

The main activities carried out as of August 1998 included: assisting the government to strengthen the institutions needed for the rule of law, especially the judicial system; helping to develop the capacity of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to protect and promote human rights; carrying out human rights promotion and education to help build a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law; investigating allegations of human rights violations in collaboration with the civilian police observers and seeking appropriate remedial and preventive measures by the authorities; and making analyses of the human rights situation available to those involved in rebuilding the rule of law, including the government, UNITA and the Joint Commission, to assist them in establishing programmes to address the problems.

Angola is a member of the Southern Africa Development Community and, therefore, also a beneficiary of and participant in the Regional Human Rights Programme Office for Southern Africa, a joint project of OHCHR and UNDP, which is based in Pretoria (see profile under "South Africa").



BENIN

Date of admission to UN: 20 September 1960.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Land and People: Benin submitted a core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.85) for use by the treaty bodies. The report prepared by the government contains demographic and statistical data and information on the political structure and the general legal framework within which human rights are protected. The Constitution is the highest law and the Constitutional Court has responsibility for judging whether the law is constitutional and guaranteeing fundamental rights and public liberties. The Court is also responsible for regulating the operations of institutions and the activities of public authorities. Under the Constitution, the judiciary is independent of the legislature and the executive, and consists of the Supreme Court, courts and tribunals. International human rights treaties and agreements take precedence over national law. All provisions of the human rights instruments may be invoked before the courts or administrative authorities. The Benin Commission on Human Rights, established in May 1989, has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of human rights. The report refers to a number of NGOs which are also seen as part of the national human rights machinery: Defence for Children International, Amnesty International, the Association for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the Institute for Human Rights and Daily Democracy, The Association of Women Lawyers of Benin, the Benin Human Rights League and others.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 12 March 1992.

Benin's initial report was due 30 June 1994.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 12 March 1992.

Benin's initial and second periodic reports were due 11 June 1993 and 1998 respectively.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 12 March 1992.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 2 February 1967.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 11 November 1981; ratified: 12 March 1992.

Benin's initial and second periodic reports were due 11 April 1993 and 1997 respectively.

Torture

Acceded: 12 March 1992.

Benin's initial and second periodic reports were due 10 April 1993 and 1997 respectively.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 25 April 1990; ratified: 3 August 1990.

Benin's initial report (CRC/C/3/Add.52) has been submitted and is scheduled for consideration at the Committee's May/June 1999 session; the second periodic report was due 1 September 1997.



BOTSWANA

Date of admission to UN: 17 October 1966.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Land and People: Botswana has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 20 February 1974.

Botswana's 6th through 12th periodic reports (1985-1998) have not been submitted; the 12th periodic report was due 22 March 1997.

Discrimination against Women

Acceded: 13 August 1996.

Botswana's initial report was due 12 September 1997.

Rights of the Child

Acceded: 14 March 1995.

Botswana's initial report was due 12 April 1997.

Reservations and Declarations: Article 1.