

Burkina Faso Ex-President Blaise Compaoré has received a life sentence in absentia for his role in the assassination of his revolutionary predecessor, Thomas Sankara.

The long-awaited verdict brings to close a six-month trial over the assassination of Thomas Sankara on October 15, 1987.

Military prosecutors in Burkina Faso's capital, Ouagadougou, had requested a 30-year sentence for Compaoré, who was being tried alongside 13 others.

Sankara, 37, was gunned down along with 12 others during a coup d'état that brought Compaoré to power.

Two other main suspects were also handed life imprisonment sentences. They are Gilbert Diendéré, one of the leaders of the 1987 putsch and leader of the 2015 coup, as well as Hyacinthe Kafando, leader of Compaoré's guards at the time.

Compaoré, who was unseated in a 2014 uprising, fled to neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire where he was given citizenship.

Reports indicate that the pair had been close friends and had jointly seized power in 1983. Sankara remains a hero for many across Africa because of his anti-imperialist stance and austere lifestyle.