

CABO VERDE 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Republic of Cabo Verde is a parliamentary representative democratic republic largely modeled on the Portuguese system. Constitutional powers are shared between the head of state, President Jorge Carlos Fonseca, and the head of government, Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva. The Supreme Court of Justice, the National Electoral Commission, and international observers declared the 2016 nationwide legislative and presidential elections generally free and fair.

The National Police, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is responsible for law enforcement. The Judiciary Police, under the Ministry of Justice, is responsible for major investigations. The armed forces, under the Ministry of Defense, are responsible for protecting the national territory and sovereignty of the country. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over security forces. Members of the security forces committed some abuses.

Significant human rights issues included a reported case of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by police officers.

The government took steps to identify, investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who committed human rights abuses.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from

a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. In the event of such a killing, the Ministry of Internal Affairs would investigate the National Police, the Ministry of Justice investigates the Judicial Police, and the Ministry of Defense--specifically the Military Judicial Police--investigates the armed forces. The Attorney General's Office plays an

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The Directorate General for Labor and Inspectorate General for Labor are charged with implementing labor laws. Certain benefits, such as social security accounts for workers, existed in the informal sector, but the government imposed no penalties for violations that included fines or imprisonment during the year. Labor agencies hired additional inspectors during the year and had sufficient personnel to enforce the law. The government effectively enforced occupational safety and health laws during the year, stepping up inspections to ensure workers were protected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors had the authority to make unannounced inspections, and initiate sanctions. Although companies tended to respect laws on working hours, many employees, such as domestic workers, health-care professionals, farmers, fishers, and commercial workers, commonly worked for longer periods of time than the law allows. It continued to be common for companies not to honor foreign workers' rights regarding contracts, especially concerning deductions for social security.

According to the Inspectorate General for Labor 2019 report, most irregularities detected during labor inspections related to nonsubscription to the National Institute for Social Protection, nonsubscription to mandatory insurance for job injury, and some irregularities in complying with health and safety standards. Inspections revealed the most common work violations concerned the right to vacation time and the right to rest periods between work periods.

The majority of work-related accidents reported during the year occurred in food services, the steel industry, and construction sectors. In 2019 the Inspectorate General for Labor registered 238 work-related accidents (compared with 395 in 2018), including five deaths.