



## 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.