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**Human Rights Council**  
**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Fortieth session**  
24 January–4 February 2022

## **Compilation on Uganda**

### **Report of 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 periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a compilation of information contained in reports of treaty bodies and special procedures and other relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

#### **II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies<sup>1, 2</sup>**

2. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ratify the international human rights treaties to which it was not yet party, particularly the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.<sup>3</sup>

#### **III. National human rights framework<sup>4</sup>**

3. The United Nations country team remarked that the Constitution of 1995 and other laws provided the overarching framework for the promotion and protection of human rights. There was a number of pending bills and regulations that, if enacted, would have the potential to further uphold human rights. Those included the sexual offences bill, the human rights defenders bill, the witness protection bill, the succession (amendment) bill and the evidence (amendment) bill.<sup>5</sup> The United Nations country team also expressed concern that the Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission continued to face significant financial resource and other constraints, including a protracted delay in the appointment of commissioners. The Commission had been without a Chairperson from November 2019 to July 2021.<sup>6</sup>



4. The United Nations country team commended the country's commitment to incorporating a human rights-based approach into its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>7</sup>

5. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ensure that the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and relevant line ministries were adequately funded, supported and capacitated to ensure that human rights were effectively mainstreamed in governance. It also recommended ensuring that the Government was supported to collect and analyse data to inform its implementation of the third National Development Plan and the 2030 Agenda; ensuring that human rights obligations, action plans and recommendations from human rights mechanisms were incorporated and aligned with national development frameworks and policies; advancing in the submission of pending reports to United Nations treaty bodies and other international human rights mechanisms; and issuing a standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders in the United Nations system.<sup>8</sup>

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

### **A. Cross-cutting issues**

#### **1. Equality and non-discrimination<sup>9</sup>**

6. The United Nations country team noted that since 2016, the Equal Opportunities Commission had promoted the equal opportunities of vulnerable groups, including by mainstreaming gender and equity in ministries, departments and agencies, carrying out advocacy on the human rights of vulnerable groups, including persons with albinism, supporting work on disability inclusion and conducting research to identify the status of equal opportunities to inform national interventions. However, it expressed concern that despite the Government's efforts to eradicate them, harmful traditional practices and stereotypes perpetuated discrimination against women, children, ethnic minority groups, persons living with HIV and persons with disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

7. The United Nations country team commended Uganda for its achievements in the fight against HIV/AIDS, noting that the Government had put in place a conducive policy, legislative and programmatic environment, which included the national policy on HIV/AIDS and the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2015/2016–2019/2020. It recommended that Uganda periodically review the impact of the implementation of the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Act, especially on women and most at-risk populations, and strengthen efforts to counter negative attitudes and practices that prevented access to and use of HIV/sexual and reproductive health and rights services and that increased stigma and discrimination.<sup>11</sup>

8. The United Nations country team was concerned that while efforts had been made to review legislation through a non-discrimination lens, there were still discriminatory laws and provisions in place that prevented lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons from enjoying equal human rights. It indicated that while homosexuality was not criminalized in Uganda, the act of same-sex relations was. The Penal Code criminalized "carnal knowledge of any person against the order of nature", providing for a punishment of life imprisonment. The United Nations country team further noted that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons were subjected to human rights violations and abuses and continued to face stigmatization, discrimination and fear of arrest.<sup>12</sup>

9. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted that the sexual offences bill had been passed by Parliament and was pending presidential assent to become law. However, a few clauses would be detrimental to certain categories of the population, including the provision on "unnatural offences", defined in the bill as sexual relations with persons of the same sex, which was discriminatory for LGBTIQ+ persons, and the provision considering HIV as an aggravating circumstance, which stigmatized persons living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>13</sup> UNHCR recommended that Uganda review the clauses in the sexual

offences bill that were discriminatory before it was passed into law, and that it prioritize financial resources for programming on gender-based violence in order to address gaps in human and technical capacities.<sup>14</sup> The United Nations country team recommended that a systematic audit and review of legislation be conducted to ensure non-discrimination and that laws be expedited to guarantee effective enjoyment of equal rights. It further recommended that the Penal Code be amended to derogate section 145 on “unnatural offences”, which, when enforced, led to discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons.<sup>15</sup>

