

CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL



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I. INTRODUCTION



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1. The present report, which covers the period from January to December 2021, is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#), in which the Council requested me to report annually on the implementation of resolutions [1820 \(2008\)](#), [1888 \(2009\)](#), [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#), and to recommend strategic actions.

2. In 2021, continued recourse to military rather than diplomatic and political means led to displacement on a significant scale, exposing civilians to heightened levels of sexual violence. Rising inequality, increased militarization, reduced civic space and the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons also contributed, among other factors, to fuelling widespread and systematic conflict-related sexual violence, even in the midst of a global pandemic. A series of coups d'état, including in several countries that appear in the present report, were another worrying development. Terrorist groups and transnational criminal networks continued to destabilize some of the most fragile contexts, including through the use of sexual violence as a tactic. In some situations, gender-based hate speech and incitement to violence were evident in public discourse, including on digital platforms. Women peacebuilders and human rights defenders were often specifically targeted, including through sexual violence and harassment as a form of reprisal, in order to exclude them from public life. Activists and advocates working to highlight the plight and defend the rights of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, and to support their access to justice and services, were also subjected to reprisals and intimidation. Sexual violence further impeded women's livelihood activities, against the backdrop of economic shocks and poverty driven by protracted

conflict and pandemic-related restrictions. These trends emerged at a time when the global public health crisis as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) had already diminished humanitarian access and diverted resources away from life-saving services to address gender-based violence and deeply affecting survivors, in particular displaced women and girls. Military spending outpaced investment in pandemic-related health care in fragile and conflict-affected countries (see [S/2021/827](#)).

3. Intersecting humanitarian, security and political crises exacerbated the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence, including militarization, the proliferation of arms, impunity, institutional collapse, structural gender-based inequality and harmful social norms. Protection is the bedrock for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in political, social and economic processes, which is in turn critical to ending conflict-related sexual violence and preventing its recurrence. Indeed, women and girls must be able to safely participate in all peace and security decision-making processes, as outlined in my proposal in Our Common Agenda ([A/75/982](#)) to develop a new agenda for peace), which also calls for greater investment in prevention.

4. The term "conflict-related sexual violence", as used in the present report, refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. This link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator, who is often

affiliated with a State or non-State armed group, including those designated as terrorist groups by the United Nations; the profile of the victim, who is frequently an actual or perceived member of a persecuted political, ethnic or religious minority, or targeted on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; a climate of impunity, which is generally associated with State collapse; cross-border consequences, such as displacement or trafficking; and/or violations of the provisions of a ceasefire agreement. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation, when committed in situations of conflict.

5. While many communities are affected by the threat, occurrence or legacy of conflict-related sexual violence, the present report is focused on countries for which information verified by the United Nations exists. It should be read in conjunction with my 12 previous reports, which provide a cumulative basis for the listing of 49 parties (see annex). The majority of listed parties are non-State actors, with several having been designated as terrorist groups according to the sanctions list of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#), and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. National military and police forces that are listed are required to adopt specific, time-bound commitments and action plans to address violations and are prohibited from participating in United Nations peace operations. Effective implementation of commitments, including the cessation of violations, is a key consideration for the delisting of parties. Non-State armed groups are also required

to implement action plans to prevent and address sexual violence in compliance with international humanitarian law and relevant Security Council resolutions.

6. The deployment of women's protection advisers, who are responsible for convening the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence in the field, has ensured more timely, accurate and reliable information and helped to overcome the dearth of data that is often used as a pretext for inaction. Deepening the evidence base requires sustained political resolve and resources. To date, the Security Council has called for the deployment of women's protection advisers in the mandate authorizations and renewals of nine peace operations. A total of four peacekeeping missions with mandates pertaining to conflict-related sexual violence have established monitoring arrangements and incorporated early warning indicators of conflict-related sexual violence into their protection frameworks. Four special political missions have also established such arrangements. While the timely deployment of women's protection advisers is a widely endorsed priority, the level of human and budgetary resources is not yet equal to the scale of the challenge. Moreover, the deployment of women's protection advisers to the offices of resident and humanitarian coordinators in situations of concern was mandated by the Security Council in its resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#). Their deployment is also envisaged to relevant United Nations regional hubs, in response to cross-border dynamics. In November, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security met with my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and four senior women's protection

advisers to discuss strategies for advancing the implementation of the mandate. At this meeting, the United Nations recommended, inter alia, the integration of these positions into the annual budgets of United Nations peace operations, particularly during transition processes, in line with Council resolution [2594 \(2021\)](#), and that an annual meeting of the Informal Expert Group be convened, with a focus on conflict-related sexual violence (see [S/2021/1012](#)). A strategic retreat of women's protection advisers was also convened in November, culminating in a new community of practice to strengthen capacity and information-sharing.

7. In order to promote effective coordination, the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict network unites efforts across 21 United Nations system entities with the goal of preventing conflict-related sexual violence, meeting the needs of survivors and enhancing accountability. The network is the primary forum through which my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict promotes cooperation and coherence among relevant actors in accordance with the principle of "Delivering as one". The network also provides strategic support at the country level through the conflict-related sexual violence multi-partner trust fund. Programming through this fund advances the survivor-centred approach outlined in Council resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#). Between 2009 and 2021, 53 projects were supported in 17 conflict-affected countries, as well as a range of regional and global initiatives. In 2021, United Nations Action provided funding for service providers working to address sexual and gender-based violence in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon to address challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The network also

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initiated the development of a prevention framework to guide system-wide efforts. In addition, United Nations Action launched an assessment of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements mandated by the Security Council in its resolution [1960 \(2010\)](#), with the goal of strengthening data collection and analysis to activate early warning and help inform survivor-centred programming. In September 2021, the network organized a donor round table attended by more than 20 Member States, which called for predictable and sustained funding. The network aims to raise \$100 million for the multi-partner trust fund by 2026.

8. In 2021, the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, in accordance with its mandate under Security Council resolution [1888 \(2009\)](#), continued to assist national authorities in strengthening rule of law institutions to enhance accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. Since its establishment, the Team has engaged in 14 conflict-affected settings in follow-up to the high-level political engagements of my

Special Representative and with the consent of affected States. Despite challenges relating to the pandemic, the Team continued to make progress in several settings. In the Central African Republic, in partnership with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), it finalized a diagnostic report on the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence, identifying the remaining challenges for law enforcement, national courts and the Special Criminal Court in investigating and prosecuting these crimes. The report was endorsed by the authorities and will form the basis of a national road map on the fight against impunity. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Team deployed a technical mission focused on reparations for victims in support of efforts by the authorities to advance related legislation. The Team also deployed an expert to assess pending criminal cases and lessons learned regarding the trial of Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka with military, judicial and civil society representatives, as well as United Nations partners. Moreover, the Team and the police



component of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) supported the Congolese National Police in implementing their action plan on fighting sexual violence and establishing 10 gender desks in police stations in the eastern provinces. Following the coup in Guinea, in September 2021, the Team continued to advocate for accountability regarding the events of 28 September 2009, specifically for trials to be expedited, perpetrators to be held accountable and victims to be able to obtain justice and reparations. In Iraq, the Team worked with partners to support the finalization of the Law on Support to Female Yazidi Survivors (2021) and associated by-laws by ensuring the integration of a more inclusive approach. In Mali, the Team organized a workshop focusing on accountability for violations allegedly committed by armed groups, including special terrorist groups, during the 2012–2013 conflict, which brought together magistrates, senior judicial and political authorities, and civil society organizations representing victims. This led to the prioritization by national judicial authorities of three cases,

representing over 140 victims. In South Sudan, the Team and the United Nations facilitated the finalization of an action plan for the armed forces on addressing conflict-related sexual violence, contributing to the Government's efforts to undertake institutional reforms and improve the conduct of the armed forces. The Team, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and academia, co-hosted a course entitled, "Gender dimensions and women's rights in terrorism".

9. While acknowledging that conflict-related sexual violence committed by parties to conflict is distinct from incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse that continue to be committed by United Nations personnel in complex operating environments, I reiterate my commitment to improve the way in which the Organization prevents and addresses such conduct. In my report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse ([A/76/702](#)), I provided information on efforts to strengthen the system-wide response and ensure full implementation of the zero-tolerance policy.



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II. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS A TACTIC OF WAR AND TERRORISM:

patterns, trends and emerging concerns

10. Against the backdrop of ongoing political and security crises, compounded by trends of militarization and the proliferation of arms, sexual violence continued to be employed as a tactic of war, torture and terrorism. Civilians were disproportionately affected in settings in which actors pursued military interventions at the expense of political processes, with the effect of dramatically curtailing the operating space for humanitarian workers and human rights monitors. Unconstitutional shifts of power in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Myanmar and the Sudan were followed by widespread insecurity, economic shocks and human rights violations, including the use of sexual violence in the lead-up to, during, and in the wake of these events, to subjugate and humiliate opposition groups and rival communities. In certain settings, the actors that seized power had been implicated in documented patterns of conflict-related sexual violence for several years, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Tatmadaw in Myanmar. Shrinking civic space, coupled with misogynistic threats, were worrying trends observed in Afghanistan, Libya, Myanmar, the Sudan and Yemen, where sexual violence was perpetrated against political activists, including during demonstrations. In Myanmar, a rise in online sexism, including threats of sexual violence, was reported as being directed against politically

active women. In Ethiopia, gender-based hate speech and incitement to violence, including various forms of sexual violence, were directed against women on the basis of their actual or perceived affiliation with parties to the conflict. Moreover, service providers were subjected to threats and attacks, causing the closure of essential services, including emergency post-rape care and sexual and reproductive health care, for victims of sexual violence. Long-standing barriers to reporting and accessing services, such as stigma, fear of retaliation, and weak rule of law institutions, already exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic (see S/2021/312), were heightened by conflict and political crisis. Globally, despite deepening constraints, survivors and service providers continued to report sexual violence crimes. The present report is limited to incidents of conflict-related sexual violence that were verified by the United Nations. While it conveys the severity and brutality of recorded cases, it does not purport to convey the full scale and prevalence of these crimes.

