



Covering events from January - December 2000

MALI

Republic of Mali

Head of state: Alpha Oumar Konaré

Head of government: Mande Sidibe (replaced Ibrahim Boubacar Keita in February)

Capital: Bamako

Population: 11.2 million

Official language: French

Death penalty: abolitionist in practice

2000 treaty ratifications/signatures:

Optional Protocol to the UN Children's Convention on the

involvement of children in armed conflict;

Optional Protocol to the UN Women's

Convention; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court



At least 14 people were sentenced to death. No executions were carried out. The work of a commission of inquiry set up by the government to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment was hampered by lack of funding.

Background

In February, President Alpha Oumar Konaré appointed former presidential adviser Mande Sidibe as Prime Minister following the resignation of his predecessor, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita.

Death penalty

At least 14 people were sentenced to death during the year, most of them following convictions for offences including murder and armed robbery. In July the Assize Court in Bamako convicted Cheick Ibrahim Khalil Kanouté, the founder of a religious group known as the *Pieds nus* (the Barefooted), and two of his supporters of murdering a judge in August 1998.

No executions have been carried out in the last decade. On several occasions, President Konaré has stated his opposition to the death penalty.

Commission of inquiry

In December 1999 the government named a commission of inquiry to investigate allegations by opposition party supporters arrested in Niamakoro in May 1997. They alleged that they had been tortured and ill-treated in the presence of senior police officers. In January 2000 the commission requested financial support to

enable it to carry out its work but received no response. A commission of inquiry set up to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment was unable to carry out its work because of lack of funding.

AI action

Following meetings with government officials by an AI delegation in December 1999, the organization urged the government in February 2000 to give the commission sufficient resources to enable it to fulfil its functions in accordance with international standards for human rights investigations. No response was received to this appeal.
