



## **COUNTRY REPORT: TOGO**

**PRESENTED BY THE TOGOLESE DELEGATION**

**Abuja May, 2021**

Members:

- ✓ **Honourable IBRAHIMA Mémounatou**
- ✓ **Honourable ALIPUI Séna**
- ✓ **Honourable BOLOUVI Patrick**
- ✓ **Honourable AGBANDAO Kounon Nahou**
- ✓ **Honourable SOKLINGBE Sénou**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- **Your Excellency, The Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament,**
- **Honourable Members and Dear Colleagues,**
- **Distinguished Guests,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On this occasion of the First Ordinary Session of the year 202, the Togolese delegation would like to express its sincere gratitude to The Honourable Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament and to all Colleague-Members of Parliament, for the confidence, fraternity and collaboration within the Parliament.

We have the honour to present to you our report which is structured around the Parliament's framework, namely:

- 1- Political situation**
- 2- Security situation**
- 3- Human Rights Situation**
- 4- Health situation**
- 5- Status of implementation of the ECOWAS texts, particularly:**
  - **Protocol on the Community Levy (CL)**
  - **Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and Goods**
  - **Supplementary Act on Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS region.**

### **I- POLITICAL SITUATION**

Following the presidential election of February 22, 2020 which saw the Togolese people give more than 70% of their votes to President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, Togo is continuing its march towards development in accordance with the national development plan (PND 2018-2022) as set out in the government's 2020-2025 roadmap.

As a prelude to the presidential election of February 2020, the National Assembly, on November 5, 2019, adopted a bill amending the electoral code in order to adapt it to the new provisions of the Constitution to enable Togolese in the diaspora to vote.

Further constitutional reforms carried out, in accordance with the roadmap established in full collaboration with ECOWAS, introduced in the Constitution, the limitation of the presidential mandate to two (02) and a modification of the mode of election which will henceforth be carried out by a two-round majority vote.

For more than a decade, Togo has succeeded in organizing inclusive and participatory elections without violence. Indeed, the holding of the presidential election of February 22, 2020 in a peaceful and secure environment, just like the previous legislative elections of 2018 and municipal elections of 2019, sufficiently demonstrates the maturity of the Togolese people in their journey towards the entrenchment of democracy. These elections have enabled Togolese within the required age to express their voting rights.

Seven (7) candidates were selected after the various procedures carried out by the Constitutional Court including the incumbent President, His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE of the Union pour la République (Union for the Republic) (Unir) and six other candidates of the Togolese opposition such as, Mr. Jean-Pierre Fabre, of the Alliance Nationale pour le Changement (National Alliance for change) (ANC), Mr. Agbéyomé KODJO, of the coalition Dynamique (Dynamic coalition), Monseigneur KPODZRO (DMK), Mr. Aimé Tchabouré GOGUE, of the Alliance pour la démocratie et le développement Intégral (Alliance for Democracy and Integral Development) (ADDI), Mr. Mouhamed TCHASSONA –TRAORE, of the Mouvement citoyen pour la démocratie et le développement (Citizens' Movement for Democracy and Development) (MCD), Mr. Komi WOLOU, of the Pacte social pour le Renouveau (Social Pact for Renewal) (PSR) and Mr. Georges –William KOUESSAN of the Santé du Peuple (People's Health) (SP).

Following the votes cast in the first round, the results were as follows:

- Faure Essozimna GNASSINBGE: 70.78% or 1,760,309 votes
- Jean-Pierre FABRE: 4.68% or 16,336 votes
- Agbéyomé KODJO of the DMK coalition: 19.46% or 483,926 votes
- Aimé Tchabouré GOGUE: 2.40 or 59,777 votes
- Mouhamed TCHASSONA –TRAORE: 0.68% or 16,814 votes
- Komi WOLOU: 1.20% or 29,791 votes
- Georges –William KOUESSAN: 0.80% or 19,923 votes

Thus, candidate Faure Essozimna GNASSINBGE of the Union Party for the Republic (UNIR) won the presidential election in the first round with a score of 70.78%.

Following the announcement of the results, the unsuccessful candidate of the DMK coalition contested the said results by appealing to the Constitutional Court which rejected the appeal "for lack of evidence to support his allegations".

