

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

BRIEFING TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

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Amnesty International submits the following information to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the Committee), in advance of its examination of the combined initial, second and third periodic reports of Côte d'Ivoire, submitted under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Convention).

This briefing reflects Amnesty International's information on human rights violations against women committed in the context of the armed conflict situation in Côte d'Ivoire, with an emphasis on violence against women, in particular rape and other forms of sexual violence. It raises issues relevant to articles 1, 2(d), 5, 7, 10, 12 and 16 of the Convention, as well as General Recommendation 19.

Unrest has persisted in Côte d'Ivoire for nearly ten years, with the recent disputed elections and post electoral violence again seeing a number of women experiencing rape and other forms of sexual violence. In addition to the trauma stemming from rape and other forms of sexual violence, women have experienced rejection from their families and communities. Further, due to stigma and/or lack of availability of health services, many survivors do not have access to any health care in the aftermath of the crimes committed against them, notably emergency contraception and abortion in cases of rape, pregnancy testing and testing for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

Due to the 10 years de facto partition of the country and the lack of political willingness, the Ivorian judiciary has been unable or unwilling to tackle the issue of rape and sexual violence against women. To Amnesty International's knowledge, virtually no perpetrator of rape and other sexual violence committed in the context of the conflict has been prosecuted and none of the victims have received reparation or appropriate healthcare.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire in September 2002 following a failed coup attempt, hundreds, possibly thousands, of women and girls have been victims of widespread and, at times, systematic rape and other forms of sexual violence committed by combatant forces or by civilians with close ties to these forces. This pattern was highlighted in a report published by Amnesty International in March 2007: *Côte d'Ivoire: Targeting women: the forgotten victims of the conflict*.¹ Women have again been targeted after the resumption of the post electoral violence in December 2010 where both parties loyal to the outgoing President Laurent Gbagbo and the internationally recognized President Alassane Ouattara attacked women and girls, raping and beating them.

The scale of rape and sexual violence in Côte d'Ivoire during the armed conflict has been

¹ Amnesty International, Côte d'Ivoire: Targeting women: the forgotten victims of the conflict, Index: AFR 31/001/2007, 15 March 2007, and Amnesty International, Côte d'Ivoire : Voices of women and girls, forgotten victims of the conflict, Index: AFR 31/002/2007, 15 March 2007.

largely underestimated. Many women have been gang raped or have been abducted and forced into sexual slavery by fighters. Rape has often been used to humiliate the community to which women and girls belong and was often accompanied by the beating or further torture (including additional torture of a sexual nature) of the victim. Rape has been committed in public and in front of family members, including children. Some women have been raped next to the corpses of family members.

Throughout this ten year crisis, women have been the forgotten victims of this conflict. All the women and girls interviewed by Amnesty International were targeted because of their ethnicity and/or presumed political affiliation. The extent of the attacks launched against women and girls amount to crimes against humanity as they were directed against a civilian population as part of a widespread or systematic attack, and as part of a state or organizational policy. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court also characterizes these abuses as crimes against humanity.²

Women's rights have also been violated in the aftermath of rape, adding to their trauma and suffering. Most women suffering injuries or illnesses caused by rape – some of them life-threatening – have been unable to access the medical care they needed. Stigmatized by rape, some women have been abandoned by their partners or families, and condemned, often along with dependent children, to extreme poverty.

For several years, Amnesty International has made recommendations to all the parties to the conflict regarding the fight against violence against women in the context of the conflict and has been asking for the victims of rapes and their relatives to have access to justice and reparation and for perpetrators to be brought to justice.

Amnesty International has recommended that the new Ivorian authorities:

- Put an immediate end to the targeting of women and girls by those engaging in post electoral violence;
- Ensure that women victims of rape and sexual violence receive access to justice, medical treatment and reparations.

2. WOMEN AND GIRLS TARGETED BY BOTH PARTIES DURING THE 2010-2011 POST-ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

Following the contested results of the November 2010 presidential election, violence resumed in Abidjan and parts of the west of the country where women and girls were targeted for violence, including rape and sexual violence, by forces loyal to both Laurent Gbagbo and to Alassane Ouattara.