11. Conflict-related sexual violence contributed to internal and cross-border displacement and eroded family networks, as documented in several settings, where family members were forced to witness rape. The collapse of protective social networks and prevailing insecurity exposed internally displaced,

refugee and migrant survivors to further violence in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere. In certain contexts, the diversion of resources to military efforts undermined health and social services. Migrant and refugee women and girls in conflict-affected areas, particularly those held in detention facilities, continued to face heightened risks of sexual violence in Libya and Yemen. Across diverse contexts, women and girls suffered ongoing attacks and threats of sexual violence in the course of livelihood activities. In the Central African Republic, women and girls engaged in agriculture, gathering firewood or returning home to retrieve essential items after displacement, were raped and in some cases abducted and held by armed groups. Localized armed violence also intensified at the subnational level in contexts such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. In the Sudan, from July to October, there was an increase in reported incidents of sexual violence corresponding to the farming season, especially along transhumance routes. Economic hardship compounded by political instability and structural gender-based inequality deepened the risk of conflict-related sexual violence. In Afghanistan, the loss of livelihoods, in many cases owing to the Taliban takeover and ensuing inflation, caused many to resort to negative coping strategies, with reports indicating the sale or forced marriage of women and girls, including to Taliban fighters. In almost all settings covered in the present report, sexual violence impeded women's participation in social, political and economic life, highlighting the importance of addressing the root causes of sexual violence as part of promoting substantive equality in all spheres.

12. There was a discernible trend of sexual violence and exploitation in the context of abduction and trafficking, including by United Nations-designated terrorist groups operating in conflict-affected settings in which State presence and the

rule of law remain weak. For instance, the United Nations received reports of women and girls being abducted by fighters from non-State armed groups in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, including cases of forced marriage and rape. In other settings, authorities continued to grapple with the legacy of crimes of conflict-related sexual violence. In the Lake Chad basin, in 2021, the greatest ever number of individuals defected from Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups, compared with the number of defections in any previous year, including the exit from these groups of abducted women and children, highlighting the importance of socioeconomic reintegration support. In Mali and Burkina Faso, groups such as Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin have grafted onto local grievances, thereby deepening cycles of violence, which include conflict-related sexual violence. Similarly, in Iraq, the authorities, and society as a whole, continued to grapple with the traumatic legacy of crimes perpetrated by Da'esh between 2014 and 2017, with an alarming trend observed of increased suicide among members of the Yazidi community, including survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. Furthermore, women and children allegedly associated with Da'esh continued to be detained in conflict-affected settings, including Iraq, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic. Accountability for crimes of sexual violence perpetrated by members of terrorist groups remains low. The rights of survivors to justice and redress were underscored in the seventh review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (General Assembly resolution 75/291).

13. Survivors continued to demonstrate agency and resilience, bringing into focus the importance of protection as a foundation for active political participation. In the Central African Republic, survivors engaged with the consultations regarding the republican dialogue in certain prefectures, including by conducting outreach activities. The majority of

survivors continued to come from socioeconomically marginalized communities, including in remote and rural areas where State authority is weak, and were often targeted for their actual or perceived ethnic, religious or gender identity. Incidents of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against men and boys continued to be reported in almost all settings covered in the present report, primarily in detention settings. Despite access and funding constraints, humanitarian workers continued to provide support, including through one-stop centres in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan. During the reporting period, the United Nations shed light on an often-invisible category of victims through a special report of the Secretary-General on women and girls who become pregnant as a result of sexual violence in conflict and children born of sexual violence in conflict (S/2022/77). The report illustrates the full spectrum of the corrosive political and socioeconomic effects of conflict-related sexual violence and sets out a platform for action to deepen programmatic support and to close protection and accountability gaps.

14. In almost all settings covered in the present report, impunity for crimes of conflict-related sexual violence remains the norm and the pace of justice remains painfully slow. Two decades after the kidnapping and sexual abuse of Colombian journalist Jineth Bedoya, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a landmark ruling finding the State responsible for a number of violations of her rights. Similarly, in Guatemala, five former members of the paramilitary group Civil Self-Defence Patrol were convicted and sentenced for crimes of sexual violence committed against indigenous Maya Achi women in the early 1980s (see A/HRC/45/22). A former official of the Syrian General Intelligence Service, Anwar R., was convicted by the Higher Regional Court in Koblenz, Germany, for crimes against humanity, including acts of sexual violence, committed in 2011 and 2012. A major milestone for transitional justice was achieved in Iraq,

with the adoption in 2021 of the Law on Support to Female Yazidi Survivors, which stipulates that the policy of rape and sexual slavery enacted by Da'esh against Yazidis and other groups constitutes genocide and crimes against humanity. The law also provides for access to pensions, land, education, as well as a quota in public sector employment for victims of Da'esh atrocities, including survivors of sexual violence crimes, but regrettably does not address the challenges faced by children born of conflict-related rape. In terms of support provided to national authorities to align legislative frameworks with international standards, my Special Representative launched Model Legislative Provisions and Guidance on the Investigation and Prosecution of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and signed a framework of cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

15. Overall, the level of compliance by parties to conflict with relevant international norms and resolutions remains appallingly low despite the robust framework put in place by the Security Council since 2008. Over 70 per cent of the parties listed in the present report are persistent perpetrators, having appeared in the annex for five or more years. For parties that have made commitments in the form of joint and/or unilateral communiqués or frameworks of cooperation, the level of implementation remains limited. It is therefore critical to enhance coherence between the practice of listing and the designation of parties for the imposition of targeted and graduated measures, in order to leverage behavioural change and open space for dialogue on protection. My Special Representative continued to brief relevant sanctions committees in 2021, namely the committees concerning the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Yemen. Her recommendations included the listing of individuals and entities specifically for sexual violence crimes or including a specific mention of sexual violence in cases of those already designated for United Nations

sanctions on other grounds, in order to send a clear political signal. In an encouraging development, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya listed Osama Al Kuni Ibrahim (LYi.029), the de facto manager of the Al Nasr detention centre in Zawiyah, for violations including sexual violence.

16. Concerted action and investment are urgently needed to prevent sexual violence in the first instance and to tackle the structural root causes that perpetuate these crimes. Inadequate attention has been paid to prevention in conflict and post-conflict settings, including to preventing the escalation of sexual violence, the revictimization of survivors and the transgenerational transmission of trauma. Despite these gaps, the road map for prevention is clear. Sustained focus is required on such high impact areas as: political and diplomatic engagement, in order to address this scourge in the context of peace negotiations and agreements; the inclusion of sexual violence as a prohibited act in the definition and monitoring frameworks of ceasefire agreements; the use of early warning indicators of conflict-related sexual violence; curtailing the flow of small arms and light weapons; gender-responsive justice and security sector reform; and amplifying the voices of survivors and affected communities in security policy deliberations; as well as consistent and effective prosecution as a form of deterrence. Regrettably, only one of the ceasefire agreements reached between 2018 and 2020, the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, included a prohibition of sexual violence. It is increasingly clear that targeted political and operational measures are required to foster a protective environment that inhibits the

perpetration of sexual violence and enables safe reporting and response. Such efforts must also ensure adequate redress and rehabilitation for survivors and their dependants as part of larger peacebuilding and development strategies, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to leave no one behind.



AFGHANISTAN

III. SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED SETTINGS



PHOTO IRIN | ASHLEY HAMER

17. Escalating insecurity associated with the military offensive and subsequent takeover by the Taliban on 15 August 2021 led to mass displacement, heightened humanitarian needs and drastically restricted civic space. Despite declarations and assurances by the Taliban de facto authorities, reports indicate that women and girls were targeted as part of systematic and widespread gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, amid a strong push to limit their participation in public and political life. However, data remain difficult to obtain owing to structural gender inequality and the fear of reprisals linked with the prevailing climate of impunity.

18. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan verified five incidents of conflict-related sexual violence affecting both girls and boys. These incidents were attributed to members of the Taliban and Afghan security forces. In June, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission documented concerns about conflict-related sexual violence, particularly in areas under the control of the Taliban. After the takeover, the Taliban de facto authorities occupied the premises of the Commission, with its staff being unable to exercise their duties. In December 2021, the Taliban de facto authorities issued a decree prohibiting forced marriage. Nonetheless, reports of women and girls being sold and/or forced into marriage and sexual slavery by Taliban forces have emerged, including one instance in which the daughter of a former government official was handed over to the Taliban in exchange for the official's safety. A number of women human rights defenders, journalists and other professional women have been targeted with violence,

ranging from kidnapping to assassination; for instance, in September 2021, a female police officer, who was eight months pregnant, was tortured and killed in Ghor Province. Afghan civil society representatives have consistently, and at great personal risk, underscored the escalating violence against women activists and the marginalization of Afghan women in discussions on the future of the country. Services remain severely limited owing to the fear of reprisals and movement restrictions. The United Nations continued to receive requests to refer survivors for assistance who had allegedly been held hostage, tortured or raped by Taliban forces. Those who continue to deliver protection services, including staff of women's shelters, are at risk of violence and reprisals. Impunity prevails for sexual violence crimes, with the closure of specialized courts for the prosecution of violence against women. The adjudication of many cases through informal justice mechanisms continues to exacerbate underreporting.

Recommendation

19. *I call upon the Taliban de facto authorities to take steps to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, and to ensure access for human rights monitoring, accountability for perpetrators and protection for victims and witnesses. I urge the de facto authorities and institutions to ensure that women's human rights defenders and service providers are allowed to conduct their work safely and effectively.*



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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

20. In the Central African Republic, conflict-related sexual violence remained a serious protection concern, as political and humanitarian crises deepened in the wake of the presidential and legislative elections. Following the attack on Bangui on 13 January 2021, an alliance of armed groups, the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC), took control of certain parts of the country. Ensuing clashes, including counter-attacks by national armed forces, and other security personnel (see [S/2021/867](#)), resulted in a marked increase in conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated by all parties to the conflict. MINUSCA verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 379 women and 327 girls, representing a doubling in the number of reported cases compared with the previous year. The cases included 555 rapes or attempted rapes, 17 forced marriages or attempted forced marriages and 17 cases of sexual slavery. MINUSCA also documented 99 cases that had occurred in previous years. In terms of the profile of the perpetrators, 149 cases were attributed to CPC. Moreover, 138 cases were attributed to Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation, 79 to Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC) and Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique, 55 to Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC), 30 to anti-balaka elements, as well as 20 to ex-Séléka, 30 to Fulani armed elements, 9 to the Lord's Resistance Army, and the remaining cases to unidentified armed perpetrators. A total of 24 cases were attributed to the national armed forces and internal security forces. Responsibility for 25 cases was attributed to other security personnel.

