

PRI e-newsletter July 2015

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# E-newsletter

July 2015

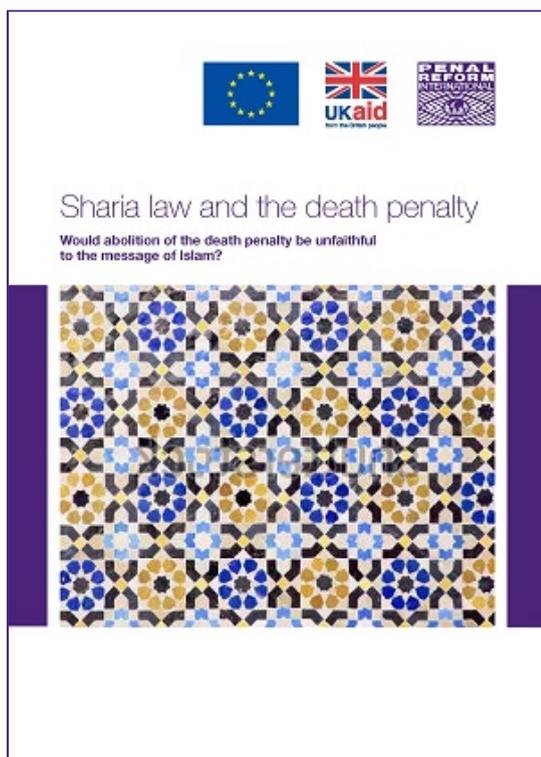


**Welcome to Penal Reform International's monthly e-newsletter, a round-up of PRI and other penal reform news from around the world and a variety of criminal justice and human rights resources.**

***The views expressed in the news items below are not necessarily those of PRI.***

## In this month's edition

- [In the spotlight: New report: Sharia law and the death penalty](#)
- [Conditions of detention](#)
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- [Rehabilitation and reintegration](#)
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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Sharia law and the death penalty: would abolition of the death penalty be unfaithful to Islam?

On 23 July, we launched a new report for non-experts who want to understand more about Sharia law and Islamic jurisprudence as it relates to the death penalty.

Sharia law is used in some countries as a reason to retain capital punishment. However, there are schools of thought among Islamic scholars that state that Sharia law creates stringent conditions for the use of the death penalty; includes various opportunities to avoid

or commute punishment, and explicitly encourages alternatives. Our report looks at the categories of penalties in Sharia law and explains what these comprise in relation to the death penalty. It also examines the ways in which Islamic jurisprudence has changed over the centuries in terms of law and punishment.

See [our website](#) for more details!

## CONDITIONS OF DETENTION



### [Opening the steel door: how Colorado is reforming solitary confinement](#)

In this new [expert blog post](#) for PRI, the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections, Rick Raemisch, discusses the reforms that Colorado has made to its use of solitary confinement in its prisons. He explains some of the dangers that solitary confinement poses for public safety and the mental health and wellbeing of prisoners, and talks about tailored treatment responses that have been introduced

in Colorado for prisoners with mental health issues.

### [Enhancing the impact of National Preventive Mechanisms](#)

The University of Bristol and the [Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights](#) have recently published [a paper](#) on 'Enhancing impact of National Preventive Mechanisms-strengthening the follow-up on NPM recommendations in the EU: strategic development, current practices and the way forward'. This paper evaluates current follow-up strategies employed by NPMs and identifies ways in which they can better ensure that governments

implement the recommendations in their reports.

Read [a blog post](#) that Moritz Birk from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute wrote for PRI last year on improving the impact of detention monitoring bodies based on the early findings from this research.

See also an upcoming event for those who work in criminal justice on [Improving measures related to detention conditions at the EU level](#) in October 2015.

## Other news and resources:

### New reports:

**Self-inflicted Deaths in National Offender Management Service's Custody Amongst 18–24 Year Olds:** [Cambridge University's Faculty of Law and Prison Research Centre \(PRC\)](#) and [RAND Europe](#) have published a [research report](#) on self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds imprisoned in England and Wales.

**Report on the stay at home monitoring exercise carried out by AdvocAid paralegals:** [AdvocAid](#) has released a [new report](#) on the work of their paralegals during the national 'Zero Ebola' campaign in Sierra Leone, where citizens were obliged to stay indoors. The paralegals monitored police stations during the campaign and provided legal services for those who were arrested for being outside of their homes.

**HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales Annual Report 2014–15:** The 2014-15 [Annual Report](#) provides data and statistics on prison facilities and prison populations in England and Wales.

**Mental Health and Scotland's Prison Population:** a [new report](#) has been published by the [Scotland Institute](#) on the mental health of prisoners in Scotland.