² Request for authorisation of an investigation pursuant to article 15, ICC-02/11-3 - Original: English, at para. 39, available at <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1097345.pdf>.

2.1. SEXUAL ATTACKS AGAINST WOMEN BY FORCES AND MILITIAS LOYAL TO LAURENT GBAGBO

Amnesty International documented several cases of rape committed by security forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo in Abidjan from December 2010 before the arrest of the outgoing President in April 2011.

Women were gang-raped and kept as sexual slaves for a few days after being detained by police officers loyal to Laurent Gbagbo. Several women were arrested at the 16 December 2010 demonstration in Abidjan and some were kept in a house guarded by gendarmes (paramilitary force).

One of the women told the Amnesty International delegation in Abidjan in March 2011:

"On Saturday [18 December 2010] they took me and five other women into a room. It was in the morning. There were three of them. They told us to undress. I refused. One of them hit me with his knife. I told him it was not human. He said: 'We will see about that'. He took his gun out and I was obliged to yield. The three men raped us, they wore masks. Afterwards, they left and we were kept in the house until Wednesday [22 December]. Every day, a gendarme brought us something to eat. They returned on Monday [20 December]. It was the same men; I suppose it was the same men. It was late in the afternoon and they raped us again. On the evening of 22 December towards 5pm, they released us. I have not dared to go to see a doctor since then."

In some cases, women were taken from their homes and then raped by a group of soldiers and militiamen. In March 2011, the mother of one of the victims told an Amnesty International delegation in Abidjan how her daughter was raped on 18 December 2010.

"Our house looks out onto a yard that we share with five other families. Two days after the march of 16 December [2010], I was with my daughter at home in our bedroom when the militia and soldiers entered our bedroom towards 10pm. (...) (T)hey took my daughter, Sita, with them. I tried to protect her but they pushed me to the ground. As they were leaving my house, they began to rip off my daughter's clothes. She came back a few hours later and her skirt had bloodstains on it. She told me they had forced her to walk with them. They pushed her to the ground. Two of them held her hands and feet while the other one raped her. They all took it in turns to rape her."

One rape survivor told delegates of Amnesty International:

"On the 19 December [2010], they came to my house in Abobo. They came in the middle of the night; I was sleeping with my husband and my children. They were hammering at the door. Our door is right on the street, we didn't open. They then broke down the door (...). Two of them took my husband outside and six of them came upon me. They told me to undress and when I didn't, they came at me again. They all took turns raping me and threw my children to the floor, the children were crying. I was screaming. (...) The people who raped me and killed my husband told me that if I wanted to complain, I should go to Alassane Ouattara."

Militia members supporting Laurent Gbagbo also raped women accused of supporting Alassane Ouattara. In some cases, the rapes occurred in the presence of and/or involving security forces loyal to Gbagbo. One of the survivors told an Amnesty International delegation in March 2011:

"On 16 December [2010], towards 7pm, I was coming back from the market wearing an ADO [Alassane Dramane Ouattara] t-shirt. I was with some other people. About ten civilians were standing at a roadblock. We were frightened and ran away. I was unable to run quickly because I was carrying my baby on my back. They caught me and another young girl. They immediately pulled off the cloth that was holding my baby. The baby fell to the ground and started screaming. Despite that, they left it on the ground and dragged me to the side of a table. They held me by the hands. One of them pushed my legs apart and another one raped me, then another one also raped me. After raping me, they slapped me and told me that if I wanted to make a complaint, I should call ADO. He finally let me go and I took my baby in my arms. They also raped the other girl who they had caught and who was also wearing an ADO t-shirt. I have not yet told my husband but plan to do so soon. I have not had a test and I have not dared to see a doctor."

2.2 SEXUAL ATTACKS AGAINST WOMEN BY FORCES LOYAL TO ALASSANE OUATTARA

Forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara who were integrated in March 2011 into the newly created Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire, FRCI) as well as militias supporting the new President also attacked women and girls with impunity.