10. The United Nations country team noted that various interventions had been undertaken to protect persons with albinism, such as the Prevention and Prohibition of Human Sacrifice Act of 2021, aimed at preventing human sacrifice and punishing perpetrators. It also noted that Uganda had taken a number of measures to promote the health rights of persons with albinism, including the provision of free eye care, and support to raise awareness of the rights of persons with albinism.<sup>16</sup>

## **2. Development, the environment, and business and human rights<sup>17</sup>**

11. The United Nations country team commended Uganda on its development of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, integrating the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. It recommended that Uganda expedite the implementation of the plan.<sup>18</sup>

## **B. Civil and political rights**

### **1. Right to life, liberty and security of person<sup>19</sup>**

12. The United Nations country team noted that following the elections, there had been a significant increase in allegations of enforced disappearance and torture that had reportedly taken place during the electoral period. Hundreds of opposition organizers, campaign staff, members and supporters had been arrested and detained and some had been subjected to incommunicado detention, including in military detention facilities. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ensure that the United Nations principles on the use of force and United Nations guidance on less-lethal weapons were part of the regular training of the police and other security forces, and that Uganda ensure the existence of oversight mechanisms to enhance accountability for security forces. It further recommended that any case of alleged torture or unnecessary or disproportionate use of force be investigated and prosecuted and that the perpetrators be brought to justice.<sup>20</sup>

13. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ensure that detainees were brought before a court within 48 hours of arrest, as required by the Constitution, and that civilians charged with criminal offences were brought before civilian rather than military courts.<sup>21</sup>

### **2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law<sup>22</sup>**

14. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women asked Uganda to explain the reason for the delay in the enactment of the legal aid bill and clarify the expected timeline for its enactment and implementation.<sup>23</sup>

15. The United Nations country team noted that Uganda had taken several measures to strengthen the rule of law and access to justice, including introducing new laws and policies incorporating international human rights norms and standards, such as the Human Rights (Enforcement) Act, 2019 and the Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act, 2019, which removed the mandatory death penalty from domestic law.<sup>24</sup> It commended Uganda for adopting the National Transitional Justice Policy in 2019.<sup>25</sup> However, the United Nations country team was concerned that Uganda still faced challenges in the administration of justice, with prison occupancy at over 312 per cent, and pretrial detainees steadily constituting more than 52 per cent of the overall prison population over the past 10 years.<sup>26</sup>

16. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda take urgent steps to pass key laws and policies central to the administration of and access to justice, such as the transitional justice bill, the legal aid policy, the witness protection bill and the amnesty (amendment) bill, and to ensure the protection of children when they were involved in court proceedings. It also recommended that Uganda support the justice, law and order sector in: continuing its efforts to reduce the case backlog, overcome gender bias and address delays in the justice delivery system; promoting the use of non-custodial outcomes for minor offences; and addressing the lack of child-friendly facilities in prisons, which exposes many children in prison with their mothers to poor living conditions with inadequate access to nutrition, leisure and education. The United Nations country team also recommended expediting the implementation of the National Transitional Justice Policy.<sup>27</sup>

### **3. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life<sup>28</sup>**

17. The United Nations country team noted that Uganda had a vibrant civic space, with civil society actors, including human rights defenders, women advocates, children, young people, ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples and journalists, playing a significant role in promoting good governance, human and child rights and gender equality in Uganda.<sup>29</sup>

18. The United Nations country team stressed that, in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Uganda had issued presidential COVID-19 directives and the Ministry of Health had issued standard operating procedures. The new regulatory framework introduced restrictions on public meetings and assemblies, which were discretionally enforced by security and law enforcement agencies in the electoral period. The United Nations country team noted that there had been widespread restrictions on political participation, media freedom and freedom of peaceful assembly throughout the electoral campaign, and incidents of arbitrary arrest and detention of political opposition candidates and supporters, journalists and members of civil society organizations. While there were clear public health reasons for limiting mass gatherings and suspending physical campaigning in some locations due to COVID-19, those restrictions were applied in a discriminatory manner to target people perceived as opponents of the Government and curb dissent.<sup>30</sup>

19. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda amend the legal and policy framework regulating public assemblies in order to bring the powers that security forces have to police assemblies into line with international human rights standards, and that it ensure an enabling online environment in which Ugandans were able to access information, work and access services freely.<sup>31</sup>

20. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that Uganda facilitate independent and transparent self-regulatory mechanisms for the media. It also advised Uganda to decriminalize defamation and place it within a civil code according to international standards.<sup>32</sup> It further urged Uganda to investigate the cases of journalists who had been killed, and to voluntarily report to UNESCO on the status of judicial follow-up.<sup>33</sup>

## **C. Economic, social and cultural rights**

### **1. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work<sup>34</sup>**

21. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations urged Uganda to strengthen its efforts to ensure the effective elimination of child labour, especially in hazardous work. In that regard, it requested the Government to provide information on the implementation of the reviewed national action plan, once adopted, and to supply information on the application of the Convention in practice, particularly statistics on the employment of children under 14 years of age.<sup>35</sup> The Committee also urged Uganda to pursue its efforts to place the labour inspection system under a central authority with a view to ensuring coherence in the functioning of the labour inspection system and to provide information on the steps taken in that regard, including a copy of any legislation adopted.<sup>36</sup>

22. The same Committee requested the Government to take the necessary measures to revise the level of the minimum wage without further delay.<sup>37</sup>

23. The same Committee also requested Uganda to take the necessary measures to ensure that the revised legislation would recognize the right of trade union federations and confederations to engage in collective bargaining.<sup>38</sup>

## **2. Right to social security<sup>39</sup>**

24. The United Nations country team commended Uganda for initiating social protection measures such as special grants for older persons. However, up to one third of Ugandans were unable to access social protection due to the requirement to possess a national identification card. The United Nations country team noted that such mass exclusion jeopardized the commitment to leave no one behind, since it prevented marginalized people from accessing basic social services, including special grants and health services.<sup>40</sup>

## **3. Right to an adequate standard of living<sup>41</sup>**

25. The United Nations country team stated that the COVID-19 lockdown measures had exposed and deepened inequalities with regard to economic, social and cultural rights.<sup>42</sup> Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, it had been estimated that the poverty rate had declined from 41.3 to 40.2 per cent between 2016 and 2019. COVID-19 had reversed those gains, with the poverty rate estimated to be 41.4 per cent in 2020 and projected to increase to 41.7 per cent in 2021, according to the World Bank. Household incomes had fallen significantly during the first lockdown, which was concerning given the high levels of vulnerability to poverty and the limited social safety nets.<sup>43</sup>

26. The United Nations country team stated that the economic impact of the pandemic had hit the poorest the hardest, because of their extreme vulnerability to the effects of COVID-19. The country's strategy to stimulate the economy had fallen short of the expectation that the worst hit would be the priority in COVID-19 economic responses. In the lockdown ending recently, only urban centres had been targeted for financial assistance.<sup>44</sup>

27. The United Nations country team also noted that environmental hazards continued to threaten the country's gains in addressing multidimensional poverty at the subnational levels by adversely affecting food systems, human health, and critical sources of livelihood. It noted that, according to the International Organization for Migration, 148,182 people had been affected by floods, landslides, hailstorms and fire outbreaks in Uganda between January and June 2021.<sup>45</sup> It further noted that there were still over 2 million children in Uganda chronically malnourished (stunted), and that Uganda would likely not meet the Sustainable Development Goal target for reducing stunting.<sup>46</sup>

28. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ensure that key human rights principles of inclusion, participation, equality, non-discrimination and accountability guided the socioeconomic recovery and resilience-building strategies and processes; continue to expand the provision of social assistance and direct income support to vulnerable individuals and households and collect, analyse and disseminate disaggregated data for policy formulation and programming; and increase investment in social protection and environmental sustainability and increase budgetary allocations towards national social protection and integrated environmental sustainability and climate resilience programmes. It also recommended that Uganda remove the requirement to possess a national identification card to access social protection interventions, to ensure that those most at risk of being left behind were not further excluded from social protection.<sup>47</sup>

## **4. Right to health<sup>48</sup>**

29. The United Nations country team commended Uganda for the advances made in increasing people's access to and use of health services. It indicated that in 2018, 75 per cent of the population lived within a 5-kilometre radius of a health facility. Significant progress had also been made in the provision of specialized medical care in cardiology and gynaecology, which had increased access to health services.<sup>49</sup> Despite efforts to employ additional health workers, a recent study of the preparedness of the country's health-care system to handle COVID-19 indicated that the doctor-patient and nurse-patient ratios were

approximately 1 to 25,000 and 1 to 11,000, respectively – far below the doctor-patient ratio of 1 to 1,000 recommended by the World Health Organization.<sup>50</sup>

