

In June, the Court of First Instance in Cotonou sentenced John Akintola, publishing director of *L'Indépendant* newspaper, to a three-year suspended prison term and a fine for "insulting the Head of State" following the publication of an article concerning possible illicit financing of trips abroad. The author of the article, Prudence Tessi, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment and the newspaper was suspended for three months.

DEATH PENALTY

Thirteen people remained under sentence of death despite Benin's ratification in 2012 of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

BOLIVIA

Plurinational State of Bolivia

Head of state and government: **Evo Morales Ayma**

Victims of human rights violations committed during past military regimes continued to be denied truth, justice and full reparation. Indigenous Peoples' rights to consultation and to free, prior and informed consent and equal access to sexual and reproductive rights remained unfulfilled.

BACKGROUND

In October, President Evo Morales was re-elected for a third term. More than 50% of parliamentary candidates were women. This was the result of the first time implementation of the 2010 Electoral Law gender equality clause.

In October, Bolivia accepted most of the recommendations of the UN Universal Periodic Review process, including to investigate past human rights violations and ensure a full and effective reparation,

to review legislation that criminalizes abortion and to improve prison conditions. Concerns around these same issues had been highlighted by the UN Human Rights Committee in October 2013¹ and the UN Committee against Torture in May 2013.

IMPUNITY AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Five decades after the military and authoritarian regime (1964-1982), no progress in providing justice to victims of political violence or measures to implement a mechanism to unveil the truth of the human rights violations committed during that period was made.² The authorities ignored national and international bodies' concerns about the lack of transparency and unfairness of the reparation process that ended in 2012 and in which just over a quarter of applicants qualified as beneficiaries.

In February 2014, a campsite of the victims' organization, Platform of Social Activists against Impunity, for Justice and Historical Memory of the Bolivian People, outside the Ministry of Justice was set on fire³ and files and documents were destroyed. Preliminary investigations indicated that the fire was caused by an electrical fault. However, the organization complained that it was an intentional attack. Criminal investigations were ongoing at the end of the year. Investigations into an attack against a member of the same victims' group in February 2013 were reported⁴ as being delayed.

In July, Bolivia's second request to extradite former President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada to Bolivia was filed in the USA. He faced charges in connection with the "Black October" case, when 67 people were killed and more than 400 injured during protests in El Alto, near La Paz, in late 2003. A previous extradition request was rejected in 2012. In May 2014, a Federal Judge in the USA had allowed a civil lawsuit against the former President and his Minister of Defence for their responsibility in the events.

Trial proceedings connected to the 2008 Pando massacre in which 19 people, mostly peasant farmers, were killed and 53 others injured, continued but were subject to delays.

Hearings in the case of 39 people accused of involvement in an alleged plot in 2009 to kill President Evo Morales continued. By the end of the year, there had been no investigations into allegations of lack of due process or into the killings of three men in 2009 in connection with the case. In March, the Prosecutor who resigned after denouncing political interference in the case and who was subsequently charged with involvement in extortion, requested political asylum in Brazil. In August, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention stated that the detention of one of the suspects in the case was arbitrary and recommended his immediate release and reparation.

In June, criminal proceedings against three judges of the Constitutional Court were initiated for breach of duty, among other crimes, before the Congress. The judges were suspended.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

According to a 2014 study by the Panamerican Health Organization, Bolivia has the highest rate of violence against women by an intimate partner and the second highest rate of sexual violence in the region. In October, a norm that regulates the budget and implementation of the 2013 Law 348 to guarantee women's rights to a life free of violence was promulgated.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Although in February the Plurinational Constitutional Court decided that the request for judicial authorization for an abortion, as requested by article 266 of the Criminal Code, was unconstitutional, the implementation of the decision was still pending.

