

THE GUARDIANS OF THE THRONE

Israel and Togo: Anatomy of a Strategic Complicity



Faure Gnassingbé and Shimon Peres in Jerusalem, IDF inspection, visits to the Western Wall.

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TEXT I

THE ORIGINS OF A COMPLICITY

*From the Assassination of Olympio
to the Installation of a Dynasty
1963–1987*

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THE ORIGINS OF A COMPLICITY

From the Assassination of Olympio to the Installation of a Dynasty (1963–1987)

By Farida Bemba Nabourema

Disillusioned African Citizen

Estimated reading time: 15–25 minutes



Faure Gnassingbé, President of Togo, and Shimon Peres, President of Israel, during an official meeting in Jerusalem. At the Western Wall, and flanked by IDF officers during a military inspection.

This first text documents the origins of a strategic complicity between the State of Israel and the Gnassingbé dynasty in Togo, from the assassination of President Sylvanus Olympio in the night of January 12–13, 1963, to the official restoration of diplomatic relations in June 1987. It traces how a political murder created a regime, how that regime sought in Israel the guarantee of its survival, and how this relationship — maintained even through the years of official diplomatic rupture — constituted the foundation of a dependency that persists to this day.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This first text of the series *The Guardians of the Throne* documents the genealogy of a dependency: how the assassination of President Sylvanus Olympio in the night of January 12–13, 1963 created a regime, and how that regime sought in the State of Israel the guarantee of its own survival.

On the assassination of Olympio (1963): The text establishes that Olympio's death was not merely the product of disgruntled demobilized soldiers. It was embedded in a French strategy of neocolonial control, supported by documented American complicity, and executed by veterans of the colonial army. Olympio refused the CFA franc zone, refused the UAM, refused to fund the reconverted French army. He was killed for it.

On Israel's entry (1963–1967): Israel, which had opened an embassy in Togo as early as 1962, collected the dividends of Olympio's murder through the successive governments of Grunitzky and then Eyadéma, each more pliant than the last. In 1967, Eyadéma made the request explicit: he needed Israel for his physical survival. Israel accepted.

On the period of official rupture and unofficial continuity (1973–1987): The diplomatic break of 1973, imposed by the Arab League after the Yom Kippur War, did not interrupt the relationship. The Mossad and security contractor networks maintained the ties. The official restoration of June 1987, coming one year after the most serious armed assault on the regime, constituted the public formalization of a relationship that had never truly ceased.

Conclusion of Text I: What 1963 produced was not merely a regime. It was a system. A system in which murder opens doors and dependency is rewarded. The second text will document the concrete tools of this dependency: surveillance contracts, military training, spyware.

Keywords: *Togo, Israel, Sylvanus Olympio, Eyadéma, 1963 coup, Françafrique, Mossad, presidential security, Gilchrist Olympio, Shamir, 1987.*

INTRODUCTION

The story this text tells begins with a murder. Not a war, not a revolution, not the collapse of a regime under the weight of its own contradictions. A murder, carried out at dawn, in the courtyard of an American embassy, on the body of a man who had run barefoot across his garden to escape soldiers he had refused to hire. That murder opened a door. And that door, since January 13, 1963, has never been closed.

The question this series poses is not simply: who killed Sylvanus Olympio? That question has already been partially answered by historians, journalists, and witnesses who reconstructed the night of January 12–13, 1963. The more difficult, and more urgent, question is this: what did that murder make possible? What did it build, institutionally, diplomatically, and in terms of security, over sixty years? And who, beyond the soldiers who pulled the trigger and the French officers who encouraged them, benefited from that construction?

The answer to that last question is the subject of this series. And it implicates an actor that Togolese history has long kept in the shadows — not because it was absent, but because its presence was precisely conditioned on its discretion: the State of Israel, its security industry, its contractor networks, and the policy of exporting repression technologies that has been one of the pillars of its African foreign policy since the 1970s.

This first text covers the period 1963–1987: from the assassination of Olympio to the official restoration of Israeli-Togolese diplomatic relations under Prime Minister Shamir. It draws on primary sources including partially declassified Israeli diplomatic cables, direct testimonies, memoirs of key actors, and academic and journalistic works. It does not claim exhaustiveness. It claims rigor. And it poses, from its very first paragraph, the question that structures the entire series: how does a free and sovereign state become, in the span of two decades, entirely dependent on a foreign power for the physical survival of whoever governs it?

On the night of January 12–13, 1963, Sylvanus Olympio heard unusual sounds at his Lomé residence and sent his family to safety before seizing his pistol and descending the stairs. At 11 p.m., a commando of six men, probably led by Emmanuel Bodjollé himself, attacked the presidential residence, a pine-surrounded villa roughly 150 meters from the Atlantic Ocean. Olympio escaped through a window, ran barefoot across his garden, scaled the shared wall separating his residence from the American embassy, and slipped into a Plymouth parked in the diplomatic compound's courtyard. He had succeeded, and believed he was safe.

What happened next constitutes one of the most revealing and least-discussed sequences in the political history of postcolonial Africa. At 3:30 a.m., according to the testimony of his daughter Sofia, American Ambassador Leon B. Poullada received a phone call at his residence, located roughly three kilometers from his office. The ambassador went to the embassy, found Olympio in the vehicle, listened to him, and asked him to wait while he went to fetch the keys to open the building. He did not return with the keys. According to Sofia Poullada, her father did not open the building because he feared the putschists would ransack it. The ambassador returned to his residence and called his French counterpart, Mazoyer, to

confirm that Olympio was on the premises. Then he did not move.

The crucial question is this: who told the assailants where Olympio was hiding? At 11:30 p.m. or midnight, when the president found refuge in the American embassy, the putschists did not enter the diplomatic compound. Seven hours later, after the phone exchange between Poullada and Mazoyer, they no longer hesitated. Henri Mazoyer and Jacques Foccart's agent in Lomé, Major Georges Maïtrier, had in fact argued against Olympio on behalf of these unemployed ex-soldiers for weeks.

Gilchrist Olympio, the assassinated president's son, reported that at the end of 1964, he met Poullada in Washington, and that the ambassador, still traumatized, told him it was the French ambassador Henri Mazoyer who had informed him that night that a coup was underway and that the president had taken refuge in his embassy.

At 7 a.m. that morning, Eyadéma declared to the international press, including Time magazine and Paris Match: "He could not stay there. There would have been demonstrations. He refused to move. I shot him." This declaration, made in the first hours of the coup, gave him considerable prestige within the ranks and allowed him to impose himself over his more senior and higher-ranked comrades.

WHY FRANCE HAD AN INTEREST IN OLYMPIO'S DEATH

To understand why France had an interest in Olympio's death, one must return to what was truly at stake at the beginning of that night of January 12, 1963. Olympio was on the verge of departing for Paris to officially sign Togo's exit from the CFA franc monetary zone, the neocolonial system controlled by Paris. In 1962, he had approved the creation of a Togolese central bank to issue an independent national currency, a move that had deeply aggravated his relations with the de Gaulle regime, which demanded that the young Togolese government pay France 800 million francs as a "colonial debt" for infrastructure built during colonization, as a condition for having its own currency.

Olympio had refused to pay this colonial debt, refused to join the African and Malagasy Union (UAM), and chosen to seek German rather than French assistance whenever foreign aid was required. The African and Malagasy Union was a political and economic cooperation organization founded in September 1961 in Antananarivo, Madagascar, grouping the newly independent francophone African states closely aligned with France. While his neighbors rushed to Antananarivo to sign the instruments of their own economic vassalage, Sylvanus Olympio was working with his friend Sékou Touré of Guinea on what would become the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), a platform of continental sovereignty founded on the dignity of peoples rather than deference to former metropolises.

For Paris, his independence and his intransigence in detaching himself fully from France constituted a threat that the Françafrique could not tolerate. The soldiers who killed him were former French colonial army troops, veterans of the Indochina and Algeria wars, who had recently been demobilized by Paris. They had not been sent home with their savings and pensions. Paris had used them to fight its imperial wars and then abandoned them, while

ensuring they remained available for another mission, should the need arise.

On September 24, 1962, Olympio had rejected the personal request of Étienne Eyadéma, a sergeant in the French army, to join the Togolese army. On January 7, 1963, Kléber Dadjo had once again presented a request to enroll ex-French soldiers, and Olympio reportedly tore up the petition. The coup's pretext was thus ready-made: frustrated soldiers, an intransigent president, and a salary dispute. But behind this pretext lay a deeper reality: Olympio refused to integrate into the army of a free state men whose entire training had consisted of suppressing independence movements, killing Algerians, Vietnamese, Cameroonians, Malagasy, Africans seeking their liberation. He knew what these soldiers were: instruments of empire, potentially reconverted into instruments of his own destruction.

ISRAEL'S ENTRY INTO TOGOLESE HISTORY

It is within this context — traversed by French interests, American complicity, and the personal ambition of a handful of sergeants — that Israel enters the history of Togo. Israel had opened an embassy in Togo as early as 1962, under Olympio's presidency, and it was the first Israeli embassy in Africa where a Nahal (Fighting Pioneer Youth) military framework had been established. The relationship with Olympio was described by the Israeli Foreign Ministry as good. What would transform it into something infinitely more intimate was precisely the murder, and the succession of governments that resulted from it.

Nicolas Grunitzky, Olympio's brother-in-law (half-brother of his wife Dina), recalled from Paris to assume the presidency, immediately understood the terms of his installation. His first official act was to align Togo with the African and Malagasy Union (UAM), the pro-French bloc. He dissolved parliament, governed alone, and busied himself satisfying each of the foreign powers that had an interest in seeing Olympio removed. Among those powers was Israel. And the Grunitzky regime's gratitude was expressed not only in diplomatic corridors.

There exists a photograph from this period that merits particular attention. It shows President Grunitzky bent over the chest of Golda Meir, then Israeli Foreign Minister, pinning upon her the Order of the Mono, Togo's highest state decoration. The scene unfolded less than two years after the assassination of President Olympio, of whom Grunitzky was merely the imposed successor. A review by the Israeli Foreign Ministry dated March 1964 noted that relations had grown closer under the Grunitzky government, which showed a "willingness to respond to our requests in diplomatic matters."

THE SECOND COUP: EYADÉMA SEIZES ALL POWER (1967)

Exactly four years after the assassination of Sylvanus Olympio, in January 1967, the Togolese people took to the streets to demand what had been stolen from them: free elections, the legitimacy of a government they had not chosen. Grunitzky, installed by Eyadéma's bayonets and endorsed by Paris, had never convinced anyone of his legitimacy, and four years of imposed rule had produced what oppression always produces: the street.

On the night of January 12–13, 1967, the streets of Lomé were nearly deserted. Near the presidential residence, several government members arrived. At 1 a.m., a second group arrived, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Étienne Eyadéma Gnassingbé, army chief of staff. At 5:30 a.m., Eyadéma announced on national radio the army's removal of Grunitzky in order to end the "political confusion."

Kléber Dadjo was named interim president of Togo as president of the National Reconciliation Committee, a post he held from January 14 to April 14, 1967. Dadjo was the most senior Togolese soldier in the French army. He had served in the British army during World War II and then in the French army in Indochina and Algeria. He was the institutional guarantee of the coup — the most senior, the highest-ranking, the one whose presence lent an appearance of military legitimacy to a seizure of power that had in reality been orchestrated by Eyadéma.

On April 14, 1967, on the orders of French Ambassador Claude Rostain, Eyadéma overthrew his patron Kléber Dadjo through two ordinances: Ordinance No. 15 designating the President of the Republic, and Ordinance No. 16 dissolving the National Reconciliation Committee and forming the government. The handover was not violent. Kléber Dadjo was named Minister of Justice in Eyadéma's first government. Exhausted by years of violent wars, he retired at 55 to his home village of Siou, where he became canton chief.

The most revealing testimony on France's role in this sequence is Jacques Foccart's own, the Élysée's Africa man, who wrote in his memoirs: "The deposition of Grunitzky, replaced by Eyadéma in 1967, came at the instigation of Paris: because there constantly operates, in this former non-commissioned officer of the French army, a deep Francophilia, a French patriotism, one might say."

THE REQUEST TO ISRAEL AND THE SURVIVAL CONTRACT

When Eyadéma took power in April 1967, completing the cycle that had begun with Olympio's murder, his first priority was to reassure the Israeli ambassador of the relationship's continuity. In the midst of the Six-Day War, on June 7, 1967, Eyadéma met Ambassador Liba and declared that he was "our friend in heart and soul, and that Togo is our sincere friend." What cemented the relationship was then articulated with frankness in Israeli diplomatic cables. A diplomat reported: "Eyadéma's problem is his physical security, meaning his survival... In my estimation, he will be ready for actions only if it can be proven that he can trust Israel in all matters concerning his personal security and thus the security of his regime."

The man who had killed Olympio now lived in constant fear of being eliminated by the same method. His request to Israel was not ideological but existential. And Israel, which needed African votes at the United Nations and markets for its burgeoning security industry, accepted the terms of the contract without the slightest hesitation.

THE ARMED RESISTANCE AND THE SHADOW OF GILCHRIST OLYMPIO

What the Israeli diplomat did not write in his cable, but which both parties knew precisely, was that the threat on Eyadéma's life had a name, a face, and a justification that traced back exactly

to January 13, 1963: Gilchrist Olympio, youngest son of the assassinated president. In 1967, the very year Eyadéma consolidated his power alone, Gilchrist founded from abroad the Togolese Movement for Democracy, an armed resistance infrastructure.

