electoral competition. The need to reorganize candidacies in such a short space of time led to the effective exclusion of Agathon Rwasa and his allies, thus sidelining the only player capable of rallying a significant voting base against the ruling party, the *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie* (CNDD-FDD).

41. Deprived of its chief leader and symbol of political legitimacy, the coalition was forced to continue its participation in the polls in a highly weakened state, which affected its credibility, mobilization capacity and influence on public debate. This exclusion process amounts to indirect political disqualification, made possible by the use of electoral and judicial mechanisms to this end.

42. During the reporting period, a compulsory contribution was introduced. Launched on 19 August 2024 by the ruling CNDD-FDD party and officially addressed to its members and supporters, it has been imposed on the entire population without distinction. Amounts ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 Burundi francs per person, and up to 100,000 francs for businesses, were demanded on pain of reprisals. The *Imbonerakure* and administrative agents were deployed to collect these sums, often threatening those who were recalcitrant or depriving them of public services. Receipts bearing the CNDD-FDD logo were provided upon payment.¹⁸

43. On 4 October 2024, the Ministry of the Interior issued a press release calling for "voluntary" contributions for the holding of elections and stating that it had opened two accounts at the central bank (*Banque de la République du Burundi*) for this purpose.¹⁹ In

¹⁵ See [A/HRC/57/58](#).

¹⁶ <https://x.com/iwacuinfo/status/1834891488435511347>.

¹⁷ <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2023/04/12/ryansoro-un-local-du-cnldetrui/#:~:text=Une%20permanence%20du%20parti%20CNL%20sur%20la%20colline,parle%20d%E2%80%99une%20enqu%C3%AAte%20en%20cours.%20%28SOS%20M%C3%A9dias%20Burundi%29>.

¹⁸ <https://tournonslapage.org/fr/actualites/declaration-de-tlp-burundi-suite-aux-contributions-forcees-par-le-parti-cndd-fdd-pour-les-elections-a-venir>.

¹⁹ <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/appele-a-la-contribution-volontaire-la-pilule-ne-passe-pas/>.

practice, pressure was applied to the population, despite the absence of any legal basis for such a compulsory contribution, as the Constitution provides for it only in the event of a national disaster. Several organizations, including the Association burundaise pour la protection des droits humains et des personnes détenues, the European Network for Central Africa and Tournons La Page-Burundi, have gathered information on forced contributions in the Province of Ruyigi: a receipt of registration on the electoral roll was required for anyone wishing to access postal services (as from 1 November 2024); any farmer wishing to obtain fertilizers; and anyone wishing to access the Nyabitsinda market (as from 30 October 2024) or civil registry services.

44. The voter registration campaign, which ran from 22 to 31 October 2024, was marked by low participation. In response, the local authorities claimed that registration was compulsory. Press releases issued in several communes specified that people who were not registered to vote would not have access to public services. Organizations such as the European Network for Central Africa²⁰ and Tournons La Page-Burundi²¹ have gathered information on the restrictions imposed in some provinces, including Bubanza and Cibitoke, where access to markets was contingent on the presentation of a receipt, and schools required such proof from teachers. In Bujumbura, cases of intimidation by the Imbonerakure were reported, as well as checks of receipts in several neighbourhoods. The Association burundaise pour la protection des droits humains et des personnes détenues, meanwhile, has collected information on the registration of young people between the ages of 12 and 16 in the Province of Cibitoke.

45. The Independent National Electoral Commission, which is said to have been reformed, continues to be perceived as subservient to the executive branch. The absence of credible representatives of the opposition and civil society among its members and the lack of public access to its decisions fuel a perception of opacity and bias. Notably, the Human Rights Council's previous recommendations on the independence and transparency of the electoral authority remain largely unimplemented.

