

Press Statement  
Mark C. Toner  
Deputy Department Spokesperson  
Washington, DC

---

The United States is deeply alarmed by reports, including those from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, of serious human rights violations and abuses in Burundi, including eyewitness reports of mass graves, a sharp increase in alleged enforced disappearances and torture, and reports of sexual violence by security forces.

These and other reports further underscore the urgent need for the Government of Burundi to allow for the immediate full deployment and unimpeded access of African Union human rights observers to investigate these allegations. It is imperative that the Government of Burundi remove all bureaucratic and practical roadblocks it has used to prevent the AU human rights and military observers from fulfilling their mandate for the past six months to investigate reports of violence committed by any side in the conflict.

We call upon the Government of Burundi to permit an immediate, impartial investigation into these recent allegations and to hold accountable all those found responsible for crimes. The United States remains concerned about Burundi's ongoing political and humanitarian crisis and the resulting suffering it has brought to the people of Burundi. We once again call on all parties to reject unlawful violence, and reiterate that the only way to resolve the crisis gripping the country is for all parties to agree promptly to engage in internationally-mediated, inclusive dialogue without preconditions.