21. Internally displaced women and girls were at severe risk of sexual violence as they sought food or returned home to situations of insecurity exacerbated by the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons. New waves of displacement totalled 1.5 million people, or almost a third of the country's population. Displaced women and girls were attacked by CPC-affiliated armed group fighters in and around bases and checkpoints, sometimes by multiple perpetrators. In the west and centre of the country, MINUSCA documented numerous cases of rape, including by Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation fighters, in incidents which took place at the group's bases or in the vicinity of checkpoints. In Mbomou Prefecture, occupied by elements of CPC affiliated UPC and FPRC, widespread conflict-related sexual violence was documented. The FPRC group commander, Mahamat Salleh, was directly involved in some cases. Incidents attributable to other security personnel were also recorded. In November, a number of these elements raped a woman and kidnapped two girls, whose bodies were allegedly found days later. Moreover, joint operations between national armed forces and other security personnel were carried out against Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation in areas bordering Chad and Cameroon, which dispersed fighters and increased the risk of conflict-related sexual violence.

22. In September 2021, the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadéra, nominated a Minister Counsellor to serve as Special Adviser to the President on conflict-related sexual violence. The Minister has since worked with the United Nations to accelerate the implementation of the joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence. Following the announcement by the President that a republican dialogue would be launched, MINUSCA supported local committees in integrating the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence into their work. Under the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation, the committees conducted outreach activities, including in partnership with survivors' networks in Ouham-Pendé and Vakaga Prefectures, which led to several cases being reported to

the gendarmerie. The United Nations continued to support the work of the Special Criminal Court, which opened one investigation into sexual and gender-based violence. Nevertheless, ordinary criminal court sessions have halted since February 2020, partially owing to the pandemic, which has stalled pending sexual violence cases. The Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission is yet to be fully operationalized. Moreover, service providers were targeted amid the escalating violence. In October 2021, fighters associated with CPC kidnapped medical services personnel in Ouham Prefecture. During the counter-offensive, other security personnel occupied health centres, including the premises of an organization providing psychosocial support in Bambari. In Ouham-Pendé Prefecture, border areas remained largely inaccessible to humanitarian actors, while local health providers reported acute shortages of personnel and supplies, including post-rape kits. International organizations continued to provide a large majority of services, including through mobile teams; health care, however, remained inaccessible to many victims, in particular those in isolated or insecure areas.

Recommendation

23. *I call upon all parties to uphold their commitment to cease all forms of sexual violence, as outlined in the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic signed in 2019, and urge the authorities to integrate efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence into the implementation of the joint road map for peace and transitional justice institutions. I urge the Government to ensure the full and meaningful participation of women-led organizations and survivors throughout the republican dialogue. I commend the appointment by the President of a Special Adviser on conflict-related sexual violence, to advance the implementation of the joint communiqué.*

PHOTO TNH | MEGAN JANETSKY

COLOMBIA

24. Five years after the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), the agreement remains a global milestone in terms of integrating gender considerations in conflict resolution. Yet, the implementation of gender-specific provisions has lagged behind overall progress, while security and protection challenges persist, including conflict-related sexual violence. Furthermore, lockdowns to prevent the spread of COVID-19 led to weaker State presence, resulting in increased actions by armed groups in several regions. In April 2021, the eruption of mass demonstrations led to allegations of killings and sexual violence by the national police. In 2021, the National Victims' Unit recorded 293 cases of conflict-related sexual violence. Of those, 238 were committed against women, 21 against girls, 18 against men and 4 against boys. Twelve victims identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons. Eighty-one victims were Afro-Colombians and 17 were individuals from indigenous communities. Twenty-one cases affected persons living with



disabilities. In 2021, the United Nations verified reports that at least three girls were victims of sexual violence during their association with armed groups. A case of sexual slavery was documented concerning a woman who was kidnapped and brought to the camp of an armed group. Conflict-related sexual violence was also perpetrated against ex-combatants and their families, including two women and three girls, as reported by the United Nations. Owing to clashes between armed groups, forced displacement increased by 198 per cent compared with 2020, according to the humanitarian needs overview. In attempting to access assistance and protection, migrants and refugees experienced discrimination and fear of retaliation, despite the adoption of the landmark temporary protection status for Venezuelan migrants issued by the Government, which represents an historic instrument to regularize Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Colombia. Out of the 27 cases documented by the United Nations, eight were perpetrated against Venezuelan citizens, including six women and two girls; the remaining 10 girls, 8 women and 1 man were Colombian. In one case, the perpetrator was identified as a member of a dissident group of the former FARC EP.

25. In 2021, mobility restrictions due to insecurity continued to limit survivors' access to support networks, protection and justice. Virtual spaces were offered in the latter half of the year by the Office of the Ombudsman and the Office of the Attorney General. As reported by the early warning system from the Office of the Ombudsman, survivors seeking justice continued to face structural obstacles, including low levels of convictions of perpetrators, weak institutional presence in rural areas and threats from armed groups against survivors and local authorities. While 62 cases of conflict-related sexual violence were referred to the Office of the Attorney-General, affecting women and girls primarily, records from the judiciary indicate that in 2021, the level of convictions for these crimes was just over 17 per cent of total cases. In the case of journalist Jineth Bedoya, in October 2021, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a landmark ruling two decades after the

crime of kidnapping and sexual violence. In addition to finding the State responsible for the violation of her rights to personal integrity, liberty, honour and dignity as well as freedom of thought and expression, the Court found the State responsible for the violation of the right to due process, judicial protection and equality before the law, owing to the lack of due diligence in the investigation. Measures ordered by the Court include the investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible, as well as the implementation of a policy for the protection of journalists and the establishment of a centre dedicated to the memory of women victims of conflict, in particular female journalists. Having received 11 reports from women-led organizations on conflict-related sexual violence, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace continued to integrate a focus on these crimes across its emblematic cases and recognized specific patterns of sexual violence in its investigation of the recruitment and use of children in the armed conflict. Similarly, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission received reports illustrating patterns of sexual violence, such as reproductive violence in the context of armed conflict, namely forced abortion, within armed groups, particularly the former FARC-EP. In order to promote gender equality and a focus on addressing gender-based violence in the armed forces, a joint workplan was established between the Ministry of Defence and the Presidential Adviser for Gender Equity, with the support of the United Nations.

Recommendation

26. *I reiterate my call to accelerate the full implementation of gender-related provisions of the peace agreement, as well as the Comprehensive Programme of Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. I call upon the national authorities to support the transitional justice system as it prepares to deliver its first restorative sentences and fully implement the decision of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, as well as the security forces' plan to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence.*

UN PHOTO | ESKINDER DEBEBE



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

27. Insecurity and protection concerns, including conflict-related sexual violence, persisted in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, declared a state of siege in Ituri and North Kivu Provinces in May 2021 amid widespread violence, mass population displacement and the systematic use of sexual violence by non-State armed groups, as well as by State actors during military operations. In 2021, MONUSCO documented 1,016 cases of conflict-related sexual violence, affecting 544 women, 459 girls, 7 boys and 6 men. Of those cases, 108 dated back to previous years. The majority (723) were attributed to non-State armed groups. State actors accounted for the remaining 293 cases, including 238 perpetrated by the Armed

Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 48 by the Congolese National Police and 7 by other State actors.

28. Armed groups continued to use sexual violence as a tactic to assert control over natural resources and territory. It was also used as a tool of collective punishment for perceived collaboration with other groups or with State forces, during abductions and raids on villages. The Nyatura factions perpetrated the majority of the 380 reported cases in North Kivu. Reported cases of sexual violence by the *Alliances des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain* (APCLS)-Janvier showed a marked increase, from 2 to 27 cases, mostly against girls. Moreover, a new armed group, *Union des patriotes pour la défense des citoyens*, is now operating in North Kivu,

led by self-proclaimed “General” Maachano, who after surrendering in 2020, quickly returned to his stronghold. All 17 reported cases by this group are of rape in captivity as part of forced marriage or sexual slavery. In South Kivu, control of the gold mines has been a destabilizing factor that resulted in the killing and rape of civilians, including by Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki elements. In Maniema and Tanganyika Provinces, Mai-Mai Malaika elements were responsible for 94 reported cases, including gang rape. Moreover, due to prevailing insecurity in areas controlled by the group, it has been impossible for the United Nations to verify more than 250 allegations of sexual violence. With respect to national security forces, most of the documented cases perpetrated by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo occurred in Ituri (106), where gang rape was used against women and girls presumed to support *Coopérative pour le développement du Congo*. Cases involving the Congolese National Police were often perpetrated in detention settings.

29. Progress was made in combating impunity, although structural challenges persisted. In 2021, military courts convicted 118 members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 28 members of the Congolese National Police and 10 members of armed groups for conflict-related sexual violence. The convictions included the sentencing, on 21 September, of Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki commander Chance Mihonya Kolokolo to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity, including murder and rape; the court also ordered him to pay \$358,000 to civil parties, including 17 victims of rape. Nonetheless, the reparations awarded have yet to be disbursed. Other alleged perpetrators of sexual violence were in some cases released without trial by military prosecutors. A Bwira faction commander, “Poyo” Bauma, was released shortly after his arrest in November, during an operation in Goma conducted by police forces. In October 2021, when a fighter of the Bwira faction of *Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové* (NDC-R) was arrested in North Kivu on robbery charges, MONUSCO intervened to advocate in order for charges of human rights abuses to be brought, providing relevant information. Moreover, the use of the Bwira faction of *Nduma défense du Congo-*

Rénové (NDC-R) by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as a proxy to fight armed groups, including APCLS-Janvier, *Collectif des mouvements pour le changement/Forces de défense du peuple* (CMC/FDP) and *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda* was reported (see [S/2021/560](#)). Protection risks were exacerbated for victims and witnesses, including those who participated in the trial which led to the conviction of the *Nduma défense du Congo* faction leader, Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka, and the victims of Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki leader, Kokodikoko, convicted in 2019. Still pending are the arrest warrants against known perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, notably NDC-R faction leader Guidon Shimiray Mwiswa, since 2019, and APCLS “General” Janvier Karairi Bwingo, since 2013.

