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GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

Employment policy challenged: The Cape Times reported that five senior "mixed-race" officials are suing the Department of Correctional Services, claiming that the Department's promotion policy favours blacks over employees of mixed race. Reported by the Cape Times, 18 October 2011, at <http://capetimes.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?article=d02a00f1-4740-4846-b78b-abb66cce02a1&key=wsNzxc1ASxat8rptso0i3A%3d%3d&issue=64022011101800000000001001> Full Cape Times report (subscription needed)

Department comes under criticism: IOL reported that the Department of Correctional Services was heavily criticised by the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services for the delay in filling in key vacancies. The Committee expressed concern that most of the senior posts were manned by people who are in an acting capacity. Reported by Clayton Barnes, 19 October 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/vacancies-galore-prison-chiefs-tell-mps-1.1161289>

Information technology crisis: IT Web reported that the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services, during a parliamentary briefing on the Department of Correctional Services Annual Report, identified inefficiencies in the information technology unit in the Department as the reason the Department has continued to receive qualified audits for the past seven years. Reported by Farzana Rasool, 26 October 2011, at http://www.itweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48654:correctional-services-identifies-it-crisis&catid=118

Private prisons tender cancelled: The Engineering News reported that the Department of Correctional Services officially cancelled the much-delayed public-private partnership procurement process for four new prisons. The fulfillment of the purported contracts would have reportedly added 3 000 beds to the Paarl, East London, Nigel and Klerksdorp correctional facilities. Reported by Terence Creamer, 27th October 2011, at <http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/sa-cancels-much-delayed-private-prisons-tender-reviews-ppp-model-2011-10-27>

Democratic Alliance queries cancellation of public-private partnerships: Politics Web reported that the Democratic Alliance's James Selfe, shadow Minister of Correctional Services, questioned the Department of Correctional Service's cancellation of bids for public-private partnerships to build four new prisons. The DA raised pertinent questions about damage to the reputation of the government following the cancellation of the contracts. Reported by Politics Web, 30 October 2011, at <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71654?oid=264104&sn=Detail&pid=71616>

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UNSENTENCED PRISONERS

Justice "overhaul": The Citizen reported that the proposed overhaul of the country's justice system will introduce electronic files and expedite the trial of 40 000 prisoners currently awaiting trial. Justice Bertelsman reportedly stated that the new system should prevent "meddling" with case files. Reported by The Citizen, 6 October 2011, at <http://www.citizen.co.za/citizen/content/en/citizen/local-news?oid=230163&sn=Detail&pid=146826&Justice-overhaul-prevents-meddling>

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PRISON CONDITIONS

Government to probe mass assault: The Sunday Tribune reported that the Department of Correctional Services finally agreed to investigate Correctional Services officials allegedly involved in an incidence in which 'prisoners were taunted, sprayed with water and beaten with batons, shock boards, broomsticks, pool cues and pickaxe handles'. The United Nations Human Rights Committee found that the Department's officials had indeed tortured Bradley McCullum, an inmate of the St Albans Maximum Correctional Facility in Port Elizabeth, during a mass assault on prisoners. Reported by the Sunday Tribune, 2 October 2011, at <http://sundaytribune.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?article=18b94e69-9b88-4bb4-8f94-69c3f88cebf3&key=hgbMtXXeSZyL%2beb%2f3uuTGw%3d%3d&issue=7053201110020000000001001> (subscription needed)

Compulsory education for young prisoners: The Cape Times reported that formal education could soon be compulsory for all "young" offenders. There are reportedly plans on the part of the Department of Correctional Services to introduce regulations and possibly amend existing legislation to make it compulsory for all young people in correctional centres to complete their schooling. Reported by The Cape Times, 27 October 2011, at <http://capetimes.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?article=2fb44dde-46c7-4eb2-8042-fb2ee9cc3b62&key=akjZmSrKVmAM2ixn8pN7%2bA%3d%3d&issue=6402201110270000000001001> Full Cape Times report (subscription needed)

