



Amnesty International Annual Report 2013 - Benin

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Head of state: **Thomas Boni Yayi**

Head of government: **Pascal Koupaki**

Throughout the year, the government tried to repress dissenting voices amid disputes about governance and a project on revision of the Constitution. Benin ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

Freedom of expression

- In September, a private television channel, Canal 3, was interrupted for a few days following statements by Lionel Agbo, a former adviser to President Boni Yayi, accusing the Head of State of corruption. The state television justified this cut by referring to non-compliance with transmission rules. Lionel Agbo was charged with offending the Head of State but had not been tried by the end of the year.

Prison conditions

Prisons remained overcrowded. The prison in Cotonou held six times its capacity, resulting in harsh conditions. Official figures showed that of the some 2,250 inmates held, 97% were in pre-trial detention.

Death penalty

In July, Benin ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. By the end of the year the government had not yet adopted implementing laws to remove the death penalty from its national legislation.

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