



# ACTIVITY REPORT

FIACAT







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# FIACAT IS 35 YEARS OLD AND STILL GOING STRONG !

35 years after its birth, the International Federation of ACATs (FIACAT) is as vigorous as ever in its pursuit of the eradication of torture and ill-treatment and the abolition of the death penalty. The ideal of a world without torture and the death penalty remains a challenge far from being met. Thus, FIACAT and its network of 29 ACATs spread over three continents – Africa, America and Europe - are constantly readjusting their strategies and modes of action.

**A**fter two years of virtual inertia dictated by the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022 has shown ample evidence of the network's vitality. Nine African ACATs, supported by FIACAT, took part in the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights organised in Banjul (Gambia), in order to promote advocacy campaigns, strengthen their capacities and hold side events. In November, Berlin (Germany) followed-up by hosting three key events in which network members were involved. Ahead of the World Congress Against the Death Penalty, 11 African ACATs took part in a training delivered by FIACAT and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty on project management and advocacy for abolition at national, regional and international levels. Subsequently, the meeting of the European ACATs provided an opportunity for them to exchange experiences and good practices and decide on joint activities specific to their geographical location. Finally, the high point of this mission: the World Congress Against the Death Penalty. This 8th edition attracted some forty ACAT activists from almost 20 national ACATs. The joint expertise of ACATs and FIACAT has made it possible to draw attention to the death row phenomenon and the link between torture and the death penalty. As the Congress closed, ACAT Central African Republic received a prize for its enormous contribution to the vote in favour of abolition in the Central African Republic in May 2022. FIACAT further demonstrated its vitality by launching the "ACAT cafés". Thanks to videoconferencing, the ACATs now have a democratic forum for discussions. The four meetings held so far, each focusing on a different ACAT, have been warmly welcomed by the network's members

**“ After 35 years of existence,  
the vitality of FIACAT and  
its network give cause for hope  
in faith and charity!”**

Alongside its partners, FIACAT has extended its activities to cover two new topics. Over the last few years, more and more threats have been made against ACAT activists, in particular those of central Africa and the Great Lakes regions. It has thus undertaken to protect human rights defenders through the “*Initiative for Human Rights Defenders throughout the world*”

a project implemented by the Human Rights Platform in some ten countries including Madagascar and Togo, where the ACATs will be closely involved. The Federation has also joined the campaign for the decriminalisation of minor offences in Africa, a cause of endemic prison overcrowding on the continent.

FIACAT has successfully continued its work of representation, advocacy and support for the ACATs in projects such as the fight against abusive pre-trial detention. It has also responded to numerous requests, thus enhancing its visibility and its credibility thanks to the cooperation between its Bureau and its Secretariat.

*Paul Angaman*  
President



# SUPPORTING THE ACATS AND ADVOCACY IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FORA



**submission of 10 alternative reports** with the ACATs (Benin, Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Ghana, Niger, Switzerland and Togo) to the United Nations and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights



**Contribution to 6 UN and ACHPR thematic reports** on the death penalty, human rights defenders and torture.

## UNITED NATIONS

On the sidelines of the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, FIACAT supported its Burundian partners in their advocacy to obtain the renewal of the mandate of the special Rapporteur on Burundi, needed to draw attention to the persistent serious violations of human rights in that country.

One of the partners was Germain Rukuki, who

shared his concerns and his personal experience of over four years of arbitrary detention, which had been denounced many times by that same body.



**Adoption of 2 texts proposed or endorsed by FIACAT: 1 resolution** on the death penalty and the absolute prohibition of torture and **1 set of rules** on the alert and reporting mechanism to the ACHPR on situations of torture and ill-treatment, known as the **Abidjan Rules**.

## AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

2022 marked the return of face-to-face meetings. After three years of on-line get-togethers, the 73<sup>rd</sup> session was held in Banjul (Gambia) from 20 October to 9 November. A strong FIACAT delegation was present at the commemoration of the Commission's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the laying of the first stone of its future headquarters.



**Support for 11 ACATs in their advocacy at the ACHPR and the United Nations** (Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Switzerland and Togo).