30. The United Nations country team noted that the maternal mortality rate currently stood at 336 deaths per 100,000 live births, far above the Sustainable Development Goal target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births. Efforts to address maternal mortality, including through a multisectoral strategy to reduce preventable maternal mortality, had been delayed by the COVID-19 situation.<sup>51</sup>

31. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda: urgently deploy all urgent efforts needed to ensure available, accessible and affordable medical attention for all patients, including with regard to mental health, especially in rural areas and among minority communities; take urgent steps to strengthen the number, capacity and skills of health workers and improve services offered by health-care facilities; increase investment in the health system and infrastructure and ensure improvement in the equitable distribution and availability of reproductive health and child health commodities, supplies and equipment; finalize and implement the multisectoral strategy to reduce preventable maternal mortality; and prioritize the health sector as a key driver of development by ensuring that 15 per cent of the national budget was allocated to the health sector, in accordance with the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases.<sup>52</sup>

## **5. Right to education<sup>53</sup>**

32. The United Nations country team noted that while Uganda had adopted a policy of universal primary education in 1997, primary education was not compulsory. School enrolment had improved; however, there had been a decline in the rate of transition from primary to lower secondary education, from 72 per cent in 2013 to 61 per cent in 2017.<sup>54</sup>

33. The United Nations country team also noted that the right to education was affected by harmful sociocultural factors, such as early marriage and teenage pregnancy, which contributed to girls dropping out of school. The COVID-19 pandemic had placed a huge burden on girls, owing to increases in care work and in the risk of sexual abuse.<sup>55</sup>

34. UNESCO recommended that Uganda: fully implement the provisions of the Convention against Discrimination in Education, which it had accepted in 1968; consider extending the duration of compulsory education to nine years; consider guaranteeing one year of compulsory and free pre-primary education legally; and ensure and monitor the implementation of the newly adopted third National Development Plan in order to improve the country's education system. It further recommended that Uganda continue its efforts to improve the quality of education at all levels, from early childhood care and education to post-secondary education, in order to reduce dropout rates, including by pursuing its efforts to reduce the pupil to classroom ratio; strengthen its efforts to ensure gender equality in education, including by ensuring that the law on marriage, prohibiting marriage before 18, was implemented throughout the country; strengthen its efforts to ensure that qualified teachers in sufficient quantity were entering the profession and to retain them, notably by providing a sufficient salary for all teachers; and regularly submit comprehensive national reports for the periodic consultations on the education-related standard-setting instruments of UNESCO, notably on the implementation of the Convention against Discrimination in Education.<sup>56</sup>

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

### **1. Women<sup>57</sup>**

35. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women took note of the information provided by Uganda that its Parliament had started consideration of the marriage and divorce bill and had decided to undertake further consultation. However, the Committee regretted that since its dialogue with the State party in 2010 and the decision of Parliament to start further consultations on the bill, no measures had been taken to expeditiously adopt and enact the bill.<sup>58</sup>

36. The same Committee recommended that Uganda provide, in its next periodic report, information on further actions taken to: expeditiously enact the marriage and divorce bill; expeditiously enact bills addressing gaps in its law on sexual offences to harmonize its domestic legislation with constitutional principles relating to non-discrimination and equality between women and men; expeditiously enact the bill on the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act; and raise the awareness of legislators about the need to give priority attention to legal reforms in order to achieve de jure equality for women.<sup>59</sup>

37. The same Committee also recommended that Uganda provide, in its next periodic report, information on further actions taken to: strengthen the training of school officials and students on the importance of education as the basis for the empowerment of women; ensure safe transportation to and from schools, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education; introduce the planned course on gender and child protection against discrimination and violence; and establish reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators of all sexual offences against school girls were prosecuted.<sup>60</sup>

38. The same Committee asked about the persistent delay in eliminating legal provisions that were discriminatory against women, including through the enactment of the sexual offences bill, the marriage and divorce bill, the Muslim personal law bill, the legal aid bill, the succession (amendment) bill, the employment (amendment) bill, the market (amendment) bill, the evidence (amendment) bill and the Penal Code (amendment) bill. It also asked about other measures taken to revise legislation, such as the Anti-Pornography Act of 2014, that was discriminatory against women.<sup>61</sup>

