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**Human Rights Council**  
**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Fifty-first session**  
Geneva, 19–30 January 2026

## **Rwanda**

### **Compilation of information prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

#### **I. Background**

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the outcome of the previous review.<sup>1</sup> It is a compilation of information contained in relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

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

2. In 2025, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda consider acceding to the human rights instruments to which it was not yet a Party, namely the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,<sup>2</sup> the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure. The Committee also encouraged Rwanda to accede to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>3</sup>

3. In 2021, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, reiterating a previous recommendation, encouraged Rwanda to make the declarations provided for in articles 76 and 77 of International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.<sup>4</sup>

4. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), and the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).<sup>5</sup>

5. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) referred to a relevant supported recommendation from the previous review and noted that Rwanda was yet to ratify the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education and the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States.<sup>6</sup>



6. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda ensure the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>7</sup> In 2024, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women called for the realization of de jure and de facto gender equality throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda.<sup>8</sup>

### **III. National human rights framework**

#### **1. Constitutional and legislative framework**

7. The United Nations country team stated that, by addressing the remaining gaps or inconsistencies between national legislation and ratified international treaties, Rwanda would enhance the effectiveness and clarity of human rights implementation.<sup>9</sup>

8. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda continue to take the legislative measures necessary to fully incorporate the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into domestic law to ensure the applicability of all Covenant rights in domestic courts.<sup>10</sup>

9. The same Committee expressed concern about insufficient legal protection against forced evictions and recommended that Rwanda adopt legislation on forced evictions that was in line with international standards and guidelines.<sup>11</sup>

10. In a communication of 26 June 2024 to Rwanda, special procedure mandate holders noted that the draft law governing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had been submitted to the President for final assent, and stated that the enactment of the draft law, without relevant amendments, might restrict the exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in ways that were incompatible with articles 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>12</sup>

#### **2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures**

11. Following his visit to Rwanda in May 2025, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty noted the existence of oversight mechanisms and tools to ensure the accountability of public authorities and stated that he had received troubling testimonies from community members who expressed fear of voicing dissent or criticizing government policies.<sup>13</sup>

12. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about challenges that undermined the independence of the National Commission for Human Rights and recommended that Rwanda: (a) take appropriate measures to bring the Commission into full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles); and (b) strengthen the Commission's independence and its effective functioning, including by revising the process for the selection of its members and abolishing the requirement for its members to obtain clearance from the executive branch to undertake activities abroad.<sup>14</sup>

13. The United Nations country team noted that, in addition to its mandate to promote and protect human rights, the Commission was also mandated to serve as the national preventive mechanism, and stated that the Commission should publish periodic reports on its work under both of its mandates.<sup>15</sup>

14. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that fiscal policies were characterized by a flat corporate tax rate, a limited tax base and a regressive taxation rate attributable to its significant reliance on value added and consumption-based taxes. It recommended that Rwanda revise its taxation and fiscal policies to increase the mobilization of national resources.<sup>16</sup>

## **IV. Promotion and protection of human rights**

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

#### **1. Equality and non-discrimination**

15. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that structural inequalities and discrimination had continued to hinder the equal enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights, especially by persons living in deprived urban and rural areas, the Batwa, persons with disabilities, women and girls, children, young people, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. It recommended that Rwanda address such structural inequalities and establish protection against such discrimination.<sup>17</sup>

16. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern about the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes that undermined the social status, autonomy, educational opportunities and professional careers of women. It recommended that Rwanda develop and implement a comprehensive human rights-based strategy to eliminate gender stereotypes, regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society.<sup>18</sup>

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

17. The United Nations country team stated that a 2024 case, which had highlighted severe ill-treatment in Rubavu prison and had led to the conviction of nine prison officials for torture and other abuses, had been seen as a pivotal moment in ensuring the accountability of officials and the compliance of Rwanda with its human rights obligations.<sup>19</sup>

18. In a communication of 17 January 2025, special procedure mandate holders brought to the attention of Rwanda information received concerning the alleged abduction and enforced disappearance of four identified persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by members of armed groups acting with the support and/or the acquiescence of Rwanda. They reiterated the absolute prohibition of enforced disappearances and added that such acts, when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack on a civilian population, constituted crimes against humanity, for which, in the case in question, Rwanda might be responsible by complicity.<sup>20</sup>

