

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND CORRUPTION IN GUINEA-BISSAU



LGDH
LIGA GUINEENSE DOS
DIREITOS HUMANOS

**LIGA GUINEENSE DOS DIREITOS
HUMANOS**

Fundado a 12 de Agosto de 1991

SITUATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU

ISSUE I: FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, FREEDOM OF OPINION, EXPRESSION AND PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION

Previous Recommendations:

Netherlands: “Safeguard the right to freedom of expression by refraining from interfering in peaceful assemblies and ensuring that cases of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials are appropriately investigated”.

Ireland: “Create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for civil society and human rights defenders, including by providing adequate protection for the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and by taking measures to decriminalize defamation and insult, and placing them within the Civil Code, in accordance with international standards”.

South Africa: “Fully operationalize tribunals and prosecution offices to ensure the adequate delivery of justice and the countering of corruption”.

DEVELOPMENT SINCE LAST CYCLE

- Between 2020 and 2024, Guinea-Bissau faced serious violations of the right to life and physical integrity, with a significant increase in homicides.
- An attack on the Government Palace in 2022, classified as an attempted coup, resulted in 11 deaths.
- 47 homicides were recorded in 2022, mainly affecting young people and men due to private justice and impunity.
- Repression of pluralism and fundamental freedoms, political opposition leaders being persecuted and attacked.

- 13 cases of attacks, detentions and beatings on journalists and media outlets were documented between 2020 and 2024.
- The imposition of high costs licenses for private and communities radios.
- More than seven kidnappings and brutal beatings were documented during this period.
- Freedom of expression was severely restricted, with more than 17 attempts at peaceful demonstrations repressed.

- Trade union freedom was also attacked, with arrests and threats to union leaders and a ban on demonstrations against the rising cost of living. The general secretary of the National Union of Workers of Guinea – Trade Union Center (UNTG-CS), and members of his leadership, received anonymous threats of beatings and death.
- They were forcibly evicted from the union headquarters by police forces, and a new leadership loyal to the current regime was installed.
- These situations reflect a significant decline in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUE I: FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, FREEDOM OF OPINION, EXPRESSION, PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION

In view of these concerns, we recommend the following to the State of Guinea-Bissau:

- Lift the illegal suspension of freedom of expression decreed by the government since January 15, 2024, as well as proceed with the review during the next legislature of Law No. 3/92 of April 6, on Right to Assembly and Peaceful Demonstration, the preliminary draft is deposited at the National Assembly;
- Train law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities on human rights and appropriate legal practices to ensure the protection of citizens' rights and prevent abuses, establishing clear protocols for dealing with reports of abuses and ensuring that they are strictly followed;

- Establish and implement within the next 18 months the investigation of all allegations of human rights violations, ensuring that those responsible are identified and held accountable in accordance with the law, establishing independent investigative commissions and ensuring that they are adequately resourced for their operations.
- Review of the Freedom of the Press Law;
- Create a Social Communication Regulatory Authority which, among other competencies, would be responsible for issuing Licenses and Permits to media outlets;
- Reforçar a proteção legal dos jornalistas, ativistas e opositores políticos, garantindo que possam operar livremente sem medo de represálias;

SITUATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU

ISSUE II: CORRUPTION

- Corruption is a major threat to the Guinean judicial system, affecting the administration of justice and the institutions responsible for combating it.
- Countries such as South Africa, Sierra Leone and Belgium formulate recommendations on this issue in the last cycle.
- Political interference and illegal practices, such as bribery and the sale of positions, compromise the integrity of the courts and the Ministry of the Interior;
- The lack of independence of the judiciary in relation to political and economic powers;
- There is a growing consensus on the need for profound reforms to strengthen the independence of the system, combat corruption and increase transparency.

RECOMENDATION

ISSUE II: CORRUPTION

To adopt measures to combat this scourge, the following are recommended:

- Combat and reduce drastically all forms of corruption till 2026 in all spheres of public administration and promoting transparency;
- Approve, in the first 12 months of the next legislature, the Witness Protection Law, the preliminary draft is deposited at the National Assembly;

I am immensely grateful for your attention.

THANK YOU!

OBRIGADO!

Edmar Paulo Badilé Nhaga

Vice-president of Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos