

PRI e-newsletter January/February 2016

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E-newsletter

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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

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

New PRI Publication: Short Guide to the Nelson Mandela Rules

This [Short Guide](#) summarises the 122 provisions of the [Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) which were revised and adopted as the Nelson Mandela Rules by the UN in 2015. The Guide outlines in brief the

minimum standards that should be applied in prisons from admission to release and highlights the areas that were revised. A summary of the revision process is also included.

Watch a [two-minute animated introduction](#) to the Nelson Mandela Rules.



The revised United Nations Standard
Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
(Nelson Mandela Rules)

Short guide



Read also an [external evaluation](#) of PRI's work on the [Standard Minimum Rules](#) review process by independent evaluator, Annabel Jackson.

NEW BLOGS

Expert blog for PRI: [How to build a prison compliant with human rights norms?](#)



To fill the gap between international norms and the relative lack of information on how to build a compliant prison in difficult circumstances, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) recently updated their [Technical Guidance for Prison Planning](#) document to support planners to use a human rights-based approach in the development of prison infrastructure.

This blog post by Gordon Nuttall and Pedja Jurisic (UNOPS) is adapted from the manual, which was updated in 2016 to reflect the recent adoption of the Mandela Rules, and outlines some common 'mistakes' in prison design, and three key principles to keep in mind.

Read also a previous [expert blog for PRI](#) on prison design from a gender-sensitive perspective.

[See also, new blogs on our website on ...](#)

[... food in prison](#)

In this [expert blog for PRI](#), Amy Smoyer, introduces the new [World Health Organization](#)

[Regional Office for Europe](#) report, [Food Systems in Correctional Settings](#).

... the new [World Prison Population list](#)

In this [blog](#), PRI associate Rob Allen reviews the latest edition of the [World Prison Population List](#), compiled by Roy Walmsley.

ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

[Excellence in Training on Rehabilitation in Africa \(ExTRA\) Project – Evaluation](#)

This [mid-term evaluation](#) reports on progress achieved in PRI's two-year pilot project on developing community service as an alternative to short-term prison sentences for petty offences in three East African countries.

Read also this blog by Project Coordinator, Omar Phoenix Khan, [Progress and lessons from an evaluation of PRI's alternative to imprisonment project in East Africa](#).

More news:

Scotland: [Fewer Scots receiving short prison sentences after introduction of more community-based options](#)

US: [Does smarter sentencing equal lower prison numbers?](#)

GLOBAL ADVOCACY

[PRI roundtable on prison radicalisation](#)

In December 2015, PRI organised an international roundtable on [Preventing Radicalisation in Prisons: Developing a Coordinated and Effective Approach](#) in Amman, bringing together 30 participants from 15 countries representing the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, Central and South Asia. The [report](#) on the event summarises discussions.

Read also a [plea by Muslim prison chaplains](#) in Canada for more time with federal inmates to curb radicalisation, Kenya's intention to [tackle radicalisation by building a new prison for extremists](#), and an [expert blog for PRI](#) on radicalisation and de-radicalisation in prison.

[Briefing on the Nelson Mandela Rules in Geneva](#)

On 4 February 2015, PRI, together with the [Quaker UN Office \(QUNO\)](#), and the Permanent Representations of Switzerland and Uruguay to the UN in Geneva, organised a briefing in Geneva for delegates, representatives of NGOs and interested stakeholders

on the [Nelson Mandela Rules](#). A webcast recording is available [here](#).

Panel discussion on prison reform and the rule of law at UN Headquarters

On 1 March PRI's Programme Officer, Olivia Rope, joined a panel discussion on 'Implementing International Standards and Norms: Sharing national practices on prison reform' co-organised by the UN Rule of Law Unit and the Permanent Missions of Argentina, Rwanda and Turkey. PRI highlighted the key areas and recommendations in which international standards – in particular the Nelson Mandela Rules – reinforce the rule of law in prisons and how adopting a human rights-based approach that reinforces the rule of law in prison systems results in better outcomes for prisoners, staff and the community.

Full discussion available [here](#) (PRI's contribution 1 hr 20 minutes in).

Coming up:

Side-event at the Human Rights Council on gender aspects of torture and ill-treatment

On 9 March, during the [31st Session of the Human Rights Council](#), PRI's Policy Director Andrea Huber will moderate a panel, co-sponsored by PRI, and hosted by Special Rapporteur Juan E. Méndez on his [latest thematic report](#) on the gender aspects of torture and ill-treatment.

See the [flyer](#).

Roundtable on the Nelson Mandela Rules in Kampala

On 10 March, PRI's Africa Office, together with the Ugandan Prison Service, will host a roundtable in Kampala on the [Nelson Mandela Rules](#). The meeting aims to identify the questions that arise with the [Rules](#) and the challenges practitioners anticipate in the implementation of the revised [Rules](#).

DRUG POLICIES

United Nations University: [Report - What comes after the war on drugs](#)

Prior to the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in April 2016 (UNGASS 2016), the UN University launched a new policy report which analyses political and policy trends leading up to UNGASS 2016 and offers operational recommendations for strengthening its outcome.