Furthermore, some political leaders, including Mrs. Brigitte ADJAMAGBO-JONHSON, coordinator of the DMK, called for civil unrest. To this end, they were arrested by the research and investigation service and released after a hearing.

All the observer missions noted the peaceful, free and democratic nature of these elections and encouraged all the stakeholders to continue in the spirit of preserving peace and dialogue. It is worth noting that significant progress has been made in local governance through the full communalization of the country following the election of municipal councillors and mayors. Togo is currently preparing to organize regional elections which will allow a complete decentralization of the country.

A body called national concertation between political actors (CENAP) has already been set up for the consensual organization of the said elections. The establishment of this body demonstrates the will of all Togolese political actors to maintain the flame of dialogue and consultation between them. It should be noted that these discussions are being held on the initiative of the government. It brings together, representatives of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary parties, members of both the majority and the opposition, such as UNIR, ANC, UFC, NET, and PDP. Out of the 24 invited parties, 17 responded. MPDD and CAR were among the parties absent.

## **II - SECURITY SITUATION**

The global security situation is highly unstable and volatile. In recent years, the sub-regional security situation has been characterized with security challenges marked by the COVID-19 coronavirus health crisis in early 2020, as well as a shift in national and transnational organized crime which continues to take divers forms.

Despite this difficult situation, Togo has managed to maintain relative calm through important and judicious strategic choices made by the Head of State and the Togolese government, but also through professionalism of the security and defence agencies in charge of security issues. In this regard, the Government is pursuing reforms to overhaul the defence and security forces and the community policing policy with a view to responding to emerging threats.

### **1. Managing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic**

Following February 2020 presidential election, which was conducted in a remarkable and professional manner by the Togolese agencies in charge of security, Togo, like all the countries of the world, was faced with challenges related to the management of the health situations with regard to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

In carrying out certain response measures, Togo, alongside the guidance and coordination bodies, opted for the establishment of a special anti-pandemic force (FOSAP) created on March 30, 2020 and which was, in February 2021, transformed into a joint anti-COVID-19 surveillance group (GMS). Indeed, the Government, in a dynamic vision of managing the pandemic, wished to mobilize the people in a surge of volunteerism to help raise awareness towards limiting the spread of COVID-19. Thus the anti-COVID-19 GMS includes both a defence and security force dimension and a civilian dimension.

The security forces have since then, been deeply involved in the management of COVID-19 in line with traditional mandates within a sub-regional context faced with security challenges characterized by transnational organized crime, terrorism and violent extremism.

Insecurity in Togo is residual and marked by the occurrence of common law offenses. The porous nature of the border, technological advances and the increasing ease of mobility and concealment of evidence of offenses are all factors contributing to this situation.

Togo is in a transit zone for cocaine trafficking. Since the start of the pandemic, the trend in this area has been to send unaccompanied parcels.

Cannabis trafficking is still on the increase since it is cultivated and packaged in the sub-region. Synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine, tramadol and diazepam, which are produced in laboratories located in the sub-region, continue to fuel trafficking.

## **2- Trafficking in small arms and light weapons**

Togo, like other countries, is saddled with the magnitude of illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). As a matter of fact, the SALW phenomenon undermines peace and security, destabilizes the States and hinders their sustainable development.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is a major concern with regard to the security situation which prevails particularly in the Sahel.

## **3- Maritime piracy**

Few years back, Togo was faced with the surge of crime at sea, which has become a subject of great concern for all the countries with an opening onto the Gulf of Guinea with negative impacts on the security and economy of States. . As a result of the vigorous measures earlier taken by Togo and the International Community, Togolese maritime waters have become safe. This is evidenced by the very large number of ships that anchor every day on the Togolese coast.

## **4- Terrorism and violent extremism**

Terrorism and violent extremism poses huge threat to all West African countries. As a result of the situation in Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria, terrorism and violent extremism have become a source of great concern for Togo, although never having experienced any attack or a direct threat of a terrorist attack. Togo is however, not immune mainly because of its involvement in peacekeeping missions, particularly in Mali, as well as its important contribution in resolving various crises.