30. Insecurity and poor infrastructure in health facilities hampered access to emergency assistance within the crucial 72-hour window after a sexual assault. Movement restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic continued to prevent survivors of sexual violence from gaining access to services, including for those who contracted HIV. In October, my Special Representative visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo to participate in a round table organized under the auspices of the Denise Nyakeru Tshisekedi Foundation, with the participation of survivors’ networks, to adopt a national policy framework on reparations, including the creation of a national reparations fund (see [S/2021/987](#)).

Recommendation

31. *I urge the authorities to accelerate the implementation of the 2019 addendum to the joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence and to redouble efforts to hold perpetrators accountable, as well as to adopt pending legislation, including on the provision of reparations for survivors. I welcome the launch of the national zero-tolerance campaign by the President to address sexual and gender-based violence and call for its full implementation.*

IRAQ



PHOTO UNICEF | ALESSIO ROMENZI

32. The reporting period saw a volatile security environment related to sporadic attacks by Da'esh cells. Conflict-related sexual violence committed by Da'esh between 2014 and 2017 continued to negatively affect survivors, while thousands reportedly remain in captivity. According to the Directorate of Yazidi Affairs of the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government, of the estimated 6,417 Yazidis who were abducted, 3,550 (1,206 women, 1,049 girls, 956 boys and 339 men) have been rescued and 2,763 remain missing (1,470 men and 1,293 women). These figures, however, do not include other affected groups, such as the Turkmen. In 2021, the United Nations verified six cases of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against girls who were between the ages of 13 and 17 years old at the time of their abduction and subsequent sexual enslavement in 2014 by Da'esh elements; all returned to Iraq from the Syrian Arab

Republic during the reporting period. Underreporting remains a major challenge owing to the fear of reprisals, family pressure not to report incidents and a lack of trust in law enforcement entities. Access to psychosocial support and mental health care remains a challenge given the low number of service providers. While survivors have been able to access some support, many still await critical medical treatment, including surgery, to address injuries sustained while in captivity.

33. On 23 October, the Council of Ministers issued instructions to guide the implementation of the landmark Law on Support to Female Yazidi Survivors adopted in March 2021. The law states that crimes committed against the Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian and Shabak communities amount to crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity and provides for reparations to, redress for and the rehabilitation of survivors into

society. It does not apply to other women and girls who also experienced sexual violence in the form of forced marriages to Da'esh members, nor does it address the issue of children born as a result of conflict-related rape. Owing to legal requirements related to identification documents, these children continue to be at risk of statelessness, rendering them vulnerable to human trafficking and recruitment by terrorist groups (see S/2022/77). In August, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs established a Directorate for Survivors Affairs in Ninawa Governorate, in anticipation of receiving applications for reparations in early 2022. The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant continued to collect, preserve and store evidence of Da'esh crimes, including by interviewing victims of and witnesses to sexual and gender-based crimes, such as sexual slavery.

Recommendation

34. *I welcome the enactment of the Law on Support to Female Yazidi Survivors and urge the Government to ensure its full implementation with adequate budgetary resources and in consultation with survivors. I encourage the Government to consider similar provisions relating to the children of survivors, including children born of conflict-related rape. In line with the 2016 joint communiqué to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence, I call upon the Government to ensure accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and safe access for survivors to multisectoral services.*

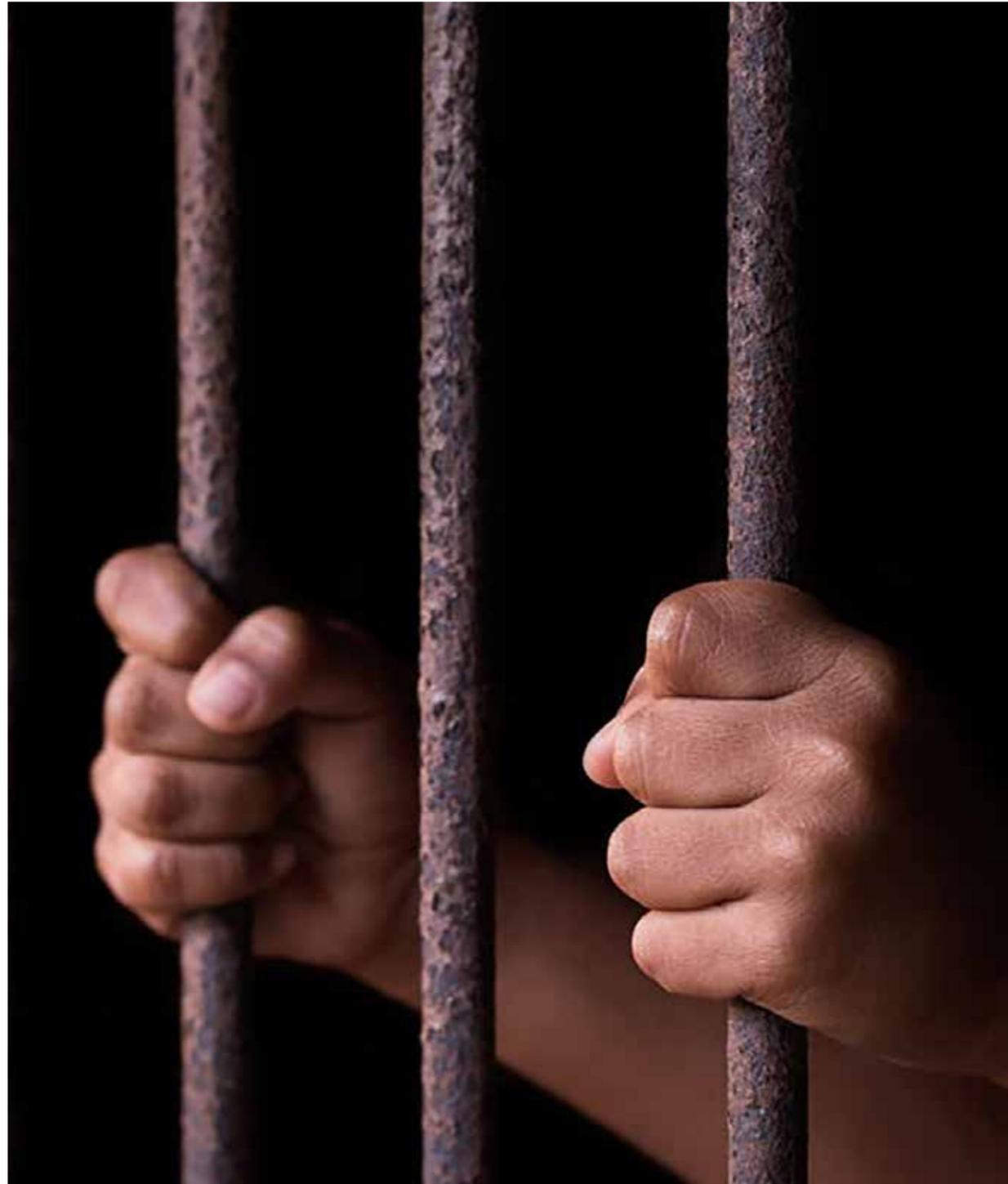


PHOTO | COBY JONES

LIBYA

35. The postponement of the elections that were to have been held on 24 December 2021 has strained the political process in Libya. Pervasive insecurity and the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons have allowed transnational smugglers, traffickers and armed groups to continue to perpetrate rape and sexual slavery with impunity, amid a deepening migration crisis. The use of gender-based hate speech and incitement to violence, including sexual violence, against women active in public life is concerning. The Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya reported that rights activists had been abducted and subjected to sexual violence in order to silence them (see [A/HRC/48/83](#)). Some survivors of sexual violence perpetrated by armed men decided not to lodge official complaints, owing to concerns for their security. Challenges to humanitarian access continued, including in detention centres. While the United Nations has been granted access to certain facilities in Tripoli and Benghazi, authorities have not permitted confidential interviews. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) verified 23 cases of conflict-related sexual violence, including rape and forced prostitution, perpetrated against 9 Libyan women and 14 migrant women, including from Cameroon, Somalia and the Sudan.

36. Threats and incidents of sexual violence persisted in detention centres. UNSMIL received reports of beatings and sexual violence, including rape, perpetrated by prison guards at the Jawwiyah detention centre in Misratah between 2015 and 2019. UNSMIL continued to receive reports of sexual violence perpetrated against detainees in the Mitiga prison under the control of the deterrence agency to combat terrorism and organized crime, formerly known as Special Deterrence Forces. In January 2021, migrant women initiated a hunger strike

in a detention centre to protest instances of abuse, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as prolonged and in some cases arbitrary detention with their children. Following advocacy by UNSMIL, 14 migrant women held in Judaydah prison were repatriated in March. The women had been subjected to sexual violence during their detention in multiple detention centres, following their capture as part of military operations against presumed Da'esh fighters. The Mission also documented the detention of 39 women, 34 boys and 25 girls, including nationals from Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, most of whom were detained for over five years, with some children having spent most of their lives in detention and some children born into it. While women and girls were particularly at risk, men and boys were not spared ([A/HRC/48/83](#)). Two men and one girl from the Sudan, two women from Cameroon and five girls from Somalia recounted that they were victims of sexual violence by traffickers, some of whom were State actors. Survivors in detention rarely receive emergency services during the crucial 72-hour window following an attack.

Recommendation

37. I call upon all parties to immediately cease all forms of sexual violence. I urge the authorities to grant the United Nations unrestricted access to detention facilities, as well as confidential interviews with detainees, to hold all perpetrators of sexual violence accountable, to scale up multisectoral assistance for survivors and to adopt legislation to end violence against women and to address trafficking in persons.

