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## **Uganda**

The present report is a compilation of the information contained in the reports of treaty bodies, special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, and other relevant official United Nations documents. It does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), other than those contained in public reports issued by OHCHR. It follows the structure of the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council. Information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes. The report has been prepared taking into consideration the four-year periodicity of the first cycle of the review. In the absence of recent information, the latest available reports and documents have been taken into consideration, unless they are outdated. Since this report only compiles information contained in official United Nations documents, lack of information or focus on specific issues may be due to non-ratification of a treaty and/or to a low level of interaction or cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.

# I. Background and framework

## A. Scope of international obligations<sup>1</sup>

Universal human rights treaties <sup>2</sup>	Date of ratification, accession or succession	Declarations/reservations	Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies
ICERD	21 Nov. 1980	None	Individual complaints (art. 14):
ICESCR	21 Jan. 1987	None	_
ICCPR	21 June 1995	None	Inter-State complaints (art. 41): No
ICCPR-OP 1	14 Nov. 1995	Reservation (Art. 5)	_
CEDAW	22 July 1985	None	_
CAT	3 Nov. 1986	None	Inter-State complaints (art. 21): Yes
			Individual complaints (art. 22): No
			Inquiry procedure (art. 20): Yes
CRC	7 Aug. 1990	None	_
OP-CRC-AC	6 May 2002	Binding declaration under art. 3: 18 years	-
OP-CRC-SC	30 Nov. 2001	None	_
ICRMW	14 Nov. 1995	Reservation (Art. 18)	Inter-State complaints (art. 76): No
			Individual complaints (art. 77): No
CRPD	25 Sept. 2008	None	_
CRPD-OP	25 Sept. 2008	None	Inquiry procedure (arts. 6 and 7): Yes

*Treaties to which Uganda is not a party:* OP-ICESCR<sup>3</sup>, ICCPR-OP 2, OP-CEDAW, OP-CAT and CED (signature only, 2007).

Other main relevant international instruments	Ratification, accession or succession	
Convention on the Prevention and	Yes	
Punishment of the Crime of Genocide		
Rome Statute of the International Criminal	Yes	
Court		
Palermo Protocol <sup>4</sup>	No	
Refugees and stateless persons <sup>5</sup>	Yes, except the 1961 Convention on the	
	Reduction of Statelessness.	
Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and	Yes, except Additional Protocol III	
Additional Protocols thereto <sup>6</sup>		
ILO fundamental conventions <sup>7</sup>	Yes	
UNESCO Convention against Discrimination Yes		
in Education		

- 1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)<sup>8</sup> and the Committee against Torture (CAT)<sup>9</sup> recommended that Uganda ratify the respective optional protocols.
- 2. CAT<sup>10</sup> and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)<sup>11</sup> urged Uganda to make declarations under articles 22 and 14 of the respective Conventions.
- 3. CEDAW encouraged Uganda to consider ratifying CED.<sup>12</sup>

## B. Constitutional and legislative framework

- 4. In 2011, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) stated that several instruments needed to be domesticated and national laws harmonized with international standards.<sup>13</sup> The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC),<sup>14</sup> CAT<sup>15</sup> and the Human Rights Committee (HR Committee)<sup>16</sup> expressed similar concerns regarding the respective Conventions. CRC noted that Uganda should provide the Law Reform Commission with concrete directions and with the necessary resources to perform its task.<sup>17</sup>
- 5. In 2005, CAT noted with concern the lack of a comprehensive definition of torture and the lack of an absolute prohibition of torture.<sup>18</sup>
- 6. In 2008, CRC regretted that the Penal Code of Uganda lacked provisions that criminalized the recruitment of children.<sup>19</sup> It also recommended that Uganda bring its Penal Code into full compliance with OP-CRC-SC.<sup>20</sup>
- 7. In 2010, the High Commissioner for Human Rights noted that the important national reconciliation bill had not yet been tabled in Parliament.<sup>21</sup>

#### C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure

- 8. The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) was accredited with "A" status by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in April 2008.<sup>22</sup>
- 9. UNCT stated that UHRC faced multiple challenges, including gaps in capacity, and insufficient geographical coverage; and noted that its autonomy had been questioned.<sup>23</sup> CRC was concerned that requirements that UHRC give prior notice of its visits to facilities of the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) might hamper its work.<sup>24</sup>

- 10. UNCT noted that the Equal Opportunities Commission suffered from constraints similar to those faced by UHRC,<sup>25</sup> and CEDAW urged Uganda to ensure that the Commission is provided with sufficient human, financial and technical resources.<sup>26</sup>
- 11. In 2010, CEDAW also recommended that Uganda expeditiously strengthen its national gender machinery. $^{27}$
- 12. UNCT stated that the NGO Registration (Amendment) Act put heavy administrative constraints on NGOs, such as burdensome yearly registration obligations.<sup>28</sup>

