

PRI's Bangkok Rules E-bulletin: February 2016

View this email in your  
browser

## Bangkok Rules E-Bulletin

*Women in the Criminal Justice System*

February 2016



Toolbox  
on the UN  
Bangkok  
Rules

Welcome to Penal Reform International's quarterly Bangkok Rules E-Bulletin, a round-up of news and developments from PRI and others around the world on women in detention, and the implementation of the UN Bangkok Rules. The views expressed in the news items are not necessarily those of PRI.

We welcome contributions to the e-bulletin and do let us know what you think by emailing [publications@penalreform.org](mailto:publications@penalreform.org)

### *What's in this issue?*

- [In the spotlight](#): 'Minus the urinals and painted pink'? What should a women's prison look like?
- [PRI news](#) and events
- New [resources](#) and reports
- [In the media](#)

## WHAT ARE THE BANGKOK RULES?

The Bangkok Rules are a set of standards adopted by the UN General Assembly on 21 December 2010, which supplement existing standards for the treatment of prisoners by addressing the specific needs of women in the criminal justice system for the first time. For more information on the Rules see PRI's [short guide](#) on the Rules.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Expert blog for PRI: 'Minus the urinals and painted pink'? What should a women's prison look like?

Historically, prisons have largely been designed for the majority male prisoner population. However, the growing understanding that women who offend are different from men – from their typical backgrounds and the nature of their offences, to their experience of abuse and their care-taking responsibilities – is also leading architects and planners to consider how prison facilities might also be designed in a gender-sensitive manner.

In this [expert guest blog](#), Laura Maiello, Senior Vice President of Justice Planning for [CGL Companies](#) (USA) and Stephen Carter, founder, Executive Vice President and Co-Director of planning and design also at CGL, outline these and other considerations that those responsible for the design and management of women's facilities should take into account.



## PRI NEWS

### New report – A shared sentence: children of imprisoned parents in Uganda

PRI and the [Foundation for Human Rights Initiative](#) (FHRI) launched the report, [A Shared Sentence: children of imprisoned parents in Uganda in November](#).

This new research reports on the impact imprisonment has on children of prisoners in Uganda, assessing implementation of the 2013 [General Comment No.1](#) (Article 30, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child) on children of imprisoned parents. In this [blog](#), FHRI's Programme Officer, Diva Mukisa, says that the research showed that while Uganda has some good policies to protect children of prisoners, implementation of this new standard needs to improve.



A shared sentence  
Children of imprisoned parents in Uganda



A report on the implementation of General Comment No.1  
(Article 30 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child)

Read also this [short guide](#) to General Comment No. 1, published by PRI and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC).

[See below for more resources on women and children.](#)

### **Minority women in the criminal justice system: violence and discrimination**

At the November 2015 UN [Forum on minority issues](#) which this year focused on national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the criminal justice system, PRI highlighted, among other concerns, the specific issues faced by women offenders and prisoners belonging to minority groups.

- Read the [report](#) of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Rita Izsák, [Minorities in the criminal justice system](#).
- Download PRI's [oral statement](#)
- Read the [full report](#) of the deliberations from a side-event co-sponsored by PRI, the Quaker UN Office (QUNO), the Permanent Mission of Canada and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Minority women in the criminal justice system: violence and discrimination.'

### **New edition: [Women in detention: a guide to gender-sensitive monitoring](#)**

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 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of our joint Detention Monitoring Tool, which now incorporates guidance provided in the revised Rules.

As well as *Women in detention: a guide to gender-sensitive monitoring*, the Detention Monitoring Tool contains several other resources providing practical guidance to help monitoring bodies conduct effective visits to places of detention. [See our website for a full list.](#)

### **Historic update of international prison standards by the UN with adoption of the Nelson Mandela Rules**

On 17 December, the UN General Assembly [unanimously adopted](#) the revised [UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners – to be known as the 'Nelson Mandela Rules'](#). In a [press release](#) PRI's Executive Director expressed her delight at the successful outcome of the four-year review of the UN Standard Minimum Rules and underlined the significance of the revision for both prisoners and prison administrations. The Bangkok Rules are supplementary to the Nelson Mandela Rules and should be read together.

