

harassed or arrested. The correspondent of Portugal's state broadcaster, Radio Televisão Portuguesa, was expelled in October for his critical reporting of the government and military authorities.

Unlawful killings and extrajudicial executions

There were reports suggesting that the six people allegedly killed during the attack on the military base in October, four civilians and two military officers, had been extrajudicially executed. Soldiers also reportedly extrajudicially executed five people in Bolama, Bijagos Islands, whom they accused of being accomplices of Pansau Ntchama, the alleged leader of the October attack. Others were unlawfully killed for their links with deposed government figures.

Luis Ocante da Silva, a close friend of the former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, José Zamora Induta, died as a result of beatings by soldiers. On 6 November he was taken from his home by a group of soldiers, beaten and taken to an undisclosed location. Two days later soldiers took his body to the morgue in the central hospital. His family were allowed to see only his face and were not allowed to take the body for burial.

No investigations were carried out into these killings or other human rights violations by the military. Impunity also persisted for political killings since 2009.

Torture and other ill-treatment

Following the coup in April, soldiers searching for deposed government officials beat their families, friends and employees and vandalized their homes. Most ministers went into hiding, where they remained for several months; a few fled the country. Members of civil society groups were also targeted. Some, including several members of the Human Rights League, received threats against their lives and took refuge in embassies.

The day after the October attack on the military base, soldiers arrested and beat Iancuba Indjai, president of the opposition Party of Solidarity and Labour and spokesperson of the Anti-Coup National Front, a grouping of political parties and civil society groups who opposed the April coup. Iancuba Indjai was abandoned by the roadside some 50 km from Bissau. Local residents found him seriously injured and alerted his family. He was subsequently taken to a hospital abroad.

Later the same day, soldiers went to the Bissau office of Silvestre Alves, a lawyer and president of the Democratic Movement party; they beat him and took him away. He was later found unconscious by a road 40km from the city by local people who took him to a hospital. He was taken abroad for medical treatment.

Amnesty International visits/reports

Guinea-Bissau: Amnesty International's concerns following the coup in April 2012 (AFR 30/001/2012)

GUYANA

REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

Head of state and government:

Donald Ramotar

Alleged unlawful killings by police continued to be reported. At least five people were sentenced to death; no executions were carried out.

Background

Following commitments made during Guyana's Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council in 2010, the government announced in August that it would launch public consultations on issues including the abolition of the death penalty and the decriminalization of consensual adult same-sex relations. Consultations on the death penalty and sexual orientation had not begun by the end of the year.

Police and security forces

On 18 July, three people were alleged to have been shot dead by riot police in the town of Linden during protests against rising electricity prices. A further 17 people required treatment for gunshot and pellet wounds. Protesters had reportedly hurled bottles and rocks at the security forces who had used tear gas against them. A five-person Commission of Inquiry into the incident was established and was due to issue its findings in February 2013.

On 11 September, 17-year-old Shaquille Grant was fatally shot and another man was injured by the police in the village of Agricola. Local residents refuted the official version that police were responding to reports

of robbery and had been fired upon. Three police officers were charged with murder in October; one was awaiting trial at the end of the year while the other two remained at large.

Violence against women and girls

In July, the CEDAW Committee highlighted the high prevalence and under-reporting of violence against women. Among its recommendations were the full implementation of the Sexual Offences Act; mandatory training for judicial officials; strengthening the capacity of shelters and crisis centres; raising public awareness; improved collection of statistical data on domestic and sexual violence; and improved access to legal aid services.

In August, the High Court ruled that “paper committals” – hearings to decide whether there is enough evidence to send a case to trial – in cases of sexual offences were unconstitutional as the accused were given no opportunity to defend themselves at that stage. There were concerns that the ruling would have a negative impact on the already very low conviction rates for sexual offences.

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

A report issued in March by the University of the West Indies examined the social impact of laws affecting LGBTI people. The report found that the majority of those interviewed were reluctant to report crimes against them as they feared charges would be brought against them because of their sexual orientation.

Right to health – HIV/AIDS

In May the National AIDS Committee, an independent advocacy body, criticized the government’s failure to decriminalize same-sex relations; the slow progress in reducing stigma against people living with HIV/AIDS; the failure to explore links between sexual violence and the spread of HIV among women and girls; and the lack of focus on Indigenous people as a group at particular risk.

Death penalty

At least five people were sentenced to death. Thirty people remained on death row at the end of the year. In June, four death-row inmates had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment on the grounds that

the length of time they had spent under sentence of death – ranging from 16 to 24 years – constituted cruel and inhuman treatment.

HAITI

REPUBLIC OF HAITI

Head of state:

Michel Joseph Martelly

Head of government:

Laurent Lamothe

(replaced Garry Conille in May)

More than 320,000 people made homeless by the January 2010 earthquake remained displaced during 2012. Thousands of internally displaced people were forcibly evicted by local authorities and private landowners. Women reporting gender-based violence received little redress. No steps were taken to address impunity for past human rights abuses.

Background

Increasing political tensions between Parliament and the presidency led to the resignation in February of Prime Minister Garry Conille after four months in office. The President’s choice of Prime Minister, Laurent Lamothe, took office in May. In the last quarter of the year, there were demonstrations in several parts of the country against the government’s apparent failure to respond to socio-economic problems. Protesters demanded the resignation of President Martelly.

In August, President Martelly established the Permanent Electoral Council. Only six of the nine members were appointed as Parliament could not reach consensus on its three representatives. Three appointments by the High Council of the Judiciary were contested for failing to respect selection procedures and in October the High Council appointed three new representatives. The creation of a Permanent Electoral Council, a key institution in organizing local and general elections, had been pending since the adoption of the Constitution in 1987.

In October, the UN Security Council renewed the mandate of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for a ninth year and recommended the gradual reduction of its military and police