## D. Policy measures

- 13. UNCT observed that there was no national action plan for human rights in place.<sup>29</sup>
- 14. In 2009, the Secretary-General reported that Uganda had signed an action plan regarding children associated with armed forces in Uganda.<sup>30</sup>

## II. Promotion and protection of human rights on the ground

## A. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

#### 1. Cooperation with treaty bodies

Treaty body <sup>31</sup>	Latest report submitted and considered	Latest concluding observations	Follow-up response	Reporting status
CERD	2001	March 2003	-	Eleventh to thirteenth report overdue since 2005.
CESCR	-	-	-	Initial report overdue since 1990.
HR Committee	2003	March 2004	Submitted in 2006.	Second report overdue since 2008.
CEDAW	2009	October 2010	Due in 2012.	Eighth report due in 2014.
CAT	2004	May 2005	Overdue since 2006.	Second report overdue since 2008.
CRC	2003	September 2005	-	Consolidated third to fifth reports due in 2011.
OP-CRC-AC	2007	October 2008	-	Next report due with report to CRC.

Treaty body	Latest report submitted and considered	Latest concluding observations	Follow-up response	Reporting status
OP-CRC-SC	2007	October 2008	-	Next report due with report to CRC.
CMW			-	Initial report overdue since 2004.
CRPD				Initial report overdue since 2010.

15. In 2011, UNCT stated that there was no permanent institutionalized system to coordinate Government engagement with the international mechanisms for implementing recommendations, monitoring performance and reporting.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. Cooperation with special procedures

Standing invitation issued	No
Latest visits or mission reports	Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons (13–17 July 2009) <sup>33</sup> and (10–16 August 2003) <sup>34</sup> ;
	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (May–June 2010 <sup>35</sup> and June 2006 <sup>36</sup> );
	Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (17–25 March 2005) <sup>37</sup> and (4–9 February 2007); <sup>38</sup>
	Independent expert on the effects of structural adjustment policies and foreign debt on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights (26–30 May 2003); <sup>39</sup>
	Special Rapporteur on the right to education (26 June–2 July 1999). <sup>40</sup>
Visits agreed upon in principle	Independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty
Visits requested and not yet agreed upon	Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (2006 and May 2011)
Facilitation/cooperation during missions	_
Follow-up to visits	_

Responses to letters of allegations and urgent appeals

During the period under review, 19 communications were sent to the Government, which provided 2 replies.

Responses to questionnaires on thematic issues

Uganda responded to 3 of the 24 questionnaires sent by special procedures mandate holders.<sup>41</sup>

#### 3. Cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

16. OHCHR established its country office in Uganda in 2005.<sup>42</sup> Its programme of work focuses on building national institutional capacity for the protection and promotion of human rights, including working with UHRC and civil society organizations; human rights mainstreaming with United Nations partners; human rights monitoring and reporting; support for national legislative and policy reforms; and support for transitional justice.<sup>43</sup> The High Commissioner visited Uganda in January 2006<sup>44</sup> and June 2010<sup>45</sup>.

#### B. Implementation of international human rights obligations

## 1. Equality and non-discrimination

- 17. CEDAW reiterated its concern at the low priority given to comprehensive legal reform, and was also concerned that legislation and customary practices that discriminate against women remained in force. UNCT reported that women still faced discrimination, marginalization and violence, and indicated that efforts for improvement were hampered by deep-rooted cultural and traditional practices, low female literacy rates and high levels of poverty. CEDAW urged Uganda to put in place without delay a comprehensive strategy, including review and formulation of legislation, to modify or eliminate traditional practices and stereotypes that discriminate against women; it also urged the Government to address harmful practices, such as polygamy, more vigorously. The HR Committee expressed similar concerns.
- 18. CEDAW was concerned that older women and women with disabilities often suffered from multiple forms of discrimination.<sup>50</sup>
- 19. CRC was concerned at the fact that discrimination against certain groups of children existed in practice, particularly with regard to girls, children with disabilities, children living in poverty, refugee children, children affected by and/or infected with HIV/AIDS, former child soldiers and Batwa children.<sup>51</sup>
- 20. In 2011, UNCT stated that estimates indicated that 19.8 per cent of Ugandans had some form of disability. Despite constitutional and legal guarantees, discriminatory laws and attitudes existed.<sup>52</sup> CRC also noted with concern that equal opportunities for children with disabilities were jeopardized.<sup>53</sup>
- 21. In 2006, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health stated that wide-ranging measures were required to combat all forms of discrimination and stigma associated with neglected diseases.<sup>54</sup>
- 22. The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations noted that significant gender inequities existed in respect of ownership and control of land as a result of discriminatory traditions and customs.<sup>55</sup> UNCT noted that national laws also discriminated against unmarried women.<sup>56</sup> CEDAW urged Uganda to

eliminate all forms of discrimination with respect to the ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land.<sup>57</sup>

