



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Welcome to IRRI's first quarterly newsletter (although as this is the first we have covered July to December 2016). We all live in busy times, and receive numerous emails with useful and important information that we just must read, but then somehow, we don't always get round to it.

With this in mind, we've decided to send a quarterly summary of our activities and publications entitled "IN CASE YOU MISSED IT". Our motivation is to make sure you are kept up to date with the range of activities IRRI is working on, and to ensure you have links to our recent publications in one place so that you can – when time allows – read all you want to.

We hope you enjoy this (slightly longer) update, and promise that future editions will be much shorter. We couldn't do this without your support, and if you would like to make a donation to help us to continue our vital work, please [click here](#). Thank you for your continued interest and support of IRRI, we are extremely grateful.

All the best,
Andie Lambe
Executive Director

Understanding and Responding to Mass Violence



BURUNDI: The big issue in the Great Lakes region has obviously been the situation in Burundi – IRRI has been working with local civil society actors on the ground to document the crisis. Our recent work has primarily focused on publishing short pieces with local civil society partners. These pieces have included [Burundi: another electoral facade?](#), [A Jump into the Unknown: What do the elections mean for Burundi?](#) and ["We have lost our faith in politicians"](#), the latter of which was based on interviews carried out in rural areas of southern Burundi (an area from which tens of thousands of people have fled into neighbouring countries). We also worked to raise the profile of the crisis, for example, by signing onto a statement as part of the ICGLR Uganda Civil Society Forum steering group, [The Burundi Crisis: The ICGLR Civil Society Call for Inclusive Dialogue and Commitment to Sustainable Peace in Burundi](#) and by helping to organise and participating in a strategy meeting for Burundian women peace activists.

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SUDAN: Our Sudan programme has continued to monitor, document, and publish on the ongoing conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states – publishing two reports, [July and August human rights update](#) and [September and October human rights update](#). We chose not to report in November or December due to a welcome, but all too brief, respite in bombing.

On Sudan more generally, as the secretariat of the [Sudan Consortium](#), we continued undertaking advocacy on behalf of our partners. We met with the outgoing and incoming UK Ambassador to Sudan; along with 48 other NGOs we signed onto a [letter](#) to

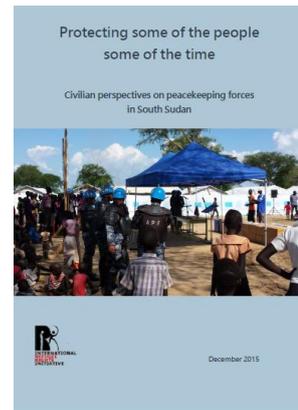


the US Special Envoy to Sudan in advance of his visit; and along with 15 other local and international civil society organisations, we signed a [letter](#) targeting the session on Sudan at the UN Human Rights Council’s 30th session, which we also attended, presenting at a side event attended by a number of UNHRC delegates. In addition, with our partners [ACJPS](#) and [FIDH](#), we submitted (and will publish



shortly) information to the Human Rights Council in advance of Sudan’s Universal Periodic Review due to take place in May 2016.

PEACEKEEPING: We published the first in a series of reports on the protection of civilians in peacekeeping missions. The report, "[Protecting some of the people, some of the time](#)" launched in December, looks at the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). It focuses particularly on the protection of civilian sites and has garnered considerable media coverage, including [National Public Radio \(NPR\)](#), [Africa Times](#), [AllAfrica.com](#), [Sudan Times](#) and [Humanosphere](#). Our subsequent advocacy has continued that momentum.



JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: In July we met with organs of the ICC and civil society groups in The Hague to follow up on the issues raised at a meeting we held at the end of 2014, reflecting on the tumultuous relationship between Africa and the International Criminal Court. Then in November we attended the Assembly of State Parties and distributed copies of [our paper](#) summarising the 2014 meeting.

