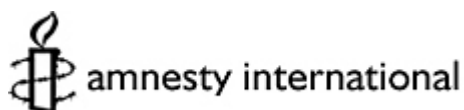


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Amnesty International Report 2010 - Togo

REPUBLIC OF TOGO

Head of state: Faure Gnassingbé
Head of government: Gilbert Fossoun Hounbo
Death penalty: abolitionist for all crimes
Population: 6.6 million
Life expectancy: 62.2 years
Under-5 mortality (m/f): 105/91 per 1,000
Adult literacy: 53.2 per cent

The death penalty was abolished. Several detainees died in detention reportedly as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. More than 30 people were arrested on political grounds, including military personnel; some were held incommunicado. The authorities curtailed freedom of expression.

Death penalty

In June, parliament abolished the death penalty for all crimes. Death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment.

Deaths in custody

Several people died in detention probably as a result of torture or other ill-treatment.

- Kossi Koffi died in March on the day he was transferred to Lomé civil prison after eight days in custody. He was reportedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated at the National Intelligence Agency (NIA).

Political prisoners

- In April, at least 32 men, including Kpatcha Gnassingbé, brother of President Faure Gnassingbé, were arrested for an alleged coup attempt. Most were charged with offences against the security of the state, conspiracy, rebellion and "voluntary violence", and were held at the NIA. Others were charged with inciting violence and held at Kara civil prison in the north. Some of the detainees were held incommunicado and several were denied family visits. Lawyers were sometimes denied access to their clients.
- Vincent Sodji, member of the opposition Union of Forces for Change, was arrested in October in Badou, apparently for possessing military uniforms and guns. He was still held without charge at Atakpame civil prison in central Togo at the end of the year.

Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression was curtailed to stifle criticism of the authorities. In April, after the alleged coup attempt, the High Council for Broadcasting and Communication (Haute autorité de l'audiovisuel et de la communication) called on the media to show restraint on how information is used and suspended all interactive shows on radio and television until further notice.

- In July, a peaceful demonstration by Journalists for Human Rights was dispersed by security forces.

Impunity

The government established the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission in February to shed light on human rights violations committed between 1958 and 2005. The Decree creating the Commission did not clarify its powers and no provisions were made to bring to justice perpetrators of abuses.

Amnesty International reports

- Togo: A quand la justice? (AFR 57/001/2009)
- Togo: Quinzième pays d'Afrique à abolir la peine de mort (AFR 57/002/2009)

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