**Joint organisation of 6 panels or side events at the UN and the ACHPR and 1 hearing** of President Paul Angaman by the European Parliament on "The African Union and its human rights and democracy mechanisms".

## AFRICAN UNION



During the week of 10 October, in Addis-Ababa (Ethiopia), FIACAT and the World Coalition advocated alongside the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in favour of the draft Additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the abolition of the death penalty in Africa. The importance of this draft was brought home to the ambassadors from Belgium, Benin, Burkina, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), France, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo at a dinner organised by the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)..



## 10<sup>th</sup> human rights seminar of the civil society organisations of the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU)

45 human rights defenders from the two continents, including one from ACAT Benin, took stock of the first nine editions of the seminar accompanying the EU-AU dialogue, in particular implementation of the civil society recommendations and the undertakings to which these institutions had committed. "Creating an environment promoting civil society organisations" "Counter-terrorism and human rights": during a seminar exploring the theme of conflicts, the defenders tackled subjects with which certain ACATs are confronted.



# RUNNING A NETWORK OF 29 ACATS

## THE EUROPEAN ACATS TAKE A TRIP TO BERLIN



Following the previous meeting of the European ACATs in Barcelona in 2019, a reunion was eagerly awaited. Thus, it was in the German capital, on the sidelines of the **8<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the death penalty**, that the European ACATs met again on 12 and 13 November. In a warm atmosphere contrasting with the start of the Berlin winter, the ACATs reviewed the action plan they had drawn up in 2019, reported on their day-to-day difficulties and put forward possible ways of continuing together the fight against torture and the death penalty.



## ACAT Central African Republic congratulated for its involvement in the fight for the abolition in its country

Owing to its unceasing efforts to get the death penalty abolished in the Central African Republic (CAR), at the close of the **8<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the death penalty** ACAT CAR received the prize for pro-abolition advocacy.

"The fight continues, especially to persuade the authorities to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty "

**Guy Dangavo**, President of ACAT CAR



## PROTECT CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

In cooperation with the transmedia project **Shadow Game**, FIACAT and the ACATs of Belgium and Italy drew public attention to the torture suffered by minors crossing Europe in search of a refuge. The screening organised in Brussels enabled the ACAT Belgium to bring these problems to the attention of the Belgian authorities and to reflect on possible solutions for remedying the situation. With its showing, ACAT Italy aimed to raise the awareness of young people by organising it in a secondary school and by discussing further the issues at hand during working sessions organised by the teachers. FIACAT's cooperation on this project concluded with an event organised during the summer session of the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**, bringing together several experts on migration issues, and with the personal testimony of one of the young protagonists of the film present for the occasion.



## WEST AFRICAN ACATS HEAD FOR COTONOU

On 25 and 26 July 2022, a FIACAT delegation went to Cotonou (Benin) to meet the members of the ACATs of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo who had come together to take part in training run by the Institute for the Healing of Memories, in the presence of Father Michael Lapsley. These friendly reunions were an opportunity to discuss sub-regional challenges and to raise the question of joint future activities.

## THE ACATS MEET OVER COFFEE



**15 000 kilometres.** The distance which separates ACAT Canada and ACAT Madagascar. Whilst the ACATs are united in their fight against torture and the death penalty, the impossibility of organising "physical" international councils every year means that in person group discussions are the exception. However, progress in the digital field now makes it possible to build more bridges than ever before. The "network animation" pole of FIACAT's International Bureau therefore decided to launch a format for informal meetings in videoconference, the ACAT cafés. On average, these first four on-line meetings, spotlighting a different ACAT each time, have brought together 9 ACATs, i.e. one-third of the entire network. The ACATs can now experience simultaneously the freezing cold of Canada and the warmth of Madagascar summer.

## NETWORKING

### LAUNCH OF THE “INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE WORLD”



On 5 July, the Human Rights Platform – co-founded by FIACAT – started this new project aiming to improve the working environment of human rights defenders in some ten countries. As a partner, FIACAT will in future act alongside the ACATs of Madagascar and Togo through national, regional and international advocacy and by strengthening the capacities of their members.