MALI



UNICEF PHOTO | MARIELLA FURRER

38. The situation in Mali is characterized by a political transition, which was prolonged by a new military coup in May, and the subsequent decision to extend the transition for five years, which resulted in the imposition of sanctions by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in early 2022. In this context, the intensification of violence by extremist groups, community-based armed groups and militias was deemed as an early warning indicator of increased conflict-related sexual violence. As a result, and despite significant underreporting owing to stigma, insecurity and constraints on humanitarian access, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 19 women, 24 girls and 4 men. The majority of perpetrators are members of unidentified armed groups as well as dozo traditional hunters, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and armed smugglers. Members of the Malian Defence and Security Forces were also implicated. For instance, in October 2021, a woman was allegedly gang-raped by 12 members of the Malian Defence and Security Forces at a military camp in the town of Mopti (see S/2021/1117). The incidents occurred in Gao, Ménaka, Mopti, Ségou and Timbuktu Regions, and included cases of rape, gang rape, attempted rape, forced marriage, abduction and other forms of sexual assault.

39. The United Nations continued to support the authorities in addressing conflict-related sexual violence, resulting in the validation of a national action plan for the implementation of the 2019 joint communiqué. A total of 10 one-stop-centres were established in existing health facilities in

Bamako, Kayes, Koulikoro, Ségou and Sikasso Regions. Furthermore, a memorandum of understanding was signed by MINUSMA and the Malian police for the integration of modules on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence within the curriculum of the national police academy. However, access to justice continues to be a major challenge, including the lack of reparations for victims of sexual violence. Significant delays in judicial processes were observed in relation to sexual violence. Still pending are eight complaints filed by victims' legal representatives, involving 197 victims of conflict-related sexual violence committed in northern Mali in 2012 and 2013. The United Nations supported Malian judicial authorities in prioritizing three of these pending emblematic cases, comprising six complaints involving a total of 146 victims. In July, authorities adopted a policy on reparations. However, the policy has not been accompanied by a clear implementation plan. Similarly, the reform of the penal and criminal procedure codes supported by the United Nations, which includes provisions related to victims and witnesses, is yet to be adopted.

Recommendation

40. I urge the authorities to fully implement the joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence and its action plan, as well as to promptly implement the reparation policy, reform the penal and criminal procedure codes, prioritize the prosecution of pending cases of conflict-related sexual violence and ensure comprehensive assistance for survivors.

PHOTO IRIN | STEFANIE GLINSKI



MYANMAR

41. In February 2021, the military takeover resulted in an escalation of conflict and shrinking civic space. Disturbing reports of widespread and systematic sexual violence have since emerged. Moreover, armed conflict has persisted, exacerbating the risks of sexual violence, resulting in more than 441,500 people newly displaced

since February 2021, with many fleeing to neighbouring countries. This is in addition to the 370,400 people who remain in protracted displacement in Chin, Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States, and the more than 900,000 Rohingya refugees living in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

42. In response to protests and the emergence of the civil disobedience movement, the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police used excessive force, including sexual violence, against protesters and journalists. Women, including health-care professionals and teachers, who have played prominent leadership roles within the movement, were targeted. In detention settings, to which humanitarian access has been denied, the Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police have reportedly used tactics including arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and sexual violence, including rape, gang rape, threats of rape and penetration with objects. Sexual harassment and violence against transgender individuals has also been reported. During armed clashes between the Tatmadaw and associated militias, ethnic armed organizations and the newly formed civilian people's defence forces, reports of sexual violence dramatically increased. The United Nations verified one incident of sexual violence by Tatmadaw soldiers against a child. Two other incidents disclosed by survivors involved multiple accounts of gang rape allegedly by Tatmadaw soldiers in Chin State, in front of family members, resulting in unwanted pregnancies in both cases.

43. Frontline service provision was disrupted as health-care facilities were raided and hospitals occupied by the military, leading to the collapse of the public health-care system and impeding access to post-rape care and sexual and reproductive services. Frequent telecommunications shutdowns have hindered access to helplines and other support services. Furthermore, while the Government disseminated a national action plan to

implement the 2018 joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence, the plan does not adequately reflect a survivor-centred approach and was finalized without consultation with the United Nations since late 2019. Legal professionals faced increased constraints, as the de facto authorities amended the 2016 Legal Aid Law, thereby ending the provision of legal aid during pretrial detention. Owing to the erosion of the rule of law, traditional justice mechanisms have expanded to fill the vacuum, particularly in areas where ethnic armed organizations operate. Moreover, as part of an overall amnesty approach, a number of prisoners, including those convicted of sexual violence, were released.

44. In Cox's Bazar, Rohingya refugees, who are unable to formally engage in employment opportunities, are vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation. Cases of sexual violence referred to male camp leaders are often handled through traditional mechanisms, with a high risk of victims being forced to marry perpetrators. While gaps in services have been identified for groups with diverse needs, including for persons with disabilities, male survivors and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex individuals, the United Nations has continued to provide multisectoral assistance in the camps.

Recommendation

45. *I call upon the parties to immediately cease all acts of sexual violence and reiterate my calls for immediate and unconstrained humanitarian access to affected populations.*

SOMALIA

46. Protracted conflict continued to expose civilians to heightened risks of sexual violence. Al-Shabaab continued to subjugate areas under its de facto control, with girls being abducted, raped and forcibly married to Al-Shabaab elements when their families were unable to meet extortion demands. Structural gender inequality, compounded by insecurity and limited access to justice, rendered displaced women and girls particularly vulnerable. Furthermore, weak State authority, clan protection for alleged perpetrators and victim-blaming contributed to severe underreporting. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) verified incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, most of which were incidents of gang rape, affecting 19 women, 13 girls and 1 man. As part of monitoring grave violations against children, the United Nations also verified incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence affecting 306 girls and 1 boy. Most incidents were attributed to unidentified perpetrators, Al-Shabaab and clan militia. Government security and police forces, as well as Puntland forces and Jubbaland forces, were also implicated. In March, a Puntland Police Force officer allegedly raped a woman at gunpoint. A female police officer was assaulted and beaten by four other officers and her commander, who accused her of interfering in the investigation of sexual violence cases.

47. In January 2022, the Government adopted a national action plan to implement the joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence, though delays persist in enacting adequate legislation to prevent and address sexual violence. With the support of UNSOM, Jubbaland authorities conducted a consultative workshop with religious leaders and clan elders on the Sexual Offences Bill, at which concerns were expressed regarding the age of marital consent. In May, the Government finalized a policy on human rights, urging compliance by the armed forces with the prohibition of sexual violence under international law. Arrests of members of the security forces and civilians led to convictions in at least 16 cases, including for rape and gang rape. In 2021, the United Nations supported one-stop centres, such as the Baahikoob Centre in Somaliland, which has provided support to 226 survivors of rape.

Recommendation

48. *I urge the Government to accelerate the adoption of the Sexual Offences Bill of 2018. I commend the Government's efforts to finalize a national action plan to implement the joint communiqué on ending sexual violence in conflict and call upon the authorities to implement the policy on human rights adopted by the Ministry of Defence.*

PHOTO UNICEF | KAREL PRINSLOO



SOUTH SUDAN



PHOTO UNICEF | SEBASTIAN RICH

49. While the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities continued to hold in most of the country, clashes among parties to the conflict and splinter groups persisted, further exposing civilians to sexual violence and causing mass displacement. Ongoing clashes between the National Salvation Front and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Central Equatoria resulted in grave human rights violations, including conflict-related sexual violence. Subnational violence in Western Equatoria, Warrap, Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area increased among factions; violence in Tambura County, Western Equatoria alone has provoked the displacement of 80,000 civilians since June. Furthermore, despite modest progress with respect to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, signed in 2018, delays in implementing the transitional security arrangements, in particular the graduation and redeployment of the unified forces, exacerbated the overall climate of insecurity.

50. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) documented 194 cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 130 women, 35 girls, 28 men and 1 boy. A further 20 cases, which occurred between 2018 and 2020, affecting 15 women, 4 girls and 1 man, were also verified in 2021. Some attacks occurred during or on the margins of military operations. Perpetrators included non-State actors, including organized armed groups, civil defence groups and other armed elements. Government security forces were also implicated: 33 per cent of incidents were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, and another 14 per cent to the South Sudan National Police Service and the National Security Service. Some 5 per cent of incidents were attributed to the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO). The National Salvation Front was implicated

in 3 per cent of the incidents. Civil defence groups now account for 32 per cent of reported cases. The remaining cases involve actors such as former SPLA-IO elements who defected to join the Government's forces, accounting for 1 per cent, and 12 per cent attributed to unidentified armed men. The majority of incidents took place in the greater Equatoria region, greater Upper Nile and greater Bahr el-Ghazal and were perpetrated against civilians ranging between 2 and 60 years of age; most were subjected to rape, attempted rape or gang rape, with reports of forced nudity, threats of sexual violence, sexual slavery, sexualized torture and forced marriage also received. Lactating mothers and pregnant women were among the victims, as were internally displaced persons and individuals with disabilities.

51. Survivors faced reprisals and pressure to settle sexual violence cases through traditional means. To facilitate service provision, a one-stop centre was established in Unity State in 2021 with the support of the United Nations, in addition to the 12 existing centres. The centres have bolstered the provision of services, including medical assistance, psychological support, legal aid and referrals for livelihood support. In Western Equatoria, as part of a project initiated by UNMISS, 40 women and girls who survived rape, gang rape and sexual slavery perpetrated by SPLA-IO received medical services and psychosocial support. Internal disputes and factions deepened among the parties, in part due to the delayed graduation and redeployment of the unified forces; some 53,000 government and opposition forces are in cantonment and training sites, without salary or food. Nonetheless, to consolidate the respective action plans of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLA-IO on conflict-related sexual violence, on 19 June, the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs launched a three-year action plan for the armed forces on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan. The establishment of a joint implementation committee to monitor the plan, composed of senior officials of the Government and opposition forces, is

encouraging, as is the inclusion of the action plan as a benchmark against which the Government is expected to report in the context of Security Council resolution 2577 (2021). UNMISS supported training initiatives for the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the South Sudan National Police Service and SPLA-IO focusing on prevention and response to sexual violence, as well as command responsibility. The Mission also continued to engage with non-signatory parties of the peace agreement, including members of the National Salvation Front, on the basis of the unilateral communiqué on preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued recommendations encouraging the implementation of the joint communiqué to address conflict-related sexual violence, the reinforcement of the judicial system and the fight against impunity, particularly within the wider security sector, with international assistance, including from the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (see CEDAW/C/SSD/CO/1). Civilian courts in Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States convicted one member of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and four members of the South Sudan National Police Service personnel for rape and gang rape. In Central Equatoria, protective measures for victims and witnesses are lacking, and the fear of reprisals continued to inhibit the reporting of these violations.

