



# 2021

Activity Report

# FIACAT



The background of the page is a photograph of a balcony or outdoor area. In the upper part, there is a metal grille or window frame. Below it, various items of clothing are hanging, including a green patterned garment and a red shirt. In the lower part, there are more clothes hanging, including a white shirt and a dark jacket. The overall color scheme is warm, with a yellowish-orange tint.

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## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



### « FIACAT ADAPTS, PROGRESSES AND LOOKS TO THE FUTURE. »

2021 was marked by the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in restrictions on in-person meetings and reduced the opportunities for civil society to make itself heard before regional and international mechanisms for the protection of human rights.

Nonetheless, FIACAT continued to engage its network by providing opportunities to interact remotely with these mechanisms during different sessions. It also relentlessly continued to roll-out its programmes focusing on campaigning for the abolition of the death penalty and combating abusive pre-trial detention (APD) in Africa. After nine years of implementation, it is time to take stock. Six African countries have established laws abolishing capital punishment (the Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sierra Leone), bringing the total to 23 abolitionist countries in Africa. With regard to APD, 7 216 dossiers have been processed since the launch of the programme, and 4 762 have received a judicial decision. The results of the programme are satisfying, even though more progress could have been hoped to end prison overcrowding, especially through the use of alternative measures. Through the transmedia project Shadow Game, run in collaboration with ACAT Belgium and ACAT Italy, FIACAT is addressing the problems of European migration within and at its borders.

Alongside these programmes, FIACAT continues to improve its contribution to international and regional human rights mechanisms. Following the example of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), the United Nations (UN) Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa (CPTA) of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

(ACHPR) have both called upon its expertise in the monitoring of prisons and mechanisms for the prevention of torture.

Given the legitimacy of its actions and its growing credibility, FIACAT has begun to take operational steps to underpin its strategic vision for 2020-2024. Thus, on the basis of ACAT survey responses and interactive discussions facilitated by consultants, the International Council held on 1 and 2 December 2021 in Abidjan decided: to **link the network's geographical and thematic operations** as much as possible in order to achieve effective and inclusive synergy in its actions; to **strengthen internal and external communications** in order to make FIACAT and its network more accessible and visible; and to achieve **financial autonomy** by seeking new sources of funding to reduce FIACAT's dependency on its donors. It is planned to bring in the expert consultants to assist the International Bureau and the International Secretariat in implementing these decisions.

Finally, we are, of course, all delighted that Germain Rukuki has been freed after four years of arbitrary imprisonment. Special thanks are due to the members of the FIACAT network who campaigned so tirelessly on his behalf.

FIACAT is also honoured to have been awarded the Cassià Just prize on 9 December 2021 in Barcelona, in acknowledgement of its fight for human rights and its ecumenical nature.

This new year will allow FIACAT to make an even greater commitment to the construction of a world without torture or capital punishment.

**Paul ANGAMAN**

*Président de la FIACAT*





## SUPPORTING THE ACAT NETWORK AND ADVOCACY IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FORA

**20**

**Participation of 20 ACAT members** in the 68<sup>th</sup> and 69<sup>th</sup> ordinary sessions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).



**8**



**Submission of 8 alternative reports** (Belgium, Benin, Burundi, Canada, France, Niger, Togo) to international and regional fora by FIACAT and partner ACATs.

**2**



**Contribution to 2 thematic reports** of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights following FIACAT consultations with the ACATs.

**1**



**Adoption of 1 resolution** on the need for better protection for women sentenced to death in Africa by the ACHPR following a proposal from FIACAT and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

**3**

**Delivery of 1 panel discussion** on the situation with regards to the death penalty in Africa (see picture above), held in partnership with the ACHPR Working Group on the Death Penalty in Africa, and participation in **2 workshops** with the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa.



**2021**

This past year was once again marked by a complex health pandemic with nearly a total restriction on travel and physical attendance before UN, European and African human rights bodies.

FIACAT, nevertheless, continued to support and engage its network by providing opportunities to interact with these important institutions and their human rights mechanisms remotely, through virtual participation in their sessions.

Additionally, the Federation organised **4 virtual training sessions on African human rights mechanisms** for its members.

FIACAT also created dedicated factsheets to present the functioning of international and regional bodies which promote and protect human rights. The guides also highlighted existing opportunities for action by the ACATs and the Federation. In all, **7 factsheets available in both French and English** have been prepared and shared throughout the ACAT network.