Department of Correctional Services faces an increase in civil claims: Business Day reported that the potential for civil claims against the Department of Correctional Services was now larger following an increase in the number of assaults in prisons over the past three years. According to statistics made available to the Parliamentary Committee on Correctional Services, figures for assaults skyrocketed from 83 per every 10 000 prisoners in September 2008 to 137.7 per every 10 000 prisoners in October 2009. In November 2010, there were 317 assaults per every 10 000 prisoners in correctional facilities. Reported by Wyndham Hartley, 13 October 2011, at <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=155823>

Detainee sues Department of Correctional Services: IOL reported that a former detainee, Noah Joseph Taukobong, is claiming R500 000 in damages from the Department of Correctional Services, claiming that a male nurse at the Pretoria Local Prison severely assaulted him by hitting him with a baton on his genitals. The assault reportedly took place while the detainee was awaiting trial on robbery charges. Reported by Zelda Venter, 19 October 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/detainee-hit-on-genitals-allowed-to-sue-1.1160144>

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SOUTH AFRICANS IMPRISONED ABROAD

SA national arrested in Mozambique: News24.com reported that a South African national is being detained in Maputo in connection with being in possession of 13kg of narcotics. The man is the third South African to be arrested in Mozambique on drug charges in the past two months. Reported by news24.com, 15 October 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/SA-man-held-in-Mozambique-for-drugs-20111015>

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OTHER

Choir competition held for prisoners: The New Age reported that 200 prisoners from different prisons across Gauteng took part in the annual offender choir competition at the Devon Correctional Centre. The competition was held as part of efforts to rehabilitate inmates through music. Reported by Esau Dlamini, 13 October 2011, at http://www.thenewage.co.za/31783-1009-53-Singing_elevates_prisoners%E2%80%99_wellbeing

Nicro commended: IOL reported that UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay commended Nicro for its prison reform programmes. Speaking at Nicro's 101th anniversary, she said that good programmes were as essential to prisoners as having access to lawyers, religious leaders and therapists. Reported by Janis Kinnear, 14 October 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/sa-must-look-at-causes-of-crime-1.1157734>

Head of prison centre suspended: Times Live reported that the head of Mpumalanga's Bethal prison was suspended following trade union complaints that he had a junior female official fired when their three-year affair ended. Reported by Anna Majavu 31 October, 2011 at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2011/10/31/mpumalanga-s-bethal-prison-boss-abused-power>

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OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

ANGOLA

Sumbe penitentiary revamped: allAfrica.com reported that the newly refurbished second block of Sumbe penitentiary, in the province of Kwanza Sul, was inaugurated by the Deputy Minister for Civil Protection Services and the Fire Department, Eugénio Laborinho. The Deputy Minister reportedly said that "the rehabilitation of the penitentiary is a result of government efforts to provide prisoners social conditions of accommodation and medical assistance in promotion of human rights." Reported by allAfrica.com, 1 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110110199.html>

Journalist sentenced: Viva News reported that a journalist convicted of defaming a General in the employment of the President, was sentenced to a one year suspended sentence and ordered to pay USD \$105 252 in damages. Reported by Viva News, 11 October 2011, at <http://news.vivasoft.hu/the-news/274300-jail-for-an-angolan-journalist-and-civil-rights-activist!.html>

Prison conditions condemned: News24 reported that seventeen activists from the organisation Young Revolutionaries Movement, sentenced to three months in prison for protesting against corruption, have condemned the conditions of the prisons in Angola. One of the activists reportedly said that "the country's prisons are turned into centres of abuse of convicts or prisoners, instead of centres of re-education." Reported by news24.com, 15 October 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Government-opponents-march-in-Angola-20111015>

BOTSWANA

Death penalty criticized: The Botswana Gazette reported that the Botswana Centre for Human Rights appealed to authorities to consider introducing a moratorium on the death penalty. Botswana is reportedly one of the few countries in Southern Africa that still practices the death penalty. Reported by the Botswana Gazette, 12 October 2011, at http://gazettebw.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11547:the-inhumanity-of-the-death-penalty&catid=15:editorial&Itemid=2