A FIACAT delegation was thus present in Lomé from 20 to 24 July alongside ACAT Togo, where it met diplomatic, technical and civil society partners to draw attention to the situation of defenders in Togo. It also trained ACAT members and other local defenders in advocacy techniques which can be used in future to highlight the conditions affecting the everyday experience of these defenders.

### “DEATH PENALTY: A ROAD PAVED WITH TORTURE”

10 October 2022 marked the 20th anniversary of the World Day Against the Death Penalty, celebrated by all the members of the WCADP. For this edition, the emphasis was on the link between the death penalty and the prohibition of torture. This theme resonates particularly within FIACAT, since it is through the prism of the fight against torture that the ACAT network became involved in the fight for the abolition.



Numerous ACATs have organised awareness-raising activities to attract the attention of the general public and the authorities, to show how the death penalty – from the sentencing to the execution – inevitably causes physical pain and psychological suffering tantamount to torture or ill-treatment. For these reasons, FIACAT considers that capital punishment is as much a violation not only of the right to life but also of the absolute prohibition of torture.

### FIACAT HAS JOINED THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE DECRIMINALISATION OF MINOR OFFENCES IN AFRICA



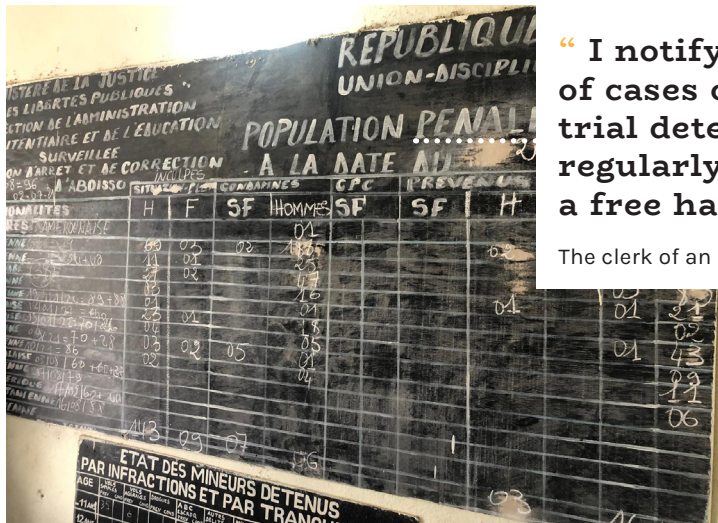
In order to prevent the torture and ill-treatment caused by overcrowding in prisons, FIACAT advocates, among other things, for non-custodial sentences for certain offences when they constitute no threat to public safety. Certain laws and their application target primarily those who are poor and marginalised owing to yawning social inequalities, and this leads to their arrest and detention, fuelling the problem of prison congestion.

Decriminalising activism and rethinking criminal justice system are the foundations of the rule of law which underpins the basic freedoms which FIACAT and its members promote in their advocacy addressed to international and regional human rights mechanisms and the national authorities of the ACATs' home countries.





# COMBATING ABUSIVE PRE-TRIAL DETENTION (PTD)



“ I notify the magistrates of cases of abusive pre trial detention more regularly. We feel we have a free hand to do so ”

The clerk of an Ivorian prison

## CONGO AND MADAGASCAR

The ACATs of these two countries have continued to fight against abusive pre-trial detention (PTD) in their respective countries. In addition to the organisation of working meetings and the identification and follow up of cases, the ACATs advocated to their national authorities on various occasions for the defence of the rights of detainees. Advantage was also taken of International Human Rights Day on 10 December to bring this subject to the attention of the general public.

Year after year these efforts help to improve detention conditions. In the Congo, the ACAT's action was instrumental in the adoption by the national authorities of Act n° 10-2022 of 20 April 2022 on the Prison Code of the Republic of Congo. In Madagascar, the ACAT worked closely with the local authorities to make videos testifying to the situation of detainees. True to their traditions, the ACATs profited from their visits to the prisons targeted by the project to take essential products to persons facing difficult living conditions and bring them temporary relief.