**FIACAT, in partnership with the Human Rights & Democracy Network (HRDN) and the European Union (EU), facilitated the EU-NGO Human Rights Forum held on 7 and 8 December 2021.**

**Over 100 persons**

gathered to take part in a panel discussion co-chaired by FIACAT on **the deprivation of freedom and imprisonment during lockdown**. The panel event hosted speakers from across the world (Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America), coming from various backgrounds including academia, research, civil society, and European and UN institutions concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights. The discussion highlighted that the significant decline in the numbers of detainees during the first few months of the pandemic proved to be short-lived; violations of basic human rights have persisted, and in some cases even increased, as the Covid-19 pandemic endured.



## LIFE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION IN 2021

### INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL IN ABIDJAN

It has taken three and a half years for FIACAT's International Council to meet again in-person (see picture in page 8). With some thirty ACATs spread across four different continents, it is obvious that the Covid-19 pandemic raging throughout the world since the start of 2020 has impacted the Federation, which is inherently international. These crucial meetings are not only vital for assessing, discussing and boosting FIACAT's strategic vision, they are also a privileged moment for exchange between its members.

### SHADOW GAME

In partnership with the ACATs Belgium and Italy, the FIACAT began the implementation of the transmedia project *Shadow Game* (see picture above), which follows unaccompanied minors during their dangerous journey across Europe, fleeing their war-torn countries to seek safety and a better life. To raise public awareness of migration related issues within Europe and at its borders, the film was shown twice, in Brussels and Rome, and a social network campaign was conducted by FIACAT to mark International Human Rights Day in December 2021.

### GERMAIN RUKUKI IS FREE AT LAST

Thanks to a plethora of targeted campaigning, notably by the members of the ACAT network, Germain Rukuki was released from Ngozi prison in Burundi on 30 June 2021 after four years of arbitrary imprisonment and legal battles.



Germain Rukuki and Lionel Grassy (Secretariat) on 22 March 2022

### CASSIÀ JUST PRIZE AWARDED TO FIACAT

On 9 December 2021, FIACAT received the *Cassia Just* prize from Eudald Vendrell, a lawyer and President of the *Justícia i Pau*, a Christian organisation for the defence of human rights. Since 2010, this prize has been awarded by the Government of Catalonia in recognition of institutions which have been instrumental in contributing to the construction of a common space where different religious choices can coexist. ACAT Spain graciously received the prize on behalf of FIACAT (see picture above left).

The prize jury acknowledged FIACAT's contribution towards the abolition of the death penalty and combating torture, especially when used to suppress the right to freedom of religion and conscience. It was also praised for its defence of human rights - in particular for the protection of women's rights - and for the ecumenical nature of the Federation, which gathers Christian confessions from four continents.



## COMBATING ABUSIVE PRE-TRIAL DETENTION (APD)

**92**



**ACAT militants in Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar, delivered 92 prison visits** in order to interview to detainees and identify cases of arbitrary APD.

**1363**



In-country programme partners ACAT Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar **interviewed 1 363 detainees**.

**271**



**271 judicial decisions** were received for detainees whose cases were being followed-up in the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar.

**10**



**10 working meetings** on prison conditions in the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar were implemented in partnership with in-country ACATs.

**52**



The ACATs in Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar organised **52 meetings** with their authorities and partners, to improve prison conditions in their countries and combat APD.

**379**



**The capacity of 379 judicial and prison administrations and civil society representatives** were strengthened on judicial safeguards, access to justice and respect for the rights of detainees.

**9 years**

It has nearly been a decade that the programme, initiated by FIACAT, has been running in collaboration with ACAT militants visiting prisons on-the-ground. Hundreds of volunteers have been able to lend an ear to those in prison, meet with them and address crucial questions regarding the processing of their legal files. FIACAT understands that **respect for legal safeguards is the hallmark of the rule of law**, and these 9 years have demonstrated that national authorities and civil society, working together in synergy, could promote greater dignity for those in detention and redefine the role of the prison administration and the Judiciary. Nowadays, wherever **ACAT volunteers** are present, the legitimacy and recognition of their actions are indisputable. These actions have led to a drop in prison overcrowding rates – by up to 30% in certain prisons – and also resulted in an improvement in prison conditions (particularly with regards