23. UNCT indicated that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons faced several forms of discrimination, including harassment and unequal access to public services.<sup>58</sup> OHCHR<sup>59</sup> and CEDAW<sup>60</sup> raised similar concerns.

#### 2. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

- 24. In 2004, the HR Committee expressed concern about the broad array of crimes for which the death penalty might be imposed.<sup>61</sup> UNCT indicated that in 2009 the Supreme Court had ruled that the mandatory death penalty was unconstitutional, and that if a death penalty sentence was not executed within three years, it should be converted to life imprisonment. It reported that sentences were still being issued.<sup>62</sup>
- 25. In 2005, CRC noted with deep concern that child sacrifice took place in the districts of Mukono and Kayunga. 63 CEDAW called upon Uganda to strengthen its efforts to prevent and investigate cases of child sacrifice and to prosecute perpetrators. 64
- 26. In 2009, the Secretary-General strongly urged the Government of Uganda to prioritize the protection of children in its military actions against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) elements.<sup>65</sup>
- 27. The High Commissioner stated that the general approach to disarmament in Karamoja had resulted in large groups of people being treated indiscriminately. In addition, there had been particularly violent UPDF operations, which had led to heavy loss of life. 66 UNCT noted that the military character of the operation remained a matter of concern, since serious human rights violations had been registered. 67
- 28. In 2005, CAT recommended that Uganda take all necessary legislative, administrative and judicial measures to prevent acts of torture and ill-treatment;<sup>68</sup> that it minimize the number of security forces and agencies with the power to arrest, detain and investigate and ensure that the police remains the primary law enforcement agency; and that it abolish the use of "ungazetted" or unauthorized places of detention or "safe houses".<sup>69</sup> CAT also recommended that Uganda take immediate and effective steps to put an end to customary torture in the area of Karamoja.<sup>70</sup> In 2011, UNCT expressed similar concerns.<sup>71</sup>
- 29. CRC was concerned that corporal punishment was still traditionally accepted and widely practised and recommended that Uganda explicitly prohibit by law all forms of corporal punishment in all settings.<sup>72</sup> In 2000, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education expressed similar concerns.<sup>73</sup>
- 30. CRC recommended that Uganda take the necessary measures to prevent child abuse and neglect.<sup>74</sup> UNCT stated that challenges in child protection included the coordination and inadequate capacity of statutory protection services and community-based structures to identify, support, refer, follow up and report on cases.<sup>75</sup>
- 31. CEDAW expressed its concern at the prevalence of violence against women and girls and was particularly concerned at the inordinately high prevalence of sexual offences; it was also concerned that such violence appeared to be socially legitimized and accompanied by a culture of silence and impunity. UNCT stated that the lack of medical officers and police surgeons meant that cases could not be properly prosecuted because of a lack of medical evidence or testimony. CEDAW called upon Uganda to expeditiously adopt the regulations for implementation of the Domestic Violence Act.
- 32. CEDAW called on Uganda to ensure the effective implementation of the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act 2010, as well as the prosecution and adequate punishment