### **a) Measures put in place**

As part of the fight against terrorism and curbing violent extremism, Togo has undertaken functional and flexible proactive measures.

#### **Under security measures:**

- i) - "Operation KOUNDJOARE": this operation which was set up by Togo since September 2018, in the northern areas, bordering Burkina Faso, Benin and Ghana, aims at containing terrorist threats by preventing all kinds of attacks, infiltration of terrorist movements or fighters. To date, it can be said that this ongoing operation is yielding encouraging results. This operation, in addition to its military component, has a social component which is decisive.

As a matter of fact, it is the vision of the Togolese Government that these areas should not be neglected in terms of the effective presence of the State and basic social services for the people.

Thus, the Head of State has engaged all basic social services in a special program to strengthen basic social infrastructure (school, water, electricity, rural roads, etc.) thus, making the people less vulnerable.

- i) - Joint operations to secure border areas: Faced with the generalized surge in insecurity and with the aim of reassuring the people and guaranteeing the stability of the States, the defense and security forces of the Member Countries of the Initiative of Accra including Togo, are organizing simultaneous joint operations towards curbing and combatting transnational crime in their common border areas such as KOUDANLGOU I (between Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo), KOUDANLGOU II (between Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) in 2018, and KOUDANLGOU III (between Ghana and Togo) in December 2019.

In addition, bilateral or multilateral operations to secure border areas are regularly organized with neighbouring countries with a view to eliminating niches of residual cross-border insecurity.

#### **Strengthening the legislative framework:**

Togo has enacted a Military Programming Law, which is a legal instrument that aims to adapt the armed forces to new security contingencies, in a context increasingly marked by the resurgence of emerging threats. It also involves planning, over several years, the amount and appropriation of funds for military expenditures such as the purchase of materials and equipment, institutional governance, capacity building of personnel in terms of training, and civil-military activities. The law also emphasizes operational priorities and essential capability choices.

#### **As regards flexible measures:**

Faced with the surge in terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel region, Togo, on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2019, set up an Inter-ministerial Committee to curb and combat violent extremism (CIPLEV). It is a flexible prevention mechanism whose primary aim is, to work in line with the operational system put in place in order to tackle and curb terrorism, to eradicate or significantly reduce the spread of violent extremism by giving grassroots communities the tools and support they need to fight this scourge and to strengthen cooperation and collaboration between the administration, defence and security forces for effective prevention and control. To achieve this, CIPLEV has branches at the prefectural and cantonal level.

#### **International police co-operation**

Togo is continuing the tradition in this area through the implementation of existing multilateral frameworks and mechanisms for international police cooperation such as the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO-INTERPOL), the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), the ECOWAS security ministers Forum, the Accra Initiative, the Council of the Entente and the UEMOA.

In addition to these multilateral mechanisms, there are bilateral, one-off or long-term actions carried out between Togo and ECOWAS member countries in order to strengthen the fight against all forms of crime.

Generally, the security situation in Togo in 2021 is quite acceptable and is the result of combined efforts in synergy by national actors as well as results of the excellent overall cooperation between ECOWAS member states. The country nevertheless, still concerned with the rise in terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel, is taking proactive measures towards preventing all forms of terrorist activities.

In the long run, Togo this year enacted a five-year military programming law which aims to make transparent, the needs of the defence and security forces but also to mobilize the entire national community, particularly through Members of Parliament, around our soldiers. Thus, the National Assembly was able, within the framework of the discussions which was held on this occasion, to put forward a number of proposals and contributions which made it possible to optimize the bill. This unprecedented and innovative exercise is to be welcomed and makes it possible to deepen, if necessary, the link between the army and the nation in order to bring specific, adapted and consensual responses to this security challenge.

Togo has also enacted a law on cybersecurity and the fight against cybercrime, which aims to ensure the security of digital users and to crack down on the crime that is developing around this technological advancement. Togo has also set up a National Cyber-Security Agency.

### **III- HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN TOGO**

The Togolese Republic is a secular, democratic and social state, governed by the rule of law. The State is also founded on political pluralism, principles of democracy and the protection of human rights.

