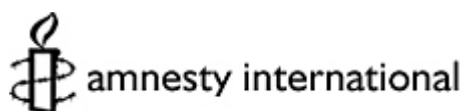


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Amnesty International Annual Report 2012 - Benin

Head of state and government: **Thomas Boni Yayi**

Death penalty: **abolitionist in practice**

Population: **9.1 million**

Life expectancy: **56.1 years**

Under-5 mortality: **118 per 1,000**

Adult literacy: **41.7 per cent**

President Boni Yayi was re-elected in March, amid protests by opposition parties that compilation of the electoral lists meant that a significant proportion of the electorate was excluded. The rising prices of basic commodities led to some social unrest. In May and June civil servants went on strike over salary claims.

Repression of dissent

In March, security forces dispersed demonstrations by opposition supporters contesting the re-election of President Boni Yayi. Some demonstrators, including member of parliament Raphaël Akotègnon, were briefly held in police custody.

Death penalty

In August, Benin took an important step towards abolishing the death penalty after the National Assembly voted in favour of ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The ratification process was not completed by the end of the year.

Prison conditions

Prisons remained overcrowded. The prison in the city of Cotonou held six times its capacity, resulting in harsh conditions. Official detention figures showed that of the 2,300 inmates held, 99 per cent were in pre-trial detention.

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