## CÔTE D'IVOIRE

The benefits felt by those profiting from the 8-year-long project are evidence of the value of providing ways and means of furthering the understanding of all the actors in the criminal justice system and thus offering a collective response to the abusive pre-trial detention phenomenon. Detainees receive legal, psychological and material support whilst working meetings enable the prison and legal staff and the Ivorian authorities to be fully aware of detainees' legal safeguards and of the importance of dialogue within the criminal justice system.

Its strength lies in the way in which activities at grass roots level, in prisons and among the various actors in the criminal justice system – examining magistrates, public prosecutors, prison administrators, clerks, social workers – complement advocacy activities at national, regional and inter-

national levels. In Côte d'Ivoire, the ACAT is still the only civil society organisation to adopt this stance in favour of collaboration. Tried and tested over the years, the method has shown that success is possible in other prisons, other jurisdictions and other countries, with the ACATs in Congo and Madagascar using the same tools since 2017.

In September and December, the publication of scientific studies produced in cooperation with the CERDAP<sup>2</sup> research laboratory boosted the credibility of the West African ACATs' expertise in supporting persons deprived of their liberty.

# 92

92 prison visits by militants from the ACATs of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar



Participation of **296 people** in working meetings, representing the judicial and prison administrations and civil society in Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar



# 48

**advocacy meetings**

attended by the ACATs of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar

# 9

Participation of actors from the criminal justice system in **9 working meetings** with the ACATs of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar on topics linked to the treatment of detainees

# 671

Identification of **671 cases** of unjustified pre-trial detention by members of ACAT Côte d'Ivoire which they subsequently passed on to the project's referring lawyers

# 900

Interview of over **900 detainees** by the ACATs of Congo and Madagascar

# ABOLISHING THE DEATH PENALTY IN AFRICA



## 1

Organisation of an **event** in New York on 21 October with Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM) and the permanent missions to the United Nations of Australia, Costa Rica, France and the European Union. Entitled "From death penalty to an official moratorium", it brought together some thirty representatives from permanent missions and civil society.



### Abolition of the death penalty in law in

#### 3 African countries :

the Central African Republic in June, Equatorial Guinea in September and Zambia in December. Almost 75% of African Union countries are now abolitionist in law or in practice

## +1

In July, the Liberian Senate unanimously **adopted a bill to abolish capital punishment**, which at least leads to hope for an additional abolitionist country in 2023.

## BERLIN: WORLD CAPITAL OF THE ABOLITION

The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the World Congress Against the Death Penalty organised by the ECPM was held in Berlin (Germany) from 15 to 18 November. Alongside around a thousand participants from four continents and the ACATs, FIACAT was pleased to contribute to the debates and exchanges of experience, to the drafting of abolitionist strategies and the strengthening of synergy among abolitionist actors. Among the highlights were the testimony of Yaovi Azonhito, a member of ACAT Benin who was once sentenced to death, on the death row phenomenon and the intervention of Xavière Prugnard during the workshop on "Making the prohibition of the death penalty a norm of international customary law" to put forward FIACAT's advocacy for recognition of the link between capital punishment and torture.



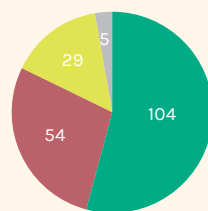
The ACAT Central African Republic received a **prize for its long-term commitment and its contribution to the recent abolition of the death penalty** in its country (see page 3). The bill had been adopted on 27 May before the act was promulgated by the President on 27 June. Upstream, the ACAT, with support from FIACAT and ECPM, had organised a campaign aimed at raising the awareness of political decision-makers.



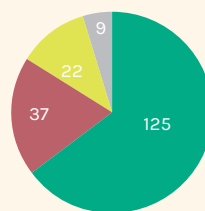
Ahead of this Congress - From 11 to 13 November FIACAT and the WCADP organised a **training for 34 persons from 18 partner organisations** including the ACATs of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Over three days, the participants were able to strengthen their capacity as regards project management and advocacy for abolition at national, regional and international levels.

# 125

Adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the 9<sup>th</sup> resolution for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty on 15 December, thanks to the **positive vote** of 125 countries.