Calls to legalise homosexuality: The BBC reported that former President Festus Mogae appealed to the government to de-criminalise homosexuality and prostitution and permit the distribution of condoms in prisons as a way of tackling HIV and AIDS. Reported by The BBC, 19 October 2011, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15368752>

BURUNDI

Campaign to decongest overcrowded prisons: Afrique en Ligne reported that the Burundian authorities have begun a campaign to decongest the overcrowded prisons in the country. 328 remand detainees have been released from Bujumbura's central prison, which accommodates 4000 individuals in a facility designed

to accommodate only 800 people. The authorities will reportedly continue to release individuals in remand detention suspected of having committed minor offences. Reported by Afrique en Ligne, 8 October 2011, at <http://www.afriquejet.com/justice-prison-burundi-2011100824468.html>. (Original report in French).

CAMEROON

Arbitrary detention: Jade Cameroun reported on a case of arbitrary detention in Yabassi Prison. 22-year old George Fountong has been in detention for almost two years, but is still awaiting trial for a charge of forgery, the punishment for which is reportedly a maximum of one year imprisonment. There are reportedly "no reasons" for him to be continuously detained given the fact that the other co-accused have been released. Reported by Christian Locka, Jade Cameroun, 4 October 2011, at <http://www.jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=206> (Original report in French).

Police Commissioner accused of ill-treatment: Jade Cameroun reported that the Police Commissioner of Bafoussam has been accused of having mis-treated a 19-year old female detainee in November 2004. Although the Commissioner was officially charged in 2006, the trial has yet to begin. Reported by Guy Modeste Dzudie, Jade Cameroun, 18 October 2011, at <http://www.jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=207> (Original report in French).

Youths arrested and allegedly ill-treated in Douala: Jade Cameroun reported that 17 youths, of whom two are children, were arrested on 4 October 2011 while distributing political pamphlets in Douala. Accused of disturbing public order, they were detained altogether in a 5m² cell for eight days during which they were prevented from washing and denied access to food and water. On 12 October 2011 they were released on bail. Reported by Jade Cameroon, 20 October 2011, at <http://jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=209> (Original report in French).

Lengthy remand detention: Jade Cameroun reported that Joshua Mbah, accused of aggravated robbery, has been in remand detention since 16 November 2007. His writ of habeas corpus was reportedly rejected on the basis that he had not always responded to summons of appearance in the past. According to Mbah, however, this was because he did not have legal assistance and was not notified by the court of his court dates in time. Reported by Anne Matho, Jade Cameroun, 26 October 2011, at <http://jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=210> (Original report in French).

CAPE

VERDE

Prison facility overcrowded: Aseman reported that São Filipe prison remains overcrowded despite the transfer of 15 inmates to São Martinho prison in Praia. The report said that the prison facility, which has a capacity of 60 prisoners, currently has a population of 80 prisoners. Reported by Asemana, 12 October 2011, at <http://www.asemana.publ.cv/spip.php?article69019&ak=1>

DEMOCRATIC

REPUBLIC

OF

CONGO

Discussion on responsibility for escapes: Radio Okapi hosted a radio debate following a public discussion between national and provincial authorities regarding prison escapes. Guests on the show were reportedly asked to debate which level of government was responsible for the prison escapes. Guests included the Katanga Province Minister of Interior and Security, the Legal Advisor and spokesperson of the National Ministry of Justice and an expert on decentralisation. Reported by Radio Okapi, 3 October 2011, at <http://radiookapi.net/emissions-audio/dialogue-entre-congolais/2011/10/03/ce-soir-evasions-dans-les-prisons-congolaises-les-gouvernements-central-provinciaux-se-rejettent-la-balle/> (Original report in French).

UN expresses concern over detention of three DRC military officers: Radio Okapi reported that the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, expressed concern about the unlawful detention of three military officers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo since March 2004. They have reportedly been in detention for more than seven years, but have never been brought before a judge. The authorities responded by saying that the officers have been detained in order to ensure their safety since their requests for asylum have not yet been processed. Reported by Radio Okapi, 4 October 2011, at <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2011/10/04/trois-officiers-de-la-rdc-detenus-brazzaville-depuis-7-ans-le-groupe-de-travail-de-lonu-inquiet/> (Original report in French).

