



A NEW CHAPTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

A handbook on issues of transition
from the Commission on Human Rights
to the Human Rights Council



Annex 3.1

Independent Expert on the Situation of Human Rights in Burundi

Current mandate holder: Akich Okola

Term of mandate holder: 2004 to 2006

Mandate started: 2004

Mandate up for renewal: 2006

Background and areas of focus

- The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi (1995-2004) preceded the Independent Expert's mandate. The Special Rapporteur's mandate was established in response to the inter-ethnic violence that followed the attempted coup d'état in 1993, and the resulting mass exodus of people from Burundi;
- Provide technical support for Government in its efforts to improve the human rights situations in Burundi;
- Ensure that the authorities are honouring international human rights commitments made;
- Follow developments in the peace process.

Differing working methods and reporting obligations

- Submits reports to the General Assembly;
- The Independent Expert does not submit communications to the Government.

Cooperation with the Government

- The Independent Expert has held meetings and consultations with senior State officials, senior officials from national institutions, non-governmental organisations, diplomatic missions, UN agencies and international organisations.

Key developments

- There is a general atmosphere of hope accompanied by high expectations for the new Government;
- Ongoing issues include a weak judiciary and climate of impunity; violations of the right to life and other civil and political rights by the State, armed groups and through mob justice; arbitrary arrests and detention; sexual violence; and issues related to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees;
- The situation in the region remains extremely volatile.

Country visits

Burundi: October 2004, July 2005, October 2005

Pending reports

Annual report (E/CN.4/2006/109).

Communications (2005)

No information available in the 2006 annual report.