19. In a communication of 18 June 2024, special procedure mandate holders brought to the attention of Rwanda information received about the alleged abduction from a neighbouring country and subsequent enforced disappearance of a human rights defender and Rwandan refugee and his alleged extraordinary rendition to Rwanda, where he was believed to be detained.<sup>21</sup>

20. The United Nations country team noted efforts to improve the prison system but stated that further progress was needed to tackle persistent challenges, including overcrowding and limited access to healthcare and sanitation. In addition, Rwanda should ensure that children in pretrial facilities were not held with adult detainees.<sup>22</sup>

#### **3. International humanitarian law**

21. In 2025, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recommended that Rwanda conduct investigations into alleged violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Rwanda Defence Force, and the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) and other armed groups supported by Rwanda, and cease all support to M23.<sup>23</sup>

22. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda facilitate access to humanitarian organizations for the delivery of aid to affected populations in conflict-affected areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, cease support to, or involvement with, non-State armed groups that were involved in, inter alia, the destruction of houses, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure and services, and ensure that all violations, including in cases of violations where the conduct of non-State armed groups

might be attributable to Rwanda, were investigated and that those responsible were prosecuted.<sup>24</sup>

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

23. The United Nations country team considered the second-generation National Strategy for Transformation, which was aimed at improving judicial efficiency, reducing case backlogs, and ensuring timely justice, to be in response to relevant recommendations from the previous review, including a recommendation to safeguard judicial independence and the right to fair trial.<sup>25</sup>

24. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted the persistent barriers to women's and girls' access to justice and the underutilization of formal justice systems by women facing rights abuses and seeking legal redress.<sup>26</sup>

25. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about reports of bribery and other incidents of corruption, including cases involving public officials, and recommended that Rwanda prosecute all cases of corruption and continue to strengthen State institutions tasked with tackling corruption.<sup>27</sup>

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

26. The United Nations country team stated that the support of relevant recommendations from the previous review suggested a commitment by Rwanda to improving media laws and ensuring an enabling environment for independent journalism. Furthermore, in the context of the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 2024, Rwanda had pledged to reform media laws by 2029.<sup>28</sup>

27. In a communication of 3 April 2024 to Rwanda, special procedure mandate holders expressed concern at information received according to which the detention and prosecution of two identified persons for their work as independent journalists and human rights defenders, and of a third person, an opposition politician, for being outspoken about and critical of the security forces and the Government. They stated that targeting the media had created a hostile environment for journalists and contributed to self-censorship. In relation to the arrest of the opposition politician, they reminded Rwanda that freedom of expression was essential to democracy.<sup>29</sup>

28. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about the lack of sufficient protection for human rights defenders and the cumbersome registration requirements for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Committee recommended that Rwanda ensure an enabling environment for human rights defenders and review the registration requirements for NGOs.<sup>30</sup>

29. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that women's representation in senior positions in the public and private sectors had remained unsatisfactory. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda introduce targeted measures to achieve parity between women and men in political and public life, particularly in decision-making positions.<sup>31</sup>

#### **6. Right to marriage and family life**

30. Noting with concern the lack of legal and economic protection of women in de facto unions, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda facilitate the regularization of de facto unions and prohibit the harmful practice of polygamy; and enhance legal and economic protection of women in de facto unions, including women married under customary law and women in existing polygamous unions.<sup>32</sup>

#### **7. Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons**

31. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda: (a) strengthen the early identification and referral of women and girl victims of trafficking to gender-responsive support services and protection; (b) ensure that women victims of trafficking were not penalized solely for violations of immigration law or other

administrative offences committed as a direct result of being trafficked; and (c) provide systematic capacity-building for front-line responders to identify victims of trafficking.<sup>33</sup>

32. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda implement awareness-raising programmes for local leaders, secondary school teachers, refugees, implementing partners in refugee camps, the border community and community members at large, to prevent trafficking of migrant workers.<sup>34</sup>