New blog: [Testing the waters for UNGASS – are parliamentarians ready for a](#)

[change in international drug policy?](#)



On 8 February, PRI's Policy Director Andrea Huber addressed the [Inter-Parliamentary Union \(IPU\) at a parliamentary hearing at the United Nations](#) in New York in preparation of the [UNGASS](#). The deliberations during the two-day hearing covered various topics, ranging from development issues, healthcare and harm reduction and criminalisation, to social issues causing or caused by drug use, rehabilitation, money laundering and corruption, and international cooperation including joint border operations.

- Read the [full report](#) on the IPU hearing.
- Watch the [webcast](#).

[IDPC: Advocacy note on the UNGASS 2016 official outcome document](#)

As negotiations continue on the official outcome document for UNGASS, the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) has published an [advocacy note](#) with reflections on the process and recommendations for the final document.

Read also the [draft outcome document](#) (revised 9 February 2016) and this open letter by scientists from around the world calling on governments for [A Reprioritization of Metrics to Evaluate Illicit Drug Policy](#).

[Report from UN panel on the world drug problem and human rights](#)

The [report](#) contains a summary of the panel discussion, held during the 30th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in September 2015, on the impact of the world drug problem on the enjoyment of human rights, and is tabled for the upcoming 31st Session of the HRC. PRI contributed to the discussion with this [statement](#).

More news on alternative approaches to the 'war on drugs':

Global: [Kofi Annan on why drug bans are ineffective](#)

Cyprus: [Therapy not prison for drug addicts](#)

Maldives: [Maldives to set up drug offenders remand centre at main prison](#)

Norway: [Norway now able to sentence drug addicts to treatment rather than prison](#)

WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Advocating Gender-Specific Needs and Priorities in the Criminal Justice System in Georgia

PRI is delighted to announce the launch of a new 1-year project in Georgia, funded by the Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF), which aims to develop recommendations to introduce gender-specific approaches in the criminal justice system, increase consideration of gender-specific aspects during decision-making by the judiciary and during parole mechanisms, advocate for greater use of non-custodial sentences, as well as raising awareness about women's gender-specific needs in the criminal justice system and the negative impact of imprisonment.

Georgia was one of seven countries where PRI conducted in-depth research into the profile and needs of women prisoners over 2013-2015. See [Who are women prisoners? Armenia and Georgia](#) for more information.

UN Bangkok Rules E-course now available in Chinese

PRI is delighted to announce that, after the launch of its free online e-course [Women in Detention: putting the Bangkok Rules in practice](#) in English, Arabic and Russian, thanks to [Dui Hua](#), a [shorter off-line version is now available in Chinese](#).

Dui Hua hope that the e-course will help [to improve the legal outcomes for women in the criminal justice system in Chinese-speaking areas of the world](#). Since 2003, the number of women in Chinese prisons has increased by more than 50 per cent.

WOLA Report - Women, drug policies and incarceration: A guide for policy reform in Latin America and the Caribbean

On 2 February, during an [event](#) on the disproportionately negative impact of current drug policies on women, the [Washington Office on Latin America \(WOLA\)](#) launched a [new guide](#) (Spanish only, English version will be published soon) to support stakeholders to implement policy changes to benefit women imprisoned on drug charges throughout the Americas.

New blog: [Hosting the second exchange visit under the East Africa Criminal Justice Civil Society e-network](#)

In February 2016, six NGOs from Uganda and Kenya participated in an exchange visit organised and hosted by the [African Prisons Project](#) (APP) in partnership with the [Foundation for Human Rights Initiative](#) (FHRI), which provided an opportunity for the NGOs and prison staff to share experiences and good practice on working with women offenders and how to implement the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders ([the Bangkok Rules](#)).

More news:

Haiti: [Justice inauguration of the new civil prison for women in cabaret](#)

New Zealand: [Green thumbs thrive at women's prison](#)

Northern Ireland: [Big rise in assaults on warders at women's jail is blamed on staff cuts](#)

Scotland: [Female inmates forced to use sinks as toilets due to night-time security arrangements](#)

UK: [Female prisoners are making designer items in a private prison](#)

US: [Video: Dangers for female prison guards](#)

For more info on women in the criminal justice system, read our [recently published E-Bulletin](#).

TORTURE PREVENTION AND CONDITIONS IN DETENTION

New edition: Detention Monitoring Tool – Addressing risk factors to prevent torture and ill-treatment

Following the adoption of the revised [UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners –\(Nelson Mandela Rules\)](#), PRI and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) have released a 2nd edition of our joint Detention Monitoring Tool, which now incorporates guidance provided in the revised Rules.

The Tool includes the following four papers:

- Women in detention: a guide to gender-sensitive monitoring
- Institutional culture in detention: a framework for preventive monitoring
- LGBTI persons deprived of their liberty: a framework for preventive monitoring
- Balancing security and dignity in prisons.

It also includes 5 shorter factsheets on monitoring: instruments of restraint; body searches; staff working conditions; video recording in police custody and pre-trial detention.

Second editions in other languages will follow.