In February 1976, a former Canadian army colonel, Tom Finan, proposed a coup in Togo to four members of the British SAS. In September 1977, another team assembled by the same Finan was in Togo drawing up plans. The operation, planned for October 15, 1977, was to directly attack Eyadéma's vehicle. Two days before the planned date, the American ambassador, informed by British intelligence, told the Togolese president of the plot. The operation failed, but its revelation produced exactly what Eyadéma knew how to exploit.

A few months later, one David Tomkins, who claimed to be an explosives expert, contacted President Eyadéma to reveal the affair's inside story. His declarations, recorded by the authorities, were splashed across the front page of Togo Presse. He revealed that the true authors of the plot were the sons of former President Olympio. Tomkins, after receiving a more than considerable sum, quietly left Togo. And Gilchrist Olympio was sentenced to death in absentia.

In 1985, a series of bombings in Lomé was attributed to the Togolese Movement for Democracy. In 1986, an assault led by an armed commando, infiltrated from Ghana, claimed several lives. The attack of September 23, 1986 killed thirteen people and wounded twenty-five.

It was precisely within this context of real and persistent threat that Israel provided what no other power could offer with the same effectiveness: a close-protection doctrine forged in decades of asymmetric warfare, agents trained to counter exactly this type of commando operation, and the absolute discretion that only a relationship operating outside ordinary diplomatic channels could guarantee. Eyadéma survived several assassination attempts during his reign. This man, whose security paranoia had become a feature of governance, would build with Israel a relationship of total dependency: medical, military, technological, and diplomatic.

THE OFFICIAL RUPTURE AND THE UNOFFICIAL CONTINUITY (1973–1987)

This relationship had nevertheless been officially suspended in October 1973, when Togo, like virtually all member states of the Organisation of African Unity, severed diplomatic ties with Israel under pressure from the Arab League and the Gulf petro-monarchies in the wake of the Yom Kippur War. The rupture, however, was only a facade. The Mossad could mobilize its efforts only modestly for minor matters, such as maintaining personal relations with the presidents of Togo or Gabon. The absence of official relations did not prevent economic and above all military ties. Security firms ensured close protection for certain African leaders, as in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Zaire, Togo, and Gabon. Diplomacy had simply shifted into the shadows, where it had always been most effective.

Togo restored official diplomatic relations with Israel in June 1987, following in a progressive movement Zaire in May 1982, Liberia in August 1983, and Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon in 1986. The timing was not a coincidence: it came the year after the most serious assault ever

mounted against the regime, that of September 1986.

It was in this context that, on June 9, 1987, Togo announced the restoration of official relations with Israel, followed on June 14 by an official visit from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to Lomé. At the airport, Shamir was welcomed by young women in traditional dress who bowed to the ground. The Israeli newspaper Maariv reported that the women danced the Hora while singing "David King of Israel." Shamir wore sunglasses, in what appeared to be a salute to President Eyadéma, known for never removing his dark glasses, and together they greeted the crowd from the open roof of the Mercedes carrying them along Lomé's boulevard.

Shamir's 1987 visit to Lomé was not an ordinary gesture of African policy. It constituted the public formalization of a relationship that had existed unofficially since the day after the 1963 coup. It signaled to the world, and above all to the heirs of the Olympist project who had sworn to overthrow the regime, that Lomé now enjoyed the explicit and visible support of a state whose security capabilities were universally recognized.

THE EXHAUSTION OF RESISTANCE

What followed belongs to the history of resistance's exhaustion. Gilchrist Olympio, nicknamed the Marshal, long an opponent of the Gnassingbé Eyadéma dictatorship, became president of the Union of Forces of Change, a political party allied with the regime since 2010 under a governing agreement. The son of the man Eyadéma had killed allied himself with that man's son. History had not delivered justice. It had simply worn down the last resistances until capitulation.

Sylvanus Olympio was killed because he wanted a sovereign Togo, economically independent, militarily modest. What Israel came to celebrate in Lomé in 1987, and what the regime had ultimately imposed even on its most tenacious adversaries, was the exact inverse of that project: a militarized, dependent, and resigned Togo.

There remains a question this first text has raised without fully answering: why has the Togolese people, who have fought for their freedom since 1963, not yet prevailed? The answer does not lie in the courage of Togolese people, which is documented and undeniable. It lies in what they are fighting without always being able to name it: an apparatus of repression whose components were designed in Tel Aviv, assembled in Lomé, and financed by the resources of a people who did not know what was being built with their money. The second text will name these components, one by one.

CONCLUSION

What 1963 produced was not merely a regime. It was a system. A system in which murder opens doors, in which dependency is rewarded, in which loyalty to foreign powers replaces accountability to a people. Sylvanus Olympio was killed because he refused this system. He refused the franc zone. He refused the UAM. He refused to integrate into the army of a free state men trained in colonial repression. He wanted a Togo that would answer only to its own citizens. He was shot for it.

What this first text has attempted to establish is the genealogy of what succeeded him. Eyadéma, who had pulled the trigger, built his survival on a simple demand: protect me. Israel, which needed African votes and markets for its security industry, responded to that demand without conditions of form and without any requirement for transparency. The relationship that resulted was not a form of inter-state cooperation. It was a survival contract concluded between a murderer turned head of state and a foreign power ready to guarantee that survival in exchange for unwavering loyalty.

This contract survived the 1973 diplomatic rupture. It survived the 1985 bombings, the 1986 assault, the 1990 demonstrations. It survived the very death of Eyadéma, en route to Israel in February 2005 for medical treatment. His son Faure inherited the contract along with the palace and the military apparatus. And Gilchrist Olympio, whose father had been shot in the courtyard of the American embassy, ended up allying with the regime in 2010. History had not delivered justice. It had simply worn down the last resistances until capitulation.

What this text has not yet said, because it belongs to the texts that follow, is the detail of what this contract concretely built: the surveillance systems installed by Israeli experts at the ANR, the special forces training by YAMAM contractors, the Pegasus licenses that transformed the phones of Togolese bishops and journalists into instruments of their own surveillance, and the exact financial cost that the Togolese people paid for all of this without ever being informed. What the first text has established is the genealogy. The texts that follow will document the price.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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Farida Bemba Nabourema — Disillusioned African Citizen

Series: THE GUARDIANS OF THE THRONE — Israel and Togo: Anatomy of a Strategic Complicity

All texts, archives, and reference documents are available for free download at www.togo-israel.com

TEXT II

THE ARCHITECTURE OF REPRESSION

*Arms Trade, Surveillance
and Diplomatic Loyalty
1987–2021*

TEXT II

THE ARCHITECTURE OF REPRESSION

Arms Trade, Surveillance, and Diplomatic Loyalty in Service of a Dictatorship (1987–2021)

By Farida Bemba Nabourema

Disillusioned African Citizen

Estimated reading time: 20–30 minutes



Faure Gnassingbé and Shimon Peres during an official meeting in Jerusalem. This image illustrates sixty years of a relationship this series proposes to dismantle.

This second text documents how Israel responded to the Gnassingbé regime's demand for survival: by selling the tools of its own perpetuation. Military training forged in the occupied Palestinian territories, surveillance equipment that transformed the phones of bishops and journalists into espionage instruments, agents trained to infiltrate resistance movements from within. This is not cooperation. It is a service rendered to a regime against its own people.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This second text of the series *The Guardians of the Throne* documents, on the basis of verifiable primary and secondary sources, the profound, durable, and structurally complicit nature of the relationship between the State of Israel and the Togolese military regime since 1987.

On security cooperation: Israel has been training and equipping Togolese security forces since at least the 1990s. Israeli private contractors, veterans of the YAMAM and the Shin Bet, trained ANR agents in intelligence techniques developed in the occupied Palestinian territories. Mer Group, an Israeli holding company whose senior executives are former Mossad agents, holds a contract worth 20 million euros per year with the ANR.

On the Pegasus spyware: Togo is among the eleven confirmed clients of NSO Group identified by the Pegasus Project. Documented targets include journalists, political opponents, and — in an unprecedented development — members of the clergy, including Bishop Benoît Alowonou. Pegasus is classified as a weapon by Israel, and each export requires Ministry of Defense approval.

On the arms trade: Togo, a country with no arms industry, regularly appears in records of illicit transfers. For the 2019–2020 period, the Institute for Science and International Security attributes between five and ten alleged violations of UN sanctions against North Korea to it.

On the diplomatic counterpart: Togo votes systematically with Israel in all international forums. In December 2017, it was the sole African state among the nine to vote against the resolution condemning the American recognition of Jerusalem. Its Foreign Minister publicly declared at AIPAC that this support was total and systematic.

Keywords: *Togo, Israel, Mer Group, NSO Group, Pegasus, YAMAM, ANR, Faure Gnassingbé, surveillance, arms trade, North Korea, UN, AIPAC.*

INTRODUCTION: THE PERIPHERAL LOGIC AND ITS AFRICAN VICTIMS

To understand how Israel became so deeply implicated in the survival of a West African dictatorship, one must trace back to the doctrinal foundations of Tel Aviv's African policy. From the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, Israeli diplomacy was built around an explicit strategy known as the "periphery doctrine," formulated by Prime Minister Ben Gurion and his Mossad chief, Isser Harel: forge relations with newly independent nations, particularly in Africa, to circumvent the diplomatic isolation imposed by the Arab states' boycott and build a support network at the United Nations.

Israel sought to create commercial and diplomatic ties and obtain UN support by starting at the periphery, establishing connections with nations seeking independence from colonialism, primarily in Africa. One of these countries' primary needs was weapons, which Israel was happy to sell from its surpluses.

Togo entered this strategic horizon as a test case for this model. What Israel offered Africa in exchange for votes and diplomatic loyalty was formulated with remarkable clarity by its own agents: weapons, military training, and internal security expertise whose value for regimes primarily seeking to survive was inestimable. Military exports are intended to obtain political achievements for Israel, such as UN votes and support in other international forums, the renewal or creation of diplomatic relations. Human rights issues and international law seem to matter little to Israeli decision-makers.

Togo, within this architecture, is not a collateral victim of a general African policy. It is a case study — the one in which the relationship between Israel and an African regime has been the longest, the most intimate, the most technically sophisticated, and the most devastating for the people concerned.

I. SECURITY AND MILITARY COOPERATION: TRAINING THE TORTURERS

1.1 The Training of Security Forces

The military cooperation between Israel and Togo has never been documented in its most operational details by public sources, for the obvious reason that neither party had an interest in its publicity. But substantial elements are now documented. Among the African countries with which Israel conducted military and training cooperation, Togo featured alongside Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea — all non-democratic states.

Israel trains units responsible for protecting presidential regimes in African states. This occurs in Cameroon, Togo, and Equatorial Guinea — non-democratic states, some of them dictatorships, that kill, plunder, and oppress their citizens.



Faure Gnassingbé during a military inspection in Israel, flanked by IDF officers. These visits include demonstrations of security techniques and equipment that the Togolese regime acquires within its bilateral cooperation framework.

The precise nature of this training is illuminated by more recent revelations. To train Togolese military personnel in intelligence techniques, Hagai Peleg, the former commander of YAMAM — an elite Israeli police counter-terrorism unit — regularly deployed private contractors in the country through his company ASI. YAMAM is an elite unit whose methods were developed and refined in the context of the military occupation of the Palestinian territories. Those same methods were thus exported, through a private company run by the unit's former commander, to train the intelligence agents of a West African dictatorship. What was developed to control a population under occupation served to train those who control a population under dictatorship.

1.2 Mer Group and the Equipment of the ANR

The Israeli Homeland Security holding Mer Group secured a contract worth 20 million euros per year to equip the security services — the ANR foremost among them — with cyber solutions, sensitive infrastructure protection hardware, and detection technologies. The holding also takes charge of training intelligence agents and special forces. Mer Group counts among its ranks a significant number of former Mossad and Shin Bet agents.

An annual contract of twenty million euros represents, for a country whose GDP per capita is one of the lowest in West Africa, a considerable sum. These funds, drawn from the resources of a state that cannot adequately fund its schools or hospitals, have served to pay Mossad and Shin Bet veterans to build and operate the surveillance architecture that allows the regime to monitor, infiltrate, and neutralize any form of organized opposition.

A handful of senior Israeli security officials have access to the Togolese capital, including Yoram Cohen, former head of the Shin Bet, who met with Faure Gnassingbé. The personal visit of the head of one of the world's most powerful intelligence services to Lomé, to meet the head of state of a country of eight million people, testifies to the depth and institutional character of the relationship.

1.3 The ANR: Composition and Infiltration of the Opposition

The National Intelligence Agency (ANR) is responsible for a range of activities including intelligence gathering, foreign intelligence, counter-terrorism, counter-espionage, and surveillance. The service is closely tied to the Gnassingbé regime and is frequently mired in controversy, notably for its resort to torture. Its mandate includes “monitoring individuals or groups, domestic or foreign, suspected of engaging in activities detrimental to state security.”

The ANR is composed not only of professional military personnel and intelligence agents, but of a transversal network that incorporates police officers, lawyers, civil society actors, journalists, and even Togolese magistrates. The most pernicious practice of the ANR is its infiltration of opposition movements, including the creation of phantom political parties whose real objective is to fragment authentic democratic coalitions, collect intelligence on their leaders, and demoralize activists through an impression of pervasive corruption. In 2012, the service was placed under scrutiny by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights over allegations of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and political opponents.

