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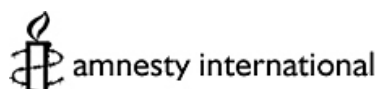
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Amnesty International Annual Report 2011 - Togo

Head of state: Faure Gnassingbé

Head of government: Gilbert Fossoun Hounbo

Death penalty: abolitionist for all crimes

Population: 6.8 million

Life expectancy: 63.3 years

Under-5 mortality (m/f): 105/91 per 1,000

Adult literacy: 64.9 per cent

Following presidential elections in March, security forces used violence to repress peaceful demonstrations. Freedom of the press was also undermined, with journalists being attacked while doing their work. Despite the work of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC), impunity remained the rule.

Background

In March, President Faure Gnassingbé claimed victory in presidential elections that were denounced as fraudulent by the opposition. In May, the Union of Forces for Change (UFC), the main opposition party, decided to join the government, leading to a split and the creation in October of a new political party, the National Alliance for Change (ANC).

Prisoners of conscience and political prisoners

More than a dozen political activists were arrested, charged with security offences and detained for weeks or months.

- In March, two members of the UFC, Augustin Glokpon and Jacob Benissan, were arrested as they were taking election campaign materials to the town of Vogan. They were held for a week at the gendarmerie in Lomé, the capital, charged with "an attempt on the security of the state", then sent to Kara prison. Both were prisoners of conscience and were provisionally released on 31 March.
- In March, four members of a political movement, Citizens' Movement for an Alternative (MCA), Fulbert Attisso, Guillaume Coco, Yaovi Abobi and Eric Solewassi, were arrested in Lomé. They were charged with "an attempt on the security of the state" and provisionally released in September.

Freedom of assembly, excessive use of force

After the election, the opposition organized weekly peaceful gatherings to contest the results. The security forces repeatedly dispersed the demonstrations with tear gas and used excessive force on several occasions.

- In April, members of the gendarmerie broke up a meeting of the opposition umbrella organization Republican Front for Alternation and Change (FRAC) and arrested more than 70 people. They were detained for a few hours and some alleged they were beaten.

- In June, a demonstration to protest against rising fuel prices was violently repressed. At least one person, Komassi Koami Dodoè, was shot dead by a military officer in Agoè neighbourhood and two others were severely injured. An inquiry was opened but by the end of the year no findings had been made public.
- In October, the security forces attacked the home of Jean-Pierre Fabre, an opposition leader. The whole area was surrounded and the security forces fired tear gas grenades and beat protesters.
- In November, a march organized by several human rights organizations to protest against the repeated violations of the right to peaceful assembly was dispersed by security forces who wounded several people.

Freedom of expression

Several journalists working for international media outlets were denied visas to cover the elections.

- In August, Didier Agbedivlo alias Didier Ledoux, a journalist with the daily *Liberté*, was assaulted by gendarmes when photographing the Court in Lomé.
- In November, a cameraman, Tony Sodji, was wounded by plain-clothes gendarmes who shot him with a tear gas grenade at close range while he was filming a demonstration. Earlier, in September, he had been stabbed by gendarmes while covering demonstrations.

Impunity

In August, the TJRC opened regional branches throughout the country to collect testimonies. The TJRC was established in 2009 to shed light on human rights violations committed between 1958 and 2005. By the end of 2010, more than 5,800 people had made statements before the TJRC but most of these cases were from the 1960s to 1980s. No victims of past human rights violations received any reparations.

No progress was made in the investigation of 72 complaints lodged by victims of political repression in 2005.

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