NGO deplores prison conditions in Bas-Congo: Radio Okapi reported that NGO 'Fraternité des prisons' called on authorities to improve conditions of detention in Bas-Congo, following the continued reports of deaths in detention. The NGO 's President, having visited the Tshela and Boma prisons, ascribes the frequent deaths to poor hygiene and malnourishment. Reported by Radio Okapi, 4 October 2011, at

<http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2011/10/04/bas-congo-une-ong-plaide-pour-des-meilleures-conditions-carcerales/> (Original report in French).

Woman in detention has miscarriage following police torture: Radio Okapi reported that a 30-year old woman suffered a miscarriage in police detention cells in Mutshima, Kasai-Occidental. The miscarriage was reportedly a result of torture inflicted by the police during her four-day detention during which she has not informed of the reason for her arrest. Reported by Radio Okapi, 12 October 2011, at <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2011/10/12/kasai-occidental-une-prevenue-fait-fausse-couche-suite-aux-tortures-de-policiers/> (Original report in French).

Renovations at Tshela prison: Radio Okapi reported that one building and the infirmary had been renovated at Tshela Prison in Bas-Congo. The renovations were financed through the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) funds of MONUSCO, in cooperation with NGO 'Fraternité des prisons' with the aim of improving the living conditions of prisoners. Reported by Radio Okapi, 24 October 2011, at <http://radiookapi.net/regions/bas-congo/2011/10/24/rehabilitation-dune-infirmerie-dun-batiment-la-prison-de-tshela/> (Original report in French).

EGYPT

Emergency laws to be repealed: News24.com reported that Egyptian officials had indicated their plans to scrap an emergency law which permits arrests without charge and restricts the rights of defendants in special courts. These laws are reportedly seen as a symbol of repression under former President Hosni Mubarak's regime. Reported by news24.com, 5 October 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Egypt-unlikely-to-lift-emergency-law-soon-20111005>

Life of prisoner hangs in balance: allAfrica.com reported that Amnesty International warned Egyptian officials that they would be held responsible for the possible death of Maikel Nabil Sanad, a prisoner who has been on hunger strike since 23 August 2011. The prisoner is protesting his conviction in connection with comments he made on Facebook. Reported by allAfrica.com, 5 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110050003.html>

Heavy sentence for insulting Islam: Times Live reported that a Cairo court handed down a three year prison sentence to Ayman Yusef Mansur for "intentionally insulting the dignity of the Islamic religion and attacking it with insults and ridicule on Facebook." Reported by Times Live, 22 October 2011, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2011/10/22/egyptian-gets-three-years-for-facebook-islam-insult>

GAMBIA

Prisoners on hunger strike: allAfrica.com reported that prisoners at the 'Security Wing' of the Mile II Central Prisons have been on a hunger strike since 20 October 2011 in protest against what they reportedly consider to be unbearable and inhuman treatment at the prison. Reported by Lamin Sanyang, 24 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110240138.html>

Children awarded scholarships: allAfrica.com reported that the children of twelve prisoners were awarded scholarships by schools in the Kanifing Municipality. The sponsorship is reportedly "meant among others things to support the parents and family members in the education of their children." Reported by Momodou Jawo, 25 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110260683.html>

GHANA

Lack of vehicles affect justice system: Ghana News Agency reported that a Judge at the Cape Coast circuit court expressed concern at the frequent break down of vehicles used to convey prisoners from the Ankaful Prison to court. The report said that the lack of reliable motor vehicles was affecting the administration of justice. Reported by Ghana News Agency, 19 October 2011, at <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/details/Human-Interest/Lack-of-vehicle-delays-court-proceedings-in-Cape-Coast/?ci=6&ai=34764>

KENYA

Allegations of torture in prison: The Standard reported that two prisoners serving life imprisonment sentences at Maximum Prison alleged they are now wheelchair bound as a result of the physical abuse they suffered at the hands of prison officials. Reported by Kiundu Waweru, 18 October 2011, at <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/sports/InsidePage.php?id=2000045078&cid=658>

