

PRI e-newsletter March 2015.

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E-newsletter

March 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.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

[PRI at the UN Crime Congress in Doha](#)

PRI is delighted to be attending the 13th UN Crime Congress in Doha, Qatar from 12-19 April.

PRI will be hosting and taking part in a number of panels, as well as running a stand in the exhibition halls. The panels PRI is organising or co-organising include:

- Revision of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
- Global Prison Trends: Developments and challenges in penal policy
- Gender-sensitive monitoring and oversight of prison systems

PRI's Regional Director in the Middle East and North Africa, Taghreed Jaber, will also be participating in official workshop A on *Why the Bangkok Rules are needed and their*

implementation five years on.

See our [website](#) for more details

Follow us on twitter at [@penalreformint](#) for updates from the congress!

EXPERT BLOG SERIES



To mark PRI's 25th Anniversary and prepare for [next month's Crime Congress in Qatar](#), we are running a series of monthly expert guest blogs, addressing interesting current trends and pressing criminal justice challenges in criminal justice and penal reform.

Prisoner consultation can contribute to the smooth running of prisons

In this penultimate blog in our year-long series, Kimmitt Edgar, Head of Research at the UK charity [The Prison Reform Trust](#), says that self-advocacy roles for prisoners have a wide range of benefits. Service provision can be better informed and targeted to actual need; conflicts can be headed off at the outset; and giving prisoners responsibility for the wider prison community can help prepare them to undertake responsibilities on release.

Catch up on [all of PRI's expert blogs!](#)

GLOBAL ADVOCACY

Side event at the Human Rights Council on overuse of detention

During the 28th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council last week, PRI co-hosted a side-event with the Permanent Mission of Austria and Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS), on the human rights impact of the overuse of detention. Policy Director Andrea Huber gave a presentation underlining the need to address the overuse of imprisonment and its consequences for the realisation of human rights.

Read Andrea's blog based on her presentation: [Human rights bodies need to look at the overuse of imprisonment](#)



Other news and resources:

- [Global Report on the death penalty by Amnesty International](#)
- **South East Asia:** [Moves Away from the death penalty](#)
- **USA:** [American Pharmacists Association votes against supply of lethal injection drugs](#)
- **Vietnam:** [Plan to remove robbery, drug crimes from the death penalty list](#)

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

PRI Central Asia training on therapeutic responses to children in conflict with the law

Last month, PRI held a training course in our Central Asia office in Almaty for the staff of closed institutions on therapeutic responses to address offending and anti-social behaviour in children and adolescents. The training was delivered by international experts in child psychiatry, psychotherapy and medical psychology. The training was part of PRI's three-country program to end violence against children in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

For more information visit our website.

Find out more about this project.

Pakistan: PRI support for CRIN campaign to stay execution of man sentenced to death for crime committed age 14

PRI has added its name to [a letter to the Pakistani Ministry of Interior](#) requesting a stay of execution for Shafqat Hussain and an enquiry into his age and facts of the case. [A 30 stay has been granted.](#)

PRI training for the National Torture Prevention Centre in Kyrgyzstan

Also in March, PRI provided training to staff from the Kyrgyz National Torture Prevention Center (NTPC) on the monitoring of detention and custodial restraint for juveniles in Kyrgyzstan. The training was also part of PRI's violence against children project in Central Asia.

UN Report on Children Deprived of Liberty

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan E. Méndez, has published his thematic report on children deprived of liberty. The report explores the international legal framework and standards protecting children deprived of their liberty from being subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, and from experiencing developmentally harmful and torturous conditions of confinement.

The report also singles out the United States as the only country that continues the practice of sentencing children to life without parole. The report also states that:

“Life sentences or sentences of an extreme length have a disproportionate impact on children and cause physical and psychological harm that amounts to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment”.

Read the full report [here](#).

Follow or tweet about the Special Rapporteur's campaign to stop child torture using the hashtag [#stopchildtorture](#).