II. THE PEGASUS SPYWARE AND THE SURVEILLANCE OF TOGOLESE CIVIL SOCIETY

2.1 Togo as an Identified Client of NSO Group

One of the most documented and revealing dimensions of Israeli complicity in Togolese repression is the deployment of the Pegasus spyware, produced by the Israeli company NSO Group, whose exports require explicit approval from the Israeli Ministry of Defense. The Israeli government has long considered Pegasus a crucial tool of its foreign policy and has treated NSO as a de facto arm of the state, granting licenses to numerous countries with which it hoped to cultivate stronger security and diplomatic ties.

A massive data leak revealed that Togo was among the eleven countries identified as potential NSO clients, alongside Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

2.2 The Targets: Opponents, Journalists, Clergy

The mapping of identified targets in Togo is particularly striking because it demonstrates that the Israeli spyware was used not against terrorists or criminals, but against the entire spectrum of organized civic dissent. The Citizen Lab identified a Pegasus operator that appeared to focus primarily on Togo, described as an unwavering Israeli ally whose long-serving president has resorted to torture and excessive force against a peaceful opposition.

Raymond Houndjo, a candidate for the Lomé mayoral race and prominent member of the opposition Alliance Nationale pour le Changement, was targeted in April and May 2019, coinciding with national demonstrations calling for respect of presidential term limits. The demonstrations planned by the opposition were largely banned by the government. On April 13, 2019, demonstrators were violently dispersed by armed security forces, with one person killed and many wounded. Dozens of journalists, opposition leaders, and human rights defenders were detained; 19 were subsequently sentenced to prison terms.

The extension of surveillance to members of the Church constitutes the most troubling dimension of this picture. Bishop Benoît Alowonou and five other government critics were among those warned by WhatsApp that their phones had been targeted, in what was reported as the first known case of the spyware being used against members of the clergy. A senior Citizen Lab researcher described this targeting as “deeply troubling.”

In 2021, the phone numbers of at least three other Togolese journalists — Ferdinand Ayité, Luc Abaki, and Komlanvi Ketohou — appeared on the Pegasus Project list of numbers allegedly selected for surveillance. Ferdinand Ayité, one of the most courageous investigative journalists in Togolese history, and Carlos Ketohou were ultimately forced into exile. They were surveilled with a weapon that the Israeli state classified as such and whose export it personally approved.

III. TOGO AS AN ARMS TRAFFICKING CORRIDOR: TREATY VIOLATIONS

3.1 The Arms Trade Treaty and Togo's Obligations

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2013 and entering into force in 2014, obliges states parties to assess the risks that authorized arms transfers might contribute to violations of international humanitarian law. Togo has signed the ATT, but its documented behaviors in illicit international arms flows reveal a state whose registries and structures serve as cover for transactions that international law explicitly prohibits.

3.2 Togo and Violations of North Korea Sanctions

Among the countries that accumulated between five and ten alleged violations of UN Security Council resolutions against North Korea for 2019–2020, Togo featured alongside Honduras, India, Italy, Panama, Singapore, and Vietnam. More specifically, among the countries whose flagged vessels were engaged in ship-to-ship transfers or direct deliveries to or from North Korea, Togo featured alongside China, the Cook Islands, Honduras, Panama, Sierra Leone, Vanuatu, and Vietnam.

The crucial question is this: where do the weapons that transit through its registries and flags toward North Korea come from, in a country that produces no armaments and has no military-industrial complex? What Togo produces is administrative complaisance erected as an exportable resource: false end-user certificates, flags of convenience, legal addresses for shell companies.

3.3 The Togolese Maritime Registry: A Tool of Concealment

There were meetings between the Bureau International d'Enregistrement, the Togolese government, and the U.S. State Department regarding deficiencies in the maritime registry, with several vessels found to be involved in drug trafficking. The Togolese flag is used as cover for illicit transport operations of a scale and variety that far exceed the capacities of a state Togo's size. This infrastructure did not emerge spontaneously; it developed within the context of a security and commercial relationship with actors who have extensive experience conducting operations their governments prefer to keep undocumented.

IV. THE FINANCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC COST FOR THE TOGOLESE PEOPLE

4.1 What the Regime Pays for Its Survival

Mer Group's contract with the ANR, valued at 20 million euros per year, alone represents a considerable sum for a country whose total national budget is around one and a half billion euros. This contract does not include the training by Hagai Peleg through ASI, the NSO Group Pegasus licenses, or the other security consulting services provided by the network of Israeli veterans operating in Lomé. The entire apparatus likely represents several tens of millions of euros per year, financed by a state in which 55% of the population lives below the poverty line.

4.2 The Vote Counterpart: The Diplomatic Cost

Foreign Minister Robert Dussey declared at the AIPAC convention in Washington: "Everyone knows that Togo supports Israel every time. This is not the first time we have voted for Israel in international forums. In Geneva, for example, at the Human Rights Council, Togo votes for Israel, it defends Israel's position. That is our position, and we defend it."

In December 2017, Togo was the sole African country among the nine states to vote against the UN resolution condemning the American recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. In 2023, Togo abstained on the resolution concerning Palestinian refugees' property and revenues, and on the resolution calling on Israel to assume financial responsibility for an oil spill that devastated the Lebanese coastline. In 2025, Togo again abstained on Palestinian refugees' property.

V. THE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND OFFICIAL VISITS

5.1 Chronology of Official Agreements

1962	Opening of the Israeli embassy in Lomé, first Nahal framework in Africa.
1987	Restoration of diplomatic relations. Official visit by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to Lomé. Reception with traditional dances and Hebrew songs at the airport.
May 2009	Israel and Togo sign a "pact of cooperation in the economic, agricultural, and educational fields."
2016	State visit by Faure Gnassingbé to Israel. Meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Peres. Deepened cooperation agreements.
2017	Minister Dussey's visit to Israel (January); Gnassingbé-Netanyahu meeting on the sidelines of the ECOWAS summit (June); second Gnassingbé visit to Israel (August); Dussey at the AIPAC convention in Washington (March).
2021+	Updating of bilateral cooperation. Joint economic forum. Integration of Israeli companies into the Adétikopé Industrial Platform (PIA).
Oct. 2023	Two days after October 7, the Israeli ambassador to Togo tweets a photo of her meeting with Gnassingbé, writing that the president expressed his condolences and "unreserved support" for Israel and its right to defend itself.

5.2 Faure Gnassingbé at the Western Wall, Jerusalem



Faure Gnassingbé at the Western Wall in Jerusalem during repeated official visits since 2012. The Togolese diaspora in democratic countries has the capacity to render these alliances politically unsustainable.

5.3 Eyadéma's Death En Route to Israel and the Dynastic Transmission

Faure was named president in 2005 after his father, who had ruled the country with an iron fist for 38 years, died while en route to receive medical care in Israel. The fact that Eyadéma died on a plane bound for Israel is, in the context of this research, a profoundly significant fact. It means that the Togolese regime and the Israeli state maintained a relationship sufficiently intimate and institutionalized that the medical treatment of an African head of state took place in Israel rather than in any of the major medical centers accessible from Lomé. It also means that this relationship of dependency was, for decades, total: medical, security-related, diplomatic, and military.

Faure Gnassingbé inherited not only his father's power and instruments of repression, but also the Israeli partnerships, which he has deepened and broadened. According to an Africa-Israel Summit conference brochure, President Faure has visited Israel three times since 2012, and Lomé systematically supports Jerusalem in international organizations. During Faure's summer 2016 visit to Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu publicly declared: "Togo is very important to us... Togo has been consistently friendly toward us and has stood up not only for Israel, but for the truth, again and again. We remember our friends and we appreciate them."

VI. ANALYSIS: THE STRUCTURE OF A COMPLICITY

6.1 What the Relationship Reveals About Israeli Foreign Policy in Africa

The Israeli-Togolese relationship is a textbook case of what researchers have called “arms diplomacy”: a state uses its exports of military hardware and security technologies to build networks of diplomatic loyalty with regimes it would otherwise have no reason to approach. Research has argued that Israel uses arms exports to strengthen its foreign relations in Africa, and that Israel's economic and political interests, as well as African countries' interests in regime survival, outweigh considerations of human security.

Eitay Mack, a human rights lawyer working to end Israeli military assistance to regimes committing war crimes, stated: “The benefits for Israel are not measured only in money. Often more important are the diplomatic and strategic alliances that Israel can obtain from this arms trade.”

6.2 What the Relationship Reveals About the Persistence of the Togolese Dictatorship

The extraordinary resilience of the Togolese regime against all attempts at popular liberation since 1990 is not explained solely by the brutality of security forces or French complicity. It is also explained by the fact that the regime has benefited from technical support in surveillance and counter-insurgency from a state that possesses, in this regard, the most extensive and sophisticated experience in the contemporary world. A regime that can monitor its opponents' phones, infiltrate their meetings, identify their funding sources, and anticipate their movements using technologies developed to control a population under military occupation has a considerable structural advantage over its adversaries. Togolese people have not lacked courage. They have lacked information about what they were truly facing.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between Israel and the Gnassingbé regime is not a peripheral anomaly in the history of Israeli foreign policy in Africa. It is, in many respects, its most complete and durable expression. It combines all elements of the model: the sale of weapons and surveillance systems, the training of security forces, personal protection guarantees for the head of state, the construction of an intelligence infrastructure oriented toward domestic repression, the infiltration of opposition movements, and in return, unwavering diplomatic loyalty in all international bodies where African votes matter to Israel.

The Togolese people pay for this relationship in several ways: financially, through the considerable sums drawn from a meager national budget to fund Israeli contractors and their systems; politically, through the diplomatic isolation that pro-Israeli loyalty imposes on Togo within the African community; and humanly, through the constant refinement of the tools used to monitor, infiltrate, and silence those among them who dare to stand up.

This text, like the entire series, was written with a simple conviction: one cannot dismantle what one cannot see, and one cannot see what one refuses to look squarely in the face. The third text of this series will document the total cost of this relationship in precise figures, and the fourth will propose the pathways to dismantling it. But first, it was necessary to name the components of the mechanism. That is what this second text has attempted to do.

The liberation of Togo passes, among other necessary conditions, through transparency about this system. For a struggle that cannot name its real enemy cannot defeat it.

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Farida Bemba Nabourema — Disillusioned African Citizen

Series: THE GUARDIANS OF THE THRONE — Israel and Togo: Anatomy of a Strategic Complicity

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TEXT III

ARMS TRAFFICKING AND IMPUNITY

*The Heavy Toll Paid by
the Togolese People
1993–2026*

TEXT III

ARMS TRAFFICKING AND IMPUNITY

The Heavy Toll Paid by the Togolese People (1993–2026)

By Farida Bemba Nabourema
Disillusioned African Citizen
Estimated reading time: 20–30 minutes

20M EUR/year

Mer Group Contract (ANR
surveillance, annual)

16.14M USD

Bayraktar TB2 Drones (3 aircraft,
2022)

10+ Bn CFA

Telephone intercepts (installation
2009)

18 false EUCs

False UNITA certificates (Bulgaria,
1997–1998)

5–10 violations

Alleged N. Korea sanctions violations
(2019–2020)

9 UN votes

Sole African country against
Jerusalem resolution 2017

This third text is an attempt at accounting. Not abstract accounting, but accounting that every Togolese citizen should be able to read, understand, and refuse. It documents the financial, diplomatic, and human cost of sixty years of complicity between the State of Israel and the Gnassingbé dynasty, paid in full by a people who never approved the principle and never benefited from the dividends.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This third text of the series *The Guardians of the Throne* documents the financial, diplomatic, and human cost of the security relationship between the Republic of Togo and the State of Israel over more than six decades. It is organized around three distinct but structurally linked categories of costs.

The direct financial cost: Legal military acquisitions and surveillance contracts whose cost the Togolese people bear without ever having approved the principle. The annual contract of 20 million euros with Mer Group, the acquisition of three Bayraktar TB2 drones for 16.14 million dollars, and the 2009 installation of a system for the systematic interception of all communications for over 10 billion CFA francs.

The international legal cost: Documented violations of embargoes on UNITA Angola between 1997 and 2000, including 18 false end-user certificates, and violations of North Korea sanctions between 2016 and 2020, including between 5 and 10 alleged incidents involving the Togolese maritime registry.

The diplomatic cost: The systematic isolation of Togo from its natural African partners through a UN voting policy aligned with Israel. In December 2017, Togo was the only African state among nine to vote against the Jerusalem resolution, alongside Israel, the United States, and a collection of Pacific micro-states.

Historical context: These costs are embedded in the broader context of the Israeli defense industry, built from the 1970s on the model of discreet sales to regimes the international community refused to arm. Israel is now ranked seventh largest global exporter of major arms (SIPRI, 2026), representing 4.4% of world exports, but it is its invisible trade — surveillance, training, interception — that constitutes the essence of its relationship with Togo.

Keywords: Togo, Israel, arms trafficking, UNITA, North Korea, Mer Group, Bayraktar TB2, ANR, UN, Jerusalem, Eyadéma, Faure Gnassingbé, SIPRI.

INTRODUCTION

In February 2005, Gnassingbé Eyadéma died aboard a French military aircraft above the Mediterranean. He had urgently left Lomé to travel to Israel, where he was to receive cardiac care. He never arrived. This man, who had spent thirty-eight years selling his people the image of an invincible and eternal leader, died in the air, between two continents, en route to the country that had made his survival a priority since 1967. There is in this death something that resembles a symbol despite itself: the dictator who had survived only through his foreign alliances died precisely in the act of rejoining them, too late.