LIBERIA

ICRC to assist in improving prison conditions: The International Committee of the Red Cross has made an undertaking to assist prison facilities in Liberia by improving prison infrastructure, health, hygiene conditions, water and sanitation systems. Reported by ICRC, 1 October 2011, at <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/feature/2011/liberia-feature-2011-09-30.htm>

LIBYA

Concern about torture of detainees: Reuters reported that up to 7000 prisoners are held in 67 makeshift detention centres in Libya more than two months after rebel forces toppled Muammar Gaddafi. The report added that evidence of the torture of prisoners in these prisons was beginning to emerge. Reported by Stephanie Nebehay, 14 October 2011, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/14/us-libya-un-rights-idUSTRE79D42M20111014>

African nationals detained: Menafn.com reported that over 1000 nationals from various African countries, the majority of which are Nigerians, are detained at the al-Judaida Prison in Libya. The prison is reportedly well known for its reputation as a place where prisoners were tortured during the era of Moammar Gadhafi's rein. Reported by menafn.com, 17 October 2011, at http://www.menafn.com/qn_news_story.asp?storyid=%7Bbbdc1507-62f1-41dc-aa79-cf284191ff4c%7D

MALAWI

Call to release activists: The Nyasa Times reported that Amnesty International called on Malawian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release five activists who are being detained in connection with a peaceful protest in the capital, Lilongwe. Reported by The Nyasa Times, 17 October 2011, at <http://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi/2011/10/17/amnesty-international-calls-on-malawi-to-release-activists/>

MOROCCO

Allegations of torture: allAfrica.com reported that evidence that Moroccan authorities had tortured many of the Saharawis being detained there is beginning to emerge. The report said that the methods of torture included beatings, electric shocks and threats of rape. Reported by Peter Kenworthy, 20 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110210515.html>

NIGER

Young prisoners released: The Bellingham Herald reported that authorities in Niger released 59 young prisoners, arrested and detained in September 2011. They were reportedly arrested on false information that they were connected to an Islamist terrorist group. Reported by bellinghamherald.com, 1 October 2011, at http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2011/10/01/2209920_niger-releases-59-youths-falsely.html#ixzz1aNsSM9Jt

NIGERIA

Prisoner transfer deal approved: The BBC reported that Nigeria's lower house of parliament approved a deal in which Nigerian offenders convicted in Britain will serve their prison sentences in their home country. Reported by The BBC, 7 October 2011, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15221954>

Journalists arrested: The Mail and Guardian reported that police raided the office of The Nation newspaper, arresting four journalists in connection with the publication of a letter from the country's former President instructing its current leader to fire government officials. Reported by The Mail and Guardian, 12 October 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-12-six-journalists-arrested-in-nigeria-over-presidential-letter>

Prison conditions deplorable: The Tribune reported that the 49,000 prisoners in various Nigerian prisons are exposed to poor sanitary conditions and diet. The report added that many of the prisoners leave the prisons weak and sick. Reported by Sulaimon Olanrewaju, Adebayo Waheed and Olalekan Olabulo, 21 October 2011, at <http://tribune.com.ng/index.php/politics/30019-nigerian-prisons-horrors-that-inmates-face>

Repatriation of prisoners criticised: This Day Live reported that human rights lawyer, Femi Falana, criticised the recent agreement between Nigerian and British governments to repatriate over 1000 Nigerian citizens serving different prison terms in British prisons to Nigeria. Falana reportedly stated that the legal

implications of this transfer and the interests of the Nigerian citizens involved had not been considered. Reported by Omololu Ogunmade and Christopher Isiguzo, 31 October 2011, at <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/falana-protests-planned-repatriation-of-nigerian-prisoners-from-uk/101708/>

RWANDA

President calls for the abolition of death penalty: allAfrica.com reported that President Paul Kagame had called on African countries to scrap the death penalty. At the Regional Conference on the Abolition or Moratorium on the Execution of the Death Penalty, the President reportedly added that the death penalty denies victims the fundamental right to life. Reported by allafrica.com, 14 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110140003.html>