Togo is a Human Rights compliant State. All texts relating thereto have been ratified by the National Assembly. The National Human Rights Commission, which is classified as "A" status in accordance with the Paris and ECOWAS Principles, has seen its powers enhanced by the passage of a new law. These tasks now range from promotion to protection of Human Rights

In terms of freedom and fundamental rights, it is noteworthy to acknowledge the positive role of the State, as well as the non-negligible activities of civil society organizations.

During the year 2020, Togo made progress in the area of human rights. This, however, led the Government to initiate reforms intended to inject new dynamism into the institutions and consolidate democracy and the rule of law.

Among the reforms, it is worth noting among others, the overhaul of the legislation, the adoption of the new organic law of the CNDH followed by the operationalization of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM), the adoption of the new code of the judicial organization, the law on military programming, the new labour code, and the law on school feeding.

Despite this progress, the government continues the process of overhauling the legislation towards ensuring greater enjoyment of human rights.

The presidential election of February 22, 2020, took place in this favourable legal context following reforms that met the needs of the political class, civil society, the international community, the African Union and African regional organizations in favour of an inclusive, democratic, open, consensual electoral process, in a peaceful context and with institutional stability.

However, there are still challenges to be met in particular, further training and education in citizenship and Civic-mindedness, the ongoing consolidation of inclusive political dialogue, material and financial support to the CENI and all structures involved in the elections.

**With regard to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to human rights and given the** pandemic nature of the disease, the specificities of its transmission and the uncertainties on the outlook, Togo has endeavoured to mitigate, as much as possible, the effects of necessary measures on the enjoyment of individual and collective rights and freedoms, a number of which, by their nature or their intrinsic conditions of enjoyment, are bound to be affected.

Particular attention has been paid to protecting citizens' rights, especially the most vulnerable section of our populations. Thus, from the onset of the outbreak, all costs relating to screening and treatment of the disease are free. In addition, the Government, in order to mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic, has implemented the “Novissi” program which is a cash transfer program via the telephone. This direct, transparent and non-intermediary aid program has enabled the people concerned to receive around CFAF 10,000 for men and CFAF 12,000 for women. The program was commended by all partners as a model of innovation and efficiency. In total, it has mobilised nearly CFAF 13 billion for the benefit of nearly 800,000 of our compatriots and we take pride in this fact.

In addition to the individual protection mechanisms made available to health personnel, health workers benefit from COVID-19 insurance, in the form of death benefit and temporary incapacity for work.

Finally, additional measures aimed at reducing the socio-economic impact of the pandemic have been undertaken, particularly for the benefit of social partners and the private sector. Those in favour of vulnerable populations have taken on several aspects such as food supplies, free access to water and electricity, free water intake at public fountains.

AWARE that, the response to COVID-19 does not suspend the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed by international human rights mechanisms and the Constitution, the government has set up a framework for a follow-up of the various mechanisms for monitoring violations of human rights during a state of emergency involving the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations.

Togo regularly submits its reports to the Human Rights Council and treaty bodies. It is actively preparing to present its national report under the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of the universal periodic review (UPR) to the Human Rights Council in October 2021. During this period, our country will take stock of the follow-up reserved for the recommendations with a view to an overall assessment for the period 2016-2021.

In addition, the collaboration between the Government, the National Assembly, Civil Society Organizations and International Human Rights mechanisms should also be noted.

The Government however, jointly organizes activities with civil society organizations. This was the case in 2020 with the Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre (CDFDH), the Collective of Associations against Impunity in Togo (le Collectif des associations contre l'impunité au Togo) (CACIT) and the World Organization against Torture (OMCT), the Togolese branch of the ECOWAS Women's Peace and Security Network for Women in the ECOWAS region, the World Solidarity Association for the Rights of Prisoners (SMPDD), etc.



It is also worth noting that Togo has stepped up its fight against human trafficking.