What the regime he had built continued to do without him is pay. To pay with a regularity and amplitude that Togolese people, absorbed in daily survival, have never been able to measure in their totality. This third text is an attempt at accounting. Not abstract accounting, but accounting that every Togolese citizen should be able to read, understand, and refuse.

The data that follows are not estimates. They are documented in official UN reports, in publicly accessible defense databases, in specialist press articles, and in partially declassified documents. They constitute the visible face of a financial relationship whose hidden face, by definition, will never be entirely known.

I. WHAT TOGO BOUGHT, AND WHAT IT COST

1.1 The Bayraktar TB2 Combat Drones

Between 2021 and 2022, the Gnassingbé regime signed an agreement with the Turkish company Baykar for the acquisition of three Bayraktar TB2 combat drones. The estimated cost of this transaction is approximately sixteen million, one hundred and forty thousand U.S. dollars for the three aircraft.¹ These drones now operate from Niamtougou base. Their acquisition followed a meeting between Faure Gnassingbé and Turkish President Erdoğan in Lomé in October 2021.

Sixteen million dollars for three aircraft in a country where more than fifty-five percent of the population lives below the poverty line, that produces not a single component of this equipment, that lacks the industrial infrastructure for autonomous maintenance, and whose national education budget struggles to cover the operating costs of public schools. It is a sum that would suffice to build hundreds of classrooms, hire thousands of teachers, fund maternal health programs in northern regions where infant mortality remains among the highest in West Africa.

1.2 The Mer Group Contract — 20 Million Euros Per Year

The heaviest line in this accounting, the one that renews every year with the regularity of a subscription, is that of the contract with Mer Group, the Israeli Homeland Security holding company whose executives are veterans of the Shin Bet and Unit 8200. This contract amounts to twenty million euros per year.² Twenty million euros, every year, to equip the National Intelligence Agency with cyber systems, sensitive infrastructure protection hardware, detection technologies, and to provide training for intelligence agents and special forces.

Twenty million euros that appear in no parliamentary debate, that were never submitted for approval by any democratic body, and whose financier and target is, in both cases, the Togolese people.

1.3 Interception Equipment Installed in 2009

In 2009, an Israeli expert installed at the ANR a device enabling the systematic reading of all emails entering and leaving Togo. This equipment cost more than ten billion CFA francs, approximately fifteen million euros.³ A voice recognition system enabling telephone voice identification was acquired around 2019. These two pieces of equipment predate the Mer Group contract. They represent the foundational layer of a surveillance infrastructure built progressively, layer by layer, with a coherence and continuity that only stable political leadership can guarantee.

1.4 Classic Military Acquisitions

To this must be added more conventional military acquisitions that trace, over the long term, the portrait of an army whose construction logic is not national defense but the protection of a regime. Five Alpha Jets delivered by France and Germany in 1981, three Aerospatiale TB-30 Epsilon in 1986, one RPB 33 Agou patrol vessel received in July 2014.⁴ Each of these acquisitions was made in a country that produces no armaments, whose Armed Forces were built according to a logic of loyalty to the regime rather than national representation, and whose militarization rate has reached, at certain periods, a ratio of approximately two hundred and fifty inhabitants per soldier. This is not a national army. It is a regime army, financed by a people it was built to contain.

II. WHAT TOGO SOLD, AND WHAT IT COST THE WORLD

2.1 False Certificates for UNITA Angola (1997–2000)

Between 1997 and 2000, Togo served as the main operational base for UNITA Angola, the armed movement of Jonas Savimbi that the UN Security Council had repeatedly sanctioned since 1993. The UN Sanctions Monitoring Mechanism established that eighteen end-user certificates bearing Togo as the country of origin were false documents, produced to enable the purchase of weapons in Bulgaria that would then be channeled to UNITA.⁵ Among the documented materiel is the export of six thousand three hundred RPG-7 anti-tank rocket launchers.

Lomé served as a storage base, as a transit point for UNITA weapons and war diamonds, and as a residence for senior UNITA officials, among them Joaquim Ernesto Mulato, João Baptista Rodrigues Vindes, Marcelo Moisés Dachala known as “Karrica,” and Helder Mundombe known as “Boris.”

The Fowler Report, presented to the UN Security Council in March 2000, explicitly names President Eyadéma as playing an important role in supporting UNITA.⁶ This is not an allegation by an activist or opposition journalist. It is a mention in an official report presented to the UN Security Council. Human Rights Watch, in its March 2000 report, confirms this mention and recommends that Togo be declared a “sanctions breaker.” The Mechanism itself recommended that international organizations be discouraged from holding conferences in listed countries. This recommendation was not followed. Eyadéma presided over the OAU. And the flows continued.

2.2 Diamond Transactions via the “Presidency of Togo”

Paragraph 98 of report S/2001/363 documents UNITA diamond sales passing through the “Presidency of Togo” to a South African jeweler, whose documentation did not satisfy South African regulations.⁷ Senior UNITA officials Dachala and Mundombe used Lomé as a transit hub until 1999, before relocating to Ouagadougou under international pressure.

2.3 Violations of North Korea Sanctions (2016–2020)

Between 2016 and 2020, vessels flying the Togolese flag were implicated in commodity transfers with North Korean vessels sanctioned by the Security Council, in violation of resolutions 2321, 2375, and 2397. The Institute for Science and International Security documented between five and ten alleged violations involving Togo for the 2019–2020 period alone, ranking it alongside Honduras, India, Italy, Panama, Singapore, and Vietnam.⁸

One particularly documented case concerns the use of fake Togolese flags on four North Korean vessels that arrived at the Russian port of Kholmsk in 2017, transporting coal that operators were laundering as Russian coal before legally reselling it on international markets.⁹ In November 2022, Lloyd’s List reported meetings between the Bureau International d’Enregistrement, the Togolese government, and the U.S. State Department over these deficiencies, with the registry described as a source of “embarrassing” violations.¹⁰

Togo produces no weapons. It produces no coal. It produces no oil. What it produces is administrative complaisance erected as an exportable resource: false end-user certificates, flags of convenience, legal addresses for shell companies, operational bases for internationally sanctioned actors. The PCASED report on light weapons in West Africa (2004) explicitly links Togo and Burkina Faso to the issuance of false end-user certificates for transfers to UNITA.¹¹

III. WHAT TOGO VOTED, AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS

In December 2017, the UN General Assembly voted on a resolution declaring null and void the American decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. One hundred and twenty-eight states voted for this resolution. Nine voted against. Togo was the sole African state among those nine. The other eight were Israel, the United States, and a collection of Pacific micro-states whose direct dependence on American aid explains their voting behavior in documented fashion.

Foreign Minister Robert Dussey, minister since 2013, publicly declared at the AIPAC convention in Washington that Togo's support for Israel was constant and systematic, in all international forums including the Human Rights Council in Geneva.¹² He reported that President Gnassingbé "likes to assert that Israel holds the keys to the African challenge." He described Israel as his second home, spiritually and politically. This declaration, made in the presence of the American ambassador to the UN, constituted the explicit demonstration of a triangle of dependency: Togolese loyalty to Israel, Israeli access to American power corridors, benefits for the Togolese regime in terms of resilience against Washington's human rights pressures.

In 2023, Togo abstained on the resolution concerning Palestinian refugees' property and revenues, and on the resolution calling on Israel to assume financial responsibility for the oil spill that devastated the Lebanese coastline. In 2025, it abstained again on Palestinian refugees' property. These abstentions are not diplomatic nuances. They are calculated political acts that have the effect of isolating Togo from the near-unanimous position of the African continent and the Global South on the Palestinian question.

Two days after October 7, 2023, the Israeli ambassador to Togo published a photo of her meeting with Faure Gnassingbé, writing that the president had expressed his condolences and Togo's unreserved support for Israel and its right to defend itself.¹³ At the moment this statement was published, civilians were dying in Gaza. Faure Gnassingbé — whose father had been protected for thirty-eight years by Israeli security technology, whose regime was maintained by ASI contractors' training and Mer Group equipment, whose opponents' surveillance was assured by Pegasus — expressed his unreserved support. The circle was complete.

IV. THE ISRAELI ARMS TRADE IN AFRICA: THE STRUCTURAL CONTEXT

4.1 From Apartheid to Sub-Saharan Africa: The Logic of an Industry

By the late 1980s, Israel had become one of the world's leading providers of arms and security services, generating foreign currency revenues estimated at one and a half billion U.S. dollars annually, representing a third of the country's industrial exports.¹⁴ This power had been built on a simple logic: sell to those no one else wanted to arm.

The central client of this logic was apartheid South Africa. After the mandatory UN arms embargo of 1977 against Pretoria, Israel remained virtually the only alternative for many areas of military equipment, particularly aeronautical and ballistic technologies.¹⁵ Annual Israeli military exports to South Africa between 1974 and 1993 are estimated at six hundred million dollars.¹⁶ Israel was the last major violator of this embargo, maintaining its relationship with Pretoria throughout the 1980s, while virtually the entire international community had withdrawn.¹⁷

It was precisely during these years that unofficial relations with Togo, maintained despite the 1973 diplomatic rupture through Mossad channels and security contractor networks, continued to function. The end of the South African market with the ANC's arrival to power in 1994 did not create this model of discreet sales to African authoritarian regimes: it freed an industry already perfectly conditioned to this logic from its primary geographic constraint.

4.2 Industry Figures (2006–2026)

For the 2006–2010 period, Israel ranked as the eleventh largest global exporter of major arms, representing nearly two percent of international delivery volume.²⁰ Israeli defense equipment exports reached seven billion dollars in 2012, a twenty percent increase over 2011. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine, these exports reached twelve and a half billion dollars in 2022.²¹ In March 2026, SIPRI ranked Israel seventh among global exporters of major arms for the 2021–2025 period, representing four point four percent of global exports.²²

These figures, already considerable, do not account for what cannot be counted: surveillance systems, interception technologies, special forces training, security consultants' fees. These invisible elements are precisely what constitutes the essence of the relationship with Togo. Israel has been defined by the Small Arms Survey as the least transparent country in terms of security connections, alongside North Korea, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.¹⁸

4.3 State Approval of Every Transaction

Every export of surveillance technology or armaments by an Israeli company to a foreign government must be approved by the Israeli Ministry of Defense. When NSO Group sells Pegasus licenses to Togo, when Mer Group signs its annual twenty-million-euro contract, when ASI contractors land to train Togolese special forces, the Israeli state knows. It approves. It collects the diplomatic dividends of these transactions. For years, its companies have been training and arming the military units responsible for protecting repressive presidential regimes in Cameroon, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, and Togo.¹⁹ The boundary between the private sector and state policy is, in this industry, an administrative fiction constructed to shield the

state from the consequences of its own decisions.

CONCLUSION: WHO PAYS THE BILL

At the end of this accounting, the question is simple. Who pays the Mer Group contract at twenty million euros per year? Who pays the sixteen million dollars for the Bayraktar TB2 drones? Who pays the ten billion CFA francs for the interception equipment installed in 2009? Who pays the diplomatic costs of a UN vote that places Togo alongside Pacific micro-states against virtually all of Africa? Who pays the economic costs of a registry of convenience that exposes the country to international investigations and American pressure? Who pays the human costs of a surveillance infrastructure that transformed bishops' phones into espionage instruments, that put Loïc Lawson, Anani Sossou, Ferdinand Ayité, Luc Abaki, and Komlanvi Ketohou on Pegasus targeting lists, and that has monitored all emails entering and leaving Togolese territory since 2009?

It is not Faure Gnassingbé who pays. It is not Robert Dussey who pays. It is not the shareholders of Mer Group, listed on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange under the ticker CMER, who pay. It is Togolese people. It is the Togolese citizens whose taxes finance a security apparatus turned against them. It is the civil servants whose salaries are compressed so the intelligence budget remains intact. It is the patients who die in under-equipped hospitals while twenty million euros depart every year for an Israeli holding listed on the stock exchange. It is the children who learn in overcrowded classrooms while combat drones take off from Niamtougou.

This text does not claim exhaustiveness. The true depth of the financial relationship between the Togolese state and the Israeli security industry extends far beyond what public sources allow documenting with certainty. But the elements documented here are sufficient to establish a reality that official propaganda works to render invisible: the regime that has governed Togo since 1967 built its survival on a model of foreign dependency whose financial, diplomatic, and human cost is borne entirely by the Togolese people, without their ever having approved the principle or benefited from the dividends.

Eyadéma died en route to Israel. Faure inherited the palace, the military apparatus, and the debt. A debt that appears in no official balance sheet, that will never be repaid, and whose interest the Togolese pay every day without knowing its amount, or even its creditor. What Togo has paid over sixty years is the cost of its own oppression. The liberation of Togo passes, among other necessary conditions, through transparency about this cost. One cannot renegotiate a debt one does not know. One cannot dismantle a system one cannot name.

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Farida Bemba Nabourema — Disillusioned African Citizen

Series: THE GUARDIANS OF THE THRONE — Israel and Togo: Anatomy of a Strategic Complicity

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TEXT IV

DISMANTLING THE SYSTEM

*A Strategic Guide to Resistance
Against a Foreign-Backed Dictatorship*

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DISMANTLING THE SYSTEM

A Strategic Guide to Resisting a Foreign-Backed Dictatorship

By Farida Bemba Nabourema

Disillusioned African Citizen

Estimated reading time: 25–35 minutes



Faure Gnassingbé and Shimon Peres in Jerusalem. This image illustrates sixty years of a relationship this guide proposes to dismantle.

