

# Government

## Names:

*conventional long form:* Republic of Benin

*conventional short form:* Benin

*local long form:* Republique du Benin

*local short form:* Benin

*former:* Dahomey

## Digraph: BN

**Type:** republic under multiparty democratic rule dropped Marxism-Leninism December 1989; democratic reforms adopted February 1990; transition to multiparty system completed 4 April 1991

**Capital:** Porto-Novo

**Administrative divisions:** 6 provinces; Atakora, Atlantique, Borgou, Mono, Oueme, Zou

**Independence:** 1 August 1960 (from France)

**National holiday:** National Day, 1 August (1990)

**Constitution:** 2 December 1990

**Legal system:** based on French civil law and customary law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal

## Executive branch:

*chief of state and head of government:* President Nicephore SOGLO (since 4 April 1991); election last held 10 and 24 March 1991 (next election 1996); results - Nicephore SOGLO 68%, Mathieu KEREKOU 32%

*cabinet:* Executive Council; appointed by the president

## Legislative branch: unicameral

*National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale):* elections last held 28 March 1995; results - percent of vote by party NA; seats - (83 total) Renaissance Party and allies 20, PRD 19, FARD-ALAFIA 10, PSD 7, NCC 3, RDL-VIVOTEN 3, Communist Party 2, Alliance Chameleon 1, RDP 1, ADP 1, other 16

**Judicial branch:** Supreme Court (Cour Supreme)

**Political parties and leaders:** as of August 1994, 72 political parties were officially recognized; the following are among the most important:

Alliance of the Democratic Union for the Forces of Progress (UDFP), Timothee ADANLIN; Movement for Democracy and Social Progress (MDPS), Jean-Roger AHOYO; Union for Liberty and Development (ULD), Marcellin DEGBE; Alliance of the National Party for Democracy and Development (PNDD) and the Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), Pascal Chabi KAO; Alliance of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the National Union for Solidarity and Progress (UNSP), Bruno AMOUSSOU;

Our Common Cause (NCC), Albert TEVOEDJRE; National Rally for Democracy (RND), Joseph KEKE; Alliance of the National Movement for Democracy and Development (MNDD), leader NA; Movement for Solidarity, Union, and Progress (MSUP), Adebo ADENIYI; Union for Democracy and National Reconstruction (UDRN), Azaria FAKOREDE; Union for Democracy and National Solidarity (UDS), Mama Amadou N'DIAYE; Assembly of Liberal Democrats for National Reconstruction (RDL), Severin ADJOVI; Alliance for Social Democracy (ASD), Robert DOSSOU; Bloc for Social Democracy (BSD), Michel MAGNIDE; Alliance for Democracy and Progress (ADP), Akindes ADEKPEDJOU, and the Democratic Union for Social Renewal (UDRS), Bio Gado Seko N'GOYE; National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP), Robert TAGNON; Party for Progress and Democracy, Thiophile NATA; FARD-ALAFIA, Mathieu KEREKOU; The Renaissance Party, Nicephore SOGLO; The Patriotic Union for the Republic (UPR), Jean-Marie ZAHOUN; Union for the Conservation of Democracy, Bernard HOUEGNON

**Member of:** ACCT, ACP, AfDB, CEAO, ECA, ECOWAS, Entente, FAO, FZ, G-77, GATT, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INTELSTAT, INTERPOL, IOC, ITU, NAM, OAU, OIC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WADB, WCL, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

#### **Diplomatic representation in US:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador Lucien Edgar TONOUKOUIN  
*chancery:* 2737 Cathedral Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 232-6656, 6657, 6658  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 265-1996

#### **US diplomatic representation:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador Ruth A. DAVIS  
*embassy:* Rue Caporal Bernard Anani, Cotonou  
*mailing address:* B. P. 2012, Cotonou  
*telephone:* [229] 30-06-50, 30-05-13, 30-17-92  
*FAX:* [229] 41-15-22

**Flag:** two equal horizontal bands of yellow (top) and red with a vertical green band on the hoist side

## **Defense Forces**

**Branches:** Armed Forces (includes Army, Navy, Air Force), National Gendarmerie

**Manpower availability:** males age 15-49 1,165,463; females age 15-49 1,249,234; males fit for military service 596,956; females fit for military service 631,780; males reach military age (18) annually 60,282 (1995 est.); females reach military age (18) annually 58,770 (1995 est.)  
*note:* both sexes are liable for military service

**Defense expenditures:** exchange rate conversion - \$33 million, 3.2% of GDP (1994)