**In the context of governance**, it should be noted that the management of the pandemic was carried out in accordance with the constitutional texts even though the health situation put us in an extraordinary situation. Indeed, after His Excellency the President of the Republic decreed a state of health emergency, the related texts were submitted to the National Assembly in order to grant or not the authorization of the Government to act in the field of the law. The Constitutional Court, guarantor of respect for the rule of law, gave its opinion at all stages of the institutional and legal process. The pandemic has not put the institutional framework on hold. We commend the quality of interactions between the various institutions including the National Assembly, which, in the spirit of concerted governance dear to the Head of State, has made it possible, to obtain the encouraging results that our country is showing. Furthermore, the ambitious political, economic and social reforms undertaken have had significant impacts in several development sectors and have enabled Togo to improve its score as illustrated by the various reports, among others, the Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Mo Ibrahim Foundation report on governance in Africa and the Doing business report, the Women Business and Law report on the advancement of women, the Country Policy and Institution Assessment report, the Reporter Sans Frontières' World Press Freedom report.

An important reform is the passage of the organic law setting the conditions for the declaration of goods and assets of high personalities, senior officials and other public officials, which confirms the will of the Government to entrench good governance in public management.

The country has also adopted the program budget which operationalizes the Organic Law relating to Finance Laws to boost transparency in the management of public funds.

However, despite this rather remarkable picture of the reforms carried out, there are still challenges to be met, in particular: further implementation of the commitments and recommendations of the human rights bodies, the need to take into account the human-rights based approach in development policies, programs and projects (ABDH), further sensitization of the masses on respect for civic values and the formal structuring of human rights defenders with a view to improving their protection through the adoption of a law on the protection of human rights defenders.

#### **IV- HEALTH SITUATION IN TOGO**

The Togolese Government, concerned with the health of grassroots, has created a portfolio dedicated to universal access to healthcare. This is the Ministry delegated to the Minister of Health, Public Hygiene and Universal Access to Care, charged with universal access to healthcare.

In the health sector, our country has made huge efforts to support the treatment of patients, particularly during the years 2020 and 2021.

The major activities carried out in 2020 in the area of health promotion can be summarized as sensitization on Covid-19, cholera, diabetes, hygiene, sanitation, malaria, vaccination against polio, child health days, maternal and child health, and family planning.

Sensitization activities which focused mainly on the fight against Covid-19, was carried out through audio-enabled vehicles, community dialogues and meetings with the authorities, community leaders, and the media.

The State and its Partners are responsible for the care of vulnerable groups.

The free healthcare services made available to the people include prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) for pregnant women, family planning (FP), voluntary testing and HIV care, the management of tuberculosis, leprosy, Buruli ulcer, acute and severe malnutrition, patients with renal failure (dialysis), malaria screening, dispensing of Artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACT) and the distribution of long-lasting insecticidal mosquito nets (LLINs), intermittent preventive treatment (IPT) for pregnant women, routine vaccination for children under 5 years, mass treatment campaigns for the fight against neglected tropical diseases with Albendazole, Praziquantel and Ivermectin, the use of injectable Arthémeter and Arthesunate for the management of acute malaria, etc.

To reduce infant and maternal death, the Government has adopted, among other measures, the subsidy of caesarean section effective since 2011 and the treatment of obstetric fistulas.

The outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020 has disrupted all ongoing efforts, but, on the contrary, has not interrupted them.

Thus, like other countries, Togo is today facing the new coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) and measures have been undertaken in response to this pandemic:

- A Covid-19 preparedness and response plan was drawn up in January 2020;
- The establishment of National Coordination for the Management of the Response (CNGR) under the supervision of the Presidency of the Republic;
- The creation of a Sectoral Crisis Management Unit for the Covid-19 pandemic at the MSHP with several sections;
- The declaration of a state of health emergency by decree;
- Identification of isolation rooms and structures for suspected cases in all health facilities and at major entry points;
- Capacity building of the National Institute of Hygiene (INH) which houses the National Reference Laboratory (LNR) and regional laboratories for the diagnosis of Covid-19;
- The implementation of a systematic and mass screening strategy in prisons which are high-risk areas for the spread of the diseases; this strategy has helped in curbing the explosion of the epidemic in the Country's various prisons.
- The identification of treatment centres for the medical management of Covid-19 cases in all regions;
- Taking security measures with the creation of an anti-pandemic force;
- Taking social and economic measures with the cash transfer program for the most vulnerable, free water and electricity for the social groups.