B. Electoral climate and organization of elections

46. In the relevant presidential decree, the electoral campaign period for members of the National Assembly and communal councillors is defined as 13 May–2 June 2025. The Independent National Electoral Commission states that it invited a total of 21 political parties, one coalition of 4 parties and 10 independent candidates to take part in the legislative and communal elections held simultaneously on 5 June 2025.²²

47. Monitoring of the campaigning period revealed an extreme imbalance between CNDD-FDD party candidates and other competitors. CNDD-FDD dominated the media space and had the necessary resources to cover the entire country. It was the only party whose candidates were able to use State resources to campaign.

48. Campaign financing and unequal access to public resources are also a major concern. In several provinces, political rallies were held by CNDD-FDD with evident use of State administrative and logistical resources.²³

49. The Special Rapporteur notes that the logistical and material situation prevented certain political parties, particularly those of the opposition, from communicating their message to the fullest extent possible, as persistent fuel shortages significantly affected the

²⁰ <https://www.eurac-network.org/fr/press-releases/nouveau-rapport-eurac-route-elections-burundaises-entre-bruits-bottes-effondrement>.

²¹ "Burundi : des pratiques portant atteinte aux droits des Burundais en contexte électoral" (Burundi: practices undermining the rights of Burundians in the context of elections).

²² <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/monde/burundi-ouverture-de-la-campagne-%C3%A9lectorale-pour-les-%C3%A9gislatives-et-communales-du-5-juin/3562049?>

²³ <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2025/05/20/photo-de-la-semaine-les-moyens-de-letat-mobilises-pour-le-cndd-fdd/>.

mobility of candidates and their teams, limiting their ability to carry out campaign activities to the same degree throughout the country.²⁴

50. Independent media outlets and national election observers continue to operate in a climate of intimidation. Barriers to the accreditation of independent observers and restrictions on pluralistic media coverage of campaigns are undermining guarantees of transparency.

51. The Special Rapporteur notes that the campaigns were marred by a climate of intimidation and violence. The Minister of the Interior, Martin Niteretse, acknowledged that the campaign period had been marked by acts of intimidation, committed mainly by CNDD-FDD members against opponents, but nevertheless concluded that it had gone well overall.²⁵

52. On 20 June 2025, the Constitutional Court announced the final results of the legislative elections, confirming the victory of CNDD-FDD, which, with 96.51 per cent of the vote, won 108 of the 111 seats in the National Assembly. The appeals lodged by the opposition were rejected as unfounded.

C. Right to life and security of person

53. The Special Rapporteur remains deeply concerned about consistent reports that torture and ill-treatment persist in Burundi. In a joint report published in May 2025 by 10 Burundian civil society organizations, it is stated that cases of torture were recorded between November 2023 and March 2025²⁶ and that, according to the information gathered, these acts were committed primarily by agents of the National Intelligence Service, members of the police force and the Imbonerakure.

54. Members of the political opposition, including the Congrès national pour la liberté and FRODEBU, have been victims of reprisals, kidnappings and arbitrary arrests.

55. Victims report that physical and psychological abuse was inflicted on them as part of interrogations or punitive measures, often outside any legal or judicial framework. These practices have generally taken place in unofficial places of detention or during incommunicado detention, and victims have had no access to a lawyer, a doctor or due process.

56. Despite the commitments made by the Government of Burundi during its dialogue with the Committee against Torture in November 2023, no concrete measures to put an end to these practices or deliver justice for the victims have yet been adopted. The Special Rapporteur also regrets the fact that Burundi has not submitted the follow-up report it was requested to provide by November 2024, as envisaged in the interactive dialogue with the Committee.

57. The period covered by the present report was marked by a significant increase in arbitrary arrests, particularly in the context of political engagement. Members of opposition parties, youth activists, human rights defenders and journalists were arrested on vague charges such as “disturbing the peace”, “spreading false information” and “endangering State security”.

D. Enforced disappearance

58. Cases of enforced disappearance, extrajudicial execution and torture continue to be reported. Witnesses report that there have been cases of illegal detention in unofficial

²⁴ <https://africa24tv.com/burundi-elections-locales-la-penurie-de-carburant-menace-la-campagne>.

