



INTRODUCTION

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

2. In April 2019, through the adoption of resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#), the Security Council recognized the need for a survivor-centred approach to inform all measures to prevent and address sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. On 30 October, the Office of my Special Representative on

6. The increased presence of women's protection advisers, who are responsible for convening the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on



Bangui for medical care, and then to a local non-governmental organization for psychosocial support and literacy training. This survivor now works on behalf of other survivors of sexual violence, conducting outreach and referrals. Her exceptional journey from victim to activist shows what is possible when timely and appropriate support is available. Indeed, in recent years, there has been a positive trend with respect to an increasing number of survivors becoming mobilized as advocates and champions and politically engaged in the pursuit of peace. Yet, in the contexts covered in the present report, humanitarian services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence remain chronically underfunded, and many struggle simply to meet their basic needs in the aftermath of these atrocities. Funding shortfalls for the programmatic response, including sexual and reproductive health care, result in major gaps in the reach and coverage of life-saving, and potentially life-changing, interventions.

12. In northern Mali, two sisters of adolescent age were abducted and gang raped by members of the Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad. Upon their release, the girls received medical treatment, but no complaint was filed with the police, despite the identity of the perpetrators being known to the family, owing to the fear of reprisals. In such cases, impunity remains the rule and accountability the rare exception, which emboldens perpetrators and perpetuates vicious cycles of abuse. This case is illustrative of the fact that across a range of settings examined in the present report that access to justice continues to be constrained by a number of factors, including stigma, the absence of protective measures for victims and witnesses, the limited availability of legal aid, limited awareness of avenues for redress, and the weakness of local institutions. In some cases, security sector actors are themselves complicit in the crimes and/or the intimidation of victims and witnesses. Women and girls face daunting gender-based barriers to justice, which are associated with social, cultural and economic disempowerment. At the global level, there remains a glaring discrepancy between the documentation of crimes, which is extensive, and their adjudication, which remains elusive.

13. The issue of reparations for crimes of conflict-related sexual violence has acquired increased prominence in global discourse over the past year, against the backdrop of decades of related efforts in the field of transitional justice. Attempts to pursue the provision of assistance and reparations in practice will require innovative approaches to ensure sustainable funding, including private sector partnerships, to provide assistance to victims in contexts where a reparations gap exists. Closing the gap can help survivors to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, as well as restore confidence in national institutions. Yet, reparations remain the justice intervention that survivors seek the most but receive the least. In several contexts covered herein, the slow pace of justice and the absence of reparations have led

to increased recourse to traditional and/or customary courts, which tend to resolve cases of rape through the awarding of material assistance to the family of the victim. While such an approach can temporarily alleviate economic hardship, they achieve little in terms of punishing and deterring perpetrators, or with respect to upholding women's rights. Some promising developments in this context include: (a) the judgment in the case of Alimasi Frederic, alias "Kokodikoko" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which found the State liable for reparations for failing to protect civilians from sexual violence by militias; (b) the delivery of compensation to over one third of registered victims of conflict-related sexual violence in Colombia; and (c) efforts in Iraq to develop a reparations law and relief programme for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, with initial grants disbursed in 2019. In contexts such as the Western Balkans, victims of wartime sexual violence have been belatedly recognized as legitimate war victims, an official status that renders them eligible for reparations. However, in other settings, such as Nepal, few survivors of sexual violence have come forward to claim reparations, owing to the onerous legal and administrative thresholds.

14. In Tanganyika Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a young man was stripped naked, raped and forced to rape his own mother during a Twa militia attack on his village. It took him many months to overcome the profound sense of shame and the fear of stigmatization and reprisals, in order to seek support. The use of sexual violence to shred the social fabric and fracture families, including through the violation of cultural taboos, continues to be particularly evident in the context of ethnic and intercommunal conflicts. The rape of men and boys has been used to attack their socially constructed identity as "protectors", and to inflict humiliation, given prevailing stereotypes about masculine invulnerability. The risks and repercussions of conflict-related sexual violence are linked with identity-based vulnerabilities, which are multiple and intersecting. During the reporting period, women and girls continued to account for the vast majority of recorded victims, placed at elevated risk by structural gender-based discrimination in political, economic and social life. Men and boys continued to suffer sexual violence in detention in several settings. Individuals were also targeted on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity as a form of persecution. Refugees and migrants faced heightened risks of sexual violence during flight and in displacement settings, leading to increased recourse to negative coping mechanisms, such as early and forced marriage, and the withdrawal of women and girls from employment and education, as observed in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and among the displaced Rohingya community in Bangladesh. Indigenous women have been targeted primarily in the context of conflicts over ancestral land and natural resources, as seen during the conflict periods in Colombia and