## **8. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work**

33. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda: (a) intensify its efforts to support women, young people and persons with disabilities to have access to decent employment;<sup>35</sup> (b) strengthen the enforcement of laws to deter employers from discriminatory employment practices and address the discrimination faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons;<sup>36</sup> (c) strengthen the national technical and vocational education and training system to align skills and qualifications with the labour market, focusing on the requirements of people most affected by unemployment;<sup>37</sup> (d) close the persistent gender pay gap;<sup>38</sup> (e) increase women's participation in the labour market;<sup>39</sup> (f) strengthen enforcement of labour legislation to ensure that workers in the informal economy were covered by legal protections;<sup>40</sup> (g) establish a minimum wage that applied to all workers in all sectors and ensure that it was periodically reviewed and indexed to the cost of living;<sup>41</sup> (h) ensure that labour legislation was effectively enforced in all sectors of the economy, including the informal sector;<sup>42</sup> (i) carry out regular safety and health risk assessments and strengthen labour inspection mechanisms;<sup>43</sup> (j) provide accessible remedial mechanisms that enabled workers to file, without intimidation, complaints of alleged violations of labour rights and take effective action against employers found to be in breach of labour rights;<sup>44</sup> (k) revise its legislative and administrative framework to remove undue restrictions on the right to form and join trade unions;<sup>45</sup> (l) take measures to improve the existing procedures for exercising the rights to strike and to collective bargaining so as to remove undue restrictions and promote free and voluntary conciliation;<sup>46</sup> and (m) take measures to ensure the statutory entitlement to all family care-related leave, including extended paternity leave.<sup>47</sup>

34. While welcoming the decriminalization of women in prostitution, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda ensure that adequate support services were available to women in prostitution, including exit programmes, that they were not arbitrarily arrested and detained, that the root causes of prostitution were addressed and that measures were adopted to protect women from being exploited in prostitution.<sup>48</sup>

## **9. Right to social security**

35. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights remained concerned about the high income and wealth inequalities in Rwanda and the overall low levels of social spending. It recommended that Rwanda increase budgetary allocations for social spending on social security, employment and food programmes, agriculture, water and sanitation, healthcare, education and climate change adaptation and mitigation.<sup>49</sup>

36. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda: (a) strengthen its efforts to develop both contributory and non-contributory social security schemes to ensure universal coverage, sufficient benefits and comprehensive protection against social risks and contingencies; (b) expand the social security system's coverage and uptake to include all workers in the informal sector; (c) expand the coverage of cash transfer programmes to ensure equitable and sufficient social security for all; and (d) ensure that the eligibility criteria and the level of social security benefits take into account the additional costs related to disability.<sup>50</sup>

## **10. Right to an adequate standard of living**

37. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that many people were living in poverty and extreme poverty and recommended that Rwanda strengthen its efforts to combat poverty and ensure the allocation of sufficient resources for the monitoring and implementation of its anti-poverty measures across all regions.<sup>51</sup>

38. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty stated that the urban-rural poverty gap should be reduced by increasing support to small-scale farmers, especially by supporting agroecological and climate-resilient mixed cropping schemes and connections to markets.<sup>52</sup>

39. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that nearly one fifth of the population was reportedly affected by food insecurity, and that malnutrition and child stunting remained prevalent. It recommended that Rwanda adopt a comprehensive national strategy to effectively combat food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition.<sup>53</sup>

40. The same Committee expressed concern about insufficient access to adequate and affordable housing and recommended that Rwanda allocate resources to develop social housing and provide subsidies to help disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups to have access to adequate housing.<sup>54</sup>

41. The same Committee expressed concern about the challenges faced by disadvantaged and marginalized groups and those living in informal settlements regarding security of land tenure and recommended that Rwanda ensure the legal recognition and protection of land tenure and take the measures necessary to guarantee land tenure rights, without discrimination.<sup>55</sup>

42. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda ensure that evictions, when unavoidable, were carried out in accordance with due process of law, were preceded by consultation with the persons concerned and the consideration of alternatives, were subject to appeal and resulted in adequate compensation or the provision of adequate alternative housing.<sup>56</sup>

43. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda strengthen its efforts to improve access to safe, affordable water for domestic use and to provide access to improved sanitation services.<sup>57</sup>

## 11. Right to health

44. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda: (a) allocate sufficient resources to the health sector, strengthen the accessibility, availability and quality of healthcare provision in all regions and for all communities and ensure that hospitals had enough medical staff, adequate infrastructure and medical equipment and a regular supply of medicines; (b) increase the accessibility, availability and quality of professional mental health services; (c) address the risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases, improve efforts for the early detection of such diseases and provide effective and timely treatment; and (d) prevent the spread of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS and provide adequate and timely treatment and specialized healthcare and services to those affected.<sup>58</sup>