Irish Penal Reform Trust: Report – Out on the Inside: The Rights, Experiences and Needs of LGBT People in Prison

This first in-depth [study](#) of the experiences of LGBT people in Irish prisons – often described as a double-marginalised group – focusses on the needs of LGBT prisoners, and identifies best practices and recommendations.

Harm Reduction International: [Monitoring HIV, HCV, TB and harm reduction in prison](#)

Harm Reduction International (HRI) has published a [tool](#) for monitoring bodies, in consultation with an Expert Committee, to assist human rights-based monitoring bodies in fulfilling their preventive mandate in the context of HIV, HCV, TB and harm reduction in prisons.

Read also HRI's [new report](#) on harm reduction in prisons.

More news:

ICRC: [Tackling Torture – Who are the torturers?](#)

Armenia: [Prison deaths raise questions](#)

Ghana: [Conditions in Ghana prisons to be improved](#)

Guyana: [Government to address concerns of prisoners after fatal fire](#)

Ireland: [Improved inmate conditions have reduced prison violence](#)

Latvia: [Report to the UN: Latvia's prison conditions have improved considerably](#)

South Africa: [HIV-positive prisoner denied antiretroviral treatment](#)

UK: [Inside Wandsworth prison: drug drones and demoralised staff](#)

US: [Albert Woodfox released from Louisiana jail after 43 years in solitary confinement](#)

From the European Court of Human Rights:

[Kalda v. Estonia](#) – Refusal to grant prisoner access to internet websites containing legal information violation of Freedom of Expression (open link in Internet Explorer)

[Isenc v. France](#) – Failure to comply with positive obligations to protect right to life of inmate who hung himself (open link in Internet Explorer)

On overcrowding:

Benin: [Benin prison conditions dire](#)

Congo: [Congo to release 2000 prisoners in bid to reduce overcrowding](#)

Haiti: [UN expert condemns Haiti prison overcrowding](#)

India: [Indian jails overcrowded, need trained administration](#)

Mexico: [Overpopulated jails to get new money](#)

Nicaragua: [Nicaragua paroles 8000 convicts to clear prisons](#)

Thailand: [Ministry seeks ways to ease overcrowding in prison](#) + [Thailand prison crowding 'getting worse' with growing number of terror detainees](#)

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

Defence for Children International: Children's Rights Behind Bars Conference in Brussels

On 15 February PRI attended a conference at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels, [Children's Rights Behind Bars: Human Rights of children deprived of liberty; Improving monitoring mechanisms](#). The conference marked the end of a 2-year project by [Defence for Children International \(DCI\)](#), for which PRI's Programme Development Director, Nikhil Roy, was an expert adviser. The culmination of the project is the new [Practical Guide – Monitoring places where children are deprived of liberty](#), which was presented at the conference.

Successful challenge to life without parole for children in the US led by former PRI Board Member, Bryan Stevenson

A [review](#) of the recent US Supreme Court ruling in [Montgomery v Louisiana](#) on the retroactive application of a new constitutional rule on mandatory life without parole for juvenile offenders (*Miller v. Alabama*), by Dirk van Zyl Smit (Chair of Board, PRI) and Harriet Lowe (PRI). Former PRI Board Member Bryan Stevenson was counsel to Mr Montgomery.

Read also [this article](#) on the practical implications of the ruling.

More news:

Global: [ECtHR - Gülcü v. Turkey – Harshness of conviction and detention of a minor for participation in a demonstration violation of freedom of assembly and association](#) (open link in Internet Explorer)

Benin: [UN Child Watchdog: Children detained in Benin still victims of torture and ill-treatment](#)

Cambodia: [Youth justice law due this year](#)

UK: [Reoffending rates for young criminals at highest level for more than 10 years](#)

US: [President Obama bans solitary confinement for juveniles in federal prison](#)

Zambia: [Over 400 juveniles detained in prison](#)

OTHER NEWS

Restorative Justice seminar in Istanbul

In September 2016, the European Forum for Restorative Justice (EFRJ) and the Asia Pacific Forum for Restorative Justice will organise an inter-regional seminar in Istanbul, [The East meeting the West: Ideas on the development of Restorative Justice](#).

Deadline for applications is [31 March](#).

See also this [series of webinars](#) by the Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice.

In the media:

On death penalty and life imprisonment:

India: [Prison manual revised death row prisoners will be allowed to meet family one last time](#)

Kenya: [Judiciary's new policy spells doom for death row convicts](#) and [12 men on death row challenge mandatory sentence](#)

Zimbabwe: [Death penalty is a cruel, inhumane: zim traditional leaders](#) and [117 zim inmates on death row](#)

On rehabilitation:

Samoa: [Samoan group to help former prisoners](#)

UK: [One in 12 criminals reoffends just 18 days after being freed from prison](#)

On pre-trial justice:

Belize: [1443 in prison: one in three awaiting outcome of trial](#)

Malta: [Historic ECtHR decision against Malta opens floodgates](#)

Papua New Guinea: [Prisoners held without trial](#)

More news:

Australia: [Indigenous artists to be allowed to sell work created prison](#)

Egypt: [3462 students will take exams in prisons: interior ministry](#)

UK: [Government considers single secure jail unit for Islamist terrorists](#)

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