Guatemala. Persons living with disabilities have also been sexually abused, including following separation from their



Sexual violence in conflict-affected settings



20. The Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation ([S/2019/145](#), annex), signed between the Government and 14 armed groups in February 2019, calls for the cessation of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence (article 5). However, signatories continue to flagrantly use sexual violence as a tactic of terror against civilians. Many challenges remain with respect to monitoring, owing to access constraints, attacks by armed groups against humanitarians and large-scale displacement. In 2019, MINUSCA verified 322 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, affecting 187 women,

124 girls, 3 men, 2 boys and 6 females of unknown age. These incidents included 174 rapes or attempted rapes and 15 cases of forced marriage. In terms of the profile of the perpetrators, 83 cases were attributed to ex Séléka groups, 48 to Fulanis, who may have been affiliated with ex-Séléka, 47 to anti-balaka, 19 to Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation, 2 to the Lord's Resistance Army, 1 to

24. The signature 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) in 2016, remains a global milestone in the effective integration of gender considerations within a peace agreement and in the meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution. The implementation of the provisions on gender and women's rights has, however, lagged behind that of other measures ([CEDAW/C/COL/CO/9](#)). In 2019, the National Victims' Unit recorded 107,445 victims of the armed conflict, 365 of whom were victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Women and girls made up 89 per cent of the victims, with 35 men and 3 individuals who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex also affected. Moreover, 166 victims were Colombians of African descent (143 women, 22 men and 1 who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex), 15 were from indigenous communities (14 women and 1 man), 28 were persons living with disabilities (23 women, 3 men and 2 individuals who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex persons). Among the cases, 51 were recorded as having been perpetrated against children (31 girls and 20 boys). The United Nations documented 10 cases of sexual violence in which the alleged perpetrators were members of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, criminal groups and other violent groups. Members of the military were allegedly involved in three cases. The United Nations documented nine cases of sexual violence in the border areas between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Colombia, where transborder armed groups operate.

25. The Ombudsperson's early warning system corroborates the correlation between a high concentration of sexual violence and conflict dynamics. In regions such as Antioquia, Chocó, Cauca and Nariño, numerous armed actors such as Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, criminal groups and dissident groups of FARC-EP, continue to compete for control of territory and local illegal economies. Border areas and transit routes for refugees and migrants are being exploited by illegal armed actors to recruit vulnerable persons, notably indigenous people, into illicit economic activities. In this context, women and girls face heightened risks of human trafficking, including for the purposes of sexual slavery

and exploitation. The Office of the Ombudsperson reported 480 threats directed against women leaders and women human rights defenders, including misogynistic insults and threats of sexual violence. Access to justice remains a challenge for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, particularly in rural areas, despite an increase in the number of formal complaints following institutional efforts to address the issue. The Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition continued to make

Democratic Republic of the Congo



Libya



34. Chronic underreporting of conflict-related sexual violence during 2019 was linked to a fear of reprisals, stigma and entrenched gender-based discrimination, in an overall context of volatility. The military offensive on Tripoli by forces under the control of the Commander of the Libyan National Army, General Khalifa Haftar, exacerbated instability and restricted monitoring and reporting. As a result of severely limited access to detention facilities, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) verified only seven cases in 2019, affecting four women, two girls and one male activist for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex rights. In the Mitiga detention facility, controlled by the Special Deterrence Force, under the Ministry of Interior, female inmates are denied due process and unable to challenge the legality of their detention. Four female detainees were subjected to rape and forced nudity, and the activist for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex rights was reportedly gang raped, by Special Deterrence Force guards. UNSMIL also documented patterns of sexual violence, sexual exploitation, extortion and trafficking of refugees and migrants in Zawiyah, Tajura', Gharyan, Tariq al Sikkah and Khums detention centres, some of which are linked with the Department for Combating Illegal Migration. Some migrant women and girls are at high risk of being sold for forced labour or sexual exploitation to transnational criminal networks, some with links to armed groups. In Tariq al-Sikkah, two girls were subjected to public beatings and sexual abuse.

