

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO BENIN

DENMARK

- Detention and prison conditions
Civil society organizations report serious human rights abuses pertaining to detention and prison conditions, such as torture against arrested persons, extremely harsh prison conditions with serious overcrowding and lack of proper sanitation and medical facilities as well as long pre-trial detention. Which initiatives does the Government plan to adopt and implement to ensure basic human rights of people detained or imprisoned?
- Death Penalty
Despite Benin's status as a de facto abolitionist country, Benin maintains the death penalty. What is Benin's position in relation to the abolition of the death penalty in the proposed bill to reform the penal code under scrutiny by the Parliament (for more than six years)?
- Children's rights
Despite Benin's ratification of international treaties and progress in certain areas, the rights of children are not well safeguarded with widespread trafficking and economic exploitation of children, early and forced marriage and infanticide due to superstition and traditions. Which measures does the Government intend to take in order to implement obligations to provide all children with a safe and secure childhood?

LATVIA

- According to the information of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 59 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering the cooperation of Benin with the special procedures (visits of Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty in 2007) – would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

NETHERLANDS

- How does the Beninese government try to solve the the issue of actually obtaining access to justice in general and more particularly on where to claim one's human rights? E.g. how does it raise the awareness of the public about the possibility of starting an individual complaint procedure before the Constitutional Court?
- The national report mentions the improvement of the conditions of detainees in prisons as one of the challenges that Benin is facing (pt. 92 'Défis à relever', p.17). As concerns about the conditions in the overcrowded prisons and the excessive duration of police custody have been noted before by the Human Rights Committee and the

Committee against Torture, we would be like to know which measures have been taken to meet this challenge so far?

- The Netherlands welcomes the several new projects, programmes and laws to protect the vulnerable, being women, children and handicapped persons which the national report mentions (pt. 77, p. 16), but still practices such as child abuse, child trafficking and Female Genital Mutilation and sexual harassment of girls at school and university persist. To what extent is the said legislation applied? For example, how many reports of such crimes have effectively led to prosecution and eventually to sentences?
- The Netherlands welcomes the *de facto* moratorium on the death penalty which has been observed by Benin since 1987 and calls on the Beninese government to permanently abolish the death penalty. In this light, The Netherlands would be like to know more about the (preliminary) findings of the multidisciplinary committee which reflects on the possibilities of abolition.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- Could you please elaborate further on the role civil society played in the preparation of your national report for this process?
- We welcome Benin's progress in establishing of a National Preventative Mechanism, as specified in the OPCAT. What experiences and advice can Benin share with other countries on this?
- What steps is the Government of Benin taking in light of the UNGA resolution calling for a moratorium on executions, and what plans are there to abolish the death penalty?
- Could you tell us if the Government of Benin plans to create new legislation to protect women's rights, in particular on prevention of trafficking and domestic violence?
- On children's rights, what further measures is the Government of Benin planning particularly on promoting access to education, preventing child labour and supporting children affected by HIV/AIDS?
- Could you tell us what the Government of Benin is doing to improve prison conditions and tackle impunity of law enforcement officers accused of crimes against inmates?
- Could you please elaborate on the existence of a national human rights institution in Benin and if it is in full compliance with the Paris principles?