39. The same Committee asked Uganda to advise on specific legislative measures in place to protect the rights of women human rights defenders who faced consistent harassment, discrimination, risk and gender-specific threats and violence, and whose reputation and sexuality were targeted.<sup>62</sup>

40. The United Nations country team noted that discrimination against women in marriage, divorce, inheritance and employment persisted. The succession (amendment) bill and the marriage and divorce bill were aimed at addressing those and other discrepancies.<sup>63</sup>

41. The United Nations country team noted that during the COVID-19 lockdown, there had been consistent reports of an increase in certain forms of gender-based violence. Police statistics indicated that there had been a 29 per cent increase in domestic violence between 2019 and 2020. The most prevalent forms of gender-based violence were domestic violence, physical violence, child marriage, rape, defilement and other types of sexual violence. During recent years, several good practices in programming on gender-based violence had been developed and implemented, including awareness-raising. Capacities had improved through multisectoral responses. However, key challenges persisted with regard to mainstreaming the issue of gender-based violence across sectors, as did impunity, and inefficiencies in the response systems due to limited resources and underreporting.<sup>64</sup>

42. The United Nations country team also stated that while Uganda had enacted a law in 2010 to prohibit female genital mutilation, the law had not been implemented.<sup>65</sup>

43. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda: prioritize financial resources for gender-based violence programming to address gaps in human and technical capacities and for long-term commitment to gender-based violence shelters; expedite the adoption of the national gender policy; expedite the enactment of the marriage and divorce bill, the law on female genital mutilation, the succession (amendment) bill and the employment (amendment) bill of 2019; review the provisions in the sexual offences bill that were discriminatory and contrary to human rights standards before it was enacted; and introduce measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in the workplace in Uganda and protect victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.<sup>66</sup>

44. UNHCR stated that implementation of the Domestic Violence Act had been gradual. While the Government had established special courts to address the backlog of gender-based violence cases, capacity gaps in human and financial resources continued to affect the implementation of the Act.<sup>67</sup>

## 2. Children<sup>68</sup>

45. The United Nations country team noted that Uganda had made significant strides in ensuring appropriate legislative, administrative and educational measures to protect children from all forms of violence. Those measures had yet to be matched with appropriate investments to ensure the availability and accessibility of services as provided for in the National Child Policy 2020.<sup>69</sup> Child protection challenges persisted, including with regard to violence against children and access to secondary education, birth registration, health services, and specialized support for children with disabilities.<sup>70</sup>

46. The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda: increase budget allocation and national investment for early childhood development, especially for the first 1,000 days of life; enforce the amended Children's Act, including by providing adequate funding to support the registration of all children and strengthening registration structures at the local government level; waive the costs associated with the issuance of birth certificates; allocate adequate financial and technical resources to enhance the national child protection system and to ensure the provision of quality child protection services to all children; and operationalize and finance the National Children Authority to enable it to carry out its child rights monitoring mandate.<sup>71</sup>

## 3. Persons with disabilities<sup>72</sup>

47. The United Nations country team commended Uganda for adopting the Mental Health Act in 2018 and the Persons with Disabilities Act in 2020.<sup>73</sup> It noted that the national council for persons with disabilities lacked sufficient human and financial resources to carry out its mandate to monitor, coordinate and advocate for disability inclusion.<sup>74</sup> In this context, the United Nations country team recommended that Uganda: ensure adequate mainstreaming of disabilities in the planning and budgeting processes; ensure that the national council for persons with disabilities was adequately resourced to fulfil its mandate effectively, including by collecting data to support national planning for persons, particularly children, with disabilities, and to present the second periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2022; and collect, analyse and disseminate disaggregated disability-specific data for policy formulation and programming.<sup>75</sup>

## 4. Minorities and indigenous peoples<sup>76</sup>

48. UNESCO encouraged Uganda to give due consideration to the participation of communities, practitioners, cultural actors, and non-governmental organizations from civil society, as well as vulnerable groups, including minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, young people, and persons with disabilities, and ensure that equal opportunities were given to women and girls to address gender disparities.<sup>77</sup>