35. The United Nations has urged the Government to launch an investigation in order to locate people who have gone missing from detention centres and may have fallen victim to human trafficking. The Free Legal Aid Coalition for Conflict-Related Survivors in Libya, established by civil society with UNSMIL support, has conducted prison visits, provided legal advice to survivors of sexual violence and advocated the adoption of legislation to enhance protection. The routes to the Libyan coasts, as departure points for Europe, continue to be havens for illegal smugglers and transnational criminal networks.

Recommendation

36. I urge the authorities to grant humanitarian access to detention facilities and to put in place measures to protect and assist detainees who have suffered, or are at risk of, sexual violence. I also urge the Government to adopt anti-trafficking legislation and, with the support of the United Nations, strengthen its rule of law institutions to ensure that allegations of sexual violence can be effectively investigated and prosecuted.

Mali



37. Delays in the implementation of the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, particularly in terms of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, contributed to persistent instability in the northern and central regions, which has impeded humanitarian access and reporting. Populations living in areas with weak state presence are particularly vulnerable to attacks by armed groups and extremist elements, which propel forced displacement. In 2019, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) verified 27 cases of conflict-related sexual violence against 15 women, 11 girls and 1 man. The perpetrators included members of Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad, Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad and unidentified armed men. Allegations of sexual slavery, forced marriage, castration and forced pregnancy were also reported. While the available information suggests that most cases were perpetrated by unidentified armed elements, it also indicates that members of non-State armed groups (namely, Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad, led by Sidi Mohamed, Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad and Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad) have committed conflict-related sexual violence. Cases were also attributed to members of the Malian Defence and Security Forces. In addition, MINUSMA verified 22 incidents that occurred in 2018 but were not reported at the time, owing to a lack of access to safe and confidential services.

38. The visit of my Special Representative in 2019 culminated in the signing of a joint communiqué with the Government to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence, which subsequently led to the drafting of an action plan focused on four strategic areas: prevention, protection, service delivery and accountability. MINUSMA also continued to monitor the implementation of the unilateral communiqués to address conflict-related sexual violence issued by Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad in 2017 and Platform coalition of armed groups (Plateforme des

mouvements du 14 juin 2014 d'Alger) in 2016. Access to justice continues to be a major challenge, owing to inadequate budgetary allocations and limited training

Myanmar



40. In 2019, Rohingya and other ethnic minorities remained at risk of conflict-related sexual violence. The increased fighting between the Myanmar armed forces (Tatmadaw Kyi) and various armed groups, including the Arakan Army, the Kachin Independence Army, and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, caused civilian casualties and displacement in Rakhine, Southern Chin, Northern Shan and Kachin States. Women, girls and boys remain at risk of trafficking, especially from Northern Shan and Kachin States, and from refugee camps in Bangladesh. Risks of forced marriage, forced pregnancy, sexual exploitation, detention and forced labour are common among women and girls living in camps for internally displaced persons and in conflict-affected areas. The high level of risk is compounded by a lack of livelihood and economic opportunities and restrictions imposed by the authorities on humanitarian actors.

41. The lack of accountability for crimes of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against the Rohingya in northern Rakhine remains unchanged. As presented in its report, the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar on sexual and gender-based violence found that sexual violence was a hallmark of Tatmadaw operations in 2016 and 2017. Moreover, it showed that those violations were perpetrated against Rohingya women and girls in order to intimidate, terrorize and punish the civilian population as a tactic of war. Following the signature of a joint communiqué in 2018 on prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence between the Government and the United Nations, a national committee on addressing conflict-related sexual violence was formed and a working group on monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements was established. The United Nations, along with civil society partners, strengthened referral pathways for the provision of multisectoral services to survivors of sexual violence, including mental health and psychosocial assistance, especially in conflict-affected areas. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is gradually implementing standard operating procedures for case management and clinical guidelines for responding to rape. In July, the Child Rights Law was enacted, criminalizing sexual violence and requiring the Government, the Tatmadaw and armed groups to take measures to protect children from sexual violence.

The draft law on the prevention of violence against women, developed in March 2013, is still pending parliamentary adoption, as are revisions to the Constitution and Penal Code recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ([CEDAW/C/MMR/CO/EP/1](#)).

