



Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	69
Land:	Ghana
Kilde:	Amnesty International
Titel:	"Ghana - Amnesty International"
Udgivet:	13. juni 2006
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	14. juni 2006

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Africa : Ghana

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Head of state and government: John Agyekum Kufuor

Death penalty: retentionist

International Criminal Court: ratified

UN Women's Convention: ratified

Optional Protocol to UN Women's Convention: signed

Overview - Covering events from January - December 2005

[The National Reconciliation Commission](#) : Violence against women



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The government released the final report of the National Reconciliation Commission with plans for implementing some of its recommendations. The President granted amnesty to 1,317 prisoners on humanitarian grounds. Violence against women continued to be widespread without progress in law reform.

The National Reconciliation Commission

On 22 April, the report of the National Reconciliation Commission, investigating past human rights abuses during Ghana's periods of unconstitutional government between 1957 and 1993, was made public by the government, together with a white paper accepting some of the recommendations and promising that a reparation and rehabilitation fund would be operational before the end of 2005. No recommendations had been implemented by the end of the year. The government issued an apology to all those who had been wronged by past governments.

The report concluded that the majority of human rights abuses were attributed to the unconstitutional governments. The recommendations included reparation for and rehabilitation of victims, and paid particular attention to rape and other sexual violence against women. Specifics included a formal presidential apology to victims of abuses by state agents, financial compensation, restitution of property, medical care, and the creation of

trauma and counselling centres in hospitals. The report also recommended reconciliation and institutional reforms such as training on human rights for the police, judges and prison officials.

Violence against women

Violence against women continued to be widespread, with violence in the family thought to affect one in three women. Civil society organizations discussed reform of abortion legislation and laws permitting marital rape, and some members of parliament advocated higher sentences for rape and defilement of women. However, no progress was made in passing the Domestic Violence Bill into law.

The Human Trafficking Law was passed by parliament in June; it had not received presidential assent by the end of the year. Ghana had not yet ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

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