## 5. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons<sup>78</sup>

49. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families encouraged Uganda to strengthen its efforts to implement the recommendations on ensuring that, in law and in practice, migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, had equal opportunities as nationals of Uganda to file complaints and obtain effective redress in the courts, including labour courts, in cases where their rights under the Convention were violated, and on taking additional measures to inform migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, about the judicial and other remedies available to them in case of a violation of their rights under the Convention.<sup>79</sup>

50. The same Committee encouraged Uganda to take the necessary measures to fully implement its recommendation to guarantee to migrant workers and members of their families, both in law and in practice, the right to form and be a member of the executive bodies of associations and unions for the promotion and protection of their economic, social, cultural and other interests, in accordance with article 40 of the Convention and with the ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87).<sup>80</sup>



51. The same Committee further recommended that Uganda undertake measures to fully implement its recommendation to ensure the right to vote for Ugandan migrant workers residing abroad.<sup>81</sup>

52. The United Nations country team noted that Uganda had continued to maintain a progressive refugee regime. Refugees had freedom of movement, and the rights to work, to own property and to access national services, including primary and secondary education and health care.<sup>82</sup> It noted that the vast majority of asylum seekers were granted *prima facie* refugee status, while 4 per cent went through individual refugee status determination. However, a small percentage of asylum seekers with certain profiles, including those who presented sexual orientation and gender-related identity claims, had limited access to the national asylum procedures.<sup>83</sup> The United Nations country team recommended that Uganda ensure that national asylum procedures were consistently accessible to all asylum seekers without discrimination on any grounds, including sexual orientation.<sup>84</sup>

53. UNHCR noted that as at 31 May 2021, Uganda was hosting 1,494,505 refugees and asylum seekers – the highest number of refugees and asylum seekers in Africa. It noted that the country's progressive refugee regime was grounded in the Refugees Act 2006 and the Refugees Regulations, 2010, allowing refugees freedom of movement, the rights to work and establish businesses upon the granting of respective permits, own property, and access national services, including primary and secondary education and health care at par with nationals.<sup>85</sup> UNHCR noted that Uganda continued to provide a favourable asylum environment and had made notable progress towards improving livelihoods and health-care systems for refugees and internally displaced persons.<sup>86</sup>

54. The United Nations country team noted that refugee children suffered from trauma arising from forced displacement, separation from families, and physical and sexual violence, and that the child protection sector was severely underfunded, resulting in a weak institutional framework and an overstretched social workforce.<sup>87</sup>

55. UNHCR noted that Uganda hosted over 850,000 refugee children, among whom over 55,000 had specific protection concerns (neglect, defilement, teenage pregnancy, and school dropout, among others). The Government had a robust child protection framework that was inclusive of refugee children. In October 2020, the Government had adopted the National Child Policy, demonstrating a commitment to enhance the welfare of all children and its efforts to ensure compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Nonetheless, child protection challenges persisted regarding the prevention of and response to violence against children, access to education, specifically to secondary education, timely access to birth registration, limited access to resources to fulfil basic needs, leading to poor nutrition among children, limited access to health services, and limited access to specialized support for children with disabilities, among others. UNHCR recommended that Uganda allocate adequate financial and technical resources to enhance the national child protection system and to ensure the provision of quality child protection services for the children of refugees and children from host communities.<sup>88</sup>

## 6. Stateless persons<sup>89</sup>

56. UNHCR noted that since 2018, Uganda had engaged in efforts to address statelessness, starting with the designation of a statelessness focal point following the signature of the 2017 declaration of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region member States on the eradication of statelessness.<sup>90</sup>

57. UNHCR noted that Uganda had a legal framework for birth registration – the Registration of Persons Act, 2015 – which made registration of all children born on the territory free and compulsory. However, that Act granted power to the authorities to prescribe fees for its services. Access to birth registration and certification continued to be a challenge due to the costs associated with the issuance of birth certificates. UNHCR recommended that Uganda waive the costs associated with issuance of birth certificates.<sup>91</sup>

58. UNHCR recommended that Uganda accede to the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness without further delay and insert a safeguard into its laws to ensure that a child born on its territory who would otherwise be stateless was granted Ugandan citizenship in line with that Convention, and that Uganda complete legal reforms to ensure that the

members of unrecognized minority communities in Uganda whose ancestors had been present in Uganda since 1926 were granted Ugandan citizenship in the absence of other recognized citizenship and issued with nationality documentation.<sup>92</sup>