- of perpetrators of that practice.<sup>79</sup> The HR Committee<sup>80</sup> and UNCT<sup>81</sup> made similar observations. CRC recommended that Uganda conduct awareness-raising campaigns.<sup>82</sup>
- 33. The Secretary-General reported that there were no cases of recruitment and use of children by UPDF or the local defence units in 2010.83
- 34. The ILO Committee of Experts reiterated its deep concern at the situation of children abducted by LRA,<sup>84</sup> as did CRC in 2008<sup>85</sup> and in 2005<sup>86</sup>. CRC urged Uganda to take all necessary measures to ensure accountability for perpetrators.<sup>87</sup> The HR Committee<sup>88</sup> and CAT<sup>89</sup> made similar observations.
- 35. In 2005<sup>90</sup> and 2008,<sup>91</sup> CRC recommended that Uganda strengthen long-term efforts to provide reintegration measures in order to provide all children who have been recruited or used in hostilities with immediate and child- and gender-sensitive multidisciplinary assistance for their physical and psychological recovery. CRC stated that Uganda should take measures to ensure that children who have been demobilized from LRA and the local defence units are not recruited into the national army.<sup>92</sup>
- 36. In 2004, the HR Committee noted that Uganda had acknowledged the deplorable prison conditions. The treatment of prisoners continued to be a matter of concern, and juveniles and women were often not kept separate from adults and males. It was also concerned about the high percentage of persons detained on remand.<sup>93</sup> In 2011, UNCT raised similar concerns.<sup>94</sup>
- 37. CEDAW urged Uganda to fully implement article 6 of the Convention, including through the effective implementation of the new legislation on trafficking. <sup>95</sup> It also reiterated its recommendation that Uganda introduce legislation to ensure the prosecution of, and stronger penalties for, the exploitation of women engaged in prostitution, and urged Uganda to review the Penal Code. <sup>96</sup>
- 38. The ILO Committee of Experts requested Uganda to take immediate necessary measures to ensure that the procuring or offering of boys under 18 years for prostitution was prohibited.<sup>97</sup> CRC recommended that Uganda take appropriate legislative measures and develop an effective and comprehensive policy addressing the sexual exploitation of children.<sup>98</sup>
- 39. CRC observed that preventive measures were inadequate and that documentation and research were insufficient on the root causes, nature and extent of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. 99 It recommended that Uganda comply with the UHRC recommendation to hold a public inquiry to investigate reports indicating the sale of children for sacrifices and ritual killings. 100
- 40. UNCT stated that 17 per cent of all children were engaged in child labour including trafficking. <sup>101</sup> CRC was deeply concerned that Uganda had not taken comprehensive measures to prevent and combat the large-scale economic exploitation of children. <sup>102</sup> The ILO Committee of Experts also expressed its serious concern at the number of children involved, or at the risk of becoming engaged, in the worst forms of child labour. <sup>103</sup>
- 41. In 2005, CRC was deeply concerned at the increasing number of street children, especially in Kampala and other major urban centres. 104

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

42. In 2007, OHCHR indicated that the administration of justice structures and institutions were weak and virtually non-existent in rural areas. Corrupt practices reportedly discouraged victims from seeking legal remedy. There was a general lack of confidence in the justice system. <sup>105</sup> A significant backlog of cases and excessive pretrial detention periods

compounded the situation.<sup>106</sup> OHCHR<sup>107</sup> and UNCT<sup>108</sup> indicated that there was a general lack of legal aid services being provided by the State.

- 43. UNCT noted that an area of particular concern was the role and capacity of local council courts, including a lack of knowledge of basic legal rules.<sup>109</sup> OHCHR raised similar concerns.<sup>110</sup>
- 44. While the Supreme Court ruled in 2009 that the trial of civilians by military courts was unconstitutional, UNCT indicated that court martials continued to try suspects and issue death sentences in 2011.<sup>111</sup> OHCHR was concerned that proceedings before military courts fell short of international standards.<sup>112</sup>
- 45. UNCT noted that the juvenile justice system did not have adequate infrastructure to handle youth in conflict/contact with the law. In Karamoja, the lack of juvenile courts, for example, led to youth having to be detained in distant locations. 113 CRC made recommendations in this regard. 114
- 46. OHCHR encouraged Uganda to continue its efforts in Karamoja to strengthen the civilian law enforcement and administration of justice.<sup>115</sup>
- 47. UNCT stated that arbitrary arrests and prolonged periods of (pretrial) detention were common; and that investigations only started once a suspect was put into custody. <sup>116</sup> CAT was also concerned about the possibility of detaining treason and terrorism suspects for 360 days without bail and about the disproportion between the high number of reports of torture and ill-treatment and the very small number of convictions for such offences. <sup>117</sup> The HR Committee expressed similar concerns. <sup>118</sup>
- 48. In 2011, UNCT indicated that the conviction rate nationally had traditionally been below 5 per cent for gender-based violence. Cases of sexual and gender-based violence were generally settled through traditional mechanisms in which family concerns regularly overrode women's rights.<sup>119</sup>
- 49. OHCHR stated that the virtual absence of the justice system in northern Uganda had resulted in the proliferation of "mob justice". <sup>120</sup> CAT<sup>121</sup> and UNCT<sup>122</sup> made similar observations.
- 50. In 2007, OHCHR stated that traditional leaders were strongly advocating for the application of traditional justice to deal with atrocities committed during the conflict. It expressed concern that relying solely on traditional justice mechanisms would set a dangerous precedent for impunity.<sup>123</sup> CRC recommended that Uganda ensure that any customary reconciliation practices avoid re-victimizing children who have been recruited or used in hostilities, especially girls who have suffered sexual violence.<sup>124</sup>
- 51. CRC recognized that the Amnesty Act 2000 had contributed to the return, demobilization and reintegration of thousands of children forcefully recruited by the LRA. Like CRC, Like CRC, however, OHCHR was concerned that the granting of an amnesty for serious crimes under international law was in violation of the treaty obligations of Uganda. Like CRC, the High Commissioner reaffirmed that there could be no amnesty for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and gross violations of human rights. Like CRC, Like CRC
- 52. In 2007, OHCHR released a report on victims' perceptions of accountability, reconciliation and transitional justice in northern Uganda and found that truth-recovery and reparation in the form of compensation were their principal needs in terms of transitional justice responses to the conflict.<sup>129</sup>
- 53. CRC noted the arrest warrants issued by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in 2005 and urged Uganda to fully collaborate with the court; the Committee also encouraged Uganda to cooperate with neighbouring States.<sup>130</sup>

