



Amnesty International Annual Report 2013 - Guyana

Publisher [Amnesty International](#)

Publication Date 23 May 2013

Cite as Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Annual Report 2013 - Guyana*, 23 May 2013, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/519f519918.html> [accessed 31 October 2013]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

Head of state and government: **Donald Ramotar**

Alleged unlawful killings by police continued to be reported. At least five people were sentenced to death; no executions were carried out.

Background

Following commitments made during Guyana's Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council in 2010, the government announced in August that it would launch public consultations on issues including the abolition of the death penalty and the decriminalization of consensual adult same-sex relations. Consultations on the death penalty and sexual orientation had not begun by the end of the year.

Police and security forces

On 18 July, three people were alleged to have been shot dead by riot police in the town of Linden during protests against rising electricity prices. A further 17 people required treatment for gunshot and pellet wounds. Protesters had reportedly hurled bottles and rocks at the security forces who had used tear gas against them. A five-person Commission of Inquiry into the incident was established and was due to issue its findings in February 2013.

On 11 September, 17-year-old Shaquille Grant was fatally shot and another man was injured by the police in the village of Agricola. Local residents refuted the official version that police were responding to reports of robbery and had been fired upon. Three police officers were charged with murder in October; one was awaiting trial at the end of the year while the other two remained at large.

Violence against women and girls

In July, the CEDAW Committee highlighted the high prevalence and under-reporting of violence against women. Among its recommendations were the full implementation of the Sexual Offences Act; mandatory training for judicial officials; strengthening the capacity of shelters and crisis centres; raising public awareness; improved collection of statistical data on domestic and sexual violence; and improved access to legal aid services.

In August, the High Court ruled that "paper committals" – hearings to decide whether there is enough evidence to send a case to trial – in cases of sexual offences were unconstitutional as the accused were given no opportunity to defend themselves at that stage. There were concerns that the ruling would have a negative impact on the already very low conviction rates for sexual offences.

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

A report issued in March by the University of the West Indies examined the social impact of laws affecting LGBTI people. The report found that the majority of those interviewed were reluctant to report crimes against them as they feared charges would be brought against them because of their sexual orientation.

Right to health – HIV/AIDS

In May the National AIDS Committee, an independent advocacy body, criticized the government's failure to decriminalize same-sex relations; the slow progress in reducing stigma against people living with HIV/AIDS; the failure to explore links between sexual violence and the spread of HIV among women and girls; and the lack of focus on Indigenous people as a group at particular risk.

Death penalty

At least five people were sentenced to death. Thirty people remained on death row at the end of the year. In June, four death-row inmates had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment on the grounds that the length of time they had spent under sentence of death – ranging from 16 to 24 years – constituted cruel and inhuman treatment.

Copyright notice: © Copyright Amnesty International

Search Refworld

by keyword

and / or country

All countries

Clear

Search

[Advanced Search](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Countries

- [Guyana](#)

Topics

- [Death penalty](#)
- [HIV and AIDS](#)
- [Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex \(LGBTI\)](#)
- [Police](#)

- [Right to health](#)
- [SGBV](#)
- [Security forces](#)