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Tables containing information on the scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies for Uganda will be available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UGIndex.aspx>.
- <sup>2</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.1–115.4, 115.17 and 116.4.
- <sup>3</sup> United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of Uganda, pp. 2, 6, 7, 10 and 11.
- <sup>4</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.39–115.44.
- <sup>5</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 4.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 5.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 7.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- <sup>9</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.59–115.60, 115.97, 117.3–117.4, 117.9, 117.14, 117.23, 117.31, 117.38, 117.46–117.49, 117.58–117.59, 117.61 and 117.64.
- <sup>10</sup> United Nations country team submission, paras. 10 and 13.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.
- <sup>13</sup> UNHCR submission for the universal periodic review of Uganda, p. 4.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>15</sup> United Nations country team submission, p. 3.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 17.
- <sup>17</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.134–115.136 and 115.138.
- <sup>18</sup> United Nations country team submission, p. 2.
- <sup>19</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 117.15, 117.25, 117.32, 117.34, 117.51, 117.56, 117.60 and 117.62.
- <sup>20</sup> United Nations country team submission, p. 6.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.82–115.83 and 116.13.
- <sup>23</sup> [CEDAW/C/UGA/Q/8-9](#), para. 4.
- <sup>24</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 33.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 34.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 33.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- <sup>28</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.19, 115.101 and 115.103.
- <sup>29</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 26.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 28–29.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>32</sup> UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Uganda, para. 11.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 12.
- <sup>34</sup> For the relevant recommendation, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), para. 116.14.
- <sup>35</sup> See [http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID:4061262:NO](http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:4061262:NO).
- <sup>36</sup> See [http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID:4061937:NO](http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:4061937:NO).
- <sup>37</sup> See [http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID:4061887:NO](http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:4061887:NO).
- <sup>38</sup> See [http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID:4023474:NO](http://www.ilo.ch/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:4023474:NO).
- <sup>39</sup> For the relevant recommendation, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), para. 116.3.
- <sup>40</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 40.
- <sup>41</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.111–115.112, 115.137, 115.140 and 115.142.
- <sup>42</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 35.

- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., para. 36.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., para. 37.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., para. 38.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., para. 39.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 8.
- <sup>48</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.113–115.122.
- <sup>49</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 41.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., para. 42.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., para. 44.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>53</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.123–115.128.
- <sup>54</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 49.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., para. 48.
- <sup>56</sup> UNESCO submission, p. 7.
- <sup>57</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.8–115.13, 115.37–115.38, 115.49, 115.51–115.57, 115.61–115.69, 115.72–115.77, 115.89, 115.91, 115.98, 116.1, 116.5, 116.7–116.8 and 117.37.
- <sup>58</sup> See [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/UGA/INT\\_CEDAW\\_FUL\\_UGA\\_32311\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/UGA/INT_CEDAW_FUL_UGA_32311_E.pdf).
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> [CEDAW/C/UGA/Q/8-9](#), para. 3.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., para. 7.
- <sup>63</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 18.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., para. 20.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid., para. 24.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 4–5.
- <sup>67</sup> UNHCR submission, p. 4.
- <sup>68</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.14, 115.20, 115.58, 115.71 and 115.80.
- <sup>69</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 45.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid., para. 47.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>72</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.21, 115.129–115.131 and 116.18.
- <sup>73</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 14.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid., para. 15.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., pp. 3–4.
- <sup>76</sup> For the relevant recommendation, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), para. 116.18.
- <sup>77</sup> UNESCO submission, para. 13.
- <sup>78</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.132–115.133 and 117.45.
- <sup>79</sup> See [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CMW/Shared%20Documents/UGA/INT\\_CMW\\_FUL\\_UGA\\_30988\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CMW/Shared%20Documents/UGA/INT_CMW_FUL_UGA_30988_E.pdf).
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 50.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid., para. 53.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>85</sup> UNHCR submission, p. 1.
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>87</sup> United Nations country team submission, para. 47.
- <sup>88</sup> UNHCR submission, pp. 5–6.
- <sup>89</sup> For relevant recommendations, see [A/HRC/34/10](#), paras. 115.99–115.100, 117.39 and 117.51.
- <sup>90</sup> UNHCR submission, p. 6.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 3–4. See also United Nations country team submission, para. 46.
- <sup>92</sup> UNHCR submission, p. 6. See also United Nations country team submission, p. 11.