²⁵ <https://indundi.com/martin-niteretse-admet-des-incidentes-mineurs-et-appelle-au-respect-des-lois/>.

²⁶ SOS-Torture Burundi, with the support of the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT), the World Organisation against Torture and the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, “Rapport alternatif de suivi de la société civile sur la mise en œuvre des 4 recommandations prioritaires formulées par le Comité des Nations Unies contre la torture au Burundi”.

locations, often carried out by the police, the intelligence services or the Imbonerakure. Impunity remains pervasive, despite the commitments made by the Government.

59. Civil society reports, including the report published by FIACAT, continue to mention enforced disappearances that reportedly occurred during the period in question, many of which targeted political activists. FIACAT reportedly has information on 40 cases of enforced disappearance that occurred between August 2024 and June 2025, of which 22, or 55 per cent, reportedly occurred in the Province of Bujumbura Mairie alone. In 13 cases, the victims were political opponents, 11 of whom were affiliated with the Congrès national pour la liberté. Twenty-six of the cases directly involved agents of the National Intelligence Service and the national police, while Imbonerakure militias are reported to have been complicit in several kidnappings. A total of 89 cases of enforced disappearance were recorded between August 2023 and June 2025.

60. In the majority of cases, people were abducted with complete impunity, often by unidentified agents, and no authority acknowledged the detention or informed families of the fate or place of detention of their loved ones. These acts form part of a larger pattern of restriction of civil liberties, including 137 cases of arbitrary detention in which political opponents in particular were targeted and 11 extrajudicial executions attributed to State agents, some of whom have been identified by name by human rights organizations.

61. The Special Rapporteur regrets the absence of independent mechanisms for investigating and documenting cases of disappeared persons and the widespread impunity enjoyed by the alleged perpetrators of these violations. He welcomes the documentation efforts made by civil society despite an often hostile environment.

E. Arbitrary arrest and detention

62. The Special Rapporteur notes that the imposition of restrictions on liberty continues to be a structural issue in the judicial system and the practices of its personnel. In particular, he notes that the authorities frequently extend periods of pretrial detention almost systematically, including beyond the legal time limits, often without clearly defining the charges or bringing the detained person before a judge within the time frame prescribed by law. This situation raises concerns as to whether the fundamental guarantees of the right to liberty and a fair trial are being respected. In several documented cases, people were detained for several weeks before being released without charge or compensation. It is concerning to note that pretrial detention is being used as a means of intimidation. Use of this practice is especially evident in the case of civil society activists, journalists and trade unionists, some of whom have been arrested during authorized demonstrations or advocacy activities. In such cases, detention is being used to deter civic engagement.

63. According to FIACAT, 86 cases of arbitrary arrest were recorded during the period in question, of which 42 cases (almost 49 per cent) involved political opponents from 10 different parties and coalitions and 13 cases were related to accusations of “unlawful assembly”. The entities responsible for making these arrests without legal basis include the national police (41 cases), the National Intelligence Service (22 cases) and the Imbonerakure (17 cases).

64. In addition to using pretrial detention, the authorities continue to refuse to release people who have served their sentences in full.

65. In the Special Rapporteur’s view, these practices have resulted directly in the overloading of the prison system. As he has already indicated in his previous reports, the Burundian prison system is not fit for purpose and the conditions of detention in it are degrading, with a lack of access to basic medical care, dirty cells, overcrowding and internal violence. People detained for political reasons are often held with ordinary prisoners, which exposes them to additional abuse.

66. The Special Rapporteur urges the Government of Burundi to fully respect the right to freedom of movement within and outside the country, to put an end to arbitrary detention and to ensure that judicial procedures are conducted in line with international standards. He also

recommends the immediate and unconditional release of all persons who have been detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their civil and political rights.

67. Pursuant to a decree issued in 2021, 5,255 prisoners in various prisons across the country, representing 40 per cent of the prison population, received a presidential pardon and were granted a remission of sentence. In November 2024, a similar initiative affecting 5,442 prisoners was launched. These measures, which were intended to relieve overcrowding in detention and correctional facilities, have not had the desired effect.

