



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee

List of issues in relation to the fifth periodic report of Rwanda*

Constitutional and legal framework within which the Covenant is implemented (art. 2)

1. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations¹ and the information contained in the State Party's fifth periodic report,² please explain how the State Party ensures that domestic law, in particular organic law, is consistent with the provisions of the Covenant. What measures have been taken to promote the application of the Covenant's provisions in domestic courts? Please provide more specific information on measures taken to disseminate the Covenant, including on the information and training for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and law enforcement officers and on awareness-raising for the general public, including examples that demonstrate the impact of training and awareness-raising activities. Please inform the Committee about steps taken to formalize the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up, through the legal or policy framework.

2. How does the State Party ensure that individuals are aware of and can access remedies for violations of rights protected under the Covenant? Please provide information on considerations and timelines for ratifying the First Optional Protocol to the Covenant, as well as for renewing the declaration under article 34 (6) of the protocol accepting the competence of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to receive cases directly lodged by individuals and non-governmental organizations with observer status.

National human rights institution (art. 2)

3. Please inform the Committee about measures taken to enable the National Commission for Human Rights to carry out its mandate fully, effectively and transparently, including the mandate of the national preventative mechanism. In particular, please inform the Committee about the provision of adequate resources to ensure wide accessibility of the Commission's services, including through the establishment of regional offices. Please clarify whether the Commission requires clearance from the Office of the Prime Minister before undertaking foreign travel for official engagements and whether the staff of the Commission are provided with functional immunity. Please specify to what extent the process of the application, screening, selection and appointment of commissioners includes formalized broad consultation and the participation of civil society organizations. Please respond to the concerns that the Commission fails to address all allegations of human rights violations by public officials, including law enforcement and security services, and to engage with national authorities and relevant stakeholders.

* Adopted by the Committee at its 145th session (2–19 March 2026).

¹ [CCPR/C/RWA/CO/4](#).

² [CCPR/C/RWA/5](#).



Non-discrimination and equality between men and women (art. 3)

4. Please inform the Committee about measures to address inequalities and intersectional discrimination, in particular in the labour market, faced by women with disabilities, and rural, Batwa and refugee women. Please provide information about national institutions in charge of empowering women and girls at all levels and in all spheres of life, in rural areas as well as in cities.

Violence against women and gender-based violence (arts. 3, 6, 7 and 26)

5. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations and the State Party's report, please indicate the number of complaints of violence against women, including domestic violence, filed and recorded during the reporting period, the investigations carried out, the prosecutions brought, the convictions and sanctions imposed on the perpetrators and the reparations granted to the victims. Please inform the Committee about the measures taken to broaden protection orders beyond the spouse, and specify the plans to increase the centres and services for victims of domestic violence across the country. What measures have been taken to increase and facilitate the reporting of sexual abuse and to tackle fear, social stigma, lack of awareness and family pressure, especially when the victims are pregnant teenage girls? What steps have been taken to increase the rate of access to legal aid and the follow-up on justice services?

Violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (arts. 3, 6, 7 and 26)

6. What measures have been taken to address violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in law and in practice, including in the areas of health, education, family, the community, and legal and political affairs? Please respond to reports that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons are subjected to arbitrary detention for alleged "deviant behaviour", including in unofficial transit centres. What steps have been taken to provide law enforcement officials with adequate training to avoid violence against and discriminatory treatment and arbitrary arrest of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons?

Unlawful detention and allegations of torture and ill-treatment (arts. 7, 9 and 14)

7. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations, the State Party's report, and the follow-up report of the Committee, please specify steps taken to ensure a maximum period of 48 hours of detention before a suspect is brought before a judge. What measures have been taken to reduce pretrial detention, including using non-custodial measures such as community service, conditional release and house arrest, especially for minor offences? Please provide information on complaints concerning unlawful detention, the use of unofficial or informal detention facilities, torture or ill-treatment, filed and recorded during the reporting period, and on the investigations carried out, the prosecutions brought, the convictions and sanctions imposed on the perpetrators of such offences and the reparation granted to the victims. Please provide information about an independent mechanism to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment.

Right to life (art. 6)

8. Please inform the Committee about measures taken to combat and prevent enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions and to ensure independent and transparent investigations of all allegations of enforced disappearance, including of poet Innocent Bahati, and of extrajudicial killings, including of attorney Donat Mutunzi. Please respond to reports that Rwandan dissidents abroad, as well as their family members in Rwanda, have faced threats, attacks and harassment and that some high-profile killings or attempted killings of exiled critics have been alleged to involve Rwandan agents. Please provide information on the status and outcome of investigations into these cases, including on convictions and sanctions imposed on perpetrators and on remedies provided to victims.

Past human rights violations (arts. 2, 6 and 7)

9. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations and the State Party's report, please provide more specific information about any investigation into past violations of the Covenant reportedly perpetrated by the Rwandan army in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1994.

Cooperation with armed groups (arts. 2, 6 and 7)

10. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations and the State Party's report, please respond to reports about forced recruitment, including of children, in the armed conflict by the M23 armed group and about the support and involvement of the Rwandan armed forces in such recruitment. Please respond to reports, including by United Nations mechanisms, concerning alleged Rwandan military, logistical or other forms of support of the M23 armed group reportedly responsible for summary executions, sexual violence, looting and forcible transfers of populations. Have there been any finalized or ongoing investigations into possible involvement of members of the Rwandan armed forces in violations of international human rights or humanitarian law committed in the context of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

Asylum-seekers and immigration detention (arts. 7, 9, 10 and 13)

11. With reference to the State Party's report, please clarify how a possibility of deporting persons whose refugee status has been revoked in the interest of national security and public order guarantees respect for the principle of non-refoulement. Please provide information, disaggregated by age, sex, and nationality or origin or both, on the number of migrants held in administrative detention for immigration offences and on the place, average duration and conditions of their detention. Please provide information about any bilateral cooperation agreements on asylum and migration issues adopted or planned, and about their compatibility with the Covenant.