Focusing on individual ICC cases being pursued on the continent, we published a number of pieces relating to the DRC, for example, soliciting and publishing the [views](#) from Ituri with regards to Lubanga’s sentence and putting the [Ntaganda](#) case into context at a local level. We also wrote about [new efforts](#) to ensure justice for DRC human rights activist, Floribert Chebeya, in Senegal, who was killed in 2010. We also [wrote](#) about the precedent setting trial against Hissène Habré in Senegal. Given that it is the first time a former African head of state is being tried by the courts of another African country, it is a significant step in the fight against impunity for African leaders. And alongside other regional and international NGOs, we signed onto an [open letter](#) and issued a [press release](#) pushing for greater attention to sexual and gender based crimes within the trial proceedings.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE: We made a submission to the Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) on [the Implementation of the Kampala Declaration in Member States](#).

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Meanwhile, we also continued our activities as steering committee members of the [International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect](#), and as members of Uganda’s National Committee on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. We joined 33 other

NGOs in signing onto a [joint letter](#) to UN Member States asking for their explicit support for the new “[Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes](#).” With 23 other NGOs, we also signed an [open letter](#) to members of the AU Peace and Security Council calling for the publication of the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan; and in August we signed onto a statement along with 22 other regional and international NGOs calling on UNHRC to create a commission of inquiry for [Yemen](#).

Protection of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons



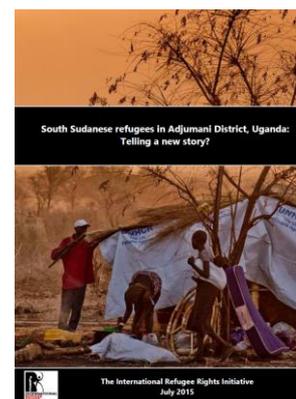
RIGHTS IN EXILE: At the heart of our refugee rights work is our [Rights in Exile](#) programme, which continued to compile and provide essential resources for the promotion of refugee protection in law. Every day we facilitated refugees and asylum seekers with [free legal support](#), lawyers with [expert information](#) to defend rights, and [interested people](#) with resources to develop their careers in refugee legal defence. We continued to publish our monthly [newsletter](#), putting as many recent developments in refugee legal support into one document as we could find. Realising that news about countries of asylum is becoming as important as news about countries of origin when it comes to securing protection, we started to draw on our networks to update us on the situation facing refugees claiming asylum all over the globe. We published on [The plight of African refugees in Israel](#), [Syrians in Paris](#), [Rwandans in Zambia](#), and multiple other situations around the world, that bring the challenges and successes of a rights-based approach to refugees to the fore.

We have added a [new resource on FGM](#), have continued to build the profile of our [Post-Deportation Monitoring](#) work, and expanding our resources for lawyers defending [LGBTI claimants](#). Of course, at the same time we continued our focus on any number of other special issues, [training](#), and our [list-serv](#) discussion board.



We stayed active in building networks, continuing our role as secretariat of the [Southern Refugee Legal Aid Network](#), recruiting a new coordinator and designing a new website.

UGANDA: In July, we published a report on South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. The report, [South Sudanese refugees in Adjumani district: telling a new story?](#) was based on field research conducted in Adjumani district, Uganda, and followed on from our [2014 report](#).



Then in September, we published a report looking at the alleged “voluntary” deportation of African asylum seekers from Israel to unknown third countries. The report documented the predominantly negative experiences of those asylum seekers who were part of the scheme and was timed to coincide with ongoing legal action in Israel challenging the issue as a whole. Our report resulted in a number of complimentary publications in the media and elsewhere including in [The Guardian](#), [RFI](#), [Open Democracy](#), [Al Jazeera](#) and an [Al Jazeera TV report](#) (not available in U.S.), and [Oxford University’s Border Criminologies blog](#). It was also covered in the German newspaper [taz.de](#). The Israeli court ruled in

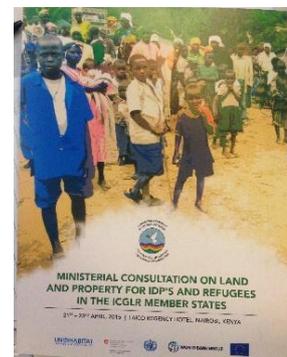
November, and we published [a blog](#) on the decision: the lawyers are appealing the ruling and the case is ongoing.



