

Amnesty International Annual Report 2012 - Burkina Faso

Publisher [Amnesty International](#)

Publication
Date 24 May 2012

Cite as Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Annual Report 2012 - Burkina Faso*, 24 May 2012, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4fbe394b5a.html> [accessed 7 November 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: **Blaise Compaoré**

Head of government: **Luc-Adolphe Tiao (replaced Tertius Zongo in April)**

Death penalty: **abolitionist in practice**

Population: **17 million**

Life expectancy: **55.4 years**

Under-5 mortality: **166.4 per 1,000**

Adult literacy: **28.7 per cent**

Serious unrest took place between February and July, and the President dissolved the government. Some 300 soldiers were charged and detained following the riots.

Background

From February to July, Burkina Faso faced one of the most serious waves of unrest since President Blaise Compaoré took power in 1987. Soldiers took to the streets on several occasions in protest against prison sentences imposed on five military officers for attacking a civilian over unpaid allowances. The President reacted by dissolving the government and firing the Chief of Staff. In September some 300 soldiers were charged and detained, many of whom were tried for rebellion, rape, robbery and looting.

Thousands of people demonstrated in the capital Ouagadougou and in other cities in March and April against food prices and the rising cost of living. They called for the resignation of President Compaoré and an end to impunity.

Excessive use of force

Anti-government protests throughout the country were triggered in February when Justin Zongo, a student, died after being beaten by police officers in Koudougou, 100 km west of Ouagadougou. Official statements that the death was due to meningitis were contradicted by later reports that it was a result of physical abuse.

During subsequent clashes between protesters and the authorities, hundreds of people were wounded and five people were killed, including a police officer, after security forces used live ammunition against the demonstrators. In August, three police officers were convicted of manslaughter in the case of Justin Zongo and received sentences ranging from eight to 10 years' imprisonment.

Death penalty

- In January Issoufou Savadogo was sentenced to death by the Criminal Chamber of the Appeal Court of Ouagadougou after being convicted of murder.
- In December, two people were sentenced to death, one in his absence, by the Criminal Chamber of the Appeal Court of Bobo-Dioulasso after being convicted of murder.

Right to health – maternal mortality

Although maternal health had been identified as a priority for the government, by the end of the year no real improvement had been achieved either in the quality of maternal health services or increased access to family planning and contraception. Some progress was reported regarding accountability of medical personnel.

- In September, two health officials were dismissed for "serious professional misconduct" in Bobo-Dioulasso following the death of a pregnant woman who had been locked in a maternity ward without any supervision. In October they were sentenced to prison terms and reparations were awarded to the family.

Copyright notice: © Copyright Amnesty International