This fourth and final text draws the operational consequences of what the three preceding texts have documented. It is no longer about establishing the facts but about transforming them into levers. One cannot dismantle what one cannot see, and one cannot see what one refuses to look squarely in the face. The Guardians of the Throne have been named. It is time to bring them down.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This fourth text of the series *The Guardians of the Throne* draws the operational consequences of what the three preceding texts documented: the genealogy of a complicity dating to January 13, 1963, the systematic architecture of Israeli-Togolese repression, and the financial, diplomatic, and human cost of sixty years of this system. It proposes differentiated strategies according to actor categories.

For everyone (absolute prerequisite): Digital security is not optional. Pegasus can infect a phone with no click whatsoever. Bishop Alowonou was surveilled. Journalists Lawson, Sossou, Ayité, Abaki, and Ketohou were surveilled. Any strategy that ignores this reality is a condemned strategy.

For journalists: Translate existing documentation into French for Togolese audiences, build transnational journalist coalitions on the model of the Pegasus Project, investigate Mer Group's financial flows, listed on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange under the ticker CMER.

For activists: Shift to a compartmentalized cell structure, rigorously separate public and organizational activities, build a diversified resistance economy, form alliances with neighboring countries' movements facing similar repressive architectures.

For the diaspora: Systematic legislative lobbying, structured funding of resistance, direct alliance with Eitay Mack and Israeli human rights organizations that combat the export of Pegasus and repressive technologies.

Missing strategic alliance: Israeli human rights organizations need testimonies from Togolese victims. Togolese activists need their legal expertise. This contact does not yet exist institutionally. It must be established.

Keywords: *Resistance, digital security, Pegasus, ANR, Mer Group, Togolese diaspora, international advocacy, universal jurisdiction, Eitay Mack, Citizen Lab, Access Now, SecureDrop.*

INTRODUCTION: FROM KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION

The three preceding texts of this series have documented, with precision and sources, a multi-layered system. The first established the genealogy: how the murder of Sylvanus Olympio in the night of January 12–13, 1963 opened a door, and how Gnassingbé Eyadéma formulated as early as 1967 the demand that structures everything that followed — a request for personal protection addressed to a state whose security capabilities had no equivalent on the continent. The second documented the architecture of the Israeli response: the contract of twenty million euros per year with Mer Group to equip the ANR, the YAMAM training transposed to Lomé's barracks through ASI, the Pegasus licenses that transformed the phones of Bishop Alowonou, Loïc Lawson, Anani Sossou, Ferdinand Ayité, Luc Abaki, and Komlanvi Ketohou into instruments of their own surveillance. The third established the accounting: what the Togolese people pay financially, diplomatically, and humanly for a system they never approved and never benefited from.

This fourth text draws the consequences of all that precedes. Because documenting a system without identifying its dismantlement levers produces literature of defeat, not resistance. Because Togolese people have tried everything since 1963 — strikes, demonstrations, votes, legal proceedings, armed resistance from Ghana in 1986 that cost thirteen lives and left twenty-five wounded — and the reason these attempts have not sufficed lies not in their lack of determination, but in their ignorance of what they were truly fighting. One cannot dismantle a system one cannot name. Now that it is named, it can be attacked methodically.

I. ABSOLUTE PREREQUISITE: DIGITAL SECURITY AS A CONDITION OF SURVIVAL

Before any political, organizational, or public engagement, every person who claims allegiance to the resistance against the Gnassingbé regime must internalize an operational reality that is no longer speculative. The three preceding texts have documented it with sufficient precision that it is no longer contestable: phones are instruments of state surveillance. Pegasus, the spyware produced by NSO Group whose exports require explicit approval from the Israeli Ministry of Defense, can access a device without the user clicking on anything. It can activate the microphone, read encrypted messages, map contacts, locate position in real time.

Bishop Benoît Alowonou was surveilled by this software — the first documented case worldwide of Pegasus used against a member of the clergy. Journalists, political opponents, mayoral candidates have been targeted. If bishops are targets, no one is out of reach.

1

Strategic conversations are never held by phone, nor through any application installed on a phone, including Signal and WhatsApp, which remain vulnerable to a Pegasus infection. Strategic conversations take place in person, in verified physical spaces, between people whose real identity is known.

2

What you send by phone must be what you are prepared to see read by Colonel Ali Ezzo Tchakpélé, director of the ANR since 2018.

3

Systematically contact Access Now, the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto (which has published specific reports on the Togolese Pegasus operator), and Front Line Defenders. These organizations offer free training.

4

Use SecureDrop for any transmission of sensitive information. This platform exists precisely to allow people in vulnerable positions to transmit information without exposing themselves.

5

Treat infiltration as a structural risk: compartmentalization, rotation of responsibilities, clear protocols. The ANR's transversal network is documented in the second text of this series.

II. TO JOURNALISTS: DOCUMENT WHAT THE REGIME WANTS RENDERED INVISIBLE



Faure Gnassingbé during a military inspection in Israel flanked by IDF officers. Documenting these visits and their security implications is an urgent journalistic responsibility.

Ferdinand Ayité, Loïc Lawson, Anani Sossou, Komlanvi Ketohou: these names are symbols, but they are also operational cases whose circumstances must be studied and whose lessons must be integrated into the practice of every journalist covering Togo. What they endured — the infection of their phones by Israeli spyware approved by the Israeli Ministry of Defense, within a security relationship whose principal contract is worth twenty million euros per year — is not simply a crime against individuals. It is a crime against public information, against a people's capacity to know what is happening in their own country.

2.1 The Task of Translation

There is a considerable documentary mass on the Israeli-Togolese relationship: Citizen Lab reports on Pegasus in Togo, UN expert panel documents on North Korea sanctions violations involving the Togolese flag, Africa Intelligence articles on Mer Group and the ANR, Israeli diplomatic cables cited in The 7th Eye publications. Almost none of this has been translated, contextualized, and made accessible to Togolese people in their own language. The distance between a Citizen Lab report in English and a citizen in Kpalimé trying to understand why their phone may have been hacked is a real distance requiring genuine journalistic work.

2.2 Investigating Financial Flows

Mer Group's twenty-million-euro annual contract with the Togolese ANR leaves traces in Israeli commercial registries, in the company's annual reports as listed on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange under the ticker CMER, in its declarations to its principal shareholders — FIMI FIVE 2012 Ltd. at 36.6%, Haim Mer at 30.58%, Isaac Ben Bassat at 9.19%. This information is accessible, verifiable, and an investigative journalist who builds a source network in the Israeli security industry, or who collaborates with specialized Israeli journalists, can access data that the Togolese regime cannot censor from Lomé.

2.3 Building Transnational Journalist Coalitions

A Togolese journalist who co-produces an investigation within a consortium coordinated by an organization like Forbidden Stories — the very one that coordinated the Pegasus Project involving more than eighty journalists in ten countries — benefits from protection through multiplicity and an international resonance that the regime cannot stifle by simply summoning a publication director in Lomé. This model exists. It must be replicated specifically for the Togolese case.

III. TO ACTIVISTS AND MILITANTS: RETHINKING ORGANIZATION UNDER SURVEILLANCE

The golden rule every Togolese activist must internalize is this: the enemy you are fighting has access to your phone, your emails, potentially your meetings if they were prepared digitally. It probably knows your funding sources. It has infiltrated part of your networks. Working from this reality is not paranoia. It is the logical conclusion of the three preceding texts.

RESTRUCTURING	WHY	HOW
Cell structure	Limits damage of an ANR infiltration to a single cell	Each group knows only its own members and its superior contact
Public/organizational separation	Raymond Houndjo targeted by Pegasus during 2019 demonstration preparation	Rigorous protocols between public activity and internal coordination
Resistance economy	Single funding source = critical vulnerability	Diversified sources, decentralized funding tools
Legal training	Knowing your rights reduces damage from arrest	Numbers memorized, not stored on a phone that can be seized
Regional alliance	Benin, Ghana, Cameroon: similar repressive architectures with Israeli dimension	Regional network sharing resources, training, lawyers, platforms

IV. TO INTELLECTUALS AND ACADEMICS: PRODUCE THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ARMS

The Israeli-Togolese relationship is virtually absent from the francophone academic literature. To my knowledge, there exists no peer-reviewed article in French that specifically and in depth addresses the Israeli dimension of the Togolese dictatorship, the relationship between the deployment of Pegasus and the repression of the 2019 demonstrations, or the role of the Togolese maritime registry in violations of North Korea sanctions. This gap is an opportunity that Togolese researchers and specialists of Togo in universities around the world can and must seize.

A researcher who submits to a journal such as *Politique Africaine*, *African Affairs*, or *The Journal of Modern African Studies* a documented and rigorous article on the Israeli-Togolese security architecture produces something the regime cannot easily erase: a contribution to an international academic corpus, archived in university libraries worldwide, cited and thus multiplied. The Citizen Lab's documentation on Pegasus in Togo had the impact it did because it was produced by a recognized university institution, with a transparent methodology and verifiable data.

There is also theoretical work to accomplish: developing an analysis of Togolese totalitarianism that integrates its transnational dimension and its architecture of foreign support, not only French through the *Françafrique* that the first three texts situated precisely, but also Israeli. An academic corpus that fills this gap, taking the Togolese case as a study — from Olympio's assassination to the 2023 and 2025 UN votes — would be a lasting contribution to African political literature.

V. TO THE DIASPORA: TRANSFORM DISTANCE INTO LEVERAGE



Faure Gnassingbé at the Western Wall in Jerusalem during repeated official visits since 2012. The Togolese diaspora in democratic countries has the capacity to make these alliances politically untenable.

The Togolese diaspora, dispersed across France, the United States, Canada, Germany, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, constitutes potentially one of the most powerful levers for dismantling the system, precisely because it operates in jurisdictions where the regime has no direct coercive capacity. This potential is systematically underexploited, for two main reasons: the political fragmentation of the diaspora, and its chronic inability to transform indignation into sustained institutional action.

5.1 Systematic Legislative Advocacy

In every country where a significant Togolese diaspora resides, there exist parliamentarians, senators, and local elected officials who represent constituencies in which Togolese people live. These elected officials can pose questions to their governments about arms sales to authoritarian regimes, table resolutions, invite Togolese witnesses to parliamentary hearings. This advocacy work requires no considerable financial resources. It requires organization.

5.2 Alliance with Israeli Human Rights Organizations

In the specific case of the Israeli-Togolese relationship, advocacy must extend to Israeli civil society organizations themselves. Eitay Mack, the Israeli human rights lawyer with whom I have worked since 2021 to obtain partial declassification of documents relating to the Israel-Togo relationship before the Israeli court of justice, has built a jurisprudential dossier that Togolese activists must continue to feed. Internal pressure in Israel on the armament and surveillance export policy is real, documented, and partially effective. It needs testimonies from African victims to strengthen its arguments.

5.3 Structured Funding of Resistance

Not occasional fundraising to cover a demonstration's costs, but durable financial institutions: emergency funds for targeted human rights defenders, grants for Togolese journalists in exile such as those the third text has named, resources for digital security training, funding for independent academic research. These institutions must be transparent in their governance, diversified in their sources, and robust enough not to collapse at the first wave of repression.

VI. TO CIVIL SOCIETY: BUILD THE INSTITUTIONS THAT WILL OUTLAST THE REGIME

In the specific context of the fight against this system, Togolese civil society has a particular and urgent responsibility: the documentation of victims. Every Togolese citizen whose phone was infected by Pegasus, every activist whose communications were intercepted by the device installed in 2009 that systematically reads all emails entering and leaving Togo, every lawyer whose client consultations were compromised by surveillance, constitutes a potential victim of a crime that has a transnational dimension and that can, in theory, be prosecuted before international jurisdictions.

NSO Group is the subject of legal proceedings in the United States, initiated by WhatsApp/Meta. Togolese victims, represented by competent lawyers, could in theory join these proceedings or initiate new ones in countries whose laws permit the prosecution of extraterritorial crimes. Every international judicial procedure that cites Togo as a documented case of abuse produces a precedent, builds a body of evidence, and creates additional pressure on the actors involved — including the Israeli Ministry of Defense, which approved each of the Pegasus licenses we are discussing.

The consolidation of inter-denominational alliances constitutes the second urgent responsibility. Bishop Alwonou, whose phone was surveilled by Pegasus in what constitutes the first worldwide case of this software used against a member of the clergy, represents a category of actors that the regime identifies as threatening precisely because they are respected across the usual political divides. The fact that the regime surveils bishops is, paradoxically, proof that it fears them.

VII. TO TOGOLESE CIVIL SERVANTS: THE MARGINS FOR MANEUVER EXIST

This chapter is the most delicate to write, because it addresses people who are simultaneously inside the system and compelled to feed it in order to survive. It would be morally indecent to ask a Togolese civil servant to risk their life or that of their family for a political ideal from the relative safety of an address outside Togo. I am not doing that. What I am asserting, however, is that Togolese civil servants have margins for maneuver of which they are not always consciously aware.