45. The United Nations country team noted that situational analysis undertaken in the context of the fifth Health Sector Strategic Plan revealed that 72 per cent of maternal deaths were preventable and that 83 per cent of maternal deaths occurred in hospitals.<sup>59</sup>

46. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda: (a) continue to take measures aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality rates and ensuring that births were assisted by skilled attendants and that all women had access to basic obstetric and neonatal care; (b) improve the accessibility, availability and quality of sexual and reproductive health services; and (c) continue with efforts to enable adolescents to independently seek sexual and reproductive health information and services and improve access to contraception and to sexual and reproductive health education for girls and boys in primary and secondary schools.<sup>60</sup>

47. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted the criminalization of abortion in circumstances other than in cases of rape, incest or forced marriage or if the health of the pregnant woman or the fetus was endangered. It recommended that Rwanda remove the cumbersome requirements for access to legal abortion and consider decriminalizing abortion in all cases.<sup>61</sup>

48. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda take the measures necessary to ensure that all migrant workers and members of their families, irrespective of their migration status, were able to access emergency medical care and basic health services on an equal basis with nationals.<sup>62</sup>

## 12. Right to education

49. UNESCO stated that Law No. 010/2021 of 16 February 2021 determining the organization of education guaranteed the right to primary education only and provided for free and compulsory education starting from the age of 6 years.<sup>63</sup>

50. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty stated that teacher training should be improved, pupil-teacher ratios should be improved, the school feeding programme should be continued, low-income households should be supported to meet the hidden costs in access to education and education should be made compulsory until 16 years of age.<sup>64</sup>

51. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda: (a) strengthen efforts to enhance access to and the quality of education, including by increasing the number of qualified teachers, improving educational materials and enhancing educational infrastructure; (b) continue to take measures to remove socioeconomic barriers and address financial disparities that hindered access to education; and (c) address the root causes of the high dropout rates in primary and secondary schools.<sup>65</sup>

52. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda: (a) address the causes of school dropout among women and girls; (b) increase access to electricity for power and lighting in schools; and (c) take measures to make schools safe spaces through combating bullying, stigma and gender-based violence.<sup>66</sup>

53. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda strengthen the effective implementation of comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education at all levels of education to prevent unplanned pregnancies and the transmission of sexually transmitted infections.<sup>67</sup>

54. UNESCO referred to a relevant supported recommendation from the previous review and noted the training of master teachers in the delivery of comprehensive sexuality education in 2022.<sup>68</sup>

55. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Rwanda: (a) take effective measures to ensure that everyone could enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, including information and communications technology; and (b) enhance its efforts to ensure affordable and reliable Internet access for all and implement measures to strengthen digital literacy by integrating digital skills training into educational curricula from the primary level onward.<sup>69</sup>

## 13. Cultural rights

56. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recalled its previous recommendation that Rwanda take into account the diversity of its population and effectively implement measures aimed at ensuring that diverse groups living in its territory could preserve, develop, express and share their identity, history, traditions and culture, while continuing to promote tolerance and understanding among them.<sup>70</sup>

## 14. Development, the environment, and business and human rights

57. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about reports of the illicit trade in minerals, including the smuggling of gold, tin, tantalum, tungsten and coltan into Rwanda, which then entered global supply chains through exports from Rwanda. It noted that such illicit practices had a negative impact on resources that were essential for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights in third countries. The Committee urged Rwanda to adopt all measures necessary: (a) to strengthen the enforcement of its laws against the illicit exploitation of natural wealth and resources; (b) to enhance oversight of mineral imports and exports; (c) to impose regular and mandatory disclosure of revenues received from trade in natural wealth and resources to a wide audience in a publicly

accessible, comprehensive and comprehensible manner; and (d) to establish mechanisms for the recovery of assets and revenues derived from illicit mineral exploitation and trade.<sup>71</sup>

58. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda strengthen its national climate change adaptation efforts and the resilience of its economy and society to environmental shocks and long-term climate change impacts.<sup>72</sup>

59. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda: (a) enact a comprehensive national legal framework that required business entities to conduct human rights due diligence throughout their operations and supply chain; and (b) develop a national action plan for business and human rights, in consultation with civil society.<sup>73</sup>

## **B. Rights of specific persons or groups**

### **1. Women**

60. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted the adoption of the third national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security for the period 2023–2028 and recommended that Rwanda effectively implement the plan in cooperation with all women in their diversities, representatives of women’s civil society organizations and women human rights defenders.<sup>74</sup>

61. The same Committee expressed concern about the high prevalence of gender-based violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence, and the social acceptance of different forms of gender-based violence against women that were considered to fall into the private sphere, such as domestic violence, based on persisting patriarchal attitudes and norms. It recommended that Rwanda address patriarchal attitudes and norms that condoned gender-based violence against women and support victims in reporting gender-based violence.<sup>75</sup>

62. The same Committee expressed concern about the penalty for marital rape in Law No. 59/2008 on the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence not being harmonized with the penalty for rape in Law No. 68/2018 on offences and penalties in general. It recommended that Rwanda harmonize the lesser penalty for “conjugal rape” provided under article 19 of Law No. 59/2008 with that for the crime of rape under article 134 of Law No. 68/2018 to ensure that both were commensurate with the gravity of the crimes.<sup>76</sup>

63. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that women had faced barriers in claiming their land rights and recommended that Rwanda continue to take measures to empower women to claim their land rights, including by addressing the economic, customary and social barriers faced by women and increasing women’s awareness of their land rights.<sup>77</sup> The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda ensure that rural women had effective access to legal aid and counselling to be able to access justice in relation to land claims.<sup>78</sup>

64. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda expand measures to promote women’s financial literacy and access to low-interest loans and other forms of financial credit, expand initiatives to support women’s entrepreneurship, improve economic security for women through increased social protection coverage, and ensure that women engaged in unpaid work in subsistence agriculture and in the informal sector had access to non-contributory social protection schemes.<sup>79</sup>

65. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda ensure that rural women working in the informal sector had effective access to non-contributory social protection schemes, and enhance rural women’s access to financial credit, technology and support for entrepreneurship, including for climate-smart agriculture.<sup>80</sup>

## 2. Children

66. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about the continued prevalence of the worst forms of child labour and recommended that Rwanda continue to take efforts to ensure the effective enforcement of its laws on child labour in both the formal and informal sectors.<sup>81</sup>

67. Noting, with concern, the prevalence of child marriage, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda take appropriate measures to combat child marriage and raise awareness of the criminal nature and harmful impact of child and/or forced marriage on girls and women and ensure that those allegedly responsible for such unions were prosecuted and, if convicted, adequately punished.<sup>82</sup>

## 3. Persons with disabilities

68. The United Nations country team stated that, since the previous review, Rwanda had adopted a four-year strategic plan on the inclusion of persons with disabilities but noted that some components of the plan remained unimplemented and that persons with disabilities continued to face challenges in relation to integration and inclusion.<sup>83</sup>

69. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda allocate the necessary resources to meet the educational needs of women and girls with disabilities and take measures to ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation for girls with disabilities in schools.<sup>84</sup>

70. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda: (a) adopt targeted measures to ensure the proportionate representation of women with disabilities in decision-making systems; (b) ensure that women with disabilities had effective access to justice and full legal capacity, including the right to freely enter into marriage and equal inheritance rights; (c) ensure that women and girls with disabilities were protected from gender-based violence and abuse in families, households and communities; and (d) provide adequate access to employment opportunities for women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.<sup>85</sup>

## 4. Indigenous Peoples and minorities

71. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concerns about the Batwa being subjected to historical and ongoing dispossession, displacement and involuntary relocation, often without receiving adequate compensation for the expropriation of their ancestral lands and commonly carried out without prior consultation. The Batwa had also been disproportionately affected by poverty, higher rates of infant mortality, shorter life expectancies, elevated incidences of disease and malnutrition, lower school attendance and poorer educational outcomes; and had faced barriers to effectively benefiting from land titling and registration processes, which prevented them from securing legal ownership or access to land. The Committee recommended that Rwanda address the disparities affecting Batwa in the enjoyment of their rights, establish an effective mechanism to facilitate the Batwa's access to land titling and land registration processes, and ensure that decisions likely to affect the Batwa were preceded by systematic and transparent consultations aimed at obtaining their free, prior and informed consent.<sup>86</sup>