In Mahapleu, in the west of the country, a schoolgirl aged 15 was raped in mid-January 2011 by a commanding officer of the Armed Forces of the New Forces (Forces armées des Forces nouvelles, FAFN) - who had been controlling half of the country since the September 2002 armed uprising. The girl told the Amnesty International delegates:

"We had been given the day off school because of the elections and then school did not start again and I was in Mahapleu at my parents' home. I was in the village with my elder sister and friends. A FAFN commander in a red four wheel vehicle stopped and forced me to get in. He forced himself on me and abused me. Then he threatened to throw my parents in prison if I told people what had happened. I have not told my mother. I acted as though nothing happened. I believe he has done that with other girls."

Despite the fact that this case was raised by the Amnesty International delegates with President Alassane Ouattara and the current Minister of Justice in March 2011 in Abidjan, the organization is not aware of any action taken against this commander to either suspend him from duty or subject him to a criminal investigation and, if sufficient admissible evidence is found, bring him to trial.

Members of the FRCI have also been responsible for rape and other crimes of sexual violence against women and girls. During the offensive launched against Laurent Gbagbo's forces in late March-beginning of April 2011, FRCI members and armed people fighting alongside, attacked women and girls belonging to ethnic groups presumed loyal to Laurent Gbagbo.

One rape survivor living in a village near Duékoué (some 500 km west of Abidjan) told the

Amnesty International delegates:

“When the rebels arrived at the village on Friday 1 April [2011], they fired in the air and chased the men. They pushed the women into a house containing two rooms. They demanded money, one of them lifted my skirt up, stuck his fingers in my vagina and threw me to the ground. One of them put his foot on my hips so I couldn't move, while a second one spread my legs and a third one raped me. They threatened to kill us if we screamed.”

Another woman, a rape survivor on that same day in the same village, said: “They accused us of supporting Laurent Gbagbo. They told us to lie down and hit us with a Gbinhin, (woven liana vines), and with palm branches. They told us to sing ‘ADO, solution’. Two of them took it in turns to rape me.”

After the FRCI took control of Duékoué on 29 March 2011, hundreds of people were executed and some women were detained for several days and raped repeatedly. For example, eight women were taken from their homes in Duékoué. One of the victims belonging to the Guéré ethnic group (generally considered as supporters of Laurent Gbagbo) told Amnesty International:

“On Tuesday 29 March, I was with the old people in a house in the Quartier Carrefour when the door was broken down. Some men in fatigues told us to go outside and join a group of people. They wanted to kill us, but one of them said that he needed some women. A group of eight women and eight children (four girls and four boys) was gathered together. They told us to carry their booty, they wanted to take everything – clothes, saucepans and plates. They pointed their guns at us, some of them went in front of us and some followed us with their guns. Between noon and 8pm, we walked until we arrived at Dodobli. We were put together in a house. One of them held a knife and threatened to kill me if I did not have sex with him. He ripped my clothes and raped me in front of everyone. While they were raping the women, some of them shouted and insulted the Guérés: ‘We are going to kill you Guérés, we are going to marry you and take your land’.”

These eight women were kept in the house for ten days, during which time experienced sexual assault and repeated rape.

Amnesty International continued to document sexual abuse against women and girls after the arrest of the outgoing President Laurent Gbagbo on 11 April 2011. In May 2011, FRCI members and people fighting alongside them raped women in the the Sassandra region (some 200 km south-west of Abidjan) after this area was attacked by Liberian mercenaries loyal to Laurent Gbagbo. One young girl who experienced raped in the west of the country told Amnesty International:

“On 22 May, I was in the bush with other villagers when the FRCI found us. They accused us of passing information on to militia members. (...). [After slitting the throat of the two youngest], they threatened to kill my father. We cried. They told us he would be spared if I agreed to have sex with them. My hands were tied behind my back. Three soldiers raped me in turn, in front of my parents. Fifteen people, including my parents and I, were sent to an official's residence. That evening, a soldier asked me to follow him. He wanted me to come with him into a room. I refused and I shouted. He gagged me with a rag, tied my hands up

behind my back and threw me to the ground. He then took off my clothes and raped me. The same evening another soldier came and raped me as well."