The first form of internal resistance is the discreet preservation and transmission of information. A civil servant who, in the course of their duties, accesses documents on contracts between the regime and its foreign partners holds potentially precious information. SecureDrop exists precisely to allow people in vulnerable positions to transmit information without directly exposing themselves. A contract of twenty million euros per year with an Israeli holding whose board chairman was a lieutenant-commander in Unit 8200 of the Israeli army deserves that civil servants who know its exact details ask themselves what those details imply for the people they theoretically serve.

The second form is the calibrated refusal to participate in the most flagrant acts of repression. A magistrate who refuses to sign an arbitrary warrant, a police officer who does not strike a

demonstrator on the ground, an ANR agent who does not relay information likely to endanger an activist, all exercise real resistance whose cumulative effects contribute to the erosion of the repressive machine. Systems of oppression only function because enough people inside them choose, for understandable reasons, to make them function.

VIII. THE MISSING STRATEGIC ALLIANCE: ISRAELI HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS



Top: Faure Gnassingbé and Shimon Peres in Jerusalem. Center left: military inspection with IDF officers. Center right and bottom: visits to the Western Wall. These visits have a counterpart: the surveillance of Togolese bishops, journalists, and opponents by Pegasus.

There is a dimension of the resistance strategy that Togolese movements have never exploited, and that represents perhaps the most underestimated opportunity in everything this text proposes: the direct and sustained alliance with Israeli organizations that combat the export of weapons and repression technologies by their own government.

Eitay Mack, the Israeli human rights lawyer whose work I have cited throughout this series, has conducted legal proceedings before Israeli courts to compel the government to disclose details of its arms exports to regimes committing grave human rights violations. It was through this channel that I obtained, in 2022, a partial declassification of documents on the Israel-Togo relationship. These partial decisions constituted the starting point of the documentation this series presents. This institutional contact must become permanent, and must be joined by other actors of the Togolese movement.

This alliance is politically delicate, because it asks African resistance movements to distinguish between the State of Israel and Israeli citizens who combat that state's policies. This distinction

is difficult in the context of the genocide in Gaza. I understand that. But the strategy of Togo's liberation cannot afford ideological purities that exclude potential allies in the specific battle before us. An Israeli lawyer who spends years of their life contesting before their country's courts the exports of repressive technologies to African dictatorships is, in this specific and circumscribed struggle, an ally.

IX. THE TIMELINE: WHAT IS URGENT AND WHAT IS STRUCTURAL

HORIZON	PRIORITIES	KEY ACTORS
12 MONTHS (Urgent)	Digital security training for all active activists Victim database of documented surveillance Formal contact with Eitay Mack and Israeli organizations Publication accessible in French and Togolese languages	Journalists, activists, civil society, diaspora
3 YEARS (Structural)	Institutionalized diaspora solidarity fund Resistance lawyers' network Secured archives outside Togo Legal dossiers submitted to international jurisdictions Cross-border coalitions with neighboring countries	Diaspora, lawyers, intellectuals, civil society
LONG TERM (Strategic)	Credible political alternative with sufficient popular legitimacy Diplomatic cost of regime support made unbearable Irrefutable documentation accessible to international forums Coordinated pressure on Israel, France, African institutions	All actors in coalition

CONCLUSION: WHAT KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

I began this series by admitting that until 2021, I did not know what I know now about the depth of the relationship between Israel and the Gnassingbé regime. This discovery came to me in the course of my duties heading an organization that worked on the illicit proliferation of arms, and what I found following the thread of Togolese arms trade led me toward archives and documents whose implications far exceeded what I had anticipated. I left that organization eighteen months ago to devote my time to this work, because I knew that this type of documentation would compromise a research structure that was not created to address questions specific to Togo.

The system this fourth text proposes to dismantle is sophisticated, well-funded, and benefits from the complicity of two of the most technically advanced states in the world in matters of security and surveillance. It would be dishonest to claim that a resistance strategy, even a rigorous one, guarantees victory within a defined timeframe.

What I can say, however, is that every system of repression, however sophisticated, contains internal contradictions and points of vulnerability that organized, informed resistance can exploit. Israeli civil society combats the export of arms to repressive regimes. Israeli courts have sometimes compelled the government to disclose information — it was through this channel that I obtained, in 2022, a partial declassification of documents on the Israel-Togo relationship. NSO Group is under judicial pressure in multiple countries. The international community is progressively less tolerant of regimes that surveil their bishops with foreign software. Each of these contradictions is a space into which organized resistance can pour itself.

This guide is not a promise of victory. It is an invitation to treat the liberation of Togo as what it truly is: a long-term strategic project, requiring analysis, discipline, rigor, and solidarity, rather than repeated cycles of indignation and forgetting. We have wept enough over our dead in reaction. It is time to work at building a country in which we will no longer have to do so. The liberation of Togo passes, among all other necessary conditions, through the truth about Togo. And the truth about Togo, in all its complexity, includes Israel.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

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- Citizen Lab, University of Toronto (2020). *Nothing Sacred: Religious and Secular Voices for Reform in Togo Targeted with NSO Spyware*. First worldwide case of Pegasus against clergy.
- Amnesty International / Forbidden Stories (2021). *The Pegasus Project*. Togo among eleven confirmed NSO Group clients.
- Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) (January 2024). *Pegasus Spyware Used to Target Togolese Journalists Loïc Lawson and Anani Sossou*. New York.

ASSISTANCE RESOURCES FOR ACTIVISTS

- Access Now — digital security assistance for human rights defenders. accessnow.org
- Front Line Defenders — protection and digital security for human rights defenders. frontlinedefenders.org
- Citizen Lab, University of Toronto — technical research on spyware and victim assistance. citizenlab.ca
- SecureDrop — secure anonymous reporting platform. securedrop.org
- Forbidden Stories — international journalist consortium. forbiddenstories.org

INTERNATIONAL LEGAL REMEDIES

- Eitay Mack — Israeli human rights lawyer. Legal proceedings before Israeli courts on arms exports to repressive regimes.
- WhatsApp/Meta judicial proceedings against NSO Group before American courts. Ongoing case, citing Pegasus deployment in multiple countries including Togo.
- Universal jurisdiction — Togolese victims could theoretically join existing proceedings or initiate new ones in countries whose laws permit prosecution of extraterritorial crimes.

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ANNEX I

TOGO'S ARMS TRADE

*Documented Table of Transactions,
Violations and Arms Flows
1993–2022*

TOGO'S ARMS TRADE

TABLEAU DOCUMENTÉ DES TRANSACTIONS, VIOLATIONS ET FLUX D'ARMEMENTS

Document de Recherche | Farida Bemba Nabourema

Sources : Rapports ONU, SIPRI, ISIS, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International

PRÉAMBULE MÉTHODOLOGIQUE

Ce tableau documente deux catégories distinctes mais liées d'activité d'armement impliquant le Togo. La première catégorie est celle des **transactions illicites** : cas dans lesquels le Togo a servi de corridor, de registre de complaisance, ou de fournisseur de faux certificats d'utilisateur final pour contourner des embargos internationaux, notamment vers l'UNITA angolaise et la Corée du Nord. La seconde est celle des **transactions officielles** : acquisitions légitimes d'armements par les Forces Armées Togolaises. La distinction entre les deux est au cœur du problème : un État qui ne produit aucune arme et dont le budget militaire est ridiculement bas par rapport aux flux documentés ne peut être qu'un intermédiaire, non un acteur autonome du commerce des armes.

TABLEAU I : TOGO COMME CORRIDOR POUR L'UNITA ANGOLAISE (1993-2000)

#	Période	Nature	Matériel	Fournisseur	Destination	Source ONU	Résolution	Statut
1	1997-1998	Faux certificats EUC émis au nom du Togo pour achat armes UNITA	6 300 lance-roquettes RPG-7 + autres (Bulgarie)	Bulgarie	UNITA, Angola	S/2001/363 ; S/2000/203	Rés. 864 (1993) ; 1127 (1997)	Confirmé — 18 EUC faux identifiés
2	1997-2000	Lomé base opérationnelle UNITA : stockage, transit armes et diamants	Équipements militaires divers ; diamants de guerre	Bulgarie, Ukraine, intermédiaires privés	UNITA, Angola	S/2001/363 ; HRW mars 2000	Rés. 864, 1127, 1173	Confirmé — Lomé base principale UNITA
3	1997-2000	Hébergement hauts fonctionnaires UNITA à Lomé (Mulato, Vindes, Dachala, Mundombe, Pena)	N/A (opérations de représentation)	N/A	UNITA	S/2001/363	Rés. 1127 (1997)	Partiellement confirmé — Togo expulse 56 Angolais mai 2000
4	1997-1998	Transit matériel militaire ex-Zaïre vers Togo	Équipements militaires stocks zaïrois	Ex-Zaïre (RDC)	UNITA via Togo	S/2001/363	Rés. 864	Documenté par le Mécanisme
5	~1997-1999	Réseau Victor Bout : faux pavillons togolais sur navires nord-coréens	Faux pavillons / transport charbon RPDC	RPDC / réseau Bout	Russie (revendu)	ISIS Report 2019 ; Panel ONU RPDC	Résolutions RPDC	Documenté
6	1999-2000	Transactions diamantaires UNITA passant par la « Présidence du Togo »	Diamants de guerre angolais	UNITA	Marché international via Togo et Afrique du Sud	S/2001/363 §98	Rés. 1173 (1998)	Sous enquête police sud-africaine (2001)
7	1993-2000	Rôle personnel d'Eyadéma dans soutien à l'UNITA (Rapport Fowler)	Soutien politique et logistique	Personnel (Eyadéma)	UNITA	S/2000/203 (Fowler) ; HRW mars 2000	Résolutions ONU Angola	« President Eyadema of Togo plays an important role in supporting UNITA »

Note : Le Mécanisme de Surveillance a établi que 18 certificats d'utilisateur final portant le Togo comme pays d'origine étaient de faux documents. Le rapport Fowler recommandait que le Togo soit déclaré « sanctions breaker » avant de prendre la présidence de l'OUA.

**TABEAU II : VIOLATIONS DOCUMENTÉES — TOGO COMME CORRIDOR POUR LA
CORÉE DU NORD (2016-2020)**

#	Période	Nature de la violation	Détail opérationnel	Source	Résolution ONU	Statut
1	2016-2018	Navires sous pavillon togolais dans transferts ship-to-ship avec RPDC	Transferts illicites de charbon et pétrole avec navires nord-coréens sanctionnés	ISIS Report 2019	Rés. 2321 (2016), 2375 (2017)	Documenté — Togo identifié
2	2017-2018	Faux pavillons togolais sur navires RPDC transportant charbon vers Russie	4 navires nord-coréens à Kholmsk (Russie) portant faux pavillons Togo/Panama. Charbon transformé en « charbon russe »	ISIS Report 2019 ; CNN mars 2017	Rés. 2321 (2016)	Documenté — confirmé
3	2018-2019	Registre togolais utilisé pour sociétés écrans évaseur sanctions	Sociétés récemment créées utilisant registre togolais comme juridiction	ISIS Report 2020	Rés. 2397 (2017)	Confirmé : « schéma de sociétés à courte durée de vie »
4	2019-2020	5 à 10 violations alléguées résolutions ONU sur RPDC	Violations : (a) pavillon navires RPDC, (b) enregistrement sociétés évaseur, (c) enregistrement navires après dé-enregistrement	Panel ONU 1718 ; ISIS 2020	Rés. 1718, 2321, 2375, 2397	« Honduras, Inde, Italie, Panama, Singapour, Togo et Vietnam » — 5-10 violations
5	2017-2019	Togo identifié parmi États dont registre exploité par RPDC	« China, Russia, Taiwan, and Togo stood out for their involvement in several alleged violations »	ISIS Report 2019	Multiple résolutions RPDC	Documenté

TABLEAU III : REGISTRE MARITIME TOGOLAIS — DÉFAILLANCES DOCUMENTÉES

#	Année	Incident documenté	Nature	Source	Conséquences
1	2022	Réunions entre BIR, gouvernement togolais et Département d'État américain sur défaillances du registre	Navires découverts trafiquant de la drogue ; registre qualifié de source de violations « embarrassantes »	Lloyd's List, novembre 2022	Sous pression US pour réformer le registre
2	2019-2020	Togo listé parmi États dont navires ont participé à transferts ship-to-ship illicites RPDC	Enregistrement de navires pour activités sanctionnées	Panel ONU 1718	Aucune sanction formelle appliquée
3	2017	Faux pavillons togolais sur navires transportant charbon RPDC	Utilisation frauduleuse du pavillon togolais — révèle absence de contrôle	Renseignement US / ONU	Incident non résolu publiquement

TABLEAU IV : ACQUISITIONS MILITAIRES OFFICIELLES DU TOGO (IMPORTATIONS DOCUMENTÉES)