- 54. UNCT reported that, in 2010, Uganda domesticated the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the establishment of the War Crimes Division within the High Court was completed, although its rules of procedure and evidence were still pending. Its first case had been fraught with procedural and due process irregularities.<sup>131</sup>
- 55. In October 2010, OHCHR published a report of a mapping exercise that documented the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo between 1993 and 2003. Comments on the report from a number of Governments concerned, including Uganda, were released at the same time. The report described the most serious violations committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo over this 10-year period by both State and non-State actors, including a number allegedly by foreign military forces, including those of Uganda. The mapping report was intended as a tool to promote accountability for past human rights abuses, to serve to prevent their recurrence in future and ensure sustainable peace and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. 132

#### 4. Right to privacy, marriage and family life

- 56. UNCT stated that many children were married at a young age, most times against their will. There were high rates of abortion amongst the youth. <sup>133</sup> CRC recommended that Uganda fully enforce the age of marriage set out in the law for all forms of marriage. <sup>134</sup> CEDAW also expressed its concern and called upon Uganda to review and amend, as necessary, the current version of the Marriage and Divorce Bill as well as the Muslim Personal Law Bill. <sup>135</sup>
- 57. In 2011, UNCT stated that, on average, only one in five children was registered at birth, which often resulted in undocumented youth being incarcerated with adults. <sup>136</sup> CRC urged Uganda to strengthen and further develop measures to ensure that all children born within the national territory are registered by, inter alia, making birth registration easy and free and by introducing mobile units. <sup>137</sup>
- 58. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recommended that Uganda amend its nationality legislation to ensure that every child born on the territory acquires Ugandan nationality, if they did not acquire any other.<sup>138</sup>
- 59. In 2010, the High Commissioner,<sup>139</sup> the Special Rapporteur on the right to health,<sup>140</sup> and the Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights defenders and on the right to freedom of opinion and expression<sup>141</sup> urged Uganda to shelve a "draconian" draft bill on homosexuality.<sup>142</sup> CEDAW also noted with concern the proposed bill.<sup>143</sup> UNCT indicated that attempts had emerged to reintroduce similar provisions under the newly revised sexual offences bill 2010.<sup>144</sup> OHCHR<sup>145</sup> and CEDAW<sup>146</sup> called on Uganda to decriminalize homosexual behaviour.

# 5. Freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and right to participate in public and political life

60. In 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that the legal regime of Uganda undermined constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression. It indicated that the Anti-Terrorism Act, the Police Act, and the Penal Code contained provisions that criminalized publication offences, It and noted that Uganda had continued to propose and pass laws that significantly threatened free expression and press freedom. It UNESCO further advised that the Press and Journalist Act and the Electronic Media Act introduced the Media Council and Broadcasting Council in contravention of the principle of independence of regulatory bodies from the Government, Is and established restrictions on who could be a journalist.

- 61. UNESCO indicated that the biggest affront on freedom of expression and press freedom in recent years had been the closure of four radio stations in September 2009. UNESCO condemned the killing of a radio news presenter and a correspondent in September 2010 and requested authorities to investigate those killings. It recommended that Uganda, among others: improve the safety of journalists; reassess the media legislation provisions; and not use the defamation law as an excuse to restrict freedom of expression. Is a safety of journalists.
- 62. In 2011, OHCHR expressed its concern about the human rights violations resulting from the State's response to the "Walk to Work" protests in April 2011. The High Commissioner urged the Ugandan authorities to halt the use of disproportionate force against protesters and the repeated ill-treatment of opposition politicians, and to conduct thorough, prompt and impartial investigations into the human rights violations committed by the security forces. 157
- 63. While acknowledging the significant increase in the number of women in Parliament and politics in general, CEDAW noted that obstacles to the advancement of women remained in other areas.<sup>158</sup> The Committee called upon Uganda to take the necessary measures to increase and strengthen the participation of women in designing and implementing local development plans, and to pay special attention to the needs of rural women.<sup>159</sup>
- 64. UNCT stated that the 2011 presidential election had been carried out in relative peace with limited incidents of violence. Nonetheless, there had been serious issues of concern during the electoral period that had led to the disenfranchisement of a considerable number of citizens. <sup>160</sup>

