

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment, please email the [Knowledge and Information Management Unit](#).

29 May 2013

TGO104400.FE

Togo: Demonstrations organized by the Let's Save Togo collective (collectif Sauvons le Togo, CST) on 12, 13 and 14 June 2012, including treatment of the protesters by the government
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Let's Save Togo Collective (CST)

The CST was founded on 4 April 2012 (CST 4 Apr. 2012; *Jeune Afrique* 2 July 2012). According to several sources, the collective is made up particularly of political parties and civil society organizations (ibid.; *l'Humanité.fr* 24 August 2012; AFP 12 May 2013). The CST website states that the collective is made up of human rights organizations, civil society organizations and political parties, including the following:

Human rights organizations

- Christians for the Abolition of Torture-Togo (Association des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture Branche Togo, ACAT-TOGO)
- Togolese Human Rights Association (Association Togolaise des Droits de l'Homme, ATDH)
- Togolese Association for the Defence and Protection of Human Rights (Association Togolaise pour la Défense et la Promotion des Droits Humains, ATDPDH)
- Collective of Associations Against Impunity in Togo (Collectif des Associations Contre l'Impunité au Togo, CACIT)
- Togolese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (Coalition Togolaise des Défenseurs des Droits de l'Homme, CTDDH)
- Journalists for Human Rights (Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme, JDHO)
- Togolese League of Human Rights (Ligue Togolaise des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH)

Civil society organizations

- SOS Journalist in Danger (SOS Journaliste en Danger, SOS JED)
- SYNERGY-TOGO (SYNERGIE-TOGO)

Political parties

- Alliance of Democrats for Integral Development (Alliance des Démocrates pour le Développement Intégral, ADDI)
- National Alliance for Change (Alliance Nationale pour le Changement, ANC)
- Organization for the Construction of a United Togo (Organisation pour Bâtir dans l'Union un Togo Solidaire, OBUTS)
- Socialist Pact for Renewal (Pacte Socialiste pour le Renouveau, PSR)
- Workers' Party (Parti des Travailleurs), as well as the Sursaut-Togo political movement (Mouvement politique Sursaut-Togo). (CST n.d.)

These organizations came together in the CST to

[translation]

...achieve, through dynamic united action, a radical change in the current governance in Togo through the defence, protection, promotion of human rights, cessation of the instrumentalization of justice, the implementation of the rule of law and the establishment of a republican army, and the implementation of all measures to align with international standards, the process of organizing and holding free and transparent elections. (ibid.)..

According to some sources, Zeus Ajavon is the CST coordinator (RFI 19 June 2012), Raphaël Nyama Kpandé-Adzaré is the general rapporteur and Jil-Benoît Afanbédji is the general treasurer (*Jeune Afrique* 2 July 2012).

2. Demonstrations and Treatment of Participants

According to an article in *Jeune Afrique*, a French weekly that provides African news (*Jeune Afrique* n.d.), an electoral code that the CST deems [translation] "favourable to the party in power" was adopted by the government on 25 May 2012 (*Jeune Afrique* 2 July 2012). In order to have this text removed before the parliamentary elections scheduled for October 2012, the CST called a series of peaceful demonstrations in June 2012 (ibid.). A news release by the CST states that the goal of the demonstrations was

- the return to the Constitution of 14 October 1992;
- the effective implementation of the recommendations of the CNDH report on torture, especially through the prosecution, judgment and conviction of perpetrators of torture;
- the immediate and unconditional repeal of the two laws related to the Electoral Code and to electoral divisions adopted by the National Assembly on 25 and 31 May 2012;
- the government's effective and good-faith application of decisions of the Interparliamentary Union and the Court of Justice of the CEDEAO [Cour de Justice de la CEDEAO] in the matter of the nine members of parliament whose parliamentary term of office was improperly revoked;
- the government clarification of the report on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (Initiative pour la Transparence des Industries Extractives, ITIE). (CST 4 June 2012)

According to the United States Department of State *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*,

[t]he constitution and law provide for freedom of assembly; however, the government sometimes restricted this right. Although demonstration organizers had followed standard notification and other procedures, on several occasions the government prevented opposition marches through commercial areas and forcibly dispersed demonstrators when authorities did not agree to the routes taken. (US 19 Apr. 2013, 8)

According to an article published by the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), [UN English version] "[s]treet protests in June, August and September were violently quashed by security forces using rubber bullets and tear gas" (UN 29 Oct. 2012). Afrik.com, an online daily, also indicates that security forces intervened [translation] "violently" during the 12 June demonstration (Afrik.com 13 June 2012).

Afrik.com states that over 100,000 demonstrators participated in this march and that it was followed by a "sit-in" at the Dékon intersection in Lomé where [translation] "everything deteriorated" (Afrik.com 13 June 2013). According to Afrik.com, [translation] "although nothing suggested a resurgence of the violence, some anti-republican soldiers in the service of conservatives opened fire with tear gas and rubber bullets against demonstrators one hundred meters from the Dékon intersection" (ibid.). In a press conference, the CST stated that the demonstrators were [translation] "pursued in the surrounding streets and homes and in the Saint Augustin d'Amoutivé church yard" (CST 13 June 2012).

Still according to Afrik.com, the demonstrations of 12, 13 and 14 June 2012, which took place in Lomé and in the interior of the country, [translation] "resulted in more than 119 injured, 52 of which were serious, 78 interrogations, from which 54 people were sent to the civil prison of Lomé, property seizure, and property damage" (29 June 2012). The Afrik.com article states that, in Lomé, a mother of two children had [translation] "accidentally" been killed and that, in Sokode, a city in the interior of the country, a retiree had died [translation] "after being kicked repeatedly in the stomach and the chest by the security forces" (29 June 2012). During its press conference, the CST pointed out that, after the demonstrations on 12 and 13 June, there were 119 injured, 78 arrests and 56 seriously injured (CST 13 June 2012). Radio France internationale (RFI) also pointed out that there had been 119 injured during the three days of demonstrations and that 34 police officers had been injured (19 June 2012).

RFI stated that 56 people were arrested, three of whom were leaders of the CST and were released on 17 June, after 48 hours in police custody while waiting for their appearance (ibid.). With respect to the 53 other people arrested, at the time RFI published the article on 19 June 2012, they were still detained in the civil prison of Lomé awaiting judgement (ibid.). According to *Africa Confidential*, a UK newspaper founded in 1960 (Asempa n.d.), one of the people who was arrested is a former prime minister, Gabriel Agbékoyomé Kodjo (*Africa Confidential* 19 Oct. 2012). He was released only after some [translation] "powerful international friends interceded in his favour," threatening in particular [translation] "to suspend foreign aid" (ibid.; RFI 19 June 2012). Further information on developments in that matter and on the demonstrations organized by the Let's Save Togo collective on 12, 13 and 14 June 2012 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Date modified: 2016-01-05