Recommendation



Somalia

43. The protracted conflict in Somalia, coupled with the de facto control of certain areas by Al-Shabaab and entrenched gender-based inequality, have heightened the risk of sexual violence faced by women and girls, and severely limited reporting. In 2019, sexual violence continued to be employed by Al-Shabaab as a strategy of social control in the communities under their influence. Women and girls were systematically abducted and forced to marry combatants as a reward for fighters and an incentive for new recruits. This practice permitted recruits to enhance their social status by marrying women from more prominent clans. Many women and girls who managed to escape were subjected to threats and, in some cases, sexual exploitation, in refugee and displacement settings. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against 220 girls and 19 women, attributed to: unknown armed actors (120), Al-Shabaab (26), Jubbaland forces (18), clan militias (19), Galmudug police (5), Southwest forces (4) and Puntland police (2). The Somali Police Force was implicated in 14 incidents and 32 cases involved members of the Somali National Army. Out of these cases, 78 cases (46 per cent) took place in Jubbaland State.

44. During her official visit in July, my Special Representative agreed with the Government to develop a new national action plan to end sexual violence in conflict, in order to advance implementation of the joint communiqué. Training on the prevention of sexual violence for Somali security forces continued in 2019, with 906 members of the national armed forces trained. In addition, 30 female police officers, operating in different districts of Mogadishu, were trained on techniques to investigate sexual and gender-based crimes. The national strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism, adopted in 2016, reflected consultations with women on their experiences as victims of terrorism and their roles in peacebuilding and reconciliation. Pursuant to the National Programme for the Treatment and Handling of Disengaged Combatants, construction began on rehabilitation centres for women ex-combatants, including those who have suffered sexual violence,

in Kismaayo and Baidoa, which will provide them with counselling, education and livelihood support. Impunity for sexual violence crimes remains a major concern, with different legal systems continuing to operate in parallel, often resulting in the release of suspects from police custody following mediation by traditional leaders. The sexual offences bill, which would ensure that rape is no longer classified as a “crime against morality”, has not yet been approved. Following consultations on the bill by Islamic religious scholars, provisions intended to criminalize child marriage were removed. In terms of service delivery, the lack of sustainable funding for personnel in Government health-care facilities compromises the availability of assistance, including emergency contraception and post-exposure prophylaxis.

Recommendation

45. I commend the Government on its commitment to implement a new national action plan on ending sexual violence in conflict with the support of my Special Representative and the United Nations system, and call for the enforcement of the zero-tolerance policy on sexual violence by the national security forces. I reiterate my calls for the Government to adopt and enact the sexual offences bill, ensuring that any amendments thereto are in line with international standards.

resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) also reported on the use of sexual violence by state security forces against alleged supporters of NAS and civilians. Patterns of attacks against women while travelling to or from urban centres, or during home invasions, persisted in 2019. The violence did not spare pregnant women, or children as young as 3 years of age. In some cases, civilians were killed after being sexually assaulted. In August, four men in Upper Nile were beheaded after suffering mutilation of their sexual organs. Sexual violence against men was also carried out as a form of torture in detention and remains underreported as a result of entrenched sociocultural norms. Although the definition of rape enshrined in the Penal Code Act (2008) is gender-neutral, male survivors fear being classified as homosexuals and liable to prosecution under section 248 of the Code, which criminalizes “carnal intercourse against the order of nature”.

48. Humanitarian actors continue to experience attacks by armed groups. During the reporting period, the compound of a humanitarian organization was attacked in Upper Nile, and two staff members were sexually assaulted, resulting in the suspension of the organization's projects. Perpetrators continue to exploit the prevailing climate of insecurity, limited state authority, and widespread impunity. Weak rule of law, militarization and permissive command and control structures contribute to the normalization of extreme violence, including sexual violence. Stigma and shame impede access to the limited services available for survivors, resulting in many untreated sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. In response, campaigns have been implemented to raise awareness of sexual violence and to promote HIV testing and treatment. With United Nations support, nine one-stop centres are currently operating in eight locations across the country, facilitating the delivery of holistic services. Their coverage outside of urban areas, however, remains limited. Initiatives focused on long-term resilience and income generation for women are scarce. With the aim of shifting harmful social norms that drive and

perpetuate sexual and gender-based violence, the South Sudan Council of Churches issued a statement, signed by influential religious leaders, denouncing the stigma associated with sexual violence and promoting social reintegration and cohesion.