#### 6. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

- 65. In 2011, the ILO Committee of Experts requested Uganda to take measures to recognize the right to collective bargaining to all public employees and public servants not engaged in the administration of the State. 161
- 66. CEDAW was concerned about the persistence of discrimination against women in the labour market, and the concentration of women in the informal sector. While noting that the Employment Act had introduced a specific provision on sexual harassment, the Committee was concerned that the narrow definition was limited to sexual harassment by an employer or his representative. 162

#### 7. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living

- 67. UNCT stated that there were no appropriate legal mechanisms of redress for violations of economic, social and cultural rights in Uganda. <sup>163</sup> In 2004, the independent expert on the effects of structural adjustment policies and foreign debt on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, found that more expanded and explicit linkages could and should be made between the development goals of Uganda and human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights. <sup>164</sup>
- 68. UNCT noted a decline in poverty to 24.5 per cent in 2010, while referring to significant regional disparities. CEDAW urged Uganda to continue to intensify the implementation of gender-sensitive poverty reduction and development programmes. 6 It noted with concern the particularly marginalized situation of Batwa women. 6 CRC remained deeply concerned about the increasingly large numbers of children who did not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living. 168
- 69. In 2011, UNCT stated that Uganda was still experiencing a severe generalized HIV epidemic.<sup>169</sup> CEDAW,<sup>170</sup> CRC<sup>171</sup> and the HR Committee<sup>172</sup> recommended strengthening efforts to combat HIV/AIDS.

- 70. UNCT stated that six million people still went hungry in Uganda, while 20.3 million were food insecure.<sup>173</sup> Malnutrition was rampant and rates had not improved over the past three decades.<sup>174</sup> There was no comprehensive legislation addressing the right to food in Uganda.<sup>175</sup>
- 71. In 2006, the Special Rapporteur on the right to health stated that significant health challenges persisted. Access to health-care facilities was limited by poor infrastructure, especially in the rural areas. 176 He stated that human resources in the health sector constituted a major, urgent issue that had multiple dimensions. 177 UNCT made similar observations and noted that funding had stagnated despite a high population growth rate and increased demand for health services; 178 the Special Rapporteur stated that that was inconsistent with the international obligations of Uganda. 179 CRC 180 and CEDAW 181 made related recommendations.
- 72. UNCT indicated that participation in housing-related decision-making and security of tenure remained inadequate. Land matters were contentious due to multiple claims over land.<sup>182</sup> Land tenure in the protected areas of Uganda had resulted in consistent conflicts with, inter alia, excessive use of force and forceful evictions taking place.<sup>183</sup>
- 73. UNCT observed that national water coverage had improved, but serious health risks associated with contaminated water sources and poor hygiene remained.<sup>184</sup> Particularly affected were displaced families in northern Uganda.<sup>185</sup>

#### 8. Right to education

- 74. In 2011, UNCT stated that less than one third of children fully completed primary education. High drop-out and low completion rates for girls in secondary and tertiary education were particularly worrisome. The ILO Committee of Experts urged Uganda to redouble its efforts to improve the functioning of the education system. CRC recommended that Uganda increase public expenditure on education and undertake additional efforts to ensure access to informal education to vulnerable groups. 188
- 75. The Special Rapporteur on the right to education noted that pregnant schoolgirls had to leave school and were unable to register at the same school after delivery. (EDAW urged Uganda to take steps to overcome traditional attitudes that in some areas might constitute obstacles to girls' and women's education. (90 UNCT indicated that other serious challenges to children accessing affordable and quality education included violence in and around schools. (191)

#### 9. Minorities and indigenous peoples

- 76. CRC was concerned at the situation of children belonging to minorities, including Batwa children.<sup>192</sup>
- 77. In 2007, OHCHR stated that in Karamoja the plight of pastoralist nomadic tribes continued to be exacerbated by high levels of insecurity.<sup>193</sup>