VOTE 2007  
(62/149)



VOTE 2022  
(77/463)

POUR  
CONTRE  
ABSTENTION  
ABSENT

29 Member States of the African Union took a stand in favour of a moratorium, thanks in particular to the new favourable votes of Ghana, Liberia and Uganda. In connection with a worldwide advocacy campaign coordinated by the WCADP, FIACAT conducted an advocacy campaign in those sub-Saharan African countries where an ACAT is present.



# FIACAT'S FINANCES

## IN 2022

### A Word from the Treasurer

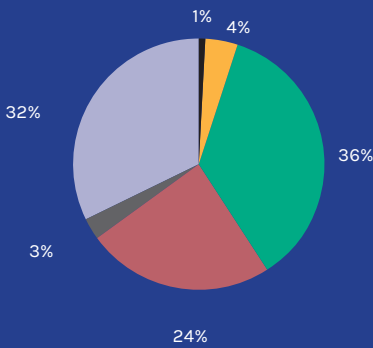
In 2022, FIACAT registered an exceptional deficit of € 60,016, with total income of € 860,408 and total expenditure of € 920,424.

This situation seems worrying, but it results from the transitional character of the year 2022, marked firstly by the effects of the COVID crisis, which led donors to give greater priority to health than to human rights and restricted operations at the beginning of the year, and secondly, by the completion of programmes on abusive pre-trial detention and the second phase of the programme against the death penalty. However, the launch of phase 3 of the "Africabolition" programme, the joint programme for protection of human rights defenders and the defenders training programme to update the Norbert Kenne programme as from 2023 are now factors conducive to a recovery.

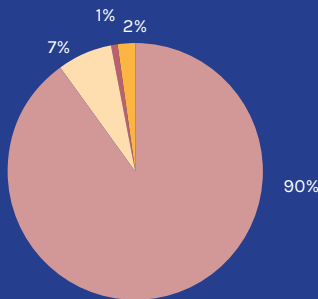
The substantial shortfall in 2022 arises largely from "book debts", i.e. resources received in 2022 but still to be used in 2023 and beyond. Activities should therefore be covered as far as possible by the new projects and expenditure which cannot be funded by the donors should be limited in order to rebuild the reserves essential to FIACAT within two years. Support by the network remains necessary so that FIACAT in turn can contribute to its promotion and development.

Benoît Théry, Treasurer

### EXPENSES



### RESOURCES



### EXPENSES

● ACAT advocacy before the United Nations	13 096 €
● Network Coordination	33 203 €
● Program to Combat Abusive Pre-trial Detention	331 176 €
● Program for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Africa	217 787 €
● Human Rights Defenders Program	26 177 €
● FIACAT's Operating Expenditure	294 309 €
Financial and Exceptional Items	4 676 €
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>920 424 €</b>

### RESOURCES

● Program Subsidies mobilised in 2022	780 770 €
● ACAT Contributions	57 640 €
● Private Donations	5 111 €
● Other Resources	16 236 €
Exceptional Items	650 €
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>860 408 €</b>

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
- Paris Bar Association
- Brot für die Welt (Germany)
- CCFD-Terre solidaire (France)
- Civil Rights Defenders (Sweden)
- The European Commission
- The European Union Delegation to Côte d'Ivoire
- ACAT Foundation
- Fondation de France
- Lyon Bar Association's Endowment Fund (France)
- The Institutional Organisation and Support Fund (FRIO) -Coordination SUD (France)
- Missio
- Open Society Foundation
- Protect Defenders
- Tavola Valdese (Italy)