Find out more:

- [Short guide to the Nelson Mandela Rules](#), including a summary of the revision process and the new rules highlighted throughout.
- [Animated introduction](#) to the Nelson Mandela Rules
- Recorded [webcast](#) of February 2016 briefing in Geneva on Nelson Mandela Rules with expert panel

## **The impact of drug policies on women**

With the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session on drugs (UNGASS) from 19 to 21 April 2016, the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs and the New York Committee on Drugs joined forces and established a Civil Society Task Force (consisting of 26 members). In September PRI, as a member of the Task Force, together with the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC), organised a [consultation](#) of civil society organisations working on criminal justice related issues, which highlighted gender disparities in the war on drugs, illustrated by the fact that [women are the fastest growing prison population](#).

PRI recently signed the [UNGASS Women's Declaration Calling for Global Drug Policies that Support Women, Children and Families](#) and again highlighted the gender disparities in a [submission](#) to the UNGASS.

## **Preventing radicalisation in prisons – developing a coordinated and effective approach: roundtable report**

In December 2015, PRI organised an international roundtable on 'Preventing Radicalisation in Prisons: Developing a Coordinated and Effective Approach' hosted by PRI's MENA regional office 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 and includes a section on issues surrounding radicalised women.

## **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.

### **DOST Welfare Foundation conducts training in Pakistan on UN Bangkok Rules**

In November, PRI's partner organisation in Pakistan, the [DOST Welfare Foundation](#), trained 48 law students, 21 faculty members of local Law Colleges, and 30 NGO representatives from Peshawar on the [UN Bangkok Rules](#), focusing on the particular situation of women prisoners in Pakistan, the extent to which the UN Bangkok Rules are being implemented in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and improvements that could be made. The [training](#) looked at various issues for women prisoners and the extent to which legislation and policy in Pakistan, such as the Pakistan Prison Rules, are implemented and reflect the UN Bangkok Rules.

---

## **NEW RESOURCES**

### **New Statistics: Female prison population increased by 50% since 2000**

The number of women prisoners globally has increased by 50% since about 2000, which is significantly higher than the rise for the male prison population, at 18%.

This [latest edition of the World Prison Population list](#) shows that the female total has increased proportionately more than the male total in every continent, with women constituting 6.8% of the total world prison population, compared to 5.4% in about 2000. This translates to more than 700,000 women and girls in prison globally, with sharp increases seen in the Americas. In Guatemala, El Salvador and Brazil, for example, female imprisonment rates have risen hugely, in large part due to the harsh drug policies in those countries which impact women disproportionately.

Download the [third edition of the World Female Imprisonment List](#) for more information.

PRI's Olivia Rope was interviewed about the growth in the number of women prisoners on the BBC World Service programme Newsday on 5 February. Click [here](#) to listen.

Read also this new blog by Rob Allen, [A World of Prisons](#).

### **WHO: Report – Food systems in correctional settings**

In a recently published [report](#) on prison food, which includes an overview of existing

research and a case study in Danish correctional institutions, WHO recommends that policymakers recognise gender in prison food programming and the promotion of 'healthy food' choices.

The research shows that prisoners generally experience a feeling of loss of control as when, where and what they eat is controlled by prison administrations, and touches on specific issues for women prisoners.

Findings include:

- Imprisoned women are more likely to be obese than women in the community;
- Access to junk food enables women to derive pleasure from engaging in 'risky' behaviour, and offers them a 'healthy' means to cope with a perceived inability to control their own lives in prison;
- Women in US prisons smuggle food into their housing units and prepare customised dishes in order to regain control;
- Food often serves as a substitute for women to regulate and cope with emotions.

Read more about the role of food in prison in this [new expert guest blog](#) for PRI by Amy Smoyer, co-author of this WHO report.

### **Dignity: [Women in detention series](#)**

The [Danish Institute Against Torture](#) has finalised its [series on Torture and Organised Violence](#) (authored by Jo Baker) with the publication of four new country studies, focusing on conditions for women in detention in [Albania](#), [Jordan](#), [Zambia](#) and [the Philippines](#).

