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## **FIGHTING CRIME IN BENIN**

Benin, a small West African nation bordered by Togo, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso, is a country rich in history and culture. Known for its vibrant traditions, Benin was once the heart of the powerful Dahomey Kingdom, which thrived from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Today, it boasts a diverse landscape that ranges from lush savannas to coastal plains along the Atlantic Ocean. The country's unique blend of ethnic groups, languages, and customs reflects its dynamic heritage. With its bustling markets, colorful festivals, and significant historical sites, such as the Royal Palaces of Abomey, Benin offers a captivating glimpse into both its past and present. As it continues to develop, Benin remains a testament to resilience and cultural richness in the heart of Africa.

West Africa is known for trafficking in a wide range of illegal products, from weapons and stolen cars to cigarettes, fake medicines, wildlife products, and natural resources like crude oil, gold, diamonds, cocoa and cashew nuts. Associated crime areas which also threaten West African security include money laundering, cattle rustling and cybercrime. International organized crime groups use West Africa to smuggle drugs from South America to Europe and Asia. The region is a source, transit region and destination for human trafficking. Most crime networks engage in all these crime areas simultaneously, using the same trafficking routes to move multiple forms of illegal produce across the region, often bringing violence, insecurity and economic loss with them. Because crime networks invariably operate globally, it is essential for Benin's law enforcement to have access to a global police cooperation tool. This enables it to work with law enforcement in continents to tackle its regional crime from a global angle [1].

Law enforcement in Benin is provided by the Republican Police (DGPR), which combines and replaces the former national police and gendarmerie. The DGPR is responsible for national security, law and order, and the protection of people and property. Article 28 of the 2018 Penal Code states that a person will not be held criminally responsible for acts committed in self-defense or defense of others, unless the use of force is disproportionate to the seriousness of the threat. Articles 23 to 25 of Decree No 2005-377 of 23 June 2005 on Regulation of the Maintenance of Public Order allow law enforcement agencies to use force to disperse assemblies either following warnings or when "serious violence is exercised by demonstrators towards law enforcement or security forces". With respect to firearms, the 2005 Decree states that they may be used without express

order. This is more permissive than international law allows. Article 28 of the 2005 Decree prohibits the firing of blank rounds and shooting in the air. Article 20 implies, though, that firearms without rounds may be used for the purpose of pistol whipping. This would also violate international law as it would amount to inhumane treatment. In July 2018, Benin's Council of Ministers appointed a permanent secretary to coordinate the country's preventive measures on terrorism. The government established a National Commission for Countering Radicalisation, Violent Extremism and Terrorism, which will also help adapt national law with a view to preventing and combating violent extremism [2, p. 1].

The Beninese National Gendarmerie is the heiress of the French National Gendarmerie established in Dahomey, the name given to this French colony between 1894 and 1958. The latter was organized into sections by decree n° 49-1365 of August 23rd, 1949, and then into gendarmerie groups with the interministerial decision of November 27th, 1957. One month after the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Dahomey in August 1960, the Dahomey National Gendarmerie was created by decree n° 492/DFSA of September 11th, 1961. On October 5th, 1961, Lieutenant- Colonel Teulière was delegated as the first director of the National Gendarmerie, assisted by Captain Adadedjan. The latter that was promoted to squadron leader rank, was appointed director in 1963. After a period of chronic political instability in the 1960s, Dahomey became the People's Republic of Benin on November 30th, 1975, following Mathieu Kérékou's coup d'état. The new political orientation of the country, inspired by Marxism-Leninism, led to an upheaval of institutions. The creation in 1977 of the People's Armed Forces led to the reform of the Gendarmerie, which became the Command of the Public Security Forces Companies. In February 1990, the National Gendarmerie regained its name and its traditional missions. The decree n° 90-329 of November 8th, 1990, consecrates this rebirth. The decree n° 95-383 of November 22nd, 1995, gives it an administrative and structural framework. It was repealed by a series of decrees issued on February 20th, 2001, which define the powers, organization and functioning of this institution [3 p. 1].

In conclusion, despite facing numerous challenges, the police force in Benin remains committed to combating crime and ensuring public safety. Their dedication to improving law enforcement practices, community engagement, and collaboration with international partners reflects a strong resolve to address the issues of crime and insecurity. Through perseverance and ongoing efforts, the police in Benin strive to create a safer environment for all citizens, demonstrating their resilience and determination in the face of adversity.

#### *Список використаних джерел*

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## **VERHÜTUNG UND BEKÄMPFUNG DER ORGANISIERTEN KRIMINALITÄT**

Das Phänomen der organisierten Kriminalität entzieht sich einer präzisen Beschreibung. Die Erscheinungsformen organisierter krimineller Gruppen in Deutschland und Europa sind vielfältig. Handlungsradius stehen neben homogenen ethnisch definierten Gruppen, deren Leitung außerhalb der EU liegt.

Ein besonderes Problem stellen lose professionelle Netzwerke ohne hierarchischen Überbau dar, die sich bedarfsgemäß und gelegenheitsbedingt zusammenschließen und angesichts ihres hohen Spezialisierungsgrades und ihrer ephemeren Erscheinungsformen spezifische Ermittlungs- und Interventionstechniken erfordern. Innerhalb von legalen Unternehmen organisierte Kriminalität stellt angesichts der potenziellen volkswirtschaftlichen Schäden ein kaum zu unterschätzendes Problem dar: dabei gelingt es kriminellen Netzwerken entweder, sich unterhalb der Wahrnehmung des unternehmensinternen Monitoring zu etablieren, oder aber Unternehmen werden direkt als Fassaden zur Kaschierung organisiert-krimineller Aktivitäten inklusive Geldwäsche gegründet. Europol schätzt, dass derzeit ca. 4000 OK Gruppen in der EU aktiv sind. Für Deutschland erlaubt das jährlich vom BKA veröffentlichte Bundeslagebild eine quantitative Einschätzung der

Entwicklungen. Ähnlich wie in der gesamten EU stehen dabei die folgenden Delikte im Vordergrund: Rauschgiftkriminalität (34,6 %), Eigentumskriminalität (17,1 %), Wirtschaftskriminalität (13,7 %), Schleusung und Menschenhandel (ca. 15 %) [1].

Die Herausforderungen der organisierten Kriminalität manifestieren sich also gleichzeitig lokal und global. Über eine entsprechende Handlungskompetenz müssen auch die Strafverfolgungsbehörden verfügen, wenn der Kampf gegen die kriminelle Organisationen erfolgreich sein soll. 1) Daneben gibt es in einigen Bundesländern, z.B. in Nordrhein-Westfalen und Brandenburg, inzwischen gemeinsame Lageberichte von Polizei und Staatsanwaltschaft, die naturgemäß nicht nur die polizeiliche Sicht der Dinge widerspiegeln. 2) Zu diesen beiden Deliktfeldern werden eigene Lagebilder erstellt, zur Schleuserkriminalität ein gemeinsames Lagebild von Bundeskriminalamt und Bundespolizei [2].