to access to basic necessities such as food, healthcare, etc.). **During the pandemic, prison visitors did not abandon prisoners**, who otherwise may have been largely forgotten, and in some cases were able to provide a temporary relief for the lack of family visits. ACAT volunteers also provided some necessities including foodstuffs and hygiene/healthcare products with the support and understanding of the prison administration (see picture above). **Challenging and arduous, this day-to-day commitment** helps to both form and to define the social identity of the ACAT members taking part in the programme. They take leading roles in human rights campaigns, and their expertise come in high demand for participation in conferences and in panel meetings relative to imprisonment. They have actively participated in events before institutions promoting and protecting human rights (UN, ACHPR, EU) and university seminars, where they are able to share their experiences as defenders of those whom justice has forgotten.





## FIGHTING FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN AFRICA

6



**6 countries** (Congo, Madagascar, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sierra Leone) abolished the death penalty since the start of the **Africabolition project** spearheaded by FIACAT and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (WCADP) in 2015.

14



**14 African ACATs** organised events for the 19th World Day Against the Death Penalty dedicated to women at risk of being sentenced to death, who have received a sentence or who have been executed.

7



**7 pro-abolition** advocacy tools were created, in partnership with the ACATs, for Benin, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Senegal and Togo.

1



**1 round table** was delivered in Bangui (Central African Republic), in October 2021, to raise the awareness of Central African decision-makers on the need to continue abolitionist efforts.

1



**1 sensitisation workshop** on the abolition for opinion-makers, in particular religious and traditional leaders was organised in Kinshasa, (Democratic Republic of Congo) in August.

2021

was a symbolic landmark for the Africabolition programme led by FIACAT, in partnership with the WCADP, whose second phase (2018-2021) was coming to an end. To mark the occasion, those involved in the project were able to discuss the programme's successes and weaknesses during a key closing seminar in Abidjan in November (see picture above). Solidarity, reflection and conviviality were the themes of the discussions, which were crucial points for the abolitionist movement on the continent.

As this project's final chapter begins in the year to come, which is due to continue until the end of 2024, it is time to take stock. As pertinent as ever, the quality of the results obtained highlights the effective cooperation between FIACAT and the WCADP, and the efficiency of their members' actions. Strengthening the capacity of civil society in favour of the abolition, the transfer of competence and the intensive advocacy of FIACAT, and its ACATs, have all helped to make Africa the most dynamic continent with regards to progress



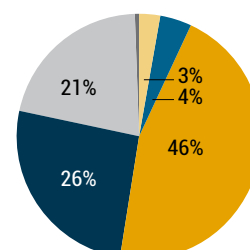
for abolition.

The next 3 years will concentrate on garnering even more international commitments from countries and further raising public awareness in Africa. A continent-wide advocacy campaign will also aim for the adoption of a legally binding African convention that explicitly bans the use of the death penalty.

## FIACAT FINANCES IN 2021

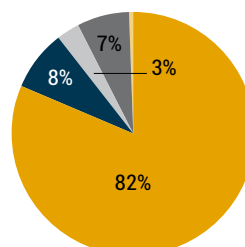
### EXPENSES : 704 257 €

Advocacy with International Organisations	22 246 €
Network Coordination	26 910 €
Programme to Combat Abusive Pre-trial Detention	326 282 €
Programme for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Africa	180 545 €
FIACAT's Operating Expenditure	147 966 €
Financial and Exceptional Items	308 €
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>704 257 €</b>



### RESOURCES : 698 010 €

Programme Subsidies mobilised in 2021	575 519 €
ACAT Contributions	54 413 €
Private Donations	17 982 €
Other Resources	49 749 €
Exceptional Items	347 €
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>698 010 €</b>



## A WORD FROM THE TREASURER

In 2021, activity was once again disrupted by the health crisis and temporary layoffs, but its 2020 level was maintained. However, the year ended with a slight deficit of 6 247 € (under 1% of its budget).

Implementation of FIACAT's two main programmes, to combat abusive pre-trial detention and fight the death penalty in Africa, continued at the same level of activity and were able to adapt to the problems posed by the pandemic. FIACAT and its benefactors agreed on a new joint action plan as from 2022. Advocacy work continued in different forms (including through film).

