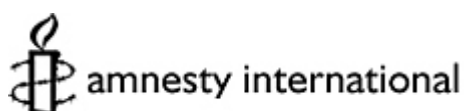


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## Amnesty International Report 2010 - Guinea-Bissau

### REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

**Head of state:** Malam Bacai Sanhá (replaced Raimundo Pereira in September, who replaced João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira in March)

**Head of government:** Carlos Gomes Júnior

**Death penalty:** abolitionist for all crimes

**Population:** 1.6 million

**Life expectancy:** 47.5 years

**Under-5 mortality (m/f):** 207/186 per 1,000

**Adult literacy:** 64.6 per cent

The killing of political and military figures, including President João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira in March, exacerbated the already fragile political situation. Elections in June restored some level of stability. The armed forces interfered with the governance of the country and the judiciary. They also committed serious human rights violations, including unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and detentions, with impunity. Human rights defenders and others received death threats.

### Background

The delay in appointing a new government following elections in November 2008 increased political tension. Drug trafficking was reportedly at the root of political instability and killings, and the tension between civilian and military authorities. A new government was finally appointed in January.

In January, presidential guards known as "Aguntas", a force created by the late President João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira during the 1998-99 civil war, allegedly tried to kill the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, General Tagme na Waie, apparently because he had ordered their disbandment. In March, General Tagme na Waie was killed by a bomb. Soldiers accused President Vieira of ordering the killing and hours later killed him. The President of the National Assembly took over as Interim President pending a presidential election. Neither killing was properly investigated.

Prior to the presidential election in June, soldiers killed politicians close to the late President Vieira, including an election candidate. They also arbitrarily arrested and beat some parliamentarians and former ministers. Several other politicians fled the country or went into hiding.

The June election was held in an atmosphere of fear and censorship. Malam Bacai Sanhá, candidate for the ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), won the election after a second round in July. He took office in September.

In August, Guinea-Bissau acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and in September signed the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

### **Unlawful killings**

In March and June, soldiers unlawfully killed political and military figures with impunity. Despite promises by the new President, no investigations were carried out into any of the killings.

- On 4 June, Hélder Proença, a former Minister of Defence, was killed together with his driver and bodyguard in an ambush by soldiers, some 40km from the capital, Bissau. The armed forces accused him of masterminding a plot to overthrow the government and kill the Prime Minister and the acting Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. Two hours later, Baciro Dabó, a former Minister of the Territorial Administration and a presidential candidate, was shot dead at home by a group of about 13 soldiers.

### **Arbitrary arrests and detentions**

Soldiers arbitrarily arrested and detained civilians and fellow soldiers whom they accused of plotting against the government. The arrests were carried out without a warrant. The detainees were held in military facilities without charge or trial for weeks or months, exceeding the 48-hour limit prescribed by law. Five soldiers accused of killing the Chief of Staff in March were arrested soon after the killing but were not brought before a magistrate to legalize their detention for several months. They had not been tried by the end of the year.

The politicians arrested in June were released without charge or trial about two months later. They included Faustino Fadut Imbali, a former Prime Minister, arrested at home by soldiers without a warrant on 5 June. He was beaten at the time of arrest and taken to the Armed Forces Headquarters where he was again beaten.

### **Torture and other ill-treatment**

Most of those arrested in March and June were tortured in military custody, including the five soldiers detained in connection with the killing of General Tagme na Waie, according to the Guinea-Bissau Human Rights League (LGDH). In addition, people who criticized the armed forces were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in custody. No investigations were carried out into these incidents and those responsible were not brought to justice.

- Pedro Infanda, a lawyer, was arbitrarily arrested by soldiers on 23 March, hours after holding a press conference during which he stated that one of his clients believed that the acting Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces was not competent for the job. Pedro Infanda was taken to the Amura military barracks in Bissau and tortured for the first four days of his detention. He was beaten with a wooden stick and other objects, and sustained serious injuries to his back for which he required intensive care treatment in hospital.

- At 1am on 1 April, four soldiers went to the home of Francisco José Fadul, President of the Audit Court, and beat him with the butts of their guns, causing cuts to his head and one arm. He required intensive care treatment in hospital. His wife was also beaten, but was not seriously injured. Two days before the attack, Francisco José Fadul had publicly criticized the behaviour of the armed forces and called on the government to hold the military accountable for corruption and for the killings of President Vieira and General Tagme na Waie.

#### **Threats against physical integrity**

Members of the LGDH were threatened for criticizing the military. Nobody was prosecuted for making the threats.

- In August, the then Attorney General said that he was receiving death threats, forcing him to sleep away from his home.

#### **Amnesty International reports**

- Guinea-Bissau: Human rights violations in the run up to presidential elections (AFR 30/003/2009)
- Guinea-Bissau: Briefing for international election observers (AFR 30/005/2009)
- Guinea-Bissau: Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review (AFR 30/007/2009)

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