## 5. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons

72. The United Nations country team noted that a 2022 survey of LGBTIQ+ persons revealed that about two thirds of the participants had experienced discrimination. It stated that, by fostering greater public awareness, promoting inclusive service environments, and strengthening community engagement, Rwanda could further reinforce its commitment to leaving no one behind, ensuring that every individual was treated with dignity, respect, and equality both in policy and in everyday life.<sup>87</sup>

## 6. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

73. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda take all necessary measures to ensure that all migrant workers and members of their families in its territory or subject to its jurisdiction, whether documented or not, enjoyed the rights recognized in the

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.<sup>88</sup>

74. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda ensure that bilateral cooperation agreements on asylum and migration issues entered into with other States Parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families safeguarded the rights and guarantees contained in the Convention and that such agreements promoted voluntary return and prohibited the forced return of migrant workers to their countries of origin.<sup>89</sup>

75. The same Committee recommended that Rwanda ensure that regularization was accessible and affordable for all migrant workers and members of their families who were in an irregular situation and that fines levied as penalties for migration-related offences did not block access to regularization mechanisms.<sup>90</sup>

76. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty expressed concern that refugees, particularly those in camps, had continued to face serious structural and practical barriers to realizing their rights. He urged Rwanda to expand livelihood opportunities, extend social protection schemes and remove practical barriers that impeded refugees' full participation in society.<sup>91</sup>

77. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Rwanda: (a) ensure access to civil registration documents, including birth certificates, for refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls; (b) ensure that gender-specific protection grounds were duly taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis when conducting refugee status assessments and processing the claims of asylum-seeking women and girls; and (c) guarantee access to judicial review and affordable and, if necessary, free, legal aid in asylum procedures.<sup>92</sup>

78. The United Nations country team stated that, in 2024, a new law governing refugees and asylum-seekers had been enacted pursuant to which the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration was responsible for receiving and registering asylum-seekers, conducting refugee status determination and issuing status documentation to asylum-seekers and refugees.<sup>93</sup>

79. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda continue to introduce measures to facilitate the voluntary return of Rwandans and members of their families living abroad and their long-term economic, social and cultural reintegration in the country.<sup>94</sup>

## 7. Stateless persons

80. The United Nations country team stated that Rwanda had enacted legislation that provided for the acquisition of nationality on the ground of statelessness.<sup>95</sup>

81. The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that Rwanda set up clear statelessness determination procedures and ease access to citizenship, and ensure that all children of Rwandan migrant workers born abroad were registered at birth and issued with identity documents at consular services.<sup>96</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> [A/HRC/47/14](#), [A/HRC/47/14/Add.1](#) and [A/HRC/47/2](#).

<sup>2</sup> See also [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 55.

<sup>3</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), paras. 64 and 65. See also United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of Rwanda, para. 2.

<sup>4</sup> [CMW/C/RWA/CO/2](#), para. 15, referring to [CMW/C/RWA/CO/1](#), para. 8.

<sup>5</sup> [CMW/C/RWA/CO/2](#), para. 16.

<sup>6</sup> UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Rwanda, paras. 9 and 27 (vi), referring to [A/HRC/47/14](#), para. 134.158 (Lesotho).

<sup>7</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), para. 66.

<sup>8</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 7.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 6.

<sup>10</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), para. 5.

- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., paras. 46 (c) and 47 (c).
- <sup>12</sup> See communication RWA 3/2024, available from <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29179>. See also United Nations country team submission, para. 18.
- <sup>13</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/2025-05-30-eom-sr-poverty-rwanda-en.pdf>, p. 15.
- <sup>14</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 6 and 7.
- <sup>15</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 5.
- <sup>16</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 16 and 17 (b).
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., paras. 20 and 21.
- <sup>18</sup> CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, paras. 23 and 24 (a).
- <sup>19</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 15.
- <sup>20</sup> See communication RWA 1/2025, available from <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29644>.
- <sup>21</sup> See communication RWA 2/2024, available from <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29146>.
- <sup>22</sup> United Nations country team submission, paras. 23 and 26.
- <sup>23</sup> See A/HRC/60/80.
- <sup>24</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, para. 15 (b)–(d).
- <sup>25</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 20, referring to A/HRC/47/14, para. 134.39 (France).
- <sup>26</sup> CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, para. 11.
- <sup>27</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 18 and 19 (b) and (c).
- <sup>28</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 16, referring to A/HRC/47/14, paras. 134.50 (Czechia) and 134.53 (Italy).
- <sup>29</sup> See communication RWA 1/2024, available from <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=28841>.
- <sup>30</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 8 and 9. See also CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, paras. 17 and 18.
- <sup>31</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, para. 24; and CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, para. 32 (a). See also United Nations country team submission, para. 9.
- <sup>32</sup> CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, paras. 49 (a) and 50 (a) and (b).
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., para. 28 (a)–(c).
- <sup>34</sup> CMW/C/RWA/CO/2, para. 54 (a).
- <sup>35</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, para. 27 (a).
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., para. 27 (b).
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., para. 27 (c).
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., para. 25 (c).
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid., para. 25 (d). See also CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, para. 36 (a).
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., para. 29.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid., para. 31.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid., para. 33 (a).
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., para. 33 (c).
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., para. 33 (d).
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., para. 35 (b). See also CMW/C/RWA/CO/2, para. 46.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., para. 35 (c).
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., para. 39.
- <sup>48</sup> CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, paras. 29 and 30.
- <sup>49</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 16 and 17 (a). See also United Nations country team submission, para. 34.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., para. 37 (a)–(d).
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., paras. 42 and 43.
- <sup>52</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/2025-05-30-eom-sr-poverty-rwanda-en.pdf>, p. 15. See also United Nations country team submission, para. 27.
- <sup>53</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, paras. 44 and 45.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid., paras. 46 (a) and 47 (a).
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., paras. 46 (d) and 47 (d).
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., para. 47 (c).
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., para. 49.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., para. 53.
- <sup>59</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 36.
- <sup>60</sup> E/C.12/RWA/CO/5, para. 55 (a)–(c).
- <sup>61</sup> CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10, paras. 37 (e) and 38 (c).
- <sup>62</sup> CMW/C/RWA/CO/2, para. 36.
- <sup>63</sup> UNESCO submission, para. 3. See also para. 27 (i)–(iii).

- <sup>64</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/2025-05-30-eom-sr-poverty-rwanda-en.pdf>, p. 15. See also United Nations country team submission, para. 45.
- <sup>65</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), para. 57.
- <sup>66</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 34 (a).
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 34 (e).
- <sup>68</sup> UNESCO submission, para. 14, referring to [A/HRC/47/14](#), para. 134.90 (France).
- <sup>69</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), para. 63.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 61, referring to [E/C.12/RWA/CO/2-4](#), para. 28.
- <sup>71</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), paras. 12 and 13.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 51.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 11 (a) and (c).
- <sup>74</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), paras. 13 and 14 (a).
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 25 and 26 (a) and (b). See also <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/2025-05-30-eom-sr-poverty-rwanda-en.pdf>, p. 15.
- <sup>76</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), paras. 25 (d) and 26 (d).
- <sup>77</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), paras. 24 and 25 (b).
- <sup>78</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 42 (c).
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 40.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 42 (a) and (e).
- <sup>81</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), paras. 40 and 41.
- <sup>82</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), paras. 49 (b) and 50 (c) and (d).
- <sup>83</sup> United Nations country team submission, paras. 32 and 33.
- <sup>84</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 34 (d).
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 48.
- <sup>86</sup> [E/C.12/RWA/CO/5](#), paras. 22 and 23. See also [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), paras. 43 and 44.
- <sup>87</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 10.
- <sup>88</sup> [CMW/C/RWA/CO/2](#), para. 26.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28 (d).
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 28 (a).
- <sup>91</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/2025-05-30-eom-sr-poverty-rwanda-en.pdf>, p. 14. See also United Nations country team submission, para. 30.
- <sup>92</sup> [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/10](#), para. 46 (a)–(c).
- <sup>93</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 4.
- <sup>94</sup> [CMW/C/RWA/CO/2](#), para. 52.
- <sup>95</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 51.
- <sup>96</sup> [CMW/C/RWA/CO/2](#), para. 38 (a) and (c).
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