### New webcast:

**The Mandela Rules:** Following the historic revision of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (SMR) at the UN Crime Commission in May this year, the [United States Institute for Peace](#) held a forum to discuss the new 'Mandela Rules' and their potential impact. See a [webcast](#) of the forum. Read more about the revision process on [PRI's website](#).

**Australia:** [Report slams 'inefficient' prisons](#)

**Australia:** [Queensland to open training prison to ease overcrowding](#)

**Bolivia:** [Pope Francis visits prison in Bolivia run by inmates](#)

**Canada:** [Inmates file class action law suit over treatment of mentally ill inmates](#)

**Costa Rica:** [Supreme Court orders prison officials to address cruel and degrading conditions](#)

**Hong Kong:** [Prisoners boost their economic contribution](#)

**Hungary:** [Prison inmates build a border fence to keep out migrants](#)

**India:** [Inmates to get personal email IDs as part of state literacy program](#)

**India:** [Police website will show the state of prisons](#)

**Ireland:** [Costliest prison to open this year in Cork](#)

**Mauritius:** [Prisons department launches 'fete de la moisson'](#)

**Norway:** [Prisons reach record high level of occupancy](#)

**Pakistan:** [Federal ombudsman forms committees for jail reforms](#)

**South Africa:** [Horror account of torture in prison](#)

**UK:** [Suicide among male prisoners reaching an all time high](#)

**UK:** [Prisons at their worst for 10 years](#)

**US:** [Pell tuition grants to be restored for prisoners](#)

**Zambia:** [Prison service boosts food production](#)

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## DRUG POLICIES

### [Looking ahead to the UNGASS 2016 on the world drug problem](#)

Between 19-21 April 2016 there will be a [Special Session of the UN General Assembly](#) (UNGASS) on the world drug problem.

In preparation for this meeting the [International Drug Policy Consortium](#) (IDPC) has issued a training module on the UNGASS (as part of their training toolkit on drug policy advocacy). The module aims to 'guide participants through the processes around the UNGASS; to place the UNGASS in the broader context of drug policy; and to explore various ways civil society can maximise their impact on the UNGASS and its preparatory process'. Access the module [here](#). As IDPC points out, 'The UNGASS on drugs has the potential to be a ground-breaking, open debate about the international drug control system – but there is much work to be done to ensure that it fulfils that potential.'

IDPC have also issued a report with their recommendations for the 'zero draft' of the UNGASS outcome document. [Download](#) it in English or French.

### [UN Office on Drugs and Crime issues annual drugs report](#)

UNODC issued its annual drugs report: [The World Drug Report 2015](#) in June. It presents a comprehensive annual overview of the latest developments in the world's illicit drug markets by focusing on the production, trafficking and consumption of the main types of illicit drugs and their health consequences. The report includes data on drug use in prisons.

Also see the joint [submission](#) by PRI and [Harm Reduction International](#) to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in May on the impact of the world drug problem on the enjoyment of human rights.

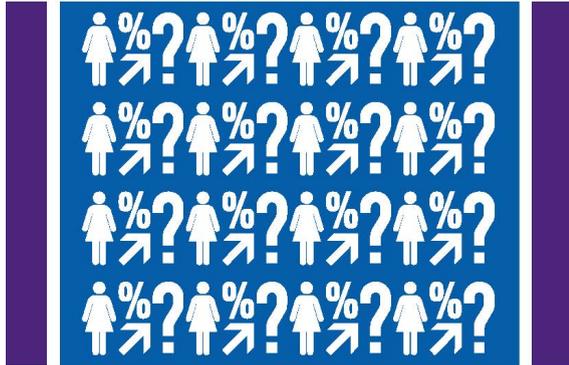
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## WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



## Who are women prisoners?

Survey results from Uganda



Towards a gender-sensitive penal policy

## Who are women prisoners? Survey results from Uganda

In July, PRI and the [Foundation for Human Rights Initiative](#) launched a new research report [Who are women prisoners? Survey results from Uganda](#) at a roundtable session in Kampala. The report provides data on the characteristics and backgrounds of women prisoners in Uganda, as well as identifying key areas to improved upon and recommending gender-specific policies for women in the criminal justice system.

### Results snapshot

Of the 194 women PRI surveyed (10 per cent of the female prison population):

- 37 per cent of women surveyed said they had experienced domestic violence.
- 76 per cent of women surveyed identified themselves as poor or very poor; 32 per cent had never been to school.
- As a result of their imprisonment, 43 per cent of women had lost their job, 35 per cent their home and 31 per cent had had their children taken away.

At the roundtable launch of the report, which brought together key stakeholders, the keynote speech delivered on behalf of Hon. Justice Lameck Nsubuga outlined the importance of the Bangkok Rules for Uganda and some of the issues and discrimination women offenders and prisoners face.