#	Année(s)	Matériel	Fournisseur	Qté	Valeur	Source	Notes
1	1960-1976	C-47 Skytrain (transport)	États-Unis (surplus)	Ind.	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Premier avion armée de l'air togolaise
2	1976	DHC-5D Buffalo STOL (transport)	Canada	2	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Remplacement des C-47
3	1976	Fouga Magister CM-170 (entraîneur armé)	France (ex-Luftwaffe)	5	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	5 Fouga ex-Armée de l'Air allemande
4	1976	EMB-326GB Xavante (attaque légère)	Brésil	7	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Formation Escadrille de Chasse
5	1976	Patrouilleurs Kara (P761) et Mono (P762)	N/D	2	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Marine togolaise créée 1er mai 1976
6	1981	Alpha Jet (entraîneur/attaque légère)	France/Allemagne (Dassault/Dornier)	5	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Modernisation flotte entraîneurs armés
7	1986	Aerospatiale TB-30 Epsilon (entraîneur)	France	3	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Flotte d'entraînement
8	2014	Patrouilleur RPB 33 Agou (P763)	Non précisé	1	N/D	Wikipedia FAT	Reçu 7 juillet 2014
9	2021-2022	Bayraktar TB2 (drone de combat MALE)	Turquie (Baykar)	3	~16,14M USD	Military Africa ; Shephard	Rencontre Erdoğan-Gnassingbé oct. 2021. Ops. depuis Niamtougou
10	2022	Équipements sécurité/surveillance (ANR)	Israël (Mer Group)	N/D	20M EUR/an	Africa Intelligence	Contrat services cyber, protection infrastructures, détection
11	2009	Systèmes d'écoute téléphonique et emails	Israël (contractants)	N/D	>10 Mds FCFA (~15M EUR)	Togo Actualité, 2012	Dispositif lecture systématique emails entrant/sortant du Togo
12	~2019	Écoutes téléphoniques avec reconnaissance vocale	Israël (contractants)	N/D	Non précisé	Togo Actualité, 2012	Système identification vocale au téléphone

* Lignes en jaune : équipements israéliens (surveillance et répression)

TABLEAU V : TOGO ET AFRIQUE DU SUD — CONNEXION DIAMONDS/ARMES VIA ANGOLA

#	Période	Nature	Détail	Source	Statut
1	~1998-2000	Vente de diamants UNITA via la « Présidence du Togo » à un joaillier sud-africain	Les diamants ont été vendus à un joaillier sud-africain par un intermédiaire qui détenait une facture, et la documentation n'était pas conforme aux réglementations sud-africaines.	Rapport du Mécanisme de Surveillance ONU (S/2001/363)	Transmis à la police sud-africaine. Enquête en cours en 2001.
2	~1998-2001	Réseau de transit de diamants UNITA : Lomé comme hub jusqu'en 1999, puis Ouagadougou	Hauts fonctionnaires UNITA Dachala et Mundombe utilisaient Lomé puis Ouagadougou	Rapport du Mécanisme	Partiellement confirmé

TABLEAU VI : TOGO ET LIBERIA — CONTEXTE RÉGIONAL (1990-2003)

#	Période	Nature	Détail	Source	Statut
1	1990-1997	Togo membre du Comité de Médiation ECOWAS sur le Liberia	Togo faisait partie du Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) qui a créé ECOMOG	Journal of Military and Strategic Studies, 2003	Rôle de médiateur officiel — pas de fourniture d'armes documentée
2	1991	Conférence de paix de Lomé (janvier 1991) sur le Liberia	Lomé accueillait des négociations de paix	Sources historiques ECOWAS	Togo dans rôle de médiateur
3	1990s	Togo et Burkina Faso liés à l'émission de faux certificats d'utilisateur final pour des transferts d'armes à l'UNITA	L'ONU a explicitement lié le Burkina Faso et le Togo à l'émission de faux certificats d'utilisateur final pour des transferts de sanctions-busting vers l'UNITA en Angola.	Rapport ECOWAS/PCASED sur les armes légères, 2004	Documenté dans rapport ECOWAS

Note critique : Aucune livraison directe d'armes du Togo au Liberia n'est documentée dans les sources ouvertes. Le Togo a joué un rôle de médiateur dans les conflits libériens via ECOWAS. La connexion directe Togo-Liberia en matière d'armements n'est pas établie avec la même rigueur documentaire que la connexion Angola-UNITA.

TABLEAU VII : TOGO ET AFRIQUE DU SUD — CONNEXIONS DOCUMENTÉES

#	Période	Nature	Détail	Source	Statut
1	~1998-2001	Enquête sud-africaine sur diamants UNITA vendus via la « Présidence du Togo »	La police sud-africaine enquêtait sur des transactions de diamants liées au Togo	Rapport Mécanisme ONU S/2001/363	Enquête en cours en 2001 ; résultat non disponible dans sources ouvertes
2	~1999-2000	Johannes Parreira (intermédiaire UNITA opérant avec Interstate Airways) basé en Afrique du Sud après expulsion de Namibie	Parreira vendait des bottes militaires, des chaussettes et des véhicules à l'UNITA ; opérait depuis Afrique du Sud	Rapport Panel d'Experts ONU (S/2000/203)	Documenté

TABLEAU VIII : RÉCAPITULATIF CHRONOLOGIQUE DE TOUTES LES VIOLATIONS ET TRANSACTIONS

Année	Événement	Pays concerné	Nature	Gravité documentaire
1993-1997	Togo commence à servir de plateforme pour l'UNITA	Angola	Faux EUC, hébergement UNITA	★★★★ (4 sources)
1997-1998	18 faux certificats d'utilisateur final émis portant le Togo	Angola/Bulgarie/UNITA	Violation directe sanctions ONU	★★★★★ (Confirmé Mécanisme ONU)
1997-2000	Lomé base opérationnelle UNITA	Angola	Hébergement, transit armes et diamants	★★★★★ (Confirmé Mécanisme ONU)
~1998-2000	Diamants UNITA vendus via « Présidence du Togo » en Afrique du Sud	Afrique du Sud/Angola	Trafic diamants de guerre	★★★ (Sous enquête 2001)
~2000	Togo expulse 56 ressortissants angolais UNITA sous pression internationale	Angola	Réaction pression internationale	★★★★
~2009	Installation équipements israéliens d'écoute et surveillance	Israël → Togo (usage interne)	Achat légal, usage répressif	★★★★
~2017	Faux pavillons togolais sur navires transportant charbon RPDC vers Russie	RPDC/Russie	Utilisation frauduleuse pavillon	★★★
2017-2019	Navires sous pavillon togolais dans transferts ship-to-ship RPDC	RPDC	Violation sanctions ONU	★★★★
2019-2020	5-10 violations alléguées résolutions ONU sur RPDC	RPDC	Multiples violations documentées	★★★★ (Rapport ONU)
2021	Accord achat Bayraktar TB2 (Turquie)	Turquie → Togo	Transaction légale	★★★★★
2022	Livraison 3 Bayraktar TB2 (16,14M USD)	Turquie → Togo	Transaction légale	★★★★★
2022	Contrat Mer Group 20M EUR/an pour équipement ANR	Israël → Togo (usage répressif)	Transaction légale aux effets répressifs	★★★★★

ANALYSE CONSOLIDÉE

1. Le Togo comme infrastructure du trafic, pas comme producteur.

Le Togo ne produit aucune arme. Sa contribution aux flux illicites documentés est systématiquement celle d'un intermédiaire : faux documents, pavillon de complaisance, territoire de transit, refuge pour des acteurs sanctionnés. Cette infrastructure de complaisance n'est pas accidentelle ; elle requière une décision politique à haut niveau.

2. Eyadéma comme acteur nommément cité.

Le rapport Fowler, présenté au Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU en mars 2000, citait nommément le président Eyadéma comme jouant « un rôle important dans le soutien à l'UNITA ». Ce n'est pas une allégation vague : c'est une mention dans un rapport officiel présenté au Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies.

3. La continuité de la logique sous Faure.

Si Eyadéma servait l'UNITA avec de faux certificats et des transactions de diamants dans les années 1990, Faure a maintenu une logique similaire avec le registre maritime de complaisance utilisé pour les flux nord-coréens dans les années 2010. La forme a changé ; la fonction est identique.

4. Le coût des acquisitions légales.

Les acquisitions officielles documentées (Alpha Jets français, Bayraktar TB2 turcs, équipements israéliens) représentent plusieurs dizaines de millions d'euros pour un pays dont le taux de pauvreté dépasse 55%. Le contrat Mer Group seul (20 millions EUR/an) est plus important que certains budgets ministériels togolais.

5. La dimension israélienne comme catégorie à part.

Les équipements israéliens ne figurent pas dans les bases de données classiques d'armements (SIPRI) parce qu'ils n'entrent pas dans la catégorie des « armes majeures ». Ils relèvent de la surveillance, du renseignement et de la cybersécurité. Leur absence des tableaux conventionnels est précisément ce qui en fait l'outil de répression le plus efficace et le moins visible.

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ANNEX II

DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS

*The Israeli-Togolese Repression Network:
Exhaustive Portrait of Institutional Actors*

ANNUAIRE DES ORGANISATIONS

Qui fait quoi, qui les dirige, comment elles ont été créées

Le Réseau Israélo-Togolais de la Répression : Portrait Exhaustif des Acteurs Institutionnels

Par Farida Bemba Nabourema | Document de référence | Série « LES GARDIENS DU TRÔNE »

Ce document est un outil de référence. Il recense, avec le maximum de précision que les sources disponibles permettent, chaque organisation israélienne impliquée dans la relation sécuritaire avec le Togo, ainsi que les structures togolaises qui constituent l'architecture intérieure de la répression. Pour chaque entité, il indique l'origine, la direction, les fonctions, et le lien documenté avec le Togo.

PARTIE I : LES ORGANISATIONS ISRAÉLIENNES

1. NSO GROUP TECHNOLOGIES

Type :

Entreprise privée de cyber-intelligence, cotée pendant un temps, aujourd'hui partiellement sous contrôle américain.

Siège :

Herzliya, Israël (à proximité de Tel-Aviv).

Création :

2010, par trois associés dont les initiales forment le nom de l'entreprise.

Fondateurs :

NSO Group a été fondé en 2010 par Niv Karmi, Shalev Hulio et Omri Lavie. Niv Karmi, ancien agent opérationnel du Mossad, a quitté l'entreprise un mois après sa création. Shalev Hulio a servi comme major dans l'armée israélienne. Le conseiller senior Daniel Reisner avait dirigé le département de droit international de l'armée israélienne.

Produit principal :

Le logiciel Pegasus. Capable d'une surveillance à distance et sans clic de smartphones. Il peut accéder aux messages, photos, e-mails, enregistrer les appels, et activer secrètement les microphones et caméras.

Statut légal de l'exportation :

Pegasus est classifié comme une arme par Israël et toute exportation de la technologie doit être approuvée par le gouvernement israélien.

Lien avec le Togo :

Le Togo a été identifié parmi les onze clients potentiels confirmés de NSO Group lors du Projet Pegasus (Forbidden Stories / Amnesty International). Les téléphones des journalistes togolais Loïc Lawson et Anani Sossou ont été infectés en 2021. Les numéros de Ferdinand Ayité, Luc Abaki, et Komlanvi Ketohou ont figuré sur la liste de surveillance. L'évêque Benoît Alowonou et cinq autres critiques du gouvernement ont été ciblés — premier cas documenté de Pegasus utilisé contre des membres du clergé.

Situation actuelle :

En octobre 2025, des investisseurs américains menés par Robert Simonds ont acquis une participation majoritaire. David Friedman a été nommé président exécutif en novembre 2025.

2. MER GROUP

Type :

Holding israélien coté en bourse, spécialisé en sécurité intérieure, cybersécurité, et infrastructures de communication.

Siège :

5 Yahadut Canada St., Or Yehuda, Israël. Ticker boursier : CMER (Bourse de Tel-Aviv).

Direction et actionnariat :

PDG : Avi Schechter. Président du CA : Nir Lempert. Actionnaires principaux : FIMI FIVE 2012 Ltd. (36,6%), Haim Mer (30,58%), Isaac Ben Bassat (9,19%). Le groupe compte 43 filiales dans le monde.

Composition du personnel dirigeant :

Mer Group compte dans ses rangs un nombre important d'ex-agents du Mossad et du Shin Bet. Nir Lempert, président du CA, était lieutenant-commandant de l'Unité 8200. Yoram Cohen, ancien directeur du Shin Bet, a rejoint le groupe comme conseiller senior.

Liens avec les territoires occupés :

Le 12 février 2020, les Nations Unies ont publié une base de données des entreprises opérant dans des colonies israéliennes en Cisjordanie et à Jérusalem-Est. Mer Group y figurait.

Contrat avec le Togo :

Contrat de 20 millions d'euros par an pour équiper l'ANR en solutions cyber, matériel de protection d'infrastructures sensibles et technologies de détection, ainsi que la formation des agents du renseignement et des forces spéciales.

Filiale clé :

Athena, fondée par l'ancien directeur du Shin Bet Shabtai Shavit, absorbée par Mer Group en 2005, spécialisée dans les systèmes d'IA et d'analyse de données pour services de renseignement.

3. ASI — ADVANCED SECURITY INTEGRATION

Type :

Société privée israélienne de conseil et de services en sécurité et contre-terrorisme.

Fondateur et directeur :

Colonel (Res.) Hagai Peleg, ancien commandant du YAMAM et premier Directeur Général du Ministère des Affaires Stratégiques en Israël.

Personnel senior impliqué au Togo :

M. Sasson : ancien colonel du service secret, ex-directeur sécurité d'El Al Airlines, profondément impliqué dans les projets d'ASI au Togo et en RDC. M. Gadi : a servi dans le YAMAM pendant 19 ans au grade de lieutenant-colonel.

Lien avec le Togo :

Hagai Peleg a régulièrement déployé des prestataires privés via ASI pour former les militaires togolais aux techniques de renseignement. Le site officiel d'ASI confirme explicitement les opérations au Togo.