# THE FIACAT TEAM

## INTERNATIONAL BUREAU



**Paul ANGAMAN (Côte d'Ivoire)**  
President



**Christophe D'ALOISIO (Belgium)**



**Claire DORAN (Canada)**



**Michel KALEMBA (DRC)**



**Jean-Bernard MARIE (France)**



**Salomon NODJITLOUM (Chad)**  
(July 2020-November 2022)



**Benoit THERY (France)**  
Trésorier



**Jean-Daniel VIGNY (Switzerland)**

## SECRETARIAT



**Anne-Gaëlle BONNEFOY (Vincennes)**  
Administrative and Financial Officer



**Guillaume COLIN (Vincennes)**  
Executive Director



**Lionel GRASSY (Brussels)**  
Advocacy Director



**Corentin MANÇOIS (Vincennes)**  
Network Officer and Project Officer



**Xavière PRUGNARD (Vincennes)**  
Representative to the African Union



**Marie SALPHATI (Geneva)**  
Representative to the United Nations  
and the Council of Europe



**Lauren THIEBAUT (Vincennes)**  
Administrative and Financial Director

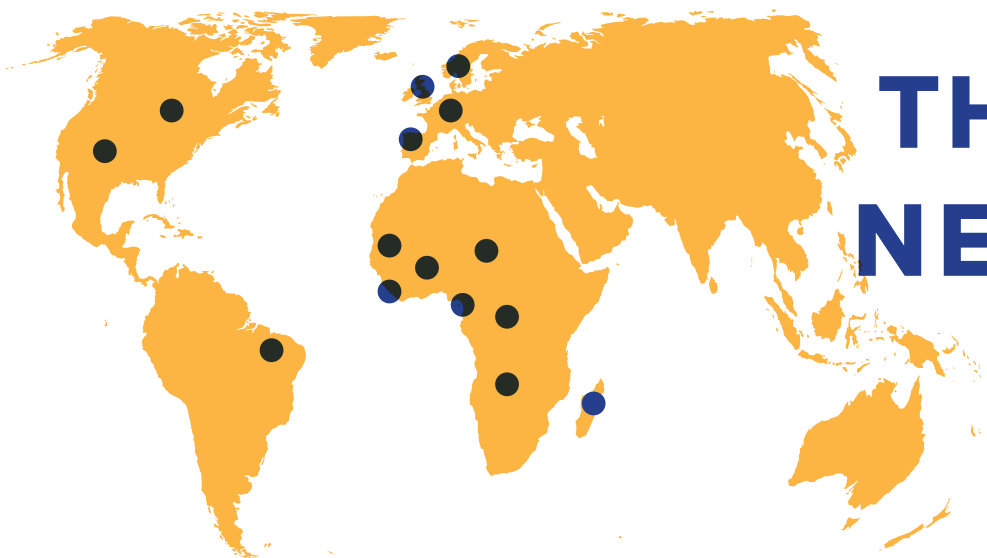


**Esteban TRUJILLO (Vincennes)**  
Administrative and Logistics Coordinator

## Interns and volunteers

FIACAT wishes to thank its interns, **Astrid Chauvin** and **Chloe Marivint**, and its volunteers – in particular **Pierre Levêque**, FIACAT's accountant, and **Robert Zuber**, representative to the United Nations in New York – who have worked with FIACAT for many years and contributed to the success of its projects.





# THE ACAT NETWORK

## AFRIQUE

### ACAT Benin

03 BP 0394  
Cotonou-Jéricho – Bénin  
acat\_coordbnin@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Burkina Faso

02 BP 5093  
Ouagadougou – Burkina-Faso  
acatburkina@gmail.com

### ACAT Burundi

Me Jean-Claude Ntiburumunsi  
Rue Haute 72/101  
1348 Ottignies  
Louvain La Neuve  
Belgique  
acatburundi@gmail.com

### ACAT Cameroon

B.P: 3026  
Douala – Cameroun  
acat.cameroun@yahoo.com

### ACAT Central African Republic

BP 527  
Bangui – Central African Republic  
acat\_rca@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Chad

BP 2231 N'Djamena – Chad  
acatchad2017@gmail.com

### ACAT Côte d'Ivoire

S/c Caritas Côte D'Ivoire  
01 BP 2590 Abidjan 01  
Côte d'Ivoire  
secretariat@acat-ci.org

### ACAT Democratic Republic of Congo

16, rue sainte Anne Moungali  
BP 15 307 Brazzaville  
Democratic Republic of Congo  
acatcongo\_brazza@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Ghana

PO Box: 532  
Ho Volta Region – Ghana

### ACAT Liberia

Gballasuah, Tubmanburg,  
Bomi County  
P. O. Box 00231 – Liberia  
acatliberiamail@gmail.com