68. The Special Rapporteur notes that on 16 June 2025, the Court of Auditors presented an audit report to the National Assembly in which it highlighted systemic failures in the Burundian prison administration. The audit report reveals a situation that is troubling in institutional, material and human terms, illustrating a structural deterioration of the rule of law and a persistent inability on the part of the State to ensure respect for and protection of the fundamental rights of persons deprived of their liberty.²⁷

69. The absence of an up-to-date procedural manual and by-laws is indicative of inadequate institutional management characterized by the absence of a set of clear standards. This regulatory vacuum is compromising the harmonization of practices, encouraging arbitrariness and preventing effective supervision of prisons. In addition, there have been violations of public procurement rules that are indicative of opaque practices and even corruption risks in prison management.

70. The poor state of record- and archive-keeping is a major barrier to the traceability of legal and administrative processes concerning detained persons. The lack of digitization places this information at risk of irretrievable loss, undermining both transparency and respect for procedural rights. In addition, the audit report reveals that there is a shortage of qualified staff and a lack of functional equipment (information technology equipment, unmarked vehicles) and that logistical organization is inadequate.

71. The material conditions of detention are particularly troubling. The lack of prison clothing and recurrent disruptions to the food supply are clear violations of international standards for the treatment of prisoners, in particular the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). These shortcomings are compromising not only prisoners' physical health, but also their dignity and fundamental rights.

72. It is also pointed out in the audit report that there is an absence of effective mechanisms to ensure the release of persons who have been acquitted or have served their sentences. This situation, which is contributing to prison overcrowding and an increase in cases of prolonged arbitrary detention, points to a failure to enforce judicial decisions, which is a critical indicator of the dysfunction of the judicial system and the absence of effective judicial control over the prison administration.

V. Economic, social and cultural rights

A. Right to food

73. During the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur noted that ensuring the right to food in Burundi remains a major challenge. Previous reports had already highlighted the problem of persistent food insecurity, which has been exacerbated by extreme climate events that have harmed crops and livelihoods. This problem has also been made worse by the continual rise in inflation, recurring fuel shortages and difficulties obtaining access to seeds and fertilizers, among other structural factors.

74. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, climate shocks, particularly weather conditions associated with El Niño, remain a major

²⁷ <https://assemblee.bi/2025/06/17/direction-generale-des-affaires-penitentiaires-beaucoup-de-lacunes-dans-la-gestion-le-ministre-de-tutelle-promet-des-changements/>.

obstacle to strengthening the humanitarian response.²⁸ Moreover, according to the 2024 edition of the Global Hunger Index, Burundi is one of the countries most affected by hunger.²⁹

75. In addition, according to an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) survey carried out in April 2024, 2.2 million people (or 18 per cent of the population) were facing acute food insecurity and in need of immediate food aid. Of those people, 229,000 were in Emergency (Phase 4).³⁰

76. In view of these observations, the Special Rapporteur urges the Burundian Government to increase the share of the State budget allocated to the agricultural sector to at least 10 per cent.

B. Right to health

77. In the Special Rapporteur's view, the Burundian health system remains chronically underfunded, which is limiting its ability to meet the basic needs of the population. This structural deficit is reflected in inadequate health infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, where health centres are often remote, poorly equipped or in a state of severe disrepair. Access to healthcare remains profoundly unequal, with specialized services concentrated in urban centres, creating a health divide between rural areas and major cities. In addition, recurrent shortages of essential medicines, including for primary care and emergencies, have been reported during the period 2024–2025; such shortages are particularly affecting vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, children and people living with chronic illnesses.

78. Furthermore, the lack of qualified medical staff is a major challenge. The workforce is insufficient, poorly distributed and often faced with precarious working conditions, low pay and limited access to continuing training. This situation is having a direct impact on the quality of care provided and on user confidence in the public healthcare system.