Recommendation

52. *I urge the authorities to implement the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, of 2018, including the security arrangements, particularly those related to the unification of forces. I further call for the full implementation of the action plan for the armed forces on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan. I reiterate my calls to guarantee the protection and participation of women human rights defenders in all political and peacebuilding processes.*

THE SUDAN



PHOTO IRIN | GIOVANNI DIFFIDENTI

53. The coup of 25 October triggered mass demonstrations that were marked by the excessive use of force, including killings and the use of sexual violence by security forces. Widespread insecurity and intercommunal violence in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile continued to generate mass population displacement, further exposing women and girls to conflict-related sexual violence. In 2021, the United Nations documented 61 cases of conflict-related sexual violence, affecting 30 women, 29 girls and 2 boys. Among the cases, 76 per cent were attributed to elements of the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW), the Sudan Liberation Army/Peace and Development (SLA/PD), which is a splinter group of SLA/AW, armed nomads and unknown armed men. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces were also involved. Between July and August, armed clashes between SLA/AW and government forces in Sortony, North Darfur, resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, mass displacement and the rape of eight women, presumably by the Sudanese Armed Forces and SLA/PD elements. In December, despite

the signing of “non-aggression” agreements by Arab, Misseriya Jebel and Masalit communities, localized violence resulted in the killing of 148 persons and the displacement of thousands of civilians. Three women were reportedly raped by armed men during these clashes in Jebel Moon and could not seek immediate medical or psychosocial support owing to the widespread violence in the area. In the Jebel Marra area, where incidents of conflict-related sexual violence were reported, humanitarian access was limited owing to the deteriorating security situation.

54. Following the military coup in October, mass protests erupted across the country, with numerous protesters injured and killed. On 19 December, serious allegations of rape and gang rape against women, girls and boys by elements of the security forces were documented by the United Nations. Most of the incidents occurred close to the Republican Palace, where protesters attempted a sit-in that was violently dispersed by the security forces. Nine cases of rape were documented in the context of the protests.

While four survivors filed judicial complaints and sought immediate medical assistance, others opted not to, owing to stigma and the fear of reprisals. In response, my Special Representative, in a statement on 23 December 2021, called for the immediate and complete cessation of sexual violence, for the authorities to ensure survivors’ access to medical, legal and psychosocial support and for the immediate launch of an independent and thorough investigation.

55. Impunity remains the norm. Out of 29 reported incidents of sexual violence against children, only six have resulted in the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators. The United Nations documented cases where parents of survivors refused to report cases of rape, as a result of coercion by security agents to settle cases of rape out of court, including by marrying child survivors to the perpetrators or paying a fee to the survivor’s parents. Access to life-saving services, including case management, clinical management of rape, psychosocial support, safe spaces and legal aid, were unavailable in 75 per cent of localities in conflict-

affected states. During the reporting period, the Sudan ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. However, the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women remains pending. In August 2021, the Cabinet passed a bill to join the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Ministry of Justice signed a cooperation agreement with the International Criminal Court to exchange information on certain cases. In April 2021, the law establishing the Transitional Justice Commission was adopted, which includes provisions for reparations to victims of gross human rights violations, including sexual violence. While the implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians is ongoing, the joint security-keeping force for Darfur has yet to be deployed, due to persistent delays in the implementation of the security arrangements of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. The Unit for Combating Violence against Women of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development advanced in the drafting of a law on combating violence against women, with the support of the United Nations, however, the law has not yet been adopted.

Recommendation

56. *I call upon the authorities to accelerate the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, especially the security arrangements, to foster a protective environment and to ensure that no amnesty is granted for conflict-related sexual violence. I urge the authorities to expedite the implementation of the framework of cooperation to address conflict-related sexual violence, with support from the United Nations. I further call upon the authorities to thoroughly investigate allegations of sexual violence during protests and hold perpetrators accountable.*

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

57. As the conflict reached its eleventh year, civilians continue to be disproportionately affected by insecurity, severe humanitarian needs and a deepening economic crisis. Parties have continued to perpetrate sexual violence, and in the case of Da'esh, violations were characterized by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic as having been meted out "with deliberate genocidal intent" (see [A/HRC/46/55](#)). The Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic also documented conflict-related sexual violence, including in detention settings. Former detainees often continue to experience violence after their release, as women and girls are often rejected by their families or targeted for "honour killings". Displaced women and girls faced heightened risks of sexual violence. Some remain in displacement camps owing to the fear of further exposure to sexual violence, by militias or armed groups, if they attempt to return to their communities of origin. Survivors of rape reported being detained while seeking assistance at a medical centre, in some instances together with their newborn babies. Reliable data on conflict-related sexual violence remain difficult to obtain owing to access constraints, prevailing insecurity, the fear of reprisals by perpetrators and the lack of services. The United Nations verified four cases of sexual violence against Yazidi girls kidnapped in 2014 in Iraq by Da'esh and held in captivity until 2019; the girls returned to Iraq in June 2021.

58. Forced and early marriage, which has become a coping mechanism in the face of protracted conflict and economic hardship, remains a significant risk for girls as young as 10 years old. Women and girls continued to be at risk of sexual violence including at checkpoints, schools, workplaces and markets. Despite the demands of survivors, safe spaces remained limited, as did overall access to essential services for displaced women and girls. In 2021, two Yazidi survivors returned to Iraq, leaving four children, born of rape during sexual enslavement by Da'esh, in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Recommendation

59. *I reiterate my calls upon all parties to end sexual violence, hold perpetrators accountable and facilitate humanitarian access throughout the country to ensure the provision of multisectoral services.*



YEMEN

60. After seven years of hostilities, two thirds of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance. Displacement, economic desperation and collapsed rule of law institutions have created an environment in which women and girls are exposed to conflict-related sexual violence. Law enforcement agencies struggle to investigate and prosecute cases of gender-based violence, closing avenues for justice and redress (see [A/HRC/48/20](#)). Sexual violence is severely underreported owing to stigma, harmful social norms related to honour, shame and victim-blaming, the fear of reprisals and limited humanitarian access, all of which also impede service delivery. Against this backdrop, the United Nations documented 11 cases of sexual violence, against six boys and five girls.

61. The Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen continued to document cases of women and girls arbitrarily detained and sexually abused by the Houthis in secret detention facilities in and around Sana'a between 2017 and 2019 ([A/HRC/48/20](#)). Detained individuals were often accused of prostitution, immorality, espionage and affiliation with enemy groups. Politically active women and women activists and their families faced threats and insecurity, including sexual violence. The Panel of Experts on Yemen collected evidence of a policy of targeting politically active women by the Houthis (see [S/2022/50](#)). Such attacks continue to be perpetrated, despite the sanctions imposed by the Security Council, through its resolution [2564 \(2021\)](#), on Sultan Saleh Aida Aida Zabin (Yei 006), the former director of the Criminal Investigation Department, for overseeing and using sexual violence as a tool to torture and



UNICEF PHOTO | SALEH BAHOLIS

humiliate politically active women. According to the Panel of Experts, former detainees are labelled “prison graduates” by the population, and often excluded from public life. The stigma of arrest and detention is compounded by the widespread perception that women are sexually assaulted while held in secret detention sites. The Houthis have also used detention for the purposes of humiliation, indoctrination and torture, including through sexual violence. The Panel of Experts also describes, in its report, the involvement of female Zainabiyat guards in the so called “purification” of female detainees through mandatory participation in “indoctrination lectures”, under threat of violence, including of a sexual nature (see [S/2022/50](#)).

Recommendation

62. *I urge all parties to the conflict to adopt commitments to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence and allow safe and unimpeded humanitarian access. I reiterate my calls to guarantee the protection and participation of women human rights defenders and activists in all political, social, economic and peacebuilding processes.*



IV. ADDRESSING CRIMES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS

63. In the Western Balkans, although a reparation scheme is in place in Bosnia and Herzegovina for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, almost 30 years after the end of conflict, insufficient progress has been made in issuing reparations. Orders to pay compensation are rarely enforced, with perpetrators often insolvent or hiding assets. Witness protection measures for civil proceedings remain inadequate or non-existent, and legal and psychosocial support is limited. Victims who initiated civil proceedings in order to receive compensation from the Republika Srpska are ordered to pay court fees if they lose their cases, which has a chilling effect on the pursuit of justice.

64. In Nepal, 16 years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in 2006, accountability for conflict-related sexual violence remains limited and survivors continue to face barriers in gaining access to services, justice and reparations. Despite the appointment in 2020 of commissioners to head the two transitional justice commissions, minimal progress has been made in conducting detailed investigation into the 66,147 complaints of human rights violations. The second national action plan on women and peace and security, which reflects the concerns of survivors of

sexual violence, female fighters and children born of wartime rape, is pending endorsement.

65. In Sri Lanka, following the formal withdrawal of the Government's co-sponsorship of Human Rights Council resolution 30/1, with a view to developing a domestically-driven approach to reconciliation and accountability, there has been a lack of substantive progress in the investigation of cases of conflict-related sexual violence. The truth commission has not been established to date and ongoing judicial proceedings have favoured military intelligence officers. In March 2021, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 46/1 to strengthen the collection and preservation of evidence for future accountability processes.

Recommendation

66. *I call upon the Governments of countries undergoing post-conflict transitional justice processes to accelerate the delivery of justice and accountability, including reparations and redress, for survivors and their children. I further encourage Governments to support reconciliation and memorialization efforts and to involve survivors in the delivery and design of such efforts.*

V. OTHER SITUATIONS OF CONCERN

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ETHIOPIA

67. Since the start of the conflict in November 2020 in Tigray, and the subsequent spreading of conflict in July 2021 to the Afar and Amhara regions, incidents of extreme brutality targeting civilians have continued to be reported. These violations were frequently perpetrated as a tactic to dehumanize and degrade adversaries. All parties to the conflict, including the Ethiopian National Defence Forces, the Eritrean Defence Forces, the Tigray Special Forces and militias, and the Amhara Special Forces, have been implicated.

