



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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REFERENCE: AS/follow-up/Rwanda/76

14 July 2020

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur on Follow-up on Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I have the honor to refer to the examination of the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of Rwanda, at the Committee's sixty-sixth session, held in February 2017. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations (CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/7-9) were transmitted to your Permanent Mission. You may recall that in paragraph 58 on follow-up on the concluding observations, the Committee requested Rwanda to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in 23 (d) and (e), 25 (b) and 27 (b) of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report received with an eleven-month delay in February 2020 (CEDAW/C/RWA/FCO/7-9) under the CEDAW follow-up procedure. At its seventy-sixth session, held remotely due to COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 23 (d)** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**accelerate the increase in the number of Isange One Stop Centres, as planned, particularly in rural areas, to provide women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and their children with access to long-term shelter and relocation possibilities, as well as financial support and access to income-generating opportunities**”:

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party that the number of Isange One Stop Centres, which provide temporary accommodations and medical, psychosocial and legal support for victims of gender-based violence and child abuse, has been increased, including in rural areas. Furthermore, it notes with appreciation that the State party provides basic services at the health center level to increase the victims' physical access to those services.

The Committee considers that the State party has taken credible steps to implement the recommendation. It considers that the recommendation **has been implemented**.

The Committee notes that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, but it fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

Her Excellency
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With regard to the recommendation made in **paragraph 23 (e)** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**ensure that reports of gender-based violence are effectively investigated and prosecuted and that perpetrators are adequately punished, and increase the funds allocated to victim assistance**”:

The Committee takes note of the information that the State party applied the zero-tolerance strategy towards gender-based violence and allocated more than 200 million Rwandan francs per year to victim assistance. It also welcomes the establishment of the Rwanda Investigation Bureau in 2018 and the efforts to increase investigators' capacity to respond to gender-based violence and accelerate the prosecution process. It takes into account the increase in the number of convictions divided by pronounced cases in 2016/2017, but it decreased in 2018/2019 from 2013/2014 and 2015/2016. The Committee is concerned of the absence of information on whether the funds for victim assistance has increased since 2017. The Committee considers that the State party taken concrete steps to implement the recommendation. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee notes that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, but it fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 23** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on actions taken to:

- 1. Provide support to women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and their children in an effective manner, such as with financial support and access to income-generating opportunities, and allocate adequate financial and human resources to Isange One Stop Centres, the National Commission for Children and local governments;**
- 2. Continues to ensure that reports of gender-based violence are effectively investigated and prosecuted and that perpetrators are adequately punished;**
- 3. Increase the funds allocated to victim assistance to enable them to report cases and provide information on the amount of the funds to see if the State party has increased since the dialogue with the Committee in 2017.**

In relation to the recommendation made in **paragraph 25 (b)** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**monitor the implementation of the code of conduct for members of the armed forces and strengthen regular training and retraining on women's rights and on applying a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of gender-based violence against women**”:

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party about training on the protection of civilians, including women and children, provided for the members of the armed forces. It also welcomes the courses on the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on the Women, Peace, and Security provided in collaboration with the UN Women and Rwanda's Peace Operations Training Institute, as well as training on the response to gender-based violence for security personnel, including the police and the defence forces, by the United Nations entities and the Rwanda National Police in 2019. Furthermore, regarding monitoring of the implementation of the code of conduct, the Committee notes that the State party dismissed 67 army officers for gross misconduct in August 2018. The Committee considers that the State party took substantial steps to implement the recommendation. It considers that the recommendation **has been substantially implemented**.

The Committee notes that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, but it fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 25 (b)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Continue monitoring the implementation of the code of conduct for members of the armed forces and provide detailed information on regular training and retraining on women's rights and on applying a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of gender-based violence against women.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 27 (b)** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**strengthen measures to protect potential victims from trafficking, including by stepping up campaigns to promote a common understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking, set up a 24/7 free hotline and encourage reporting by victims and the general public**”:

The Committee welcomes numbers of campaigns against human trafficking conducted since the dialogue with the State party in 2017, including a national campaign by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in July 2018, a community work (*umuganda*) campaign by the Ministry of Justice in October 2018, campaigns in communities by the Rwanda National Police and cross-border dialogues that included the participation of youth, refugees and opinion leaders in 2019. It also takes note with appreciation on the adoption of the Law N° 51/2018 of 13/08/2018, which provides measures to detect victims of trafficking, and joint operations by Rwanda National Police and the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration to protect potential victims of trafficking. Additionally, the Committee welcomes the establishment of free 24/7 hotlines in the Rwanda Investigation Bureau, Isange One Stop Centers, the Gender Monitoring Office, the National Public Prosecution Authority, the Rwanda Defense Forces and the Rwanda National Police that encourage reporting by victims and the public. The Committee considers that the State party took significant steps to implement the recommendation. It considers that the recommendation **has been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds directly to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Lia Nadaraia
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women