

Statement by the African Francophone Coalitions for the International Criminal Court about the situation of human rights violations in Burkina Faso

30 April 2024

Abidjan, Bangui, Bamako, Bujumbura, Conakry, Kinshasa, N'Djamena, Rabat.

Contexte

Burkina Faso has been grappling with an Islamist insurgency since 2016, in a conflict that has killed thousands of civilians and displaced nearly two million Burkinabè, around a tenth of the population.

In January 2020, the government passed a law creating the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland (VDP), an auxiliary militia to assist the army in its fight against the insurgency. VDP members receive 15 days' training. Their deployment is often in response to requests from local populations, but also frequently gives rise to accusations of ethnic targeting and other abuses. In October 2022, the government announced the recruitment of 50,000 additional VDPs.

Since 2022, Burkina Faso has experienced two military coups.

Facts

Numerous human rights violations documented by the United Nations and human rights organisations have been perpetrated by Islamist armed groups, the Burkinabe armed forces and the VDP.

Several examples illustrate these violations. These include :

- The Yirgou massacre on 1 January 2019 ;
- The attacks of 8 March 2020 in the province of Yatenga ;
- Several kidnappings (including the case of Daouda Diallo, a human rights defender, on 1 December 2023) ;



- The conscription of independent voices who speak out publicly in Burkina Faso (the case of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs on 24 December 2023, as well as several members of civil society, human rights defenders, activists and journalists in November 2023) ;
- The Nondin and Soro massacres (25 February 2024) ;
- Etc.

Recommendations

In the face of this cycle of impunity, it is crucial that legal proceedings be initiated, which would make it possible to arrest the perpetrators and bring justice to the victims.

The African Francophone Coalitions for the ICC (AFC ICC) therefore call on :

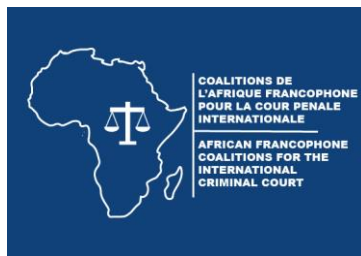
- **To the ICC Prosecutor**

To take up this case in order to bring to justice those responsible for these various crimes.

- ***To the United Nations and the African Union***

To open an impartial and independent investigation in order to establish who is responsible.

Burkina Faso ratified the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the ICC, in 2004 and is a State party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantee the right to life and prohibit extrajudicial executions.



For the African Francophone Coalitions for the ICC,

The Coordinator

Mr ALI Ouattara

Member organisations :

- Burundian Coalition for the ICC
- Central African Coalition for the ICC
- Guinean Coalition for the ICC
- Ivorian Coalition for the ICC
- Malian Coalition for the ICC
- Moroccan Coalition for the ICC
- Chadian Coalition for the ICC
- Club des amis du droit du Congo (DRC)
- Le bureau d'études et de réflexions pour le bien être des communautés (DRC)