GAMBIA: We continued to focus on the situation of refugees from the Gambia, [documenting](#) the ongoing human rights abuses committed there (you can read our five previous blogs [here](#)). In addition, our work has been covered by Chanel Africa, [Reuters Africa](#), and [the Guardian](#), as well as in the French language press, [Ouestaf](#).

These publications have been based on the work of our West Africa focal point, based in Senegal, who has provided assistance to 20 individual Gambian asylum seekers in the last six months on a diverse range of issues, including some who were arrested and detained by the National Intelligent Agency because their relatives were allegedly involved in the December 2014 failed *coup d'état* in Banjul. Other assistance included referrals to social and psychiatric assistance; referring an individual, who had applied for asylum in Senegal but was arrested in Portugal and faced deportation to the Gambia, to Portuguese lawyers; and supporting refugees with obtaining identity and/or travel documents. In addition to our work with Gambian refugees, our work in Senegal was covered on Walf TV and via a radio show on Afia FM.

We also responded to a variety of other issues. In October, we [published](#) on an evolving situation facing Eritrean asylum seekers in Botswana, warning that the proposed repatriation of these Eritreans, without access to asylum procedures, would violate international law and could amount to *refoulement*. That same month, we presented at a Ministers meeting on the Implementation of the ICGLR Protocol on Property Rights of IDPs and Refugees in the Great Lakes Region and in November 2015, we published a [piece](#) about the restriction of the freedom of movement for refugees in Zambia.



In addition, we had pieces published externally. In the EACSOE newsletter, our paper entitled "[What will the Status of Refugees in an East African Federation Be?](#)" was published. In December, IRRI's Senior Researcher, Lucy Hovil, co-authored a paper on [refugee protection, durable solutions in the Great Lakes region](#) and Reliefweb published our overview on [the state of freedom of movement for refugees in Tanzania](#).

But it wasn't all about publishing and writing, we also met with numerous organisations, groups, and individuals, all with the aim of presenting a coordinated position on key issues to ensure that our voice – and that of our partners' – was heard within key regional and international fora. For example, we organised and chaired the "Alternatives to Camps" session at the UNHCR/NGO consultations in Geneva.

Citizenship and nationality rights



Our work on citizenship and nationality rights has primarily focused on activities as part of the Citizenship Rights in Africa (CRAI) coalition – including maintaining the [CRAI website](#), publishing weekly updates to the CRAI mailing list, engaging on social media via @CRAIAfrica and Facebook, and publishing the first newsletter. The [newsletter](#) featured original pieces written by IRRI dealing with issues such as the progress made in Senegal on a woman's right to pass on her nationality to her children and spouse, a report summarising a test case, filed with African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) by our partners at ACJPS, that is challenging discriminatory legislation in Sudan, a snapshot of how our partners [Lawyer for Human Rights](#) are working to end statelessness in South Africa, a summary of the African Commission on Human and

Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) study on the right to a nationality in Africa, and a reflection on the need for and outcomes of the first Global Forum on Statelessness, at which we presented.

We also attended a number of high level meetings including the UNHCR statelessness retreat in Geneva, where we were asked to join a group of experts to push forward Agenda item 10 of the Global Action Plan to end statelessness (on the need for research). We also attended a review of the progress of implementation of the Abidjan Declaration on eradicating statelessness in West Africa, a regional meeting on statelessness issues in Central Africa in Cameroon, and a regional meeting on statelessness and nationality issue in East Africa in Arusha, Tanzania.

In sum, it has been a busy six months, but our work is ongoing and there is plenty more to be done, and our next update will cover the first quarter of 2016. Once again, this important work would not be possible without your ongoing support, so thank you from the staff at IRR1 and, more importantly, the people whose lives are directly impacted by our work.