49. Notwithstanding the persistent challenges, progress was also observed in 2019. The implementation of the action plans adopted pursuant to both the 2014 joint communiqué, signed by President Kiir and the United Nations, and the unilateral communiqué, signed by Riek Machar, leader of SPLA-IO/RM, continued to advance. With UNMISS support, over 700 officers of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and 150 SPLA-IO/RM officers were trained on relevant legal frameworks prohibiting the use of sexual violence, as well as on the principle of command responsibility. SPLA-IO/RM issued four command orders, one of which instructed commanders in Western and Central Equatoria to form committees to investigate alleged cases of sexual violence. The National Salvation Front, a non-signatory group to the peace agreement, issued two similar orders. In November, the South Sudan National Police Service also launched an action plan. In follow-up to the 2018 report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) documenting abductions of women and children in Western Equatoria, my Special Representative met with Riek Machar in Addis Ababa in July to advocate the immediate release of all women and children held against their will on military bases of SPLA-IO/RM. On 29 July and 26 December, Riek Machar issued command orders calling for the release of these women and girls. In order to facilitate the full implementation of those orders, UNMISS and the United Nations country team continued to engage with local commanders so as to encourage the release and referral of abducted women and children to medical and psychosocial support structures. Political advocacy is ongoing to secure the release of all women and children held against their will.

50. Criminal accountability for crimes of conflict-related sexual violence remains extremely limited. During the reporting period, a civilian court sentenced six pro Taban Deng Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition elements and one member of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces for the rape of four women, with prison terms ranging between two and six years and the obligation to make payments in compensation to victims. Two of the perpetrators subsequently escaped detention. The investigation of the national committee established by Republican Order 25/2018 into the widespread sexual violence committed in Bentiu in 2018, was finalized in February 2019, but has not been made public. The Government presented some key findings from this investigation to the Human Rights Council, acknowledging only 16 incidents of rape, which were characterized as “isolated acts of random criminality”. The weakness of the formal justice system has increased reliance on customary and traditional mechanisms to adjudicate cases of sexual violence. In two such cases, reportedly perpetrated by SPLA-IO/RM elements against minors, a customary court in Western Bahr el-Ghazal sentenced perpetrators to pay compensation to the survivors' families, in amounts ranging from 20,000 to 30,000 South Sudanese pounds (\$153 to \$230) and a fine of 3,000 South Sudanese pounds (\$23), in lieu of a three-month term of imprisonment. The creation of a specialized court to prosecute crimes of sexual and gender-based violence remains pending. The United Nations continues to support the authorities in convening mobile courts for prosecuting serious crimes in various parts of the country.

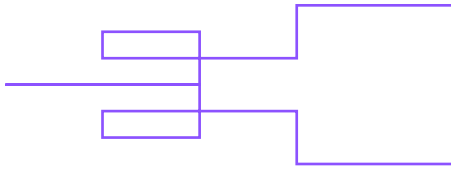
Recommendation

51. I welcome the establishment of a Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity and urge all parties to fully comply with the provisions prohibiting the use of sexual violence contained in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict. I encourage the Government to accelerate implementation of the action plans for the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the South Sudan National Police Service, to establish a specialized court to prosecute sexual and gender-based crimes, and to provide services, reparations and redress to survivors. I call for the immediate safe release of all women and children abducted during the course of hostilities.

The Sudan



Syrian Arab Republic



56. After nine years of armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, ongoing hostilities continue to inflict disproportionate and devastating suffering on civilians. Incidents of conflict-related sexual violence continue to be reported, although the prevailing security situation and generalized context of structural gender-based inequality prevent the collection of comprehensive data. Available information indicates that rape and sexual exploitation are prevalent in internally displaced person and refugee camp settings and conflict-affected areas, and that fear and threats of sexual violence, including in the context of abduction or detention, has been a major factor in inducing displacement and driving families to flee their homes.

