

# Benin

Benin is a Member State of the African Union (AU) and of the United Nations (UN), and has human rights obligations at both the regional and universal levels.

## Regional: African System



Benin has ratified the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter), and its human rights policies and practices are monitored by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), which reviews the State's reports concerning its human rights situation and decides complaints of alleged violations. Additionally, Benin has accepted the jurisdiction of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to hear complaints presented by the Commission, African intergovernmental organizations, and States parties to the African Charter. Benin has also declared that individuals and non-governmental organizations may submit complaints to the Court.

Individuals or groups have submitted complaints of human rights violations committed by Benin to the [African human rights system](#). For example, in *Comité Culturel pour la Démocratie au Bénin v. Benin*, the ACHPR received a complaint concerning the arbitrary detention of hundreds of political prisoners who were held without being charged and were allegedly subject to torture, but dismissed the case due to lack of responsiveness by the complainant. See ACommHPR, *Comité Culturel pour la Démocratie au Bénin v. Benin* (joined with 17/88 and 18/88), Communication No. 16/88, 15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, 3 November 1994.

Benin has fallen behind in submitting its [periodic reports](#) to the ACHPR on human rights conditions in the country. The ACHPR has conducted several missions to Benin, including promotion missions in [2008](#) and [2000](#) and a mission on conditions in prisons and conditions of detention in [1999](#).

Benin has ratified the following **regional human rights treaties**:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
- AU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa

## United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Benin is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, Benin's policies and practices are monitored by [UN treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of two treaty bodies.

Benin has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Benin has ratified the Optional Protocol to CAT; the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty; and Optional Protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Benin has a duty to submit **State reports** to each UN treaty body that is associated with the relevant treaty Benin has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis and describe the steps Benin has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

Benin has also ratified [optional protocols](#) or made appropriate declarations allowing individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of the ICCPR and CRPD. Additionally, certain UN treaties include **inquiry procedures**, which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations. Benin has accepted the inquiry procedures of the CAT and CRPD.

On October 31, 2012, Benin extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means that any special rapporteurs or working groups are welcome to conduct visits in Benin. For example, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography went on a mission to Benin in 2013, and published a [report](#) on that visit in March 2014.

For more information on Benin's engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/BJIndex.aspx>.

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