A 2012 bill on sexual and reproductive rights guaranteeing the right to receive information about sexual and reproductive health services to prevent unplanned or

unwanted pregnancies, and the right to sexual education in schools, among other provisions, was still under discussion in the Congress.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

In November, 14 police officials were charged in connection with the excessive use of force in 2011 during a peaceful march against the construction of a road in the Isiboro-Sécure Indigenous Territory and National Park. The Prosecutor's office dismissed the involvement of high rank civil authorities, as claimed by victims. Plans to build the road remained on hold following a controversial consultation with the affected Indigenous communities in 2012.

A new Mining Law passed in May excluded consultation with Indigenous Peoples for prospecting and exploration of mining activities and did not recognize the principle of free, prior and informed consent in relation to projects that are going to have an impact on them. A draft law on Free, Prior and Informed Consultation was finalized.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Concerns remained over the requirements specified by the 2013 law to grant legal identity to NGOs. Under this regulation, organizations have to specify their "contribution to the economic and social development" of the state. In 2013 the UN Human Rights Committee recommended that Bolivia eliminate these requirements because they placed restrictions on the organizations' ability to operate freely, independently and effectively.

In January, members of the Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ), who were holding a vigil outside the organization's office in La Paz, were violently evicted by other Indigenous Peoples' groups who adjudicated themselves the leadership of CONAMAQ. There were complaints that the police did not intervene to stop the violent eviction.

In March, the Danish NGO IBIS Dinamarca closed most of its projects in Bolivia after the government announced its expulsion from the country in December 2013, arguing that they were interfering in political issues and had contributed to divisions within the Indigenous movement.

PRISON CONDITIONS

A lack of security and poor prison conditions remained a concern. Delays in concluding trials within a reasonable time, the excessive use of pre-trial detention and the limited use of alternatives to detention, all contributed to prison overcrowding. Presidential decrees enacted in 2013 and 2014 granting pardons and amnesties, intended to deal with overpopulation in prisons, were not having the expected outcome.

In August, the Ombudsman reported little progress in the investigation into the deaths of more than 30 inmates in Palmasola prison, Santa Cruz, in August 2013.⁵

In September, four inmates died and a dozen were injured in clashes between inmates in El Abra prison, Cochabamba. Investigations were ongoing at the end of the year.

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1. Bolivia: Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Committee (AMR 18/005/2013)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR18/005/2013/en
 2. Bolivia: "No me borren de la historia": Verdad, justicia y reparación en Bolivia (1964-1982) (AMR 18/002/2014)
www.amnesty.org/es/library/info/AMR18/002/2014/es
 3. Bolivia: Victims of military regimes' campsite burnt (AMR 18/001/2014)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR18/001/2014/en
 4. Bolivia: Protester attacked, police take no notice (AMR 18/001/2013)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR18/001/2013/en
 5. Bolivia: Las autoridades bolivianas deben investigar completamente la tragedia en la cárcel de Palmasola (AMR 18/004/2013)
www.amnesty.org/es/library/info/AMR18/004/2013/es

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Head of state: **Rotating presidency - Bakir Izetbegović, Dragan Čović, Milenko Đukanović**

Head of government: **Vjekoslav Bevanda (Incumbent)**

High levels of unemployment and dissatisfaction with government institutions prompted popular protests that spread throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and were accompanied by clashes between demonstrators and the police. The prosecution of crimes under international law continued before domestic courts, but progress remained slow and impunity persisted. Many civilian victims of war were still denied access to justice and reparation.

TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

In February, popular protests, initially fuelled by the large-scale dismissal of the workforce of industrial companies in the Tuzla Canton, spread across the country, resulting in clashes between demonstrators and the police. Law enforcement officials subjected at least 12 detainees, some of them minors, to ill-treatment while in detention.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION - JOURNALISTS

At least one journalist was beaten by police officers while recording the February protests. Intimidation of journalists by state officials persisted throughout the year, including beatings, death threats and a police raid on a newsroom. The authorities frequently failed to open investigations into complaints.

DISCRIMINATION

The 2009 judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Sejdić-Finci v. BiH*, which found the power-sharing