See all of the publications in our [Who are women prisoners?](#) series, or find resources on women in the criminal justice system in PRI's [Bangkok Rules Toolbox](#).

### Summary report from our joint 'girls in detention' side-event at the UN Human Rights Council

A [report](#) from a side-event at the UN Human Rights Council in June, co-hosted by PRI, [Defence for Children International](#), the Permanent Mission of Switzerland and the [United Nations OHCHR](#), is now available on [our website](#). The event drew attention to the particular needs of girls in detention and some of the challenges in achieving the realisation of their human rights.

### Other news and resources:

**Argentina:** [Prisoners gain new focus through pinhole photography](#)

**Fiji:** [Female prison faces overcrowding](#)

**Rwanda:** [How Nyarugenge correctional facility is transforming female convicts](#)

**UK:** [Edinburgh fringe: play about female prisoners to hit stage](#)

**UK:** [More than 80 per cent of female inmates locked up for non-violent offences, new figures show](#)

**USA:** ['Prison within prison': a transgender inmate's years-long battle for treatment](#)

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## REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

### [PRI at the 2nd World Congress on Community Corrections](#)

In July, PRI attended the 2nd World Congress on Community Corrections in Los Angeles and delivered a workshop to share information about PRI's [Excellence in Training and Rehabilitation](#) (ExTRA) project to improve the use and implementation of community service orders in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The conference was attended by 360 participants from 27 different countries and focused on innovations in community corrections and the improvement of rehabilitation prospects for offenders.

Read a [blog post](#) by PRI's Executive Director, Alison Hannah, on the highlights of the conference, or see a previous [blog post](#) by PRI's ExTRA Project coordinator, Omar Khan, on how the ExTRA project is addressing skepticism about community service in Kenya.

### Other news and resources:

**Australia:** [New supervision order creating more punishment after time served](#)

**Egypt:** [Al-Sisi releases over 400 prisoners on Eid](#)

**Estonia:** [Third of Estonian convicts are in prison for at least the fourth time](#)

**Finland:** [Rehabilitation course combats recidivism](#)

**Gambia:** [Over 200 prisoners freed](#)

**Jamaica:** [Justice minister expunges minor marijuana -related convictions](#)

**Malta:** [93 per cent of businesses do not feel comfortable employing former prison inmates](#)

**Malta:** [Rehab services for inmates serving their final year in prison](#)

**Morocco:** [Recidivism rates are down](#)

**Myanmar:** [Almost 7,000 prisoners are pardoned](#)

**New Zealand:** [Treatment and parole are more effecting at reducing recidivism than serving a full sentence](#)

**North Korea:** [Government grants amnesties](#)

**Pakistan:** [President approves remission in jail terms on Eid](#)

**Sierra Leone:** [New project to boost fair sentencing and reduce detentions](#)

**Somalia:** [President extends amnesty to over 100 convicts in prison](#)

**Thailand:** [Probation department a failure from the start](#)

**Tonga:** [To mark coronation, Tonga releases 23 prisoners](#)

**Turkey:** [Convicts work as excavators in Selimiye Mosque garden](#)

**UK:** [New prisoner early release scheme isn't about saving money](#)

**UK:** [Charities better than private companies at reducing reoffending, report finds](#)

**UK:** [Gove hints at rise in tagging and community penalties as jail alternatives](#)

**USA:** [Obama commutes the sentences of 46 non-violent drug offenders](#)

**Zambia:** [President commutes over 300 death sentences](#)

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## **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Request for proposals: Evaluation of Penal Reform International's work on Women in the Criminal Justice System at the international level**

PRI is looking to contract a consultant to evaluate our international work on the promotion and implementation of the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules). PRI has developed a theory of change for its work on the Bangkok Rules that covers both advocacy at the international level and implementation at the national level. This evaluation will focus on PRI's work at the Head Office (international) level.

See the full request for proposals [here](#) and view [our website](#) for details on how to apply.

### **Research and communications internship**

We are looking for a part-time Research and Communications Intern to join our team based in central London. This is an excellent opportunity for either a student or graduate seeking a career in human rights to gain solid experience and develop their skills. Please visit our [website](#) for more information and details on how to apply.

### **Other:**

### **Call for reports on legal representation for people accused of violent crimes and redress for victims**

The International Bar Association is collecting information for a report on legal representation for people accused of violent crimes, as well as redress for victims of violent crimes. They are also collecting case studies and best practices on these issues. If you have information on these two issues please [participate in the survey](#) or provide information on case studies [using this form](#) (both in English). Also feel free to disseminate to relevant stakeholders. More general information on the project and on its different stages is available [here](#).

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