#### 10. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

- 78. As Uganda had not extended its typically generous refugee policy to refugees from a third country since 2009,<sup>194</sup> UNHCR recommended that Uganda lift the ban on tilling land by that group of refugees and afford them the same treatment given to other refugees.<sup>195</sup> It also recommended that Uganda allow for the naturalization of refugees and their descendants after a certain period of residence.<sup>196</sup>
- 79. The ILO Committee of Experts reiterated its previous observation, in which it expressed concern over the slow progress made with respect to the adoption of legislation that would include measures against clandestine migration movements and provide for

equal treatment and opportunity between migrant workers and nationals.<sup>197</sup> UNHCR recommended that Uganda ensure that the security screening of migrants would not negate requests for asylum by civilians who were in need of international protection.<sup>198</sup>

80. UNHCR expressed its concern that the Crime Intelligence Unit was part of the adjudication arm for refugee status.<sup>199</sup>

#### 11. Internally displaced persons

- 81. In 2009, the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons noted that finding durable solutions for extremely vulnerable individuals among the displaced populations was the biggest remaining humanitarian challenge.<sup>200</sup>
- 82. In 2008, OHCHR called upon Uganda to consider all options for durable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) based on a voluntary choice, <sup>201</sup> as did the mandate holder on IDPs in 2004. <sup>202</sup>UNHCR recommended a more expansive approach be taken that considered reintegration and relocation as solutions in addition to return. <sup>203</sup>
- 83. The Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons observed that disputes over land and property hampered return movements and their sustainability, <sup>204</sup> and UNHCR recommended that Uganda investigate issues relating to land ownership. <sup>205</sup>
- 84. CEDAW urged Uganda to take all necessary measures to ensure that women and girls in the IDP camps and those who have returned to their communities are adequately protected from sexual and gender-based violence and abuse, that the perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted and punished, and that relief and remedies are provided to victims and their families.<sup>206</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict,<sup>207</sup> the HR Committee<sup>208</sup> and CRC<sup>209</sup> made similar observations.
- 85. UNCT stated that insecurity, natural disasters, and limited access to basic services had led to the displacement of significant numbers of Karamojong.<sup>210</sup>

#### 12. Human rights and counter-terrorism

86. UNCT stated that the Anti-Terrorism Act 2002 contained a broad definition of terrorism and conferred considerable discretionary powers to the Minister for Internal Affairs. Wide interpretations of the Act and operations by the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force had resulted in abuses.<sup>211</sup> The HR Committee raised similar concerns.<sup>212</sup>

## III. Achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints

- 87. UNCT noted that northern Uganda had experienced very long and brutal civil wars that had ravaged the region and led to the displacement of millions, <sup>213</sup> that questions over transparency and accountability in government affairs persisted, <sup>214</sup> and that climate change had impacted Uganda on many fronts. <sup>215</sup>
- 88. CRC noted the extremely negative impact of the conflict on the children of Uganda.<sup>216</sup>
- 89. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict noted the full commitment by the Government and concerted efforts towards implementing the provisions of the action plan regarding children associated with armed forces in Uganda.<sup>217</sup>

## IV. Key national priorities, initiatives and commitments

## Specific recommendations for follow-up

90. Treaty bodies requested follow-up information on their recommendations regarding discriminatory laws and sexual offences against schoolgirls (CEDAW);<sup>218</sup> security forces and agencies, unauthorized places of detention, human rights monitors, protection of civilians and prevention of abduction (CAT);<sup>219</sup> and female genital mutilation, IDPs and arbitrary detention (HR Committee).<sup>220</sup>

## V. Capacity-building and technical assistance

91. Treaty bodies recommended that Uganda seek technical assistance/cooperation from United Nations agencies and programmes in a number of areas.<sup>221</sup>

Notes

Unless indicated otherwise, the status of ratifications of instruments listed in the table may be found in *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General: Status as at 1 April 2009* (ST/LEG/SER.E.26), supplemented by the official website of the United Nations Treaty Collection database, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, http://treaties.un.org/.

The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

ICERD International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial

Discrimination

ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

OP-ICESCR Optional Protocol to ICESCR

ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICCPR-OP 1 Optional Protocol to ICCPR

ICCPR-OP 2 Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death

penalty

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

OP-CEDAW Optional Protocol to CEDAW

CAT Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading

Treatment or Punishment

OP-CAT Optional Protocol to CAT

CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child

OP-CRC-AC Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict OP-CRC-SC Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child

pornography

ICRMW International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant

Workers and Members of Their Families

CRPD Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

OP-CRPD Optional Protocol to CRPD

CED International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced

Disappearance

Adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/117 of 10 December 2008. Article 17, paragraph 1, of OP-ICESCR states that "The present Protocol is open for signature by any State that has signed, ratified or acceded to the Covenant".