In addition, FIACAT held an extraordinary International Council in Abidjan in December 2021 to consider in more general terms, its priorities and how it can strengthen the entire ACAT - FIACAT network. This would appear to be especially useful at a time when ACATs' overall financial contributions to FIACAT are in decline, despite the clear need for the continuing management of the network.

Sincere thanks are extended to those individuals who have generously supported FIACAT, and to the FIACAT Secretariat for its unfailing commitment to all ACATs.

**Benoît THÉRY**, *Treasurer*

FIACAT also extends its sincere thanks to its private donors, who have regularly supported its activities throughout the years, as well as in 2021.

**FIACAT is grateful to its partners who, over many years, have encouraged and supported its efforts to combat torture and the death penalty :**

- Agence française de développement (France)
- Brot für die Welt (Germany)
- CCFD-Terre Solidaire (France)
- The European Commission

- The European Union Delegation to Côte d'Ivoire
- The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- Lyon Bar Association's Endowment Fund (France)
- The Institutional Organisation and Support Fund (FRIO) - Coordination SUD (France)
- ACAT France Foundation
- Chad Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development in connection with the "Support for Justice in Chad Project: Phase 2" (PRAJUST 2) (Chad)
- Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Tavola Valdese - Otto Per Mille (Italy)



## THE FIACAT TEAM

### INTERNATIONAL BUREAU



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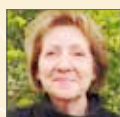
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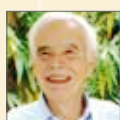
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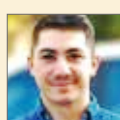
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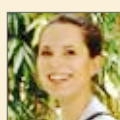
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FIACAT wishes to thank its intern, **Camille Aubinais**, and its volunteers – in particular, FIACAT's accountant, **Pierre Lévêque**, and its representative to the United Nations in New York, **Rober Zuber**, – who have worked with FIACAT for many years and contributed to the success of its projects.



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### Cover pictures

- FIACAT International Council (Côte d'Ivoire, December 2021)
- Round table on the Abolition of the Death Penalty (*Central African Republic, October 2021*)
- Workshop at the FIACAT International Council (Côte d'Ivoire, December 2021)
- Awareness-raising on the World Day against the Death Penalty (*Ghana, October 2021*)
- Presentation of basic necessities donations at the Maison centrale d'Antanimora (*Madagascar, December 2021*)

### Pictures of 4<sup>th</sup> cover

- Meeting on abusive pre-trial detention (*Madagascar, February 2021*)
- Presentation of the Cassià award (*Spain, December 2021*)
- Virtual meeting of the national coordinators of the APD programme (*June 2021*)
- FIACAT International Council (Côte d'Ivoire, December 2021)





## FIACAT at a Glance

The International Federation of ACATs (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture), FIACAT, is an international non-governmental human rights organisation, set up in 1987, which works towards the eradication of torture and the abolition of the death penalty. The Federation brings together some thirty national associations, the ACATs, present in four continents.

### FIACAT REPRESENTS ITS MEMBERS IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

It enjoys Consultative Status with the United Nations (UN), Participatory Status with the Council of Europe and Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). It is also accredited to the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF).

By referring the concerns of its members working on the ground to international bodies, FIACAT's aim is to encourage the adoption of relevant recommendations and their implementation by governments. FIACAT works towards the application of international human rights conventions, the prevention of torture in places of detention, and an end to enforced disappearances and impunity. It also takes part in the campaign against the death penalty by calling on states to abolish capital punishment in their legal systems.

To give added impact to these efforts, FIACAT is a founding member of several campaigning coalitions, in particular the World Coalition against the Death Penalty (WCADP), the International Coalition against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED) and the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN).

### FIACAT - BUILDING UP THE CAPACITIES OF THE ACAT NETWORK IN THIRTY COUNTRIES

FIACAT assists its member associations in organising themselves, supporting them so that they can become important players in civil society, capable of raising public awareness and having an impact on the authorities in their country.

It coordinates the network by promoting exchanges, proposing regional and international training events and joint campaigns, thus supporting the activities of the ACATs and providing them with exposure on the international scene.

### FIACAT - AN INDEPENDENT NETWORK OF CHRISTIANS UNITED IN FIGHTING TORTURE AND THE DEATH PENALTY

FIACAT's mission is to awaken Churches and Christian organisations to the scandal of torture and the death penalty and convince them to act.

#### FOLLOW FIACAT ON :



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