Read also Jo Baker's [new article](#) on women's health needs in prison based on her research in 2013-2015 among women's prisons and prison communities.

### **UN Working Group on discrimination against women raises concern about violence against women in detention in the US**

After a ten-day country visit to the US, the UN Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice [released a statement](#) on their findings which included concerns about the links between violence and women offenders/prisoners. The statement reaffirmed those concerns [raised by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women](#) which included over-incarceration, sexual violence, shackling of pregnant women, solitary confinement, lack of alternatives to custodial sentences for women with dependent children, inappropriate access to health care and inadequate re-entry programs, and the criminalisation of women in prostitution.

A comprehensive report of the country visit will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in June 2016.

### **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

In September 2015, the international community agreed to a new set of development goals, [The 2030 agenda for sustainable development](#), comprising 17 goals and 169 associated targets.

A number of the goals have links with establishing fair and effective criminal justice systems, including for women and girls. Goal 5, 'Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls', may be a particularly important reference point for organisations working on the implementation of the Bangkok Rules.

### **Cornell Law School: Conference report – Women, prison and gender-based violence**

This [report](#) provides an overview of Cornell's fifth annual Women and Justice Conference in April 2015, which focussed this year on the role of judges in addressing causes, conditions and consequences of women's imprisonment.

### **Women in Prison (UK): Report – State of the estate**

This new [research](#) by UK charity, [Women in Prison](#), analyses the UK's compliance with the Bangkok Rules, and includes a chapter with first-hand accounts of women prisoners.

### **Center for Reproductive Rights (US): Global view of abortion rights**

[The World's Abortion Laws map](#), published by the [Center for Reproductive Rights](#), compares the legal status of induced abortion in different countries.

In some countries induced abortion can have severe consequences, such as Northern Ireland, where a [21-year-old woman currently faces life imprisonment](#) for taking an abortion pill. In a landmark court case, Northern Ireland's High Court recently ruled its [abortion law incompatible with the European Convention for Human Rights](#).

### **Paywand Afghan Association: Report – Female prisoners deprived of their rights in Afghanistan**

New [research](#) reveals that despite international financial support since 2001 to reform the Afghan criminal justice system, the rights of prisoners – and of women prisoners in particular – are largely neglected. 68 per cent of accused women are not informed of their rights; women are often held for up to two weeks in police custody (although this is only allowed for 24 hours); women have limited or no access to legal representation;

and there is insufficient (mental) health care or child care available in prison.

## **[WOLA Report - Women, drug policies and incarceration: A guide for policy reform in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)**

On Tuesday 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 in implementing policy changes to benefit women imprisoned on drug charges throughout the Americas.

## **[Report – Life in prison: The first 24 hours in prison \(UK\)](#)**

This new [report](#) published by the UK's Inspectorate of Prisons combines existing literature with evidence from prison inspection reports and provides specific information on how women experience the first 24 hours in prison, focussing on mode of transport, information provision, body searches and general safety issues.

## **[Centre for Crime and Justice Studies \(UK\): New series - Breaking the silence](#)**

Women in contact with the justice system share their stories in this series of [short articles](#) by the [Centre of Crime and Justice Studies](#).

## **[The Sentencing Project \(US\): Fact sheet – Incarcerated women and girls](#)**

This [new fact sheet](#) by [The Sentencing Project](#) provides data on the number of women in the criminal justice system and the juvenile justice system in the USA and highlights differences based on gender, race, ethnicity and type of offence.

## **[AdvocAid \(Sierra Leone\) uses illustrations to inform women prisoners about the Bangkok Rules](#)**

These [ten posters](#) have been produced by the NGO [AdvocAid](#) to ensure legal standards and human rights are being upheld in police stations, prison and courts in Sierra Leone and illustrate key provisions in the Bangkok Rules.

## **[Photoseries – Girls in detention in Iran](#)**

This year's documentary winner at the [Lens Culture](#) visual storytelling awards, Sadegh Souri, photographed [girls in juvenile detention in Iran](#). Many of them are sentenced to death by hanging, a verdict that will be carried out when they reach the age of 18.