57. Humanitarian partners have signalled the use of negative coping mechanisms, such as the early marriage of girls in the name of physical and financial security and/or to overcome the stigma affecting actual or perceived victims of sexual violence. Threats of sexual violence have been documented as a recurrent pattern, circumscribing the mobility of women and girls. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic reports



Yemen

60. Since the onset of the conflict five years ago, Yemen has faced the world's largest humanitarian crisis, with 24.1 million people in need of assistance and 14.4 million in need of protection. In addition, 3.65 million people have been displaced, with 46,660 households newly displaced in 2019. The humanitarian crisis and widespread violence have exacerbated pre-existing gender-based discrimination, leading to increased risks of sexual violence and more frequent recourse to negative coping mechanisms. For instance, in camps for internally displaced persons, desperate parents have viewed child marriage as a way to protect girls from sexual harassment and abuse. Thirty-three child marriages were reported in Sana'a, Aden, Ibb and Dali' Governorates in 2019. Efforts are being made to strengthen referral pathways for service delivery in these areas, though humanitarian actors continue to face severe access restrictions, particularly in areas controlled by the Houthis (who are also known as Ansar Allah) linked with collapsed rule of law and the proliferation of armed militias.

61. In 2019, women and children faced a high risk of sexual violence, particularly in displacement settings and areas controlled by parties to the conflict. The Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#), documented that women political leaders and activists have been systematically targeted by the Houthis since 2017. For instance, the arrest, detention and ill-treatment of 11 women, 3 of whom were repeatedly raped in custody, was documented. Female Houthi guards, identified as zainabiyath, were also implicated in abetting the rape of women, including during interrogations ([S/2020/70](#)). The Security Council adopted resolution [2511 \(2020\)](#), in which it, inter alia, condemned the use of conflict-related sexual violence in Houthi-controlled areas. The United Nations further documented six cases of conflict-related sexual violence against three women, one girl and two boys. In one of the incidents, the two boys

were raped by unidentified armed men in Ta'izz Governorate. Two other incidents took place in Aden, allegedly committed by Southern Transitional Council troops. Sudanese soldiers stationed in Hudaydah Governorate were responsible for one attempted rape in April and one verified case of rape in September. The Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts (Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen) documented 37 cases of sexual violence that occurred between 2016 and 2019, by members of the Security Belt Forces. Yemeni armed forces were also implicated (see [A/HRC/42/17](#)). Moreover, the Group of Eminent Experts reported on sexual violence in detention centres, including secret prisons, in Houthi-controlled areas. In one case, a boy detained in the Political Security Organization detention centre, was subjected to sexual assault, namely beatings on his genitals, forced nudity and threats of rape. The Group of Eminent Experts concluded that there are "reasonable grounds to believe that all parties to the conflict committed gender-based violence, including sexual violence".

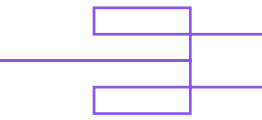
Recommendation

62. I urge all parties to commit to preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence, and to facilitating safe access for humanitarian service providers to deliver assistance to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and those at risk.

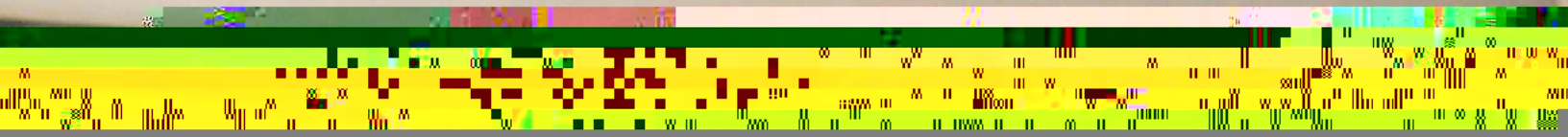
IV.

Addressing crimes of sexual violence in post-conflict settings

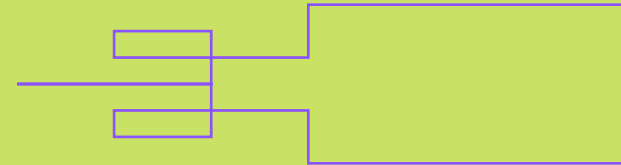
Bosnia and Herzegovina



63. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, events such as the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversaries of the Srebrenica massacre and the Dayton Peace Agreement, which aim to honour the memory of the victims, can risk triggering retraumatization and pain among survivors of conflict-related sexual violence who have struggled to achieve recognition as legitimate victims of the war, and still often lack social support systems. In addition, the climate of political polarization, in which the pain of survivors is sometimes manipulated to fuel collective grievances, as well as continuing economic hardship and social rejection, have fostered transgenerational trauma, which is particularly evident in cases of children born of wartime rape. In response, the authorities have taken steps to improve the quality and expand the availability of medical, psychosocial, legal and financial assistance for survivors. Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has expedited the implementation of the Special Category of Civilian Victims of War status, in order to encourage the registration of victims of wartime sexual violence who have not come forward to date. There have also been institutional efforts to foster a survivor-centred approach in service delivery and to uphold ethical best practice standards. The United Nations has forged strategic partnerships with faith-based organizations and grass-roots youth groups to promote transformative narratives around conflict-related sexual violence. This is part of a concerted effort to tackle harmful social norms related to shame and victim-blame, as well as the persistent threats faced by victims and witnesses who have testified in war crimes trials, as part of a broader public dialogue on the preservation of peace.