Other news and resources:

- **Ireland:** [Practice of jailing minors to end from this week](#)
- **Pakistan:** [UN report paints dismal picture of treatment of juvenile offenders](#)

WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Two new reports...

New OHCHR report on women in detention in Senegal

This new report from the OHCHR Regional Office in West Africa and the Women's Lawyers Association (AJS) in Senegal was officially launched on the 8 March, International Women's Day. It analyses the causes of detention of women and emphasises the discriminatory nature of certain offences, and makes recommendations including the decriminalisation of abortion.

Find out more information about the report [here](#)

Report on reproductive healthcare for women in New York State prisons

Reproductive Injustice: The State of Reproductive Health Care for Women in New York State is published by the US Women in Prison Project and the Coalition for Women Prisoners. It reveals a low standard of reproductive health care for women detained in New York State prisons, and found that even outlawed practices such as shackling women during pregnancy and childbirth are still routinely employed.

For more information and the full report please click [here](#)

And see also, a guest blog for PRI in 2013 by Brian Citro of the University of Chicago Law School: [Using international human rights mechanisms to stop the shackling of incarcerated pregnant women in the United States](#)

Other news and resources:

- Indonesia: [Second Chance Foundation provides training for women prisoners after release](#)
- Thailand: [Surge in women being imprisoned](#)
- USA: [Tennessee sterilisations in plea deals for women](#)

ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

KENYA: The National Crime Research Centre Calls for Non-Custodial Sentences for All First-Time Petty Offenders

PRI has helped to fund an National Crime Research Centre (NCRC) study in Kenya as part of our [Excellence in Training on Rehabilitation in Africa \(ExTRA\) project](#). The study found that as well as saving public funds, community-based sentences have long term benefits such as reconciliation, better reintegration and rehabilitation and maintaining

family ties. This study is especially relevant as it found that in some provinces 94 per cent of those sentenced to prisons for less than three years were actually petty offenders who could have received alternative sentences.



The Challenges of Developing Community Corrections in Africa

An article by PRI on “The Challenges of Developing Community Corrections in Africa” has now been published in the Winter 2015 Issue of Perspectives, the journal of the American Probation and Parole Association. The article outlines PRI’s work in East Africa with Community Service programs, and highlights some of the challenges these programs are facing.

You can find the full issue of the journal [here](#)

Other news and resources:

- **Belgium:** [Belgium is abolishing all prison sentences less than one year](#)
- **Scotland:** [Non-custodial orders 'making a difference'](#).

CONDITIONS OF DETENTION

Coming soon! Seminar for the Council of Europe and International Bodies' Work in Improving Detention Conditions

PRI will be making a presentation at the seminar which takes place from 7-8 May 2015; the second in a series which will focus on the work of the Council of Europe and international bodies in improving conditions related to detention.

Further information on the event is available on the Academy of European Law's [website](#).

Other news and resources:

- **Canada:** [Ontario Government to review solitary confinement practices](#).
 - **Egypt:** [UPR Recommendation for Independent Prison Observers Rejected](#)
 - **Georgia:** [UN Special Rapporteur on Torture says prison conditions in Georgia have come a long way, but more needs to be done](#)
 - **Hungary:** [Strasbourg court rules against Hungary in prison overcrowding case](#)
 - **Norway:** [The Radical Humaneness of Norway's Halden Prison](#)
 - **South Africa:** [Prison overcrowding blamed for high TB infection rate](#)
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OTHER NEWS

[Essex University Human Rights Summer School](#)

Essex University will be holding their Human Rights Summer School, which will take place at their Colchester campus from 29 June to 7 July 2015. The Human Rights Centre will offer its five day summer school in Human Rights Research Methods from 29 June to 3 July. This will be followed by a second week (6 – 7 July) of thematic modules on cutting edge issues in human rights.

See the brochure [here](#).

Or visit the [website](#) for more details.

[Desert Island Discs](#)

PRI Board member and Director of the [Equal Justice Initiative](#), Bryan Stevenson, appeared on Desert Island Discs earlier this month on BBC Radio 4.

Take a listen to it [here](#).

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