79. The Special Rapporteur stresses that these shortcomings are compromising the progressive realization of the right to health, as guaranteed by the regional and international instruments to which Burundi is a Party, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. He calls for the State and its partners to strengthen their commitment to overhauling the healthcare system, in particular through an increased budget allocation, strengthened human capacity-building and improved governance of the sector.

80. In January 2025, the Burundian population was affected by the mpox epidemic, with 1,767 people testing positive out of 3,355 screened.³¹ Overall, it was noted that, despite the observations made, only minor actions were taken. The recommendations made in the previous reports remain timely and relevant.

VI. Rights of specific groups

A. Rights of the child

81. The situation of children in Burundi remains troubling and is characterized by structural challenges and recurring humanitarian crises that are endangering their well-being and future. Children are being exposed to heightened risks due to natural disasters such as floods, which are affecting their access to education, health and a safe environment. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that the floods have caused mass

²⁸ <https://www.unocha.org/burundi>.

²⁹ <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/ranking.html>.

³⁰ <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1157088/>.

³¹ <https://www.rpa.bi/index.php/actualites/8sante/burundi-le-mpox-envahit-93-des-districts-sanitaires>.

See also United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Burundi, "Humanitarian Situation Report No. 6", reporting period 1 January to 31 January 2025.

population displacements and the destruction of school and health infrastructure, and have increased vulnerability to malnutrition and waterborne diseases.³²

82. According to IPC estimates, between June 2024 and May 2025, nationwide, 484,490 children between the ages of 6 and 59 months were acutely malnourished or in need of treatment and 84,985 of them were severely acutely malnourished (these figures were significantly higher than in 2022).³³ According to the national nutrition survey conducted in 2024, malnutrition remains a major public health problem in the country, with 53 per cent of children under the age of 5 years suffering from stunting (the highest rate in the world), 8 per cent from wasting and 59 per cent from anaemia. Provinces affected by El Niño have the highest prevalence of wasting, which is contributing to increased morbidity and mortality among children.

B. Women's rights

83. Women continue to face structural discrimination in access to land, employment and justice. Gender-based violence, including domestic violence, occurs frequently and is underreported. Women's political representation has improved slightly in the National Assembly, 35 per cent of whose members are women, but remains marginal in decision-making positions.

84. Circular No. 552/01/427/CS/2025, signed on 27 March 2025 by the President of the Supreme Court, Gamaliel Nkurunziza, sets out precise guidelines for Burundian judges regarding land inheritance disputes. The guidelines prohibit any reference to land jurisprudence, in particular rulings favouring gender equality, and provide that priority must be given to custom in judicial decisions. They represent a step backwards in the protection of women's rights in Burundi and legitimize the dominance of discriminatory customs in land inheritance. They are illustrative of the instrumentalization of the judiciary to endorse inegalitarian practices, contrary to the country's constitutional and international commitments. The amendment of this circular and the adoption of a clear and egalitarian law on inheritance are necessary to guarantee Burundian women an effective right to land, which is essential for their autonomy and for social justice and community stability.

C. Right to property

85. Burundian law recognizes and protects the right to property. Expropriation in the public interest must be authorized by law and must give rise to fair and prior compensation. The Land Code defines which land assets are the private property of the State. Such assets do not include privately owned plots covered by land titles in the name of third parties. Monitoring has revealed that expropriations have taken place without any legal basis. The absence of public consultation or prior assessment of public needs is contributing to a perception of arbitrariness in government decisions in this area. The Special Rapporteur notes that influential figures, such as military officers and businessmen, have interfered in certain cases, notably by intimidating victims. He also notes that violations of the rights to property, land tenure security and access to justice have been committed in which members of the Tutsi community in particular have been targeted.