Côte d'Ivoire



64. The political situation in Côte d'Ivoire has stabilized in recent years, with an attendant de-escalation in violence. The drawdown of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in 2017, and the delisting of the Forces armées de Côte d'Ivoire from the annex to the annual report on conflict-related sexual violence, also in 2017 (see [S/2017/249](#)), are important signs of progress in the consolidation of peace. The monitoring and reporting of conflict-related sexual violence continues to be carried out by a national committee consisting of members of the security forces, the national human rights commission and civil society organizations, with support from the United Nations. In the lead-up to the 2020 presidential elections, this committee is taking measures to prevent renewed patterns of political violence, including sexual violence, by putting in place early warning mechanisms. Training and capacity-building to help the security forces deter and detect sexual violence has taken place, specialized gender desks have been established within the national police, and justice sector officials have been trained on relevant legal frameworks prohibiting sexual violence. Despite the publication of a presidential ordinance in 2018, granting amnesty to individuals prosecuted or sentenced for offences relating to the 2010–2011 post-electoral crisis, institutional counterparts affirm that perpetrators of crimes of international concern will not benefit from immunity. Although the Government has provided general compensation to many victims of the post-electoral violence, no cases of sexual violence committed in this context have progressed to trial and none of the survivors have received reparations.

photo irin | tommy trenchard

65. In Nepal, survivors of conflict-related sexual violence continue to face obstacles in accessing services, justice and reparations, almost 14 years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2006). Fears of social stigma and the absence of criminal accountability for serious crimes, including sexual violence, deter survivors from coming

Sri Lanka



66. In Sri Lanka, the Government has made express commitments to address sexual violence, torture, abduction and intimidation, as part of the legacy of the conflict. It has established an Office on Missing Persons and an Office for Reparations, though the creation of a truth and reconciliation commission or judicial mechanism has been delayed. United Nations human rights mechanisms have urged the Government to ensure that reparations are made available to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and that all perpetrators, including State actors, are held accountable and removed from the security apparatus.

Recommendation

67. I urge governments of countries undergoing post-conflict transitional justice processes to ensure that survivors of wartime sexual violence have full access to national relief, recovery and reparations programmes on a basis of equality before the law, and that concrete measures are taken to end the vicious cycle of violence and impunity for these crimes. I further call upon these governments to ensure gender-responsive security sector reform, the provision of comprehensive services for survivors and children born of rape, and to prioritize efforts to alleviate stigma, as part of measures to repair the social fabric torn by conflict.

V.

Other situations
of concern



Burundi

68. The political and human rights crisis that began in 2015 remains unchanged, with heightened risks of sexual violence facing women and girls, including as a strategy of intimidation and punishment for their perceived political affiliation. The Commission of Inquiry on Burundi recalled, in its latest report, the political context in which crimes have been committed in recent years, including sexual violence

70. Despite commendable progress, the Government continues to face challenges in countering the decade-long Boko Haram insurgency. The high number of security incidents attributed to two main factions of Boko Haram have continued since late 2018 in north-east Nigeria and parts of Cameroon, Chad and the Niger, resulting in many civilian and military casualties and a major humanitarian crisis. More than 9.5 million people across the affected regions require humanitarian assistance and protection, and an estimated 2.7 million have been forced to flee their homes. In this context, women and girls face a heightened risk of conflict-related sexual violence, including abduction, rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage. During the reporting period, the United Nations documented 826 allegations of conflict-related sexual violence, including rape and forced marriage. Sexual violence continues to be underreported owing to fears of stigma, gender-based inequality and social norms that silence the survivors in order to uphold family reputation. Of all the recorded incidents, 88 per cent were attributed to armed groups, including Boko Haram and the Civilian Joint Task Force. Security forces, such as the police and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps were implicated in the remaining 12 per cent of cases. It was