68. Owing to humanitarian access constraints, ongoing insecurity and a lack of services to address gender-based violence, the information documented does not capture the full scale and magnitude of violations. However, the United Nations and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission conducted a joint investigation covering the period from November 2020 to June 2021, with the subsequent report acknowledged by the Government of Ethiopia, and a number of the report's recommendations being identified for implementation. The report documented different forms of sexual violence including rape, gang rape, oral and anal rape, insertion of foreign objects into the vagina and intentional transmission of HIV. The survivors came from different parts of Tigray including Mekele, Samre, Maychew, Mekoni, Bora, Addis Alem, Wukro, Adi Hageray, Shire, Tembien, Adet, Shimebba and Sheraro.

69. The investigation detailed incidents of sexual violence against women

and girls for their perceived, alleged or actual association with parties to the conflict. The report notes that Tigrayan women and girls, particularly those with family members in the Tigray Special Forces, were subjected to targeted sexual violence. Similarly, the Tigray Special Forces and militias targeted women and girls for rape as a result of their perceived association with the Ethiopian National Defence Forces. For instance, a rape survivor witnessed the killing of two women married to soldiers of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces, after cell phones they had hidden were discovered. She stated that three soldiers of the Tigray Special Forces warned her not to do the same and gang raped her until she was left unconscious. The Government of Ethiopia also noted, in its response to the report, cases of sexual violence committed by the Tigray Special Forces against female members of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces. A survivor from Adi Hageray seeking assistance, for herself and an infant, was raped by two soldiers of the Tigray Special Forces, five times, after being lured to a shop by another woman. In another incident, a young woman was taken with her minor sister to an Eritrean Defence Forces camp, where 27 soldiers raped her. She reported that there were other women detained in the camp and indicated she became pregnant and contracted HIV as a result of the multiple rapes. Sexual violence against women and girls fleeing the conflict was documented, and displaced women and girls have been unable to access services in western Tigray, where few humanitarian actors operate. The joint investigation found

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that persons with disabilities and the elderly were among the victims. A female survivor with a physical disability was separated from her 8-year-old brother and her mother and was raped near her residence by a person she identified as a soldier of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces. An elderly, visually impaired woman was shot dead by soldiers of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces after being detained in a room for three days while her daughter was raped by three Ethiopian National Defence Forces soldiers in a room close by. The report noted that an adolescent boy was raped by nine Eritrean Defence Forces soldiers in Himora and later committed suicide. The joint investigation concluded that there are reasonable grounds to believe that violations of international humanitarian and human rights law related to sexual violence, including rape, have been committed by all parties to the conflict, requiring further investigation.

70. Since the start of the conflict, an increase in demand for services to address gender-based violence has been reported. Around Tigray, 1,324 visits to service centres by survivors were registered. Yet, the availability of services remains limited, owing to insecurity and restrictions. Survivors detailed the consequences of sexual violence, including trauma, unwanted pregnancies and HIV. With the support of the United Nations, six one-stop centres and three rehabilitation safe houses were opened in Tigray, as well as two in Afar and three in Amhara. The Government of Ethiopia acknowledged the joint investigation report as an important document that complements ongoing efforts to provide redress to victims, ensure accountability

and take preventive measures, and as a follow-up to its recommendations, established an Inter-Ministerial Task Force, with a subcommittee focusing on sexual and gender-based violence and an investigation and prosecution team to deploy to concerned regions to gather evidence. A total of 31 trials have been initiated to prosecute cases of sexual violence involving members of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces, with 10 individuals convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 10 years to 25 years, and with one suspect acquitted. My Special Representative has engaged extensively with the Ethiopian authorities on a framework of cooperation as a structured basis for a comprehensive response to these violations, but regrettably this agreement has not yet been finalized.

Recommendation

71. *I urge the Government to adopt a framework of cooperation to address conflict-related sexual violence with my Special Representative in order to support the provision of services to survivors and facilitate the investigation and prosecution of crimes of sexual violence, as part of strengthening ongoing efforts to implement the recommendations of the joint investigation. I further urge all parties to immediately cease all forms of sexual violence, in compliance with international law and relevant Security Council resolutions.*

NIGERIA



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72. Protracted conflict and entrenched gender-based inequality continued to drive sexual violence in north-east Nigeria, which continued to be a major protection concern for women and girls. During the reporting period, 601 incidents of sexual violence were documented, affecting 326 girls and 275 women. Of the reported cases, 80 per cent constituted rape and 5 per cent were sexual slavery. In 2021, large defections took place from Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups, attributed to ongoing counter-insurgency operations, as well as internal divisions within the groups. Among those escaping were women and children, including former abductees. In response, two transit centres, supported by the United Nations, were opened in Borno State, in addition to the Bulunkutu transit centre. The United Nations also facilitated access to medical care, psychosocial and livelihood support, and legal assistance for survivors through seven one-stop centres

and three shelters in the north-east. A specialized unit of the Office of the Attorney General continued to investigate and prosecute crimes committed by Boko Haram factions, although no cases of sexual violence have been prosecuted in the context of terrorism to date, as those are handled by subnational authorities.

Recommendation

73. *I urge the authorities to strengthen service provision and referral pathways for addressing gender-based violence for women and girls who have escaped from situations of abduction by Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups, and to prioritize the prosecution of crimes of sexual violence, including in counter-terrorism cases.*

74. The findings in the present report illustrate the urgent need for enhanced investment by the international community to break the vicious cycle of sexual violence and impunity. The work of the Security Council in enforcing compliance by State and non-State actors with the series of resolutions on conflict-related sexual violence adopted since 2008 has helped to raise the cost of what has long been perceived as the cheapest weapon of war. Nonetheless, renewed political and financial support by national, regional and international actors is required to tackle the root causes and prevent conflict-related sexual violence in the first instance. The following recommendations therefore focus on prevention and should be read in conjunction with those presented in my previous reports.

75. I RECOMMEND THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL:

- (a) Call upon all parties to conflict to immediately cease all forms of conflict-related sexual violence in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and to ensure unimpeded access for humanitarian actors and human rights monitors to military bases, cantonment sites and detention centres;
- (b) Ensure that sexual violence is incorporated as a stand-alone designation criterion for targeted sanctions, including the imposition of travel and visa bans, the freezing of assets and other financial resources so as to ensure that there are no safe havens for perpetrators and to curtail the financial revenues of armed groups from trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation; ensure that sanctions committees have expertise on conflict-related sexual violence and that they continue to invite my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict for relevant briefings, including prior to official visits; ensure that decisions related to humanitarian carve-outs and exemptions duly take into account gender considerations; and consider applying sanctions to perpetrators who have appeared in the lists included in

the annexes to my annual reports for five years or more without taking remedial or corrective action;

- (c) Reflect the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence in mandate authorizations and renewals of peace operations through the inclusion of specific operational provisions on risk mitigation measures and early warning;
- (d) Support the accelerated deployment of women's protection advisers to peace operations and offices of United Nations resident and humanitarian coordinators in all relevant situations of concern, in order to support engagement with parties to the conflict, risk mitigation measures, behavioural change and prevention frameworks to address the factors that drive conflict-related sexual violence;
- (e) Encourage all State and non-State parties to conflict to adopt time-bound commitments to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence, and monitor their compliance, including through the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security;
- (f) Consider referring to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court situations in which crimes of sexual violence, as defined in its Statute, appear to have been committed;
- (g) Give due consideration to the early warning signs of sexual violence in its monitoring of global crises, especially in contexts of rising militarization, unconstitutional changes of power, terrorism, gender-based hate speech, widespread insecurity, electoral violence, political instability, intercommunal tensions and mass displacement, and take appropriate and timely action; and ensure relevant regional mechanisms are represented in Security Council meetings;
- (h) Ensure adequate consultations with women-led organizations and service providers on the risk and occurrence of conflict-related sexual violence during its periodic field visits, so as to contribute to an enabling environment for protection; give due consideration to dedicated thematic visits on conflict-related sexual violence to situations on the agenda of the Security Council, with the aim of mitigating risks of sexual violence and fostering prevention;
- (i) Ensure that peace operations integrate efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence and gender-responsive analysis, including with the deployment of dedicated expertise, at the earliest stages of transition planning processes, in coordination with resident coordinators, United Nations country teams, host States and civil society organizations;
- (j) Give due consideration to deepening the knowledge base on conflict-related sexual violence by mandating the Office of my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to produce thematic reports on emerging issues.

76. I ENCOURAGE MEMBER STATES, DONORS AND REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

(a) To adopt a survivor-centred approach to preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence that recognizes that survivors are unique individuals and seeks to empower them by prioritizing their different needs, perspectives and aspirations, and that pays attention to intersecting inequalities, namely, ethnicity, religion, migratory status, disabilities, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity, and HIV status, among others; to ensure that survivors' rights are respected, that they are treated with dignity, and that their capacity to make informed decisions and to guide interventions to prevent future incidents is promoted;

(b) To reform discriminatory laws and enhance protection, investigation and prosecution, including through the training of investigators, prosecutors and corrections officers; to develop national forensic facilities that contribute to more effective investigations; to promote transformative, gender-responsive reparations and ensure that all efforts are guided by the principles of security, confidentiality and informed consent; to encourage the use of the Model Legislative Provisions and Guidance on the Investigation and Prosecution of Conflict-related Sexual Violence in order to support legislative reform on conflict-related sexual violence; and to ensure the exclusion of sexual and gender-based violence crimes from general amnesties and statutes of limitations;

(c) To ensure a gender-responsive security sector, increase the representation of women in national forces and establish and deploy units specialized in the response to sexual violence; to establish safeguards, through vetting, so as to prevent presumed perpetrators from being recruited, retained or promoted within the security forces; to ensure predeployment training of personnel from troop- and police-contributing countries on conflict-related sexual violence, including on early warning and risk mitigation;

(d) To prevent the resurgence of conflict, by integrating gender analysis and training into disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes so as to mitigate the impacts of sexual violence, and refer survivors to services;