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, 1954

Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness

Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Convention); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Convention); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.

International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour; Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour; Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise; Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively; Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value; Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation; Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7), para. 49.

Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/CR/34/UGA),

Ibid.

para. 11.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/62/CO/11), para. 19.

CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7, para. 54.

UNCT submission to the UPR on Uganda, p. 2.

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                              Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
               (CRC/C/UGA/CO/2), para. 13.
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                             CAT/C/CR/34/UGA, para. 5.
16
                             Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee (CCPR/CO/80/UGA), para.
               6.
                             CRC/C/UGA/CO/2, para. 13.
                             CAT/C/CR/34/UGA, para. 5.
                             Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
               (CRC/C/OPAC/UGA/CO/1), para. 27.
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               (CRC/C/OPSC/UGA/CO/1), para. 23.
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                             See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?
               NewsID=10116&LangID=E.
22
                             For the list of national human rights institutions with accreditation status granted by
               the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of
               Human Rights, see A/HRC/16/77 of 3 February 2011, annex.
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                              UNCT submission to the UPR on Uganda, p. 2.
                             CRC/C/OPAC/UGA/CO/1, para. 14.
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                             CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7, paras. 17-18.
                             Ibid., para. 16.
                             UNCT submission to the UPR on Uganda, p. 2.
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                             S/2009/462, para. 3.
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                             The following abbreviations have been used for this document:
                      CERD
                                          Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
                      HR Committee
                                          Human Rights Committee
                      CEDAW
                                          Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
                      CAT
                                          Committee against Torture
                      CRC
                                          Committee on the Rights of the Child.
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                              A/64/214, paras. 70-73.
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                             E/CN.4/2004/77/Add.1.
35
                              A/HRC/15/58, para. 34.
                              A/HRC/4/45.
37
                             E/CN.4/2006/48/Add.2.
38
                              A/HRC/4/28/Add.3.
39
                             E/CN 4/2004/47/Add 1
40
                             E/CN.4/2000/6/Add.1.
41
                             The questionnaires referred to are those reflected in an official report by a special
               procedures mandate holder issued between 1 January 2007 and 1 June 2011. Responses counted for
               the purposes of this section are those received within the relevant deadlines, and referred to in the
               following documents: (a) A/HRC/6/15, para. 7; (b) A/HRC/7/6, annex; (c) A/HRC/7/8, para. 35; (d)
               A/HRC/8/10, para. 120, footnote 48; (e) A/62/301, paras. 27, 32, 38, 44 and 51; (f) A/HRC/10/16 and
               Corr.1, footnote 29; (g) A/HRC/11/6, annex; (h) A/HRC/11/8, para. 56; (i) A/HRC/11/9, para. 8,
               footnote 1; (j) A/HRC/12/21, para. 2, footnote 1; (k) A/HRC/12/23, para. 12; (l) A/HRC/12/31, para.
               1, footnote 2; (m) A/HRC/13/22/Add.4; (n) A/HRC/13/30, para. 49; (o) A/HRC/13/42, annex I; (p)
               A/HRC/14/25, para.\ 6, footnote\ 1; (q)\ A/HRC/14/31, para.\ 5, footnote\ 2; (r)\ A/HRC/14/46/Add.1; (s)
               A/HRC/15/31/Add.1, para. 6 – for list of responding States, see
               www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/WaterAndSanitation/SRWater/Pages/ContributionsPSP.aspx;\ (t) \\
               A/HRC/15/32, para. 5; (u) A/HRC/16/44/Add.3; (v) A/HRC/16/48/Add.3, para. 5, endnote 2; (w)
               A/HRC/16/51/Add.4; (x) A/HRC/17/38, see annex I.
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                             OHCHR, High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan 2010-2011 (Geneva), p.
               71.
                             OHCHR, 2010 Report, p. 119.
                              A/HRC/4/49/Add.2, para. 1.
                             See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?
               NewsID=10116&LangID=E.
                              CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7, paras. 11-12.
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                             UNCT submission to the UPR on Uganda, p. 4.
                             CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7, para. 20.
                             CCPR/CO/80/UGA, para. 9.
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                             CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7, para. 45.
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                             CRC/C/UGA/CO/2, para. 30.
                             UNCT submission to the UPR on Uganda, p. 3.
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                             CRC/C/UGA/CO/2, para. 46.
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              Individual Direct Request concerning Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention,
              1958 (No. 111), 2011, Geneva, doc. No. (ILOLEX) 092011UGA111, seventh paragraph.
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              Individual Observation concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), 2011,
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                             CCPR/CO/80/UGA, para. 15.
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                             CRC/C/UGA/CO/2, para. 81.
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