77. Eight non-State actors have issued unilateral communiqués specifically addressing sexual violence in accordance with Security Council resolutions, namely: pro-Riek Machar Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition and the National Salvation Front (NAS) in South Sudan; and in Mali the coalition Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (consisting of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, Haut Conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad, and Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad, led by Sidi Mohamed), and the Platform coalition of armed groups (consisting of Coordination des mouvements et fronts patriotiques de résistance, Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés, and Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad, led by Ould Moulaye).
78. Forty-two listed parties have not assumed any commitments, with 30 (71 per cent) having been listed for over five years. It is notable that 26 of these parties are non-State actors. In all relevant resolutions, the Security Council expresses its intention to consider the application of targeted sanctions against those who perpetrate and/or direct sexual violence in conflict. Since its first consideration of the thematic agenda item on sexual violence in conflict, the Council has adopted designation criteria, which include designation related to responsibility for acts of sexual violence, in eight sanctions regimes, namely pertaining to the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Yemen. Furthermore, in the context 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, the Council, in its resolution [2368 \(2017\)](#), reaffirmed its "intention to consider targeted sanctions for individuals and entities associated with ISIL or Al-Qaida involved in trafficking in persons in areas affected by armed conflict and in sexual violence in conflict".
79. During the 10-year period of the mandate, there has been no designation of individuals or entities for sanctions specifically as a result of crimes of sexual violence. However, 21 individuals and four entities in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, have had crimes of sexual violence added to the narrative accounts of their violations, although their designations were primarily based on other grounds. Furthermore, it should be noted that there is limited correlation between the parties listed in my annual reports and the individuals and entities designated by sanctions committees. Therefore, the referral of persistent perpetrators listed in my reports for the consideration of relevant sanctions committees is an important aspect of enhancing compliance. The use of sanctions and other targeted measures by the Security Council may increase the perceived or actual cost for perpetrators, thereby serving as a deterrent.

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

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 those parties are suspected of committing violations.

Parties in the Central African Republic

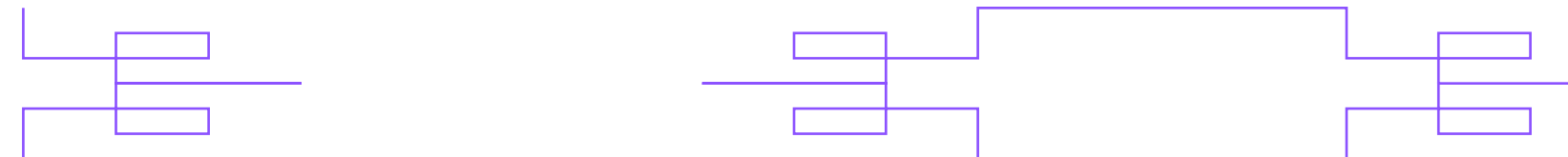
1. Non-State actors:

- (a) Lord's Resistance Army;
- (b) Ex-Séléka factions: Union pour la paix en Centrafrique, Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique, Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique – Gula faction, Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique – Abdoulaye Hussein faction, Rassemblement patriotique pour le renouveau de la Centrafrique; Mouvement national pour la libération de la Centrafrique; Mouvement des libérateurs centrafricains pour la justice;
- (c) Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain – Abdoulaye Miskine;
- (d) Révolution et justice;
- (e) Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation – Abbas Siddiki;
- (f) Anti-balaka associated militia.

Parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Non-State actors:

- (a) Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain-Janvier;
- (b) Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain-Rénové led by “General” Mapenzi Bulere Likuwe;
- (c) Allied Democratic Forces;
- (d) Forces pour la défense du Congo;
- (e) Bana Mura militias;
- (f) Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda;
- (g) Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri;



- (h) Kamuina Nsapu;
- (i) Lord's Resistance Army;
- (j) Nduma défense du Congo;
- (k) Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové led by “General” Guidon Shimiray Mwissa;
- (l) Mai-Mai Kifuafua;
- (m) All Mai-Mai Simba factions;
- (n) Nyatura;
- (o) Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki;
- (p) Mai Mai Apa na Pale;
- (q) Mai Mai Malaika;
- (r) Mai Mai Fimbo na Fimbo;
- (s) Mai Mai Yakutumba;
- (t) Lendu militias;
- (u) All Twa militia.

2. State actors:

- (a) Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;*
- (b) Congolese National Police.*

Parties in Iraq

Non-State actors:

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