Rusizi Prison Project: allAfrica.com reported that Major-General Paul Rwarakabije, Commissioner General of the Rwandan Correctional Services, hailed Cyanguu prisons for implementing developmental projects aimed at preparing prisoners for their reintegration into society. The Commissioner reportedly made the remarks during a visit for the purpose of assessing the developmental projects at the prison. Reported by allAfrica.com, 16 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110170678.html>

Prison warders trained in security processes: allAfrica.com reported that 28 prison warders completed a three-week training course in security techniques in prisons. The training workshop which took place at Murindi in Ndera Sector, Gasabo District, was organised by the Rwandan Correctional Services in partnership with the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Reported by allafrica.com, 31 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110310698.html>

SIERRA

LEONE

Prison service under stress: The Awoko reported that delays by authorities in initiating prison reforms were worsening the conditions of already overcrowded, poorly built and under-funded prisons. Reported by Winston Ojukutu-Macaulay Jnr, 12 October 2011, at <http://www.awoko.org/2011/10/12/sierra-leone-prison-service%E2%80%A6-under-pressure-at-a-breaking-point/>

Correctional Services Bill before parliament: Sierra Express Media reported that a Bill that has been tabled before parliament, when ratified, will establish a number of positive changes to the prison administration and management. In addition, the legislation will establish various empowerment programmes for prisoners. Reported by Donstance Koroma, 21 October 2011, at <http://www.sierraexpressmedia.com/archives/31158>

SUDAN

Calls made for release of activist: Amnesty International appealed to authorities in Khartoum to release a detained human rights activist on a hunger strike and reportedly at risk of torture. The prisoner, Bushra Gamar Hussein Rahma, was detained following the arrest of Nubians affiliated with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. Reported by Amnesty International, 12 October 2011, at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/health-fears-detained-sudanese-activist-hunger-strike-2011-10-12>

SWAZILAND

Juveniles encouraged to work hard: The Swazi Observer reported that the Commissioner of the Department of Correctional Services visited Malkerns Juvenile Industrial School and encouraged the children in attendance to commit most of their time to studying hard in order to get good results. The school, which is run by the Department of Correctional Services, caters for the school needs of young offenders. Reported by Winile Masinga, 18 October 2011, at <http://www.observer.org.sz/index.php?news=31137>

TANZANIA

The abolishment of capital punishment being considered: ipppmedia.com reported that the government has formed a special committee for the purpose of collecting public opinion on whether the death penalty should be retained and abolished. Reported by ipppmedia.com, 20 October 2011, at <http://www.ipppmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=34615>

UGANDA

Criticism of the death penalty: Martin Shearman, British High Commissioner to Uganda, wrote a piece in the New Vision in which he appealed to authorities in Uganda to abolish the death penalty. The writer noted that five people were sentenced to death in 2010 and 470 remain on death row. Written by Martin Shearman, 11 October 2011, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/18349-abolish-the-death-penalty.html>

Some death row inmates labelled "innocent": The New Vision reported that the newly appointed Presidential Advisor on Security, Chris Rwakasisi, who spent considerable time in prison before being pardoned, revealed that 25% of the 505 inmates on death row at Luzira Maximum prison are innocent. Rwakasisi reportedly made the remarks at a gathering marking world day against the death penalty. Reported by Josephine Maseruka, 12 October 2011, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/18379-quarter-of-luzira-death-row-convicts-innocent-rwakasisi.html>

Death sentences commuted: allAfrica.com reported that three prisoners who were on death row at Luzira Prison had their respective sentences commuted to prison sentences of less than twenty years each. Reported by Anthony Wesaka, 20 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110200872.html>

Facilities inadequate for mothers with babies: allafrica.com reported that children whose mothers are serving various sentences in Arua government prison are facing "tough times" due to lack of proper bedding, food and medication. Reported by Felix Warom Okello, 21 October 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110201478.html>

Controversial bill before parliament: Bloomberg reported that Uganda's parliament voted to re-open debate on a Bill that seeks to outlaw homosexuality and impose a penalty for this "offence" of death or life imprisonment. Reported by Fred Ojambo, 25 October 2011, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-10-25/uganda-parliament-votes-to-continue-anti-homosexual-bill-1-.html>

