

ORGANISATION: REDE DOS DEFENSORES DOS DIREITOS HUMANOS DA GUINÉ-BISSAU

THEMATIC: HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS OF GUINEA-BISSAU

INDEX :

- • Arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment
- • Exercise of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly
- • Investigation of cases of violations against human rights defenders and journalists
- • Legal framework for the protection of whistleblowers who testify about corruption-related crimes.

CONTEXT

- In Guinea-Bissau, concern about the situation of human rights defenders has multiplied in recent years. They have been victims of attacks, kidnappings, threats and restrictions on access to information held by the state, with total impunity for the perpetrators of these violations.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY STATE AGENTS

- Recommendation on arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment is not being complied with.
- Recommendations on the exercise of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are not being complied with and are going backwards.
- Recommendations which deal with the investigation of cases of violations against human rights defenders and journalists, are not being complied with.
- Recommendation which deals with a legal framework for the protection of whistleblowers who testify about corruption-related offences, is not being complied with.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- There is no law in the country to protect human rights defenders, as required by the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders. There is also the absence of a national action plan developed by the State with specific measures to promote the rights underlying the same Declaration.



CHALLENGES

- In GB The practical experience of defenders, including defenders who work independently, members of NGOs, trade unionists, lawyers and journalists, is challenging. The analysis of available data and the experience shared among defenders demonstrates that the environment is not conducive to them being able to carry out their activities freely and effectively. All of this is facilitated and aggravated by political instability that is plaguing the country.

IMPACTS

- The lack of a conducive and safe environment for human rights defenders has significant and negative impacts on the country, such as:
 - Persecution and violence: which means that human rights defenders face risks such as arbitrary detention and torture, which destabilize their lives and threaten their personal security.
 - Lack of a safe environment where there are cases of censorship and restrictions on freedom of expression and association, making the work of defenders difficult.
 - Threats and violence demotivate defenders, leading some to give up their work.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **To the national authorities:**
- To guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of all human rights defenders in Guinea-Bissau.
- To put an end to all acts of persecution against human rights defenders.
- To investigate abuses relating to the demonstrations held in 2023 and 2024 and convict, through criminal, civil and disciplinary proceedings, those responsible for these offences.
- To adopt legislative measures, especially the National Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and the law for the protection of whistleblowers.

CONT.

- **To the Member States of the United Nations**
- To assess Guinea-Bissau's compliance with the recommendations set out in this report.
- **To the Member States of the European Union and the European Commission**
- To raise the concerns referred to in this report with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau on the basis of the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.
- **To the international community**
- To support human rights monitoring by NGOs in the forthcoming elections and other related electoral activities.

THANK YOU !