Another woman, Laurence Banjneron, aged 27, was killed whilst resisting rape by FRCI soldiers in the village of Toulepleu, near the Liberian border, on 11 May 2011. She reportedly bit the hand of an FRCI soldier who was attempting to rape her. The soldier killed her and reportedly later shot and killed her husband Jean Pierre Péhé, when he arrived to make inquiries about what had happened to his wife.

Other women were also raped by the FRCI in the village of Tanyo (in the region of Soubré) on 12 May 2011 after Liberian militias loyal to Laurent Gbagbo had attacked it. One eyewitness told Amnesty International:

"After the Liberians passed through our village on 10 May, we went to the bush in order to find refuge. (...) the FRCI threatened to kill us if we didn't go back to the village. So most of the women returned home. We were really scared. One evening [on 12 May 2011] someone knocked at the door. When we asked who it was, we heard it was the FRCI. My mother opened the door. Three FRCI soldiers took three women including me. They threatened us with their weapons and we followed them. They asked us where the young men were, we answered we didn't know. They told us to lie down and aimed their guns at our faces. I told them I was having my period but they said that I was lying. When they tore off my loincloth (pagne), they saw I wasn't lying. They raped two other women in turn. We went back home. The following day, they came back and they took a 16-year-old girl who was four months pregnant. When she came back, she was crying. She told her parents she had been raped three times."

2.3 SEXUAL ATTACKS AGAINST WOMEN IN THE CONTEXT OF INTER-COMMUNAL CLASHES IN THE WEST OF THE COUNTRY

In the west of the country and notably in Duékoué, tens of people were killed in fierce inter-communal clashes that opposed ethnic groups, real or presumed supporters of Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara.

A woman belonging to the Guéré ethnic group told the Amnesty International delegates how she was raped by some Dioulas (generic term used to describe anyone with a Muslim name, or anyone coming from the north of Côte d'Ivoire or other countries in the sub-region members and generally considered as supporters of Alassane Ouattara):

"On Monday 3 January [2011], they came early in the morning. I was in my home in my father's compound with my mother, my older sister and my little brothers. I was alone in my house, the courtyard is not enclosed. They had knives and machetes. They broke the door and grabbed me. Their faces were blackened with charcoal; they said nothing, threw themselves on me and did horrible things to me; they raped me, three or four of them. They burned my house, the house of my family and they killed my brother. They stole everything from my shop and then burned it down. We fled the same day, with my mother and my sister-in-law and her children. We hid in the bushes and then went to a small village and after a day came here".

In February 2011, the Amnesty International delegation met several Guéré women who had been gang-raped in their own houses, which were then set ablaze. One victim told an Amnesty International delegation in March 2011 in Abidjan:

"On Tuesday, 4 January, in the afternoon there was shooting and we hid in the house; there were many of us as other neighbours had come to shelter in our house, in my father's house. They broke the door and came in and started to hit the young men and boys and to rape the women. They were Dioula, were dressed in boubous and with amulets. Several women were raped in the house; they pushed some of the young men and boys outside and hit pregnant women. I was raped by three men; they told us to lay flat and said: 'We'll kill you.' We fled the same night... We went to the Catholic Mission in town but there was no space and now we are staying with my sister in the Quartier Carrefour; she lent us a very small room by her house."

3. ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSES BY UN PEACEKEEPING FORCES IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Amnesty International is also deeply concerned by the recent allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving peacekeeper members of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI).

After receiving the allegations by mid August 2011, the UN opened an investigation and on 1 September 2011, the UNOCI published a news release stressing that "[i]f these allegations are founded, it would be the responsibility of the countries from which these peacekeepers come to take appropriate action against those involved".³ Amnesty International has called upon the UNOCI and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to ensure that all peacekeepers suspected of committing rape and other forms of sexual violence against Ivorian women are immediately suspended from duty, subjected to disciplinary proceedings and/or returned to their sending state with a request for initiation of a domestic criminal investigation and prosecution.

4. INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

For years, until the post-electoral crisis that brought to power Alassane Ouattara, a collapsed judicial system in the north and the absence of political will in the south meant there was little possibility of justice or effective reparation for the crimes they have endured. Owing to continuing insecurity, women often lived in fear of further attacks or reprisals if they speak out against the perpetrators.

After the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo in April 2011, the new administration led by Alassane Ouattara opened several enquiries to deal with the crimes committed by Laurent Gbagbo's administration and to the human rights violations committed by all parties in the west of the

³ UN News Center, Côte d'Ivoire: UN responding to allegations of sex abuse by peacekeepers, 1 September 2011.

country, but none of them appear to have a particular focus of sexual violence against women.

Concerning the international justice, Amnesty International has welcomed the declarations by Côte d'Ivoire accepting the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and calls upon the authorities to continue to fully cooperate with the ongoing preliminary investigation by the ICC Prosecutor.

Amnesty international welcomes the inclusion of allegations of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a crime against humanity in the request of the ICC Prosecutor to the Pre-trial Chamber to authorise an investigation into the crimes committed in Côte d'Ivoire. The request noted that "there are over 100 reported cases of rape, while the number of unreported incidents is believed to be considerably higher."⁴ However, the ICC investigation, when authorised, is likely to focus on "[t]he identification of the persons who bear the greatest responsibility for ordering or facilitating the crimes", which means that accountability for direct perpetrators of rape and other forms of sexual violence will remain to be addressed by the domestic criminal jurisdictions.

It appears, from information submitted by the ICC Prosecutor to the Pre-trial Chamber in August 2011, that there are numerous investigations or prosecutions underway in the Côte d'Ivoire criminal justice system that address crimes committed during the post-election violence.⁵ Many of these investigations relate to economic crimes or crimes against the state. According to the ICC prosecutor, a third category of investigations - into "blood crimes" which may include genocide and crimes against civilians - are being conducted by the Abidjan, Dalou, and Military Prosecutors. However, these investigations reportedly do not have significant overlap with the ICC preliminary investigation into the individuals who may bear the greatest responsibility for crimes falling within the jurisdiction of the ICC (which includes crimes against humanity of rape and other forms of sexual violence).

Amnesty International also deeply regrets the limited temporal jurisdiction chosen by the ICC Prosecutor. Restricting the investigation to events since 28 November 2010 ignores many thousands of victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all parties to the conflict since 2002, notably the women and girls who have been subjected to rape and other crimes of sexual violence. Amnesty International has urged that the ICC investigation not be limited to events following the presidential election but rather should extend to all crimes against humanity and war crimes committed since 2002.

⁴ Request for authorisation of an investigation pursuant to article 15, ICC-02/11-3 - Original: English, at para. 2, available at <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1097345.pdf>.

⁵ Prosecution's provision of additional information in relation to its request for authorisation of an investigation pursuant to Article 15, ICC-02/11-7-RED, at paras 9-18, available at <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1204071.pdf>

5. RAPE UNDER NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Rape is a crime in Côte d'Ivoire and is punishable under the Ivorian Penal Code. Chapter 2, section 1, article 354 of the Ivorian Penal Code states that rape is punishable by five to 20 years' imprisonment. Rape is punishable by life imprisonment if the perpetrator is assisted by one or more people or if the victim is a minor under 15 years of age.⁶ However, the Ivorian Penal Code does not define "rape," which could make it difficult for survivors to obtain effective remedies, including equal and effective access to justice and adequate, effective and prompt reparation.

Human rights organizations in Côte d'Ivoire, including the Ivorian Association of Women Lawyers (*Association des femmes juristes de Côte d'Ivoire*, AFJCI) have publicly called upon authorities to include a definition of rape in the Ivorian Penal Code. However there is still no definition of rape in the Ivorian legislation to date.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the last decade, rape and other forms of sexual violence committed by all parties in the Côte d'Ivoire conflict have been used as a weapon of war. These abuses against women were part of a widespread or systematic attack and constitute, in some cases, crimes against humanity.

Despite the fact that these crimes were publicly denounced by UN bodies, international commissions of inquiry and human rights organizations, to Amnesty International's knowledge, virtually none of the perpetrators of these acts of sexual violence have been held accountable. This impunity has fuelled and continues to fuel rapes and sexual assaults.

While justice is essential, the victims of sexual violence in Côte d'Ivoire have a more pressing need: access to healthcare in order to remedy the physical and psychological trauma of rape and other sexual violence to save their lives. The impossibility for survivors to access adequate and effective medical care is a further violation of their rights.

The scale of rape and sexual violence in Côte d'Ivoire in the course of the armed conflict has been largely underestimated and women have become its forgotten victims. Many victims of sexual violence are today suffering and risk dying needlessly, and in the meantime, many other women remain at risk of experiencing sexual violence. An organized and comprehensive programme must be developed in order to accommodate the various needs of these women.

The Ivorian authorities as well as civil society, the international donor community and the international peacekeeping missions (notably UNOCI) must pay special attention to violence

⁶ Art. 354. *Le viol est puni de l'emprisonnement de cinq à vingt ans. La peine est celle de l'emprisonnement à vie si l'auteur :*

1. est aidé dans son crime par une ou plusieurs personnes ;

La peine est également celle de l'emprisonnement à vie si la victime est mineure de quinze ans.

committed against women and girls and work together to develop a programme of promotion and protection of human rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent reports, Amnesty International has made the following recommendations:

a) To the Ivorian authorities

- Take concrete measures to put an end to the impunity of perpetrators of acts of violence against women and, in particular, ensure that any person for whom there are reasonable grounds to believe has committed rape or other acts of violence against women, is suspended from his duties whilst awaiting investigation into the matter.
- Ensure that all the perpetrators of crimes under international law are being investigated and prosecuted either at the national or the international level.
- Provide full reparation to survivors of rape and other sexual violence and to their families, including the following forms: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.
- Continue to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court proceedings pursuant to Côte d'Ivoire's declarations pursuant to Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute accepting the jurisdiction of the court;
- Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and bring domestic legislation fully into line with its provisions, particularly to ensure that torture, rape, and other forms of sexual violence as crimes against humanity are defined and all modes of liability are applicable in domestic criminal law.
- Amend the penal code to define rape and other crimes of sexual violence in a way that is consistent with existing international law. The definition of rape in national law should reflect the most advanced international principles, including recent jurisprudence that has embraced comprehensive definitions that respond to the nature of sexual violence during conflict. In particular, the elements of the crime of rape should include:
 1. The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.
 2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.⁷

⁷ See ICC Elements of Crimes, adopted 9 September 2002, Article 7(1)(g)-1, footnotes 15–16.

- Provide immediate and effective assistance to survivors of gender-based violence and take the necessary measures to prevent future gender-based violence. In particular, ensure that survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence, have access to appropriate medical treatment and psycho-social assistance, notably by providing the necessary funding, training and other resources to appropriate health-care and social welfare providers.
- Strengthen efforts to address gender-based violence, including rape and other forms of sexual abuse, with a view to developing and implementing specific and time-bound commitments to combat sexual violence in accordance with Security Council resolution S/RES/1960 (2010), 16 December 2010. Such commitments should include ensuring that survivors of rape and other sexual violence have access to appropriate medical treatment and psychological support.
- Ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict, post-conflict planning and peace building, including by enhancing their engagement in political and economic decision-making at early stages of recovery processes, through, *inter alia*, promoting women's leadership and capacity to engage in aid management and planning, supporting women's organizations, and countering negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally.

Amnesty International has also made recommendations to UN bodies including the UNOCI:

- Publish the results of the investigation regarding allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving peacekeeper members of the UNOCI and indicate what sanctions were taken against the perpetrators of these sexual abuses.
- Ensure that peacekeepers suspected of committing rape and other forms of sexual violence are immediately removed from duty, subjected to disciplinary proceedings and/or returned to their sending state with a request for a domestic investigation and prosecution to be initiated.
- Reaffirm the importance of appropriate gender expertise and training in UNOCI in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), encourage the appointment of women protection advisors in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) and request the Secretary General to establish monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence, including rape in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict and other situations relevant to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), as appropriate.
- Stress the need to address sexual violence against women, men and children as a weapon of war, and proceed with the appointment of women protection advisors in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010).

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