(e) To ensure that operational provisions and expertise on prohibiting and addressing sexual violence inform the design and implementation of peace, ceasefire, cessation of hostilities and/or subsequent agreements, in line with the Guidance for Mediators: Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements (2012), and subsequent policies;

(f) To protect politically active women, including women human rights defenders, journalists and peacebuilders and those working directly on conflict-related sexual violence from any form of reprisals and ensure those risks are duly addressed and perpetrators prosecuted; and to ensure protection measures and timely responses for civilians at imminent risk of conflict-related sexual violence, including those in detention, displacement or migration settings;

(g) To enhance human security and public health investment by channelling resources from military spending to multisectoral services, including HIV prevention, and the response to victims of conflict-related sexual violence;

(h) To foster an enabling environment for victims/survivors to seek support, to provide accessible and quality multisectoral assistance, including sexual and reproductive care, access to emergency contraception and safe abortion care, as well as psychosocial and legal services;

(i) To implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Arms Trade Treaty and other instruments so as to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (see [S/2021/839](#));

(j) To implement the platform of recommendations pertaining to women and girls who become pregnant as a result of sexual violence in conflict and children born of such violence, as outlined in my special report ([S/2022/77](#));

(k) To mitigate the risks of sexual violence associated with livelihood activities, by building community resilience and ensuring that women and victims/survivors of conflict-related sexual violence have safe access to employment and socioeconomic reintegration, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals;

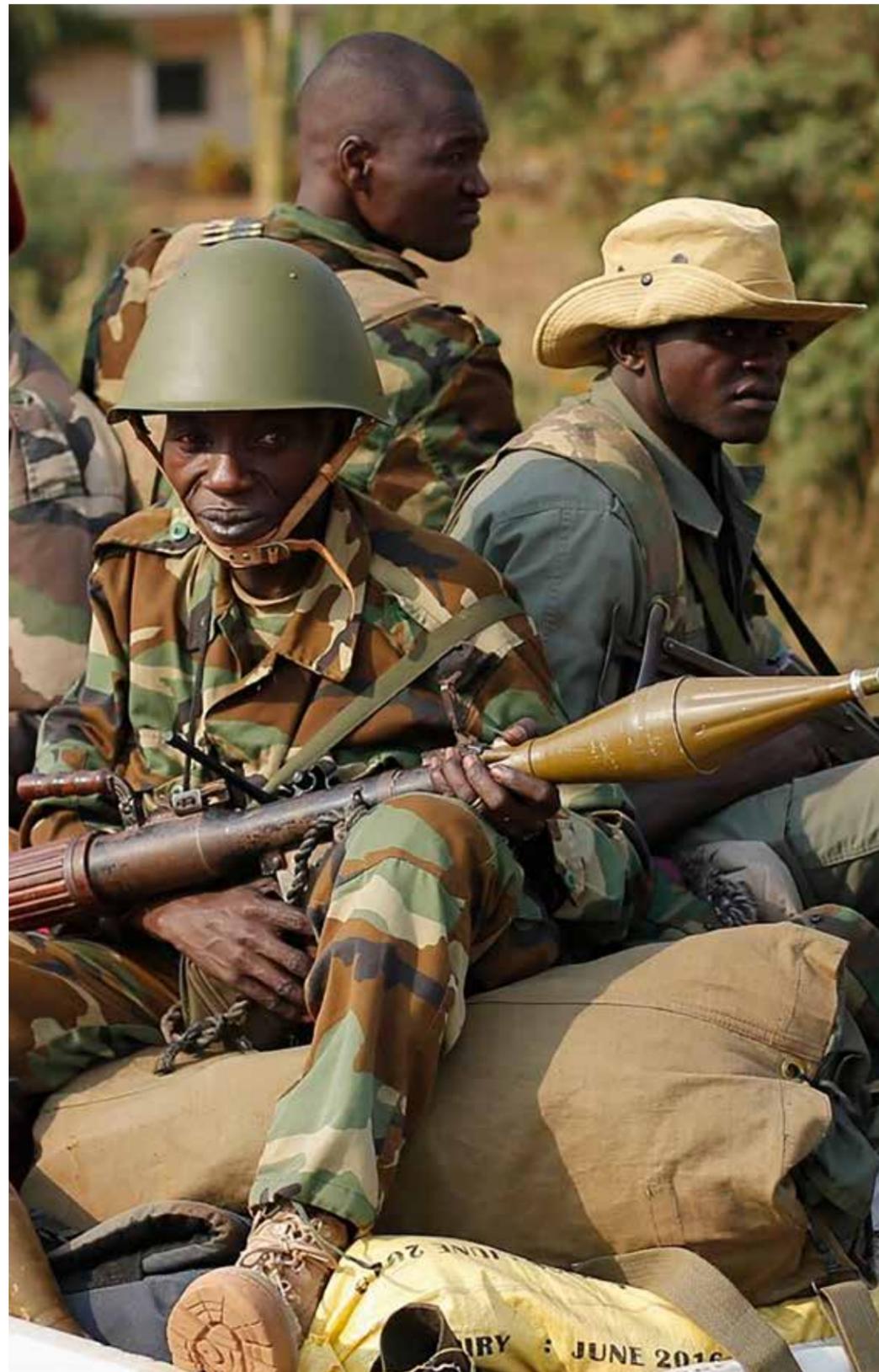
(l) To tackle the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence, including structural gender inequality and harmful social norms that lead to the stigmatization and discrimination of survivors, by promoting women's leadership in political, peacemaking, security and rule of law institutions, as well as by engaging with faith-based, traditional and community leaders, the media and women's organizations so as to promote attitudinal and social change; and to engage with and identify champions for community mobilization;

(m) To ensure that the next generation of national action plans on women and peace and security, as well as related regional and local action plans, include budgeted operational provisions relating to the structural prevention of conflict-related sexual violence;

(n) To address chronic funding shortfalls for preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence by providing predictable financial support to the conflict-related sexual violence multi-partner trust fund for the work of the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict network; and to draw on the expertise of the United Nations system in the areas of justice and the rule of law by supporting the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict.

ANNEX

LIST OF PARTIES CREDIBLY SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING OR BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR PATTERNS OF RAPE OR OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON THE AGENDA OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL



VOA

The following list does not purport to be comprehensive, but rather includes parties in relation to which credible information is available. It should be noted that the names of countries appear only to indicate the locations where parties are suspected of committing violations.

PARTIES IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

1. Non-State actors:
 - a) Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC) – former President François Bozizé; Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation – General Bobbo; Anti-balaka Mokom-Maxime Mokom; Anti-balaka Ngaissona-Dieudonné Ndomate; Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique – Noureddine Adam and Zone Commander Mahamat Salleh; Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique – Mahamat Al-Khatim; Union pour la paix en Centrafrique-Ali Darrassa;
 - (b) Lord's Resistance Army;
 - (c) Ex-Séléka factions;
 - (d) Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain – Abdoulaye Miskine;
 - (e) Révolution et justice.
2. State actors:
 - National armed forces.*¹

* Indicates that the party has made formal commitments to adopt measures to address conflict-related sexual violence.



PARTIES IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

1. Non-State actors:
 - (a) Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain-Janvier;
 - (b) Allied Democratic Forces;
 - (c) Bana Mura militias;
 - (d) Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda;
 - (e) Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri;
 - (f) Lord's Resistance Army;
 - (g) Nduma défense du Congo;
 - (h) Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové faction led by "General" Guidon Shimiray Mwiswa and faction led by Commander Gilbert Bwira Shuo and Deputy Commander Fidel Malik Mapenzi;
 - (i) Mai-Mai Kifuafua;
 - (j) Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki;
 - (k) Mai-Mai Apa Na Pale;
 - (l) Mai-Mai Malaika;
 - (m) Mai-Mai Yakutumba;
 - (n) Nyatura;
 - (o) Coopérative pour le développement du Congo;
 - (p) Twa militias;
 - (q) Union des patriotes pour la défense des citoyens;
 - (r) Forces patriotiques populaires-armée du peuple.
2. State actors:
 - (a) Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;*
 - (b) Congolese National Police.*¹

* Indicates that the party has made formal commitments to adopt measures to address conflict-related sexual violence.

PARTIES IN IRAQ

1. Non-State actors:
 - Da'esh.





PARTIES IN MALI

1. Non-State actors:
 - (a) Mouvement national de libération de l’Azawad, part of Coordination des mouvements de l’Azawad;*
 - (b) Ansar Eddine;
 - (c) Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, part of Jama’a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al Muslimin;
 - (d) Groupe d’autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés, part of Plateforme des mouvements du 14 juin 2014 d’Alger.*

PHOTOS| CREATIVECOMMONS



PARTIES IN MYANMAR

1. State actors:
 - Tatmadaw, including integrated Border Guard.*

PARTIES IN SOMALIA

1. Non-State actors:
 - Al-Shabaab.
2. State actors:
 - a) Somali National Army;*
 - (b) Somali Police Force* (and allied militia);
 - (c) Puntland forces.



PARTIES IN SOUTH SUDAN

1. Non-State actors:
 - (a) Lord’s Resistance Army;
 - (b) Justice and Equality Movement;
 - (c) Sudan People’s Liberation/Army in Opposition – pro-Machar.*
2. State actors:
 - (a) South Sudan People’s Defence Forces, including Taban Deng-allied South Sudan People’s Defence Forces;*
 - (b) South Sudan National Police Service.*

PARTIES IN THE SUDAN

1. Non-State actors:
 - (a) Justice and Equality Movement;
 - (b) Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid.
2. State actors:
 - (a) Sudanese Armed Forces;
 - (b) Rapid Support Forces.

PARTIES IN SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

1. Non-State actors:
 - (a) Da'esh;
 - (b) Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham;
 - (c) Army of Islam;
 - (d) Ahrar al-Sham.
2. State actors:

Government forces, including the National Defence Forces, intelligence services and pro-government militias.

OTHER PARTIES OF CONCERN ON THE AGENDA OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

PARTIES IN NIGERIA

- Non-State actors:
- Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups, including Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad and Islamic State West Africa Province.



PHOTOS | AMIN ISMAIL, DERK SEGAAR





OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

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