Arbitrary detention of persons, including children, on the grounds of vagrancy (arts. 2, 7, 9, 10, 14 and 24)

12. Please respond to the reports that according to legislation passed in 2017, anyone exhibiting "deviant behaviours", such as drug use, begging, vagrancy or informal street vending can be held in a transit centre for up to two months, without any other further legal justification or oversight. Please respond to information that children in street situations are arbitrarily detained in the Gikondo Transit Centre which operates as a de facto detention facility, and that detained children are underfed, beaten, and held in overcrowded and unhygienic rooms, without judicial oversight or due process.

Prison conditions (art. 10)

13. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations and the State Party's report, please provide information about the prison population rate and the impact of measures to address overcrowding, including use of alternative measures to detention. Please inform the Committee about specific steps taken to improve conditions across all prison facilities, including access to clean and adequate bedding, water, food, sanitation facilities, medical care and rehabilitation programmes, especially for women and persons with disabilities. Please provide information about separation of children and adults, and accused and convicted detainees. What measures have been taken to address judicial delays and ensure the timely resolution of criminal cases in order to reduce prolonged pretrial detention?

Independence of the judiciary, fair trial and military courts (art. 14)

14. Please specify measures taken to strengthen judicial independence and prevent influence from the executive branch over the judiciary. Please inform the Committee about the implementation of the Legal Aid Policy, including the establishment of a legal aid fund, and eligibility criteria for accessing services. What measures have been taken to make sure that military courts do not conduct trials of civilians?

Surveillance and interception of communications (art. 17)

15. Please clarify which guarantees, such as judicial oversight, redress mechanisms and transparency, are provided, including by the Law relating to the Protection of Personal Data and Privacy (Law No. 058/2021), in the conduct of government surveillance and interception of communication.

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (arts. 2, 18, 23, 24, 26 and 27)

16. Please inform the Committee about the steps to bring the Law on Determining the Organization and Functioning of Faith-based Organizations (Law No. 72/2018), which established the Rwanda Governance Board and prescribed registration requirements for faith-based organizations, into compliance with the Covenant. Please clarify whether the right to conscientious objection to military service is guaranteed in law and protected in practice, and what the rules are governing the alternative service. Please provide more specific information about the legal reform addressing enjoyment of freedom of conscience and religion of Jehovah's Witnesses and respond to allegations of arbitrary detentions of Jehovah's Witnesses for refusing to take part in the armed night patrols.

Freedom of expression (arts. 9, 14 and 19)

17. Referring to the Committee's follow-up report, please provide information about the progress in revising the 2011 Media Policy, especially in strengthening the protection of journalists. Please inform the Committee about steps that have been taken to revise or repeal legal provisions of the Penal Code and the Cybercrime Law that enable arbitrary restrictions on speech and press freedom. What safeguards are in place to ensure that legal provisions prohibiting spreading "false information or harmful propaganda with intent to cause public disaffection against the Government" are not used to chill public criticism, silence political dissent and limit investigative journalism? What measures have been taken to revise restrictive media laws and ensure independent journalism? Please respond to reports of harassment of journalists and human rights defenders, including Théoneste Nsengimana and Dieudonné Niyonsenga, and specify measures taken to prevent and address such harassment.

18. Please respond to reports about digital surveillance and censorship of online content deemed critical of the Government and decisions to block websites and online platforms without transparency and a clear legal process. Please provide information on investigations into such allegations and on measures taken to ensure that journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders can operate freely and without fear of intimidation or reprisals.

Freedom of peaceful assembly and association (arts. 19, 21 and 22)

19. Please indicate steps taken to bring Law 058/2024 of 20 June 2024, governing non-governmental organizations (NGOs), into compliance with the Covenant, including a possibility of appealing against refusal to register NGOs, and of safeguarding their operational independence by managing their own assets or deciding upon their leadership. Please clarify the compatibility of the Law on Public Demonstrations and Public Gatherings with the Covenant – in particular the requirement to notify authorities 30 days in advance, and allowing demonstrations to proceed only after written approval has been received. Please respond to allegations that protests are forcibly dispersed by police.

Political participation (art. 25)

20. Please respond to allegations of restrictions on political participation, such as obstacles that political parties face in registering and operating freely, and allegations of repression, prosecution and physical attacks against opposition candidates, including in the context of the 2024 elections. What specific measures has the State Party taken to ensure free and fair elections allowing all citizens to participate without fear? Please also provide information on measures taken to ensure that opposition parties, independent candidates and civil society actors can participate in political processes freely and without intimidation or undue restrictions.

Rights of Indigenous Peoples (arts. 1 and 27)

21. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations and the State Party's report, please describe measures to ensure self-determination and other rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the Batwa community, to ancestral lands and natural resources, preservation of their spiritual practice and beliefs, cultural expressions, and access to justice and remedies in cases of violation of their rights. What measures have been taken to ensure adequate representation of the Batwa and other Indigenous Peoples in decision-making bodies and processes and to obtain their free, prior and informed consent on all measures that affect them?
