



UNITED
AGAINST
TORTURE



CALL ON CONGOLESE AUTHORITIES TO SECURE THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY AND PREVENT TORTURE IN PLACES OF DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY

Brazzaville, Paris, 15 January 2024 - ACAT Congo, the Coalition congolaise contre la peine de mort, the Association pour les Droits de l'Homme et l'Univers Carcéral (ADHUC), International Federation of ACATs (FIACAT), the World Coalition against the death penalty and the United Against Torture Consortium¹ call on the Congolese government to complete the process of accession to two UN treaties: the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

As part of the celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 2023, the Republic of Congo has pledged to the United Nations (UN) to deposit its instrument of accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (OP2-ICCPR).

ACAT Congo, the *Coalition congolaise contre la peine de mort*, ADHUC, FIACAT, the World Coalition against the death penalty and the United Against Torture Consortium welcome this pledge to complete the process of accession to the only international treaty prohibiting the death penalty. By depositing the instrument of accession to the OP2-ICCPR with the United Nations Secretariat, the Congolese authorities intend to secure the abolition of the death penalty, in accordance with the law no. 53-2020 and promulgated by the President on 13 October 2020 authorizing the ratification of this UN treaty.

A parallel can be drawn to the accession process also in progress to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). Despite the vote by the Congolese Parliament of the law no. 9-2016, promulgated by the President on 25 April 2016 authorizing the ratification, the instrument of accession has still not been deposited with the UN Secretariat.

By ratifying this treaty, the Congolese government would be committed to preventing torture in places of deprivation of liberty (prisons, youth protection institutions, psychiatric hospitals, centers for migrants, etc.) by implementing a national prevention mechanism. In this respect, our organizations recall the key role of civil society in the continuous and independent monitoring of places of deprivation of liberty. Close cooperation between prison authorities and civil society contributes to improving prison conditions and reducing the risk of torture.

Our organisations call on the Congolese authorities to:

- **complete the processes of accession to the OP2-ICCPR and the OPCAT by depositing the instruments of accession with the United Nations Secretariat;**
- **ensure civil society access to places of detention, in particular by facilitating the issuance of authorizations to enable organizations such as ACAT Congo, to visit these places.**

¹ Composed by OMCT, IRCT, FIACAT, APT, Omega Research Foundation and REDRESS.

Press contacts:

- ACAT Congo : Christian Loubassou, President, acatcongo_brazza@yahoo.fr ; +242053058666 ;
- FIACAT : Paul Angaman, President, p.angaman@fiacat.org.