



# Security Council

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## Conflict-related sexual violence

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. The present report, which covers the period from January to December 2014, is submitted pursuant to paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 2106 (2013), in which the Council requested me to report annually on the implementation of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) and to recommend appropriate actions. The report presents information on parties to conflict credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The year under review was marked by harrowing accounts of rape,



been rising numbers of displaced civilians in the Sudan (Darfur) over the past year, with attendant reports of sexual violence. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, vulnerability persists both for those displaced internally and those who seek to cross the border into neighbouring Angola or the Republic of the Congo. Forced dispossession effectively denies women a vital source of livelihood. In Colombia, women working with displaced communities and calling for land restitution have been targeted by armed groups and subjected to repeated sexual assault. Around the world, both urban and camp environments pose considerable risks of sexual exploitation for women and girls. Particular attention must be paid to the underlying political economy of violence, including competition for the control of natural resources and mining settlements by armed groups, which correlates with increased civilian displacement, human trafficking and sexual abuse, as witnessed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere. Since civil unrest began in South Sudan in December 2013, there have been 53,079 new arrivals at the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, many of them unaccompanied minors, with a corresponding increase in reports of sexual assault, teenage pregnancies and forced marriage. Similarly, in Dadaab camp, sexual violence has increased as the population has

10. Indeed, the era of silence has been replaced by international recognition that the shame of sexual violence resides not in the victims but in the perpetrators and any party that condones or conceals their conduct. However, serious concerns persist about official denials and efforts to downplay these crimes, including pressure to induce victims and witnesses to withdraw their complaints. Evidence of sexual violence is not always readily apparent or easily traced, hence the need for



*Recommendation*













stigmatized and abandoned by their husbands and families, leaving them in extreme poverty. Their children often face abandonment and death.

38. The draft agreement on peace and reconciliation in Mali includes language on conflict-related sexual violence in connection with justice and reconciliation, but fails to address the issue comprehensively. Implementation of the confidence-building measures contained in the preliminary peace agreement signed in Ouagadougou in June regrettably resulted in the release of several individuals linked to human rights violations, including conflict-related sexual violence. Following their release, civil society actors and survivors expressed fear of reprisals and a loss of confidence in the administration of justice. In Timbuktu, staff of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) interviewed victims of forced marriage to fighters affiliated with Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and Ansar Dine, which occurred when these groups occupied the city in 2012. One of the prisoners granted early release, Houka Ag Alhousseini, officiated at the forced marriages.

39. The Government and the United Nations country team have worked together to train the national army, the police and the gendarmerie on conflict-related sexual violence. In September 2014, the Joint Commander in Timbuktu of the Mouvement

directive that calls, inter alia, for the elimination of sexual violence against children. The Malian Police Service has established a national hotline. Strategic advocacy by the gender-based violence subcluster to raise public awareness included 48,000 radio broadcasts in all local languages, reaching 29,060 Malians. The United Nations system has also adapted the early warning indicators of conflict-related sexual violence to the local context to enhance prevention. The United Nations country team has supported health-care providers to improve the clinical

















*Recommendation*

66. I urge the authorities in Yemen to undertake legislative reform as a basis for addressing impunity for sexual violence, ensuring the provision of services for survivors and aligning the minimum legal age of marriage with international standards. I further call on the authorities to engage with local community and faith-based leaders to address sexual and gender-based violence and discriminatory social norms.

**B. Addressing crimes of sexual violence in post-conflict settings**

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

67. Twenty years after the end of the war, conflict-related sexual violence remains a sensitive political issue, with slow progress made in establishing a comprehensive support system for survivors. The Government has recently expressed its intention to address conflict-related sexual violence, but has focused primarily on prosecution rather than the broad range of needs. The absence of services extends to children born of wartime rape, who face particular risk of stigma, abandonment, rejection and low socioeconomic status. The stigmatization and economic marginalization of rape survivors themselves remains a concern. The United Nations country team in Bosnia and Herzegovina has launched a joint project to tackle the legacy of conflict-related sexual violence. This project seeks to improve redress for survivors by mapping needs and capacities, improving access to justice and services and reducing stigma. The Peace Support Operations Training Centre, with support from UN-Women, continues to provide predeployment training on conflict-





Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances. The Act acknowledged rape and other

Foreign Affairs participated in the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, where he stressed that Nepal had adopted a zero-tolerance policy on sexual and gender-based violence. Nevertheless, challenges to accessing justice remain. For example, the 35-day statute of limitations for the filing of a rape complaint has not yet been amended, despite the 2014 Supreme Court ruling that there should be no statute of limitations for international crimes.

*Recommendation*

76. I encourage the Government to ensure that survivors of conflict-related sexual violence to access services, judicial remedies and reparations. I further call on all parties involved in the transitional justice process to ensure that the rights and needs of survivors of sexual violence are addressed in institutional reforms and that these crimes are excluded from amnesties and statutes of limitations.

**Sri Lanka**

77. In the five years since the end of armed conflict in Sri Lanka, the Government has committed to supporting the resettlement and reintegration of civilians displaced by the violence and has made considerable progress in this regard. However, one of the major unaddressed issues is impunity for conflict-related sexual violence. The Government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy on sexual and gender-





84. Sexual violence by extremist groups arises from discrimination and dehumanization based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnic and political or religious identity, in particular the subordination of women and girls. Indeed, the same

network of journalists against gender-based violence to help disseminate key messages and am  
experience, UN Action is developing guidance on the safe and ethical reporting of sexual violence in conflict-affected settings, as part of a broader strategy to mobilize the media in countries of concern.

87. In 2014, UN Action produced a number of tools and knowledge products to improve practice in the field. It published a new guidance note on the intersections between the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements and the Gender-based Violence Information Management System, with a view to improving the way

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## **V. Activities of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict**

92. The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict was mandated by the Security Council in resolution 1888 (2009) to support national authorities to strengthen the rule of law in order to address sexual violence in armed conflict. The Team of Experts reports directly to my Special Representative and is composed of experts from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and OHCHR. In addition to this core capacity, the Team of Experts maintains a roster of experts with a broad range of specializations to support national authorities. The Team of Experts assists national authorities in developing a more structured justice and security sector response to conflict-related sexual violence, often on the basis of political commitments secured at the highest levels by my Special Representative.

93. The Team of Experts assists national institutions in the following thematic areas: criminal investigations and prosecution; collection and preservation of evidence; investigations and prosecutions within the military justice system;

96. As a result of technical support from the Team of Experts to the panel of judges established by the Government of Guinea, 12 military officers, including senior officers, and a gendarme have been indicted for crimes allegedly committed during the events of 28 September 2009, including sexual violence. A judicial expert deployed by the Team of Experts continues to assist the panel in investigations and case building. The expert also assists in relation to safeguards for the security of victims and witnesses, reparations, judicial cooperation with neighbouring countries as well as in the planning of the forthcoming access to mass graves. The Team of Experts deployed to Liberia in July 2014 to contribute to the review of the United Nations-

(b) **To fully integrate the issue of conflict-related sexual violence into the work of relevant Security Council sanctions committees, including the Al-Qaida Sanctions List, as part of the criteria for the imposition of targeted measures;**

(c) **To continue to employ all means at its disposal to influence parties to conflict to comply with international law, including by referring matters to the**

female and male observers; and training monitoring teams on how to