### ACAT Madagascar

Logement 355, 1<sup>er</sup> étage  
Cité AMPEFILOHA  
Antananarivo 101  
– Madagascar  
acatmadagascar@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Mali

BP 165  
Bamako – Mali  
mali.acat96@gmail.com

### ACAT Niger

s/c Alfari Balma  
BP 10250 Niamey – Niger  
mourniger@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Senegal

Paroisse universitaire  
St-Dominique  
(Face Université Cheikh  
Anta DIOP – UCAD)  
Km4, BP 5098 Dakar-Fann –  
Sénégal  
acatsenegal@gmail.com

### ACAT Togo

BP 60 499 Lomé – Togo  
acattogo@yahoo.fr

## AMÉRIQUES

### ACAT Brazil

Praça Clovis Bevilacqua,  
351, sala 701  
01018-001 Sao Paulo SP – Brazil  
acatbrasil.international@  
gmail.com

### ACAT Canada

2715, ch. de la Côte  
-Sainte-Catherine  
Montréal (Qc) H3T 1B6  
Canada  
+1 514 890 61 69  
acat@acatcanada.org

### ACAT United States

P.O. Box 314  
Pleasant Hill, TN 38578-0314  
United States  
kcharbonnet3@outlook.com

## EUROPE

### ACAT Belgium

Rue Brogniez 44,  
1070 Bruxelles – Belgium  
acat.belgique@gmail.com

### Czech Republic

Pohorelec 26,  
CZ-118 00 Praha – Czech  
Republic  
acatpraha@seznam.cz

### ACAT France

7 rue Georges Lardennois  
75019 Paris – France  
acat@acatfrance.fr

### ACAT Germany

Kreuzstr. 4  
D-31134 Hildesheim  
Germany  
info@acat-deutschland.de

### ACAT Italy

Via della Traspontina 15  
00193 Rome – Italy  
posta@acatitalia.it

### ACAT Luxembourg

5 Avenue Marie-Thérèse  
L-2132 Luxembourg  
contact@acat.lu

### ACAT Spain

c/ Angli 55  
08017 Barcelona – Spain  
acat.montserrat2@gmail.com

### ACAT Sweden

P.O. Box 64  
12522 Älvsjö  
Stockholm – Sweden  
acatsweden@yahoo.fr

### ACAT Switzerland

Speichergasse 29  
3011 Berne –Switzerland  
info@acat.ch

### ACAT United Kingdom

C/o 25 Higher Woolbrook Park,  
Sidmouth,  
Devon EX10 9ED  
United Kingdom  
uk.acat@gmail.com

The International Federation of ACATs, FIACAT, is a Christian 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 three continents.

FIACAT's strength lies above all in its network: that which links the ACATs one with another and also to other national NGOs. The legitimacy and relevance of the actions of both the federation and its network spring from its local roots.

## FIACAT – REPRESENTING ITS MEMBERS IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

It enjoys Consultative Status with the United Nations (UN), Participative Status with the Council of Europe and Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). FIACAT 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 fight against the death penalty by encouraging States to abolish this inhuman punishment from their legislation and by raising awareness among opinion leaders, religious leaders and customary leaders about abolition.

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 raise awareness of torture and the death penalty among churches and Christian organisations in order to convince them to act for their abolition and eradication.



### FIACAT

96 boulevard de la Libération  
94300 Vincennes – France  
Tel. : +33 (0)1 58 64 10 47  
E-mail : [fiacat@fiacat.org](mailto:fiacat@fiacat.org)

FIACAT Representation to the United Nations in Geneva  
c/o CICG  
1 rue de Varembe  
1202 Geneva - Switzerland  
Tel.: +41 78 749 93 28  
E-mail: [fiacat.onu@fiacat.org](mailto:fiacat.onu@fiacat.org)

FIACAT Representation to the European Institutions in Brussels  
Rue Brogniez, 44  
B-1070 Brussels – Belgium  
Tel.: +32 4 70 92 85 10  
E-mail: [fiacat.europe@fiacat.org](mailto:fiacat.europe@fiacat.org)

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