Criticism of proposed amendments to bail legislation: Irin News reported that Ugandan human rights activists have expressed concern that President Yoweri Museveni's proposal to do away with bail for people suspected of committing certain crimes could swell the country's already overcrowded prison system and exacerbate severe problems in delivering health services to inmates. Reported by Irin News, 26 October 2011, at <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=94071>

Inmate tortured: The Monitor reported that the Uganda Human Rights Commission is investigating the alleged torture of a prisoner at Namalembe Prison in Iganga District. The alleged victim, Hamza Kiirya, who had been in hospital as a result of the assault, claims that it was a prison official that tortured him. Reported by Andrew Gulumaire, 27 October 2011, at <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/1262322/-/bhgr76z/-/>

ZAMBIA

Prison overcrowding: The Times reported that the Zambia Prisons Service has complained of prison overcrowding in the country's Eastern Province prisons. The report quotes Acting Prisons Regional Commanding Officer as saying that the prison overcrowding made these facilities very difficult to manage effectively. Reported by Davies M.M. Chanda, 4 October 2011, at http://www.times.co.zm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2116:prisons-bemoans-overcrowding&catid=36:local-news&Itemid=27

ZIMBABWE

Officials remanded in custody: SW Radio reported that eight MDC-T officials, including youth president Solomon Madzore, were remanded in custody over allegations that they had a hand in the death of a police official. Seven other MDC-T activists are also reportedly in remand detention in connection with the same murder, five months after having been arrested. Reported by Tichaona Sibanda, 7 October 2011, at <http://www.swradioafrica.com/news071011/madzore071011.htm>

Strike affects bail hearings: The Herald reported that a strike by prosecutors caused a massive backlog at the High Court where bail applications are being repeatedly postponed as a result. High Court judges reportedly criticized the Office of the Attorney-General for the non-performance of its staff. Reported by The Herald, 12 October 2011, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23549:strike-causes-backlog-at-high-court&catid=46:crime-a-courts&Itemid=138

No condoms for prisoners: New Zimbabwe reported that Zimbabwe prison officials told the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Prisons that the prison service had no immediate plans to distribute condoms in prisons until such time as Parliament has repealed the legislation outlawing homosexuality. A local organisation, the Gays and Lesbian Association of Zimbabwe, has reportedly been at the forefront of the campaign for the introduction of condoms for inmates. Reported by newzimbabwe.com, 14 October 2011, at <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-6262-No%20condoms%20for%20inmates%20prisons%20boss/news.aspx>

Prison service receives training: News Day reported that the Zimbabwe Prison Service is planning to roll out a training programme designed to improve the knowledge of prison officials in the area of human rights. Reported by Feluna Nleya, 14 October 2011, at <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-10-14-prison-service-to-curb-abuse-of-convict>

Government urged to abolish the death penalty: News Day reported that human rights organisations have called on government to scrap the death penalty from its statutes, arguing that by upholding the "unjust and archaic legislation", Zimbabwe was slowly alienating itself from the rest of the region. Zimbabwe and Botswana are the two countries in sub-Saharan Africa which still have the death penalty. Reported by News Day, 17 October 2011, at <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-10-17-zim-stands-alone-on-death-penalty>

Children neglected in prison: The Zimdiaspora reported that 30 children aged 15 and younger are "languishing" at the notorious Wha-Wha prison, an adult facility. The probation hostel in which the children are supposed to be accommodated does not have sufficient resources to cater for the children. Reported by zimdiaspora.com, 18 October 2011, at http://www.zimdiaspora.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6722:children-languishing-in-wha-wha-prison&catid=38:travel-tips&Itemid=18

Remand prisoners affected by lack of transport: News Day reported that Harare Remand Prison has been hit hard by a shortage of transport for the purposes of ferrying detainees to and from court. The reported result is that the district court is able to attend to bail hearings only twice a week. Reported by News Day, 24 October 2011, at <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-10-24-no-joy-for-chitungwiza-remand-prisoners>

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