**The epidemiological situation as of May 21, 2021 is as follows:**

- **Number of confirmed cases: 13,352;**
- **Number of treated cases: 12,142;**
- **Number of deaths: 125, i.e. a fatality of 0.95% among confirmed cases;**
- **Number of active cases: 1,085;**
  - **Number of tests carried out: 327,100**

The management of this pandemic was a collective effort involving all Togolese led by the Head of State who, from the onset, stepped up dialogue and consultations, particularly with the scientific community. The key to Togo's success in this area lies in this wise articulation of leadership and consultation. Thus, restrictive measures have been regularly discussed with the most affected stakeholders. This is so as not to result in lack of support from the people.

### ***Covid-19 vaccination***

Faced with the spread of the pandemic and in order to curb the effects of the outbreak, the Government has carried out measures to accelerate the acquisition of vaccine doses and thus achieve collective immunity as quickly as possible. It is within this framework that it has joined the COVAX multilateral mechanism, the aim of which is to allow countries that do not produce vaccines to easily access doses for their people. To date, this mechanism has enabled our country to have 341,000 doses of the ASTRAZENECA vaccine.

In addition, the Government, through its bilateral cooperation with China, has benefited from 200,000 doses of the SINOVAC vaccine. Other measures are being undertaken to strengthen our capacities in terms of available doses (3 million doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccines expected by July 2021). These measures have made it possible to vaccinate more than 270,000 Togolese since March 10. It should be noted that nearly 95% of health-care personnel are vaccinated. The Government launched the administration of the 2nd dose of the ASTRAZENECA vaccine on May 17, 2021.

As part of the execution of President Faure's social program, the innovative contracting project in the health sector is being further implemented. It currently covers 07 hospital facilities namely: The Regional Hospital Centres (CHR) of Atakpamé, Dapaong, Sokodé, the Prefectural Hospital Centre (CHP) of Blitta, the Medico-Social Centre (CMS) of Siou and the Hospital Centres Academics from Kara and Sylvanus Olympio from Lomé.

Based on the contractual approach, this project, by relying on private expertise, aims to optimize the management of resources in the hospital sector.

After a little more than a year of implementation, the excellent results obtained in the 07 health facilities eloquently attest to the significant impact of the project on improving hospital financial management and on attendance rates, consultation rate, maternity, care, etc....

At the same time, the further strengthening of the technical platform, as well as the construction and renovation of 09 health centres for the treatment and management of Covid-19 and the construction of a referral hospital, begun. This hospital, at a cost of CFAF 17 billion, extendable to 40 billion upon full completion of the works, will cover an area of 60,000m<sup>2</sup> and should be completed in the coming years. It will provide high-level support capacities to the Togolese people.

Regarding the coverage of health costs, the Government has developed a health insurance program for learners in primary and secondary schools. This system, which is the result of a public-private partnership thus reinforces learners' attendance at school.

## **V- IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF ECOWAS COMMUNITY TEXTS**

### **1- Protocol on the Community Levy (CL)**

The last verification mission on the CL operations carried out by a delegation of the ECOWAS Commission in Lomé from May 10 to 14, 2021 revealed the following:

- compliance with the application of the CL tax rate set at 0.5% in accordance with Article 7 of the Protocol establishing the said tax;
- Non-compliance with the scope of exemption defined by the community text from January 2019 to the end of March 2021. This resulted in a loss of revenue from the CL of CFAF 5.2 million in 2019, CFAF 1.3 million in 2020 and 0.6 million at the end of March 2021, for a total amount of CFAF 7.1 million.  
These exemptions were granted as part of the headquarters agreements for diplomatic franchises and maritime security operations;
- The total amount of repayments amounts to CFAF 3.8 billion in 2019, 4.1 billion in 2020 and 1.2 billion for the months of January to March 2021. On the other hand, customs clearance for the year 2019 amount to CFAF 3.9 million in 2019, 4.3 billion in 2020 and CFAF 1.3 billion for the period January to March 2021. .
- Cumulatively, over the period from July 2003 to March 2021, there are outstanding payments totalling CFAF 66.7 as against CFAF 149.1 million from July 2003 to the end of December 2020.

This is indicative of the efforts made by the Togolese Revenue Office (OTR) in recovering the arrears of CL revenue.

We would like to reassure the Parliament that this situation is being regularized by the Government of the Togolese Republic.