■ *Observation critique : ASI est une société privée, mais ses fondateurs et cadres sont tous des vétérans actifs de structures de l'État israélien. La distinction entre activité privée et prolongement de la politique de l'État est, dans ce cas, une fiction juridique.*

4. YAMAM — UNITÉ NATIONALE DE CONTRE-TERRORISME

Type :

Unité d'élite de la Police israélienne, relevant de la Police des Frontières.

Fondation :

Créé fin 1974 après le massacre de Ma'alot, où une opération de sauvetage ratée avait abouti au meurtre de 21 écoliers.

Fonctions :

Opérations de sauvetage d'otages, missions offensives contre des cibles terroristes, opérations policières tactiques et infiltrations.

Lien avec le Togo :

Via Hagai Peleg, son ancien commandant, qui a transposé les méthodes et le personnel YAMAM à la formation des forces de sécurité togolaises par le biais d'ASI. Les techniques développées dans les territoires palestiniens occupés ont été exportées vers les unités togolaises.

5. LE SHIN BET (Shabak — Agence de Sécurité Israélienne)

Type :

Service de renseignement intérieur et de contre-espionnage de l'État israélien, fondé en 1948.

Lien avec le Togo via Yoram Cohen :

Yoram Cohen (né en 1960) a servi comme directeur du Shin Bet du 15 mai 2011 au 8 mai 2016. Après sa retraite, il est devenu conseiller privé en sécurité avec des missions en Afrique. Il a rencontré le président togolais Faure Gnassingbé à Lomé — une supervision stratégique de la relation bilatérale au niveau le plus élevé.

Lien institutionnel avec Mer Group :

Yoram Cohen a rejoint Mer Group comme conseiller senior, illustrant la porte tournante entre les services de renseignement israéliens et les sociétés privées de sécurité opérant au Togo.

6. LE MOSSAD

Type :

Service de renseignement extérieur de l'État israélien.

Rôle dans la relation Israël-Togo :

Le Mossad n'apparaît pas nommément dans les contrats avec le Togo, mais plusieurs agents et contractants opérant au Togo sont des vétérans du Mossad recrutés par Mer Group et NSO Group. La distinction entre le Mossad institutionnel et ses anciens agents dans le secteur privé est, dans la pratique, extrêmement mince.

7. L'UNITÉ 8200

Type :

Unité de renseignement militaire de l'armée israélienne, spécialisée dans le renseignement électronique (SIGINT) et le cryptage.

Lien avec le Togo :

Indirect mais structurel. Nir Lempert, président du CA de Mer Group, était lieutenant-commandant de l'Unité 8200. Cette unité est le vivier principal de formation des cadres de l'industrie israélienne

de la cybersécurité, dont sont issus nombre d'entrepreneurs des sociétés opérant au Togo.

8. LE MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE ISRAÉLIEN

Rôle :

Autorité d'approbation de toutes les exportations d'armement et de surveillance. Chaque contrat de Mer Group, chaque licence NSO, chaque déploiement d'ASI au Togo a requis une autorisation expresse.

■ *Implication : L'État israélien est un acteur conscient et actif de la relation, et non un observateur passif de sociétés privées agissant de leur propre chef.*

PARTIE II : LES ORGANISATIONS TOGOLAISES

9. L'ANR — AGENCE NATIONALE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS

Type :

Service de renseignement de la République du Togo.

Fondation et cadre légal :

Créée par décret présidentiel sous Eyadéma. Son directeur répond exclusivement au président de la République.

Missions officielles :

« Surveiller les individus ou les groupes, nationaux ou étrangers, soupçonnés de s'engager dans des activités portant atteinte à la sécurité de l'État. » Collecte de renseignements, contre-espionnage, lutte antiterroriste, surveillance.

Direction actuelle :

Depuis octobre 2018 : Colonel Ali Eso Tchakpélé, proche du président Gnassingbé. Exerçait jusqu'à sa nomination comme chef de la sécurité rapprochée au palais de Kégué. Sa nomination visait à renforcer le contrôle du président sur l'agence.

Directeurs précédents :

Koulemaga Kassawa (promu chef d'état-major de l'armée de terre) | Yotroféi Massina (a également dirigé la Gendarmerie nationale).

Équipement israélien :

En 2009, un expert israélien a installé un dispositif permettant de lire systématiquement tous les mails entrant et sortant du Togo pour plus de dix milliards de francs CFA. Un système de reconnaissance vocale a été acquis vers 2019.

Controverses documentées :

En 2012, la CNDH a mis le service sous surveillance pour des allégations de torture et de mauvais traitements infligés à des prisonniers et opposants politiques.

Composition réelle :

Au-delà de ses membres officiels, l'ANR dispose d'un réseau d'informateurs infiltrés dans tous les segments de la société togolaise : partis politiques, médias, société civile, milieux académiques, institutions religieuses, associations professionnelles et diaspora.

10. LES FAT — FORCES ARMÉES TOGOLAISES

Type :

Armée nationale du Togo : Armée de Terre, Marine, Armée de l'Air et Gendarmerie nationale.

Dimension :

Le Togo a connu l'une des militarisations les plus rapides d'Afrique de l'Ouest, avec des effectifs passant d'environ 300 dans les années 1960 à plus de 13 000. Le régime a construit son appareil militaire comme instrument premier de sa pérennité plutôt que comme outil de défense nationale.

Lien avec Israël :

Israël forme des unités chargées de la protection des régimes présidentiels dans des États africains, dont le Togo. La formation des forces spéciales togolaises par ASI concerne

spécifiquement les unités protégeant le régime présidentiel.

Direction actuelle :

Chef d'état-major général : Général Abalo Kadanga | Chef d'état-major Armée de Terre : Colonel Kpatcha Sogoyou | DG Gendarmerie : Colonel Yotroféi Massina.

11. LA GARDE PRÉSIDENTIELLE (RCGP)

Type :

Régiment Commando de la Garde Présidentielle — unité d'élite chargée de la protection physique du président et du palais présidentiel.

Chef de corps :

Colonel Dolama Malana.

Lien avec Israël :

La garde présidentielle est l'unité dont la formation par des contractants israéliens a été le plus directement documentée. La protection physique du chef d'État était, depuis Eyadéma, la priorité centrale de la relation sécuritaire avec Israël — c'est la demande explicite qu'Eyadéma avait transmise à l'ambassadeur israélien selon les câbles diplomatiques.

12. LE SCRIC — SERVICE CENTRAL DE RECHERCHES ET D'INVESTIGATIONS CRIMINELLES

Type :

Service de police criminelle et d'enquête.

Direction :

Commandant Atèkpè.

Lien avec le réseau de répression :

Le SCRIC opère en coordination avec l'ANR dans les affaires qui croisent sécurité d'État et criminalité ordinaire — une frontière que le régime togolais efface systématiquement lorsque ses opposants sont impliqués.

13. LE MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES TOGOLAIS — SOUS ROBERT DUSSEY

Type :

Institution gouvernementale et acteur politique actif de la relation israélo-togolaise.

Ministre depuis 2013 :

Robert Dussey, professeur de philosophie politique, ancien moine catholique.

Rôle dans la relation israélo-togolaise :

Dussey déclarait à l'AIPAC à Washington : « Je suis venu ici pour rassurer Netanyahu que le Togo soutient Israël. Notre soutien pour Israël est constant. » Il a décrit Israël comme sa « seconde maison, spirituellement et politiquement » et a chanté la prière hébraïque Shema Yisrael devant l'assemblée.

Analyse :

Dussey est la figure publique principale de la relation israélo-togolaise, artisan d'une stratégie qui présente cette loyauté diplomatique comme un choix souverain et moral plutôt que comme la

contrepartie d'un arrangement sécuritaire.

14. LE PALAIS DE KÉGUÉ — CENTRE DE COMMANDEMENT DE FACTO

Rôle :

Le palais de Kégué est le centre opérationnel réel de toutes les décisions sécuritaires du régime. Les nominations à l'ANR, à la garde présidentielle et aux unités d'élite transitent par le palais. C'est également le lieu où des visiteurs sécuritaires israéliens, comme Yoram Cohen, ont rencontré Faure Gnassingbé selon Africa Intelligence.

PARTIE III : LES INDIVIDUS CLÉS — TABLEAUX RÉCAPITULATIFS

Côté Israélien

Nom	Ancienne fonction	Rôle actuel dans la relation Togo-Israël
Yoram Cohen	Directeur du Shin Bet (2011-2016)	Conseiller de Mer Group ; rencontres directes avec Faure Gnassingbé à Lomé
Hagai Peleg	Commandant du YAMAM	PDG d'ASI ; déploiement de contractants pour la formation des militaires togolais
Nir Lempert	Lieutenant-commandant de l'Unité 8200	Président du CA de Mer Group
Shalev Hulio	Major, armée israélienne ; co-fondateur NSO	Ex-CEO de NSO Group jusqu'en 2022
Omri Lavie	Co-fondateur NSO	A contrôlé NSO Group jusqu'à son acquisition américaine en 2025
Niv Karmi	Mossad	Co-fondateur de NSO (a quitté rapidement)
M. Sasson	Colonel du service secret ; ex-directeur sécurité El Al	Responsable sécuritaire senior ASI, opérations au Togo
M. Gadi	Lieutenant-colonel YAMAM, 19 ans de service	Expert ASI déployé au Togo

Côté Togoais

Nom	Fonction	Lien avec le système de répression
Faure Gnassingbé	Président de la République depuis 2005	Commandant suprême de toutes les structures de sécurité ; interlocuteur direct des partenaires israéliens
Colonel Ali Eso Tchakpélé	DG de l'ANR depuis oct. 2018	Proche du président Gnassingbé ; supervise l'utilisation des technologies israéliennes de surveillance
Colonel Yotroféï Massina	DG Gendarmerie ; ex-directeur ANR	A dirigé l'ANR pendant la période d'installation des premiers équipements israéliens
Colonel Koulemaga Kassawa	Ex-directeur ANR ; chef d'état-major armée de terre	A supervisé les contrats avec les contractants israéliens

Général Abalo Kadanga	Chef d'état-major général des FAT	Commandant suprême des forces armées, responsable de la coopération militaire
Robert Dussey	Ministre des AE depuis 2013	Architecte de la diplomatie pro-israélienne ; interface publique de la relation
Colonel Dolama Malana	Commandant du RCGP (Garde Présidentielle)	Responsable de la protection physique du régime, unité formée par des contractants israéliens

PARTIE IV : LA CHAÎNE DE COMMANDEMENT — COMMENT LE SYSTÈME FONCTIONNE

Pour illustrer la mécanique concrète du système, voici la chaîne qui relie une décision israélienne d'exportation à une arrestation à Lomé :

1. DÉCISION POLITIQUE	Le gouvernement israélien approuve une licence d'exportation NSO Group ou un contrat Mer Group pour le Togo. Cette décision est prise au niveau du ministère de la Défense israélien.
2. TRANSFERT TECHNOLOGIQUE	Mer Group installe les équipements à l'ANR. ASI forme les agents à leur utilisation. NSO Group fournit les licences Pegasus aux opérateurs désignés au sein de l'ANR.
3. IDENTIFICATION DES CIBLES	L'ANR, utilisant les équipements israéliens, identifie les communications d'un opposant, d'un journaliste ou d'un militant. Depuis 2009, un dispositif installé par un expert israélien permet de lire systématiquement tous les mails entrant et sortant du Togo.
4. ACTION	Soit une arrestation directe, soit une infiltration via des agents recrutés à partir du renseignement collecté, soit la transmission du dossier à d'autres structures (SCRIC, tribunaux sous contrôle régimiste).
5. COUVERTURE DIPLOMATIQUE	À l'ONU ou dans les forums africains, le Togo vote en faveur d'Israël, consommant ainsi la contrepartie diplomatique de l'arrangement.

Cette chaîne est documentée, ses acteurs sont nommés, et ses effets sur la société civile togolaise sont mesurables dans les dossiers du Citizen Lab, du CPJ, d'Amnesty International et de Human Rights Watch.

CONCLUSION : NOMMER POUR DÉMANTELER

Ce répertoire n'est pas exhaustif. La profondeur réelle de la relation entre les structures sécuritaires israéliennes et togolaises dépasse ce que les sources publiques permettent de documenter avec certitude. Mais ce qui est ici documenté est suffisant pour répondre à la question que beaucoup de Togolais se sont posée, parfois sans le formuler clairement : pourquoi le régime Gnassingbé a-t-il résisté à toutes les vagues de contestation populaire depuis 1990, malgré l'incompétence gouvernementale chronique, malgré l'isolement diplomatique partiel, malgré la colère populaire qui s'est exprimée dans des proportions jamais vues en 2017 ?

La réponse partielle est ici. Quand des vétérans du YAMAM forment vos forces spéciales, quand des anciens directeurs du Shin Bet équipent votre ANR, quand Pegasus surveille vos évêques et vos journalistes, quand des informaticiens issus de l'Unité 8200 ont installé des dispositifs de lecture des emails nationaux, et quand tout cela est couvert diplomatiquement au niveau des Nations Unies, un régime peut se permettre de tirer sur ses propres citoyens avec la confiance de savoir que ses communications sont sécurisées, que ses opposants sont surveillés, que ses financements circulent, et que ses garanties internationales tiennent.

Document de référence — Farida Bemba Nabourema. Document d'appui à la série ISRAËL ET LE TOGO : ANATOMIE D'UNE COMPLICITÉ STRATÉGIQUE.