86. The Special Rapporteur has received information about violations of the right to property of 31 families. The families concerned are headed by widows or orphans, have been forced into exile or have been victimized by State-led repression. On 6 August 2023, the Minister of Infrastructure, Public Works and Social Housing, Dieudonné Dukundane, announced that owners of plots of land in the city of Bujumbura would have to comply with a new urban development plan. Reports indicate that this plan has not been published thus far, nor have potential victims been informed. Reportedly, the Minister has, without any legal basis, made the retention of property rights conditional on the submission of a building plan, failing which the plots will be transferred to other persons. Properties are frequently

³² UNICEF Burundi, "Flash Humanitarian Situation Report", Nos. 1 and 2, April and May 2024.

³³ <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1158883/>.

demolished without the provision of formal notification or compensation to owners, while land titles are simply contested or annulled by the administration, despite the protests made and legal action taken by the owners.

87. These practices, which amount to land spoliation, are benefiting people close to the power base, members of the Government (or members of their families) and army and police generals. A growing number of reportedly irregular land expropriations have been documented in Bujumbura and other locations across the country, including Mukaza and Cibitoke. The victims, who have frequently been threatened and experienced repeated home invasions, are living in a permanent climate of fear. Some of them have been forced into exile or obliged to sell their property at ridiculously low prices. For victims who try to take legal action, litigation is either lengthy or pointless due to the instrumentalization of the judicial system. The steps taken by the victims to contact the President of the Republic have had no conclusive result. The practices of which they are victims reportedly form part of the implementation of Vision Burundi 2040, in particular the urban development plan for the city of Bujumbura. However, analysis of the legal framework and practice reveals serious breaches of the principles of legality, transparency and respect for the right to property. Reportedly, decisions to expropriate plots are generally communicated in tweets posted by the Burundian Office of Urban Planning, Housing and Construction without prior publication of ministerial orders or orders made in the public interest, or payment of compensation, in flagrant violation of Burundian legislation and the State's international commitments.

D. Situation of refugees

88. The Special Rapporteur notes that, 10 years after the April 2015 crisis, more than half of the Burundians who went into exile remain outside the country despite the efforts of the various Governments, and are still in the same host countries. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the situation of Burundian refugees who are settled or residing in the Nduta and Nyarugusu camps continues to raise serious concerns about respect for human rights and international refugee protection standards.³⁴ According to multiple testimonies, refugees have been subjected to coercive pressure to return to Burundi, despite the risks involved. The most common practices are acts of intimidation committed at night, which are often traumatic and threaten physical safety; acts of administrative blackmail in which persons wishing to obtain access to services or documents are made to sign a return agreement; and acts of physical violence aimed at obtaining consent to repatriation.

89. These methods violate the principle of voluntary, safe and dignified return, a fundamental pillar of refugee protection enshrined in international humanitarian law and the practices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

90. The Special Rapporteur has received eight allegations of targeted abductions of refugees from the camps, which are reportedly often carried out at night by unidentified individuals in unmarked vehicles. The victims have reportedly been taken to unknown destinations; no information has been provided to their relatives, and the authorities have no official records of these actions. Such practices, which are akin to cases of enforced disappearance, are particularly troubling. In several cases, the families concerned reported that they had lodged complaints but received no response from the police or administrative authorities. No monitoring or investigation mechanism appears to have been implemented to date.

91. Recurrent elements of the testimonies gathered suggest that certain members of the security forces have tolerated these incidents or have even been involved in them. These include the regular presence of unmarked vehicles on the roads in and around the camps at night, despite formal restrictions; the lack of any evident effort to intervene or investigate following reports of abductions; and allegations of transfers to unacknowledged places of detention, beyond any judicial or humanitarian oversight. These elements point to the existence of an environment in which impunity prevails, to the detriment of the guarantees

³⁴ <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/en/2025/05/10/nduta-tanzania-controversial-interviews-worry-burundian-refugees/>.

of protection to which refugees are entitled. The cases of disappearance reported in 2025 are part of a worrying pattern.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

92. At the end of the reporting period, the human rights situation in Burundi continues to be characterized by limited progress in certain areas, but also by persistent concerns about the rule of law, democratic space, fundamental freedoms and the protection of vulnerable persons. The run-up to the elections has heightened risks to the enjoyment of civil and political rights in an environment where impunity, marginalization of critical voices, restrictions on civil liberties and serious human rights violations remain matters of concern.