### **2- Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and Goods**

Regarding free movement of people and goods, several efforts have been made by Togo in recent years. Thus, regulatory measures are being put in place to eliminate red tape at the borders.

It should also be noted that Togo has fully implemented rule 14 on axle load for several years.

### **3- The Supplementary Act on Equal Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS region.**

The Supplementary Act on Equal Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS region commits all Member States to the promotion of gender equality and fairness in all sectors, through appropriate policies and legislation as well as strategic alignment.

Togo, an ECOWAS member country, has always endeavoured to implement the commitments made at the community level. The country's commitment towards promoting gender equality

and fairness is reflected in national development policies and programs such as the National Development Plan (PND), the National Gender Equality and fairness Policy (PNEEG).

## **I- POLITICAL AND PRAGMATIC COMMITMENTS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

The legal and institutional framework is increasingly becoming gender-friendly. As a matter of fact, in order to harmonize national texts and comply with the requirements of ratified conventions and treaties and the evolution of society, Togo has undertaken a vast reform project which has resulted in the revision of certain major national texts and the establishment of institutions to promote gender and women's rights.

### **With regard to legal mechanisms, we can mention:**

Articles 2, 11, 37, 33 of the 1992 Constitution which recognizes the equality of all citizens without any distinction, the Persons and Family Code revised in 2012 and amended in 2014, the penal Code of 2015 prohibits and punishes any gender-based discrimination (access to land, production factors, freedom of movement, etc.), the 2018 land and property code ensures equal rights between men and women in land matters (Art 8 point 8; 12; 13 point 2; 14, points 3 and 5; 628).

**Articles 220 of the 2013 electoral code** enshrines gender parity on the electoral lists; article 225 reduces by half, the amount of the election bond for female candidates.

### **Institutions have however, been strengthened by:**

- the creation and establishment of focal gender units in all ministerial departments to ensure that gender is considered in sectoral policies and programs;
- the institutionalization of the national forum for Togolese women, which is an arena for consultation, exchange and sharing of experiences in order to reposition women's rights issues in national policies;
- the construction of women's houses and counselling centres for victims of gender-based violence.

All these beneficial reforms have enabled Togo to achieve the following results:

#### **a) Political participation and decision-making:**

Women representation in decision-making bodies has improved significantly in recent years.

##### **i) Government**

The current (October 2020) female-led government has a total of 35 ministers, of which 12 are women or 34.30%. Strategic positions such as the armed forces, the digital economy, mining and infrastructure are being occupied by women.

Two women hold the posts of chief of staff and two others hold the posts of general secretaries in ministerial departments.

##### **ii) National Assembly**

The National Assembly, headed by a woman, has 91 MPs of which 17 are women, a 2nd vice-president; a quaestor; a parliamentary secretary; six committee rapporteurs; two presidents and a vice-president of committees.

## **ii) Local governance**

At the local governance level, women represent 192 municipal councillors out of 1527, or 12.57% with 12 women out of 117 mayors, or 10.25%, and 24 women out of 175 deputy mayors, or 13.70%.

## **iii) Institutions of the Republic**

Women head some key institutions, in particular the National Assembly, the High Commission for Reconciliation and the Strengthening of National Unity (HCHRUN), the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH).

Other important structures such as the directorate of nationality and seal, the directorate of the training centre for judicial professions (CFPJ); the directorate of the national school for social training (ENFS), the vice-presidency of the University of Lomé, amongst others are also headed by women.

## **Some specific achievements**

### **On education:**

Significant improvement in women and girl-child education as a result of incentives provided by the State such as:

- free education at the pre-school and primary level;
- reduction of school fees for girls in secondary education;
- granting of scholarships of excellence to students of scientific series, and prizes of excellence to deserving girls at the end of the first cycle;
- support for girls from poor families;
- the implementation of a national program to combat teenage pregnancy and marriage in and out of school;
- the implementation of functional literacy for women.

### **In the area of health, several measures have been put in place, particularly,**

- free care for pregnant women;
- 100% coverage for childbirth and caesarean section by health insurance;
- free treatment of malaria, especially for pregnant women;
- full management of obstetric fistula cases.