## **[Theatre – 'Key Change' \(UK\)](#)**

Winner of the Carol Tambor 'Best of Edinburgh' Award 2015 and named as ['Critics](#)

[Pick' in the New York Times](#), this play by [Theatre Company Open Clasp](#) and devised with women in HMPYOI (Young Offender Institution) Low Newton, offers a powerful and intimate view into the lives of women in a British prison.

## **Focus: Resources and news on women and their children in detention**

### **Prison Reform Trust (UK): Sentencing of mothers – Improving the sentencing process and outcomes for women with dependent children**

This report by the Prison Reform Trust (UK) provides an overview of the current situation regarding the sentencing and imprisonment of women who are mothers in the UK, and makes recommendations for reform. The report draws on research and discussions at two roundtables in November and December 2015 with organisations involved in supporting women and children in the criminal justice system and with senior judiciary and legal experts.

### **Hallam Centre for Community Justice (UK): Report – Enhancing care for childbearing women and their babies in prison**

This [report](#) examines the services available to mothers and their babies, including the application process and existing practices in Mother and Baby Units (MBU) in the UK.

### **Coming up: Survey by CURE Nigeria of female prisoners/detainees and babies living in prison**

[CURE Nigeria](#) is planning to [conduct surveys](#) of mothers and babies held in prisons in the Federal Capital Territory, Nasarawa, Benue, Kaduna, Plateau and Niger States. Outcomes from the research will be used to promote fair and alternative sentencing for women and to advocate the development of a national policy regarding babies living in prison.

### **Child Trends (US): Report – Parents behind bars: What happens to their children?**

This new [research](#) by [Child Trends](#) shows that parental incarceration is associated with the occurrence of a higher number of other potentially traumatic life events, emotional problems and more problems in school.

### **Center for American Progress: Report - Removing barriers to opportunity for parents with criminal records and their children**

This research shows how the barriers that stem from having a criminal record – lower earning potential, debts, lower and fewer education opportunities, housing instability and challenges to family stability – can have a long term effect on a child's wellbeing

and life chances.

Additional reports from the US:

- [Voices from Solitary: Pregnant in Prison, Birth in Shackles](#)
  - [After Giving Birth, These Women Were Placed in Handcuffs, Leg Irons, and Waist Chains](#)
  - [Why are Alameda County jails forcing women to take pregnancy tests](#)
- 

## IN THE MEDIA

Brazil: [Brazil's Female Prison Population Soars 567%](#)

Bulgaria: [Bulgarian Helsinki Committee: Penal System Discriminates Women](#)

Cambodia: [Prison Director Accused of Widespread Graft](#)

El Salvador: [Women Inmates Sow Hope in Prisons in El Salvador](#)

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

India: [Prison manual revised: New restrictions on punishment for women](#)

New Zealand: [Green thumbs thrive at womens prison](#)

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

Saudi Arabia: [Trapped in the system: Thousands of Saudi women released from prison are abandoned by their families](#)

UK: [Holloway: The beginning of a revolution?](#)

UK: [Women's prison report highlights mental health issues](#)

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

UK: [The harrowing reality of being a trans woman in an all-male prison](#)

USA: [Where Martha Stewart and I Went to Prison Was No 'Camp Cupcake'](#)

USA: [Serving Time Cafe In Utah provides Inmate Job Training](#)

USA: [Investigative video: Dangers for female prison guards](#)

USA: [How I experience female contact in prison](#)

---

### Internship opportunity: Research and Communications

PRI is 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.

Visit [our website](#) for more information.

---

## ***Do you have new publications or resources to share on women and criminal justice?***

*We encourage you to send us any new materials, feedback, news items, blogs, etc... to share with this network of people interested in women and the criminal justice system. Please send to: [info@penalreform.org](mailto:info@penalreform.org).*

*And connect with us on twitter [@penalreformint](https://twitter.com/penalreformint)*

---

Copyright © 2015 Penal Reform International. All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)