93. The Special Rapporteur reaffirms his readiness to engage in an open and constructive dialogue with the Burundian authorities, civil society actors, international and regional human rights protection mechanisms and international partners with a view to sustainably advancing the human rights situation in Burundi.

B. Recommendations

94. **The Special Rapporteur reiterates his previous recommendations and also makes the following recommendations.**

95. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that the Government of Burundi:**

(a) **Organize an inclusive dialogue among all Burundians and hold free and transparent elections;**

(b) **Strengthen the independence of the justice system, conduct impartial investigations into serious human rights violations and publicly condemn acts of torture and enforced disappearance;**

(c) **End impunity for agents of the National Intelligence Service, the national police and affiliated militias involved in instances of enforced disappearance and arbitrary arrest;**

(d) **Conduct independent investigations into human rights violations and publish regular reports, in particular on cases of enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention;**

(e) **Ensure that the legal guarantees applicable to detention, including the right to have access to a lawyer, the right to be brought promptly before a judge and the right to be informed of the charges brought, are strictly upheld;**

(f) **Ensure a pluralist and peaceful political environment, in particular by putting an end to acts of intimidation and ensuring that all candidates have equitable access to the electoral process;**

(g) **Protect fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of expression, assembly and association and freedom of the press, by revising restrictive legal frameworks and putting an end to practices of interference;**

(h) **Preserve land rights and improve land governance through transparent, participatory reform that ensures respect for the rights of the populations concerned, providing effective guarantees against abusive expropriation;**

(i) **Strengthen the rights of women and children by combating gender-based violence and guaranteeing equitable access to land and resources;**

(j) **Respect international commitments related to refugee protection by creating conditions conducive to dignified and voluntary return and by investigating allegations of violations against displaced persons;**

(k) Call on the international community to strengthen its support for the documentation of rights violations, transitional justice, victim protection and humanitarian response, in a spirit of constructive cooperation.

96. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the National Independent Human Rights Commission:

(a) Ensure credible monitoring of respect for all human rights in Burundi and provide the findings of the investigations it conducts;

(b) Examine refugees' cases and carry out monitoring with a view to proposing protection solutions;

(c) Request support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the process of reviewing its status;

(d) Help set up, in consultation with key players, a mechanism to prevent human rights violations in the run-up to the 2027 elections.

97. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions consider reviewing the A status of the National Independent Human Rights Commission and encourage constructive dialogue with the Burundian authorities.

98. The Special Rapporteur recommends that civil society organizations:

(a) Take action to strengthen the rule of law;

(b) Initiate discussions on ways out of the crisis in Burundi;

(c) Continue to gather information on cases of disappearance, intimidation and refoulement in refugee camps and make this information public.

99. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the media maintain constant, in-depth coverage of the human rights situation to inform and alert national and international public opinion.

100. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the international community:

(a) Strengthen actions to protect human rights, particularly in the run-up to the 2027 elections;

(b) Make support for the urban planning and housing sector contingent on land reform that respects fundamental rights;

(c) Provide support to mechanisms for independently monitoring expropriations and cases of land spoliation.

101. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the European Union strengthen its commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights in Burundi, in particular by:

(a) Strengthening its technical and financial support for independent civil society organizations working in the fields of democracy, justice and human rights;

(b) Making its sector budget support contingent on the achievement of measurable progress in the rule of law, the fight against impunity and respect for fundamental freedoms;

(c) Continuing to advocate efforts to ensure an open and safe civic space, including through bilateral and multilateral political dialogue.

102. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights:

(a) Continue its efforts to establish a framework for dialogue with a view to ensuring effective protection for Burundian refugees;

(b) **Maintain a framework for constructive dialogue with the Burundian authorities and carry out country visits to ensure that regional standards for the protection of human rights are better taken into account.**

103. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that armed groups and militias refrain from attacking or threatening in any way the territory, institutions and people of Burundi.**