The protection of women and girl-child against gender-based violence is also a focus of the Government.

**With regard to the economic empowerment of women,** several structuring programs have made it possible to reach low-income women in the rural areas in particular and in sectors of agricultural processing, trade and crafts. These national programs include, among others: the Support Project for Groups Economic Activities (PSAEG), the National Agricultural Investment and Food Security Program (PNIASA), the Multifunctional Platform

Development Program, the National Program of inclusive female entrepreneurship, the National Fund for Inclusive Finance (FNFI). Added to this is the presidential initiative to award 25% of public contracts to young people and women.

**Regarding the National Fund for Inclusive Finance (FNFI)**, the Government is pursuing with speed and efficiency its strategy of inclusion of our people started 7 years ago. These funds, initiated to provide our people with better access to financial services to help them overcome the constraints to engage in Income Generating Activities (IGA), have seen their portfolio grow and today one of the flagship products NKODEDE offers up to 5 million in support.

**Also as part of its socio-economic inclusion policy**, and as part of a dynamic of support for youth enterprises, a presidential measure was put in place so that a quota, initially of 20% and then increased to 25% public procurement is reserved for young Togolese entrepreneurs. This measure thus offers a springboard to support the dynamism of Togolese youth.

**With regard to gender-sensitive budgeting, it is worth noting the** inclusion of a line in the budgets of sectoral ministries for the benefit of initiatives on focal gender units and the inclusion of gender in the management of public funds, through the ongoing drafting of a gender-sensitive strategic budget document.

**OTHER INFORMATION ON ISSUES RELATED TO ECOWAS MECHANISMS**

The ECOWAS Commission, through the Department of Gender and Social Affairs, has adopted a number of important mechanisms and tools which are inter alia, the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration; the ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy and Action Plan; the ECOWAS Policy and Action Plan on Children (19-2030); the Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (2018-2022); ECOWAS Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on transit and Young Migrants.

As a member of the Community, Togo has implemented these various mechanisms and tools, namely: the implementation of the 2019-2030 policy and the ECOWAS action plan in matters relating to child protection, development, implementation and enforcement of laws and policies aimed at preventing child marriage and providing support to victims, the new penal code of 2015, Act n° 2018-026 of 7 December 2018 on cybersecurity and the fight against cybercrime, the participation of children and young people in initiatives undertaken to end child marriage, the fight against Human trafficking, especially women and children.

The domestication of ratified international mechanism is reflected at the national level by the harmonization of the national legal framework with the provisions of said mechanisms.

**Summary of legal instruments to which Togo is a party**

<b>Regional legal instruments</b>	<b>Current status</b>
ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	Ratified October 28, 1998
ECOWAS Convention on Extradition	Ratified September 24, 2003
Joint ECCAS / ECOWAS action plan to combat Human	Signed in 2006

trafficking especially women and children	
Multilateral cooperation agreement between ECOWAS and ECCAS to combat human trafficking in West and Central Africa	Signed July 6, 2006
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
United Nations Anti-Trafficking Protocol	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
United Nations Protocol to Combat Smuggling of Migrants	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
Optional Protocol to the Convention on Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	Ratified July 2, 2004
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	Ratified November 21, 2005
19. Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption	Ratified (2008)
ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	Ratified by all 15 ECOWAS member states including Togo
ILO Convention on Minimum Age for admission to employment	Ratified on 1984

### **INCLUSION OF DISABLED PERSONS**

In order to take into account the inclusion of persons with disabilities, the Togolese Government has integrated the issue of disability into development policies, strategies and programs particularly, through the axis 3 national development plan, with focus on the consolidation of social development and strengthening inclusion mechanisms

With a view to further promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, the Government has initiated the process of revising article 2004-005 of 23 April 2004 on the social protection of persons with disabilities in Togo.

It is also worth mentioning that the empowerment of persons with disability has recently been illustrated by the election of a disabled person as a member of the National Assembly and several others as municipal councillors.

### **CONCLUSION**

One of the Community's priorities is regional integration, thus the Heads of State, Governments and Elected Officials must contribute individually towards ensuring that this objective is achieved. Togo on its part, is committed to achieving an ECOWAS of people.

Thank you



Obrigado