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**No cost implications in the re-naming of prisons:** The New Age reported that the Minister for Correctional Services had said that the current process of re-naming correctional services facilities did not have cost implications and that the exercise was necessary as it would bring hope to inmates and communities. She reportedly emphasised the need to move away from a situation where prisons had "names without meaning." Reported by the New Age, 7 March 2011, at [http://www.thenewage.co.za/12065-1007-53-Prison\\_renaming\\_will\\_not\\_cost\\_a\\_cent](http://www.thenewage.co.za/12065-1007-53-Prison_renaming_will_not_cost_a_cent)

**Allegations of 'bribery' against Officials in the Department of Correctional Services:** News24 reported that the Democratic Alliance had called on the Minister for Correctional Services to lay criminal charges against those allegedly involved in a bribery scandal in the Department. The DA was reportedly reacting to media reports citing a Special Investigating Unit report which revealed an "improper and corrupt" relationship between senior Correctional Services officials and the Bosasa group, which had received large contracts since 2004 to provide catering, security equipment, televisions and fencing to prisons. Reported by New24, 21 March 2011, at <http://m.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/Politics/DA-wants-action-on-prison-bribery-20110320>

**Correctional Services Department defends Minister:** The Mail and Guardian reported that the Correctional Services Department stood by Minister Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa -Nqakula, insisting that she had gone to New York to undertake a

prisons study tour. The Department produced proof in the form of a letter signed by an official in President Zuma's office authorising the trip. The letter said that the Minister Mapisa -Nqakula would "take advantage" of the tour to attend the United Nations summit on gender. Reported by Mail and Guardian, 27 March 2011, at <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2011-03-27-correctional-services-defends-ministers-us-trip/>

**Correctional Services Ministry dismisses newspaper claims:** Eye Witness News reported that the Correctional Services Ministry had accused the Sunday Times newspaper of deliberately distorting the facts of the Minister's trip to New York. The Minister had reportedly been accused of "forcing herself onto the guest list of a two week United Nations Gender Summit in New York but failed to represent South Africa at any of the sessions." Other complaints against the Minister were that she had stayed at an "expensive hotel" and had spent a lot of time shopping. The Ministry reportedly "refuted all the allegations and said the purpose of the trip was to conduct a study tour of prison security." Reported by Phakamile Hlubi, 28 March 2011, at <http://www.eyewitnessnews.co.za/articleprog.aspx?id=62584>

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## UNSENTENCED PRISONERS

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**Government response to problem of "court backlogs":** Defence Web reported on parliamentary questions posed to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development regarding court backlogs. The Minister reportedly said that "various interventions" had been implemented to deal with the problem. In particular, the Case Backlog Reduction Project (established in 2006 and which aimed to "add capacity" to courts dealing with a high volume of cases) established 50 additional regional "backlog courts." The project was reportedly set to continue in 2011/2012. The Minister also noted that, regarding the management of remand detainees, there was "constant interaction between the relevant government departments to try and "reduce the number of awaiting trial detainees." He noted too that the White Paper on Awaiting Trial Detainees and investigations into how lengthy cases could be "fast tracked" would also be of assistance in reducing the number of remand detainees. Reported by Defence Web, 17 March 2011, at [http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=14215:parliamentary-question-doj-court-backlocks&catid=86:parliamentary-questions&Itemid=187](http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14215:parliamentary-question-doj-court-backlocks&catid=86:parliamentary-questions&Itemid=187)

**Four accused have appeared in court over 100 times:** The Sowetan reported that a case against four accused charged with two counts of housebreaking, kidnapping, robbery with aggravating circumstances, rape and assault has been postponed 100 times over a period of 5 years in the Protea magistrate's court, Soweto. The delays were reportedly caused by difficulties in locating witnesses and a certain witnesses requiring "counselling." The mother of one of the accused reportedly said that the case had "crippled them financially." Reported by Ananias Ndlovu, 22 March 2011, at <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2011/03/22/100-times-in-court-and-case-continues>

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## EXTRADITION

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**Evidence in Dewani case in the United Kingdom:** The Mercury reported that evidence collected in the United Kingdom implicating murder suspect Shrien Dewani still needed to be formally handed to South African authorities. The report said that this was one of the many steps that had to be completed before the two alleged hit men in the case, Xolile Mngeni and Mziwamadoda Qwabe, appear in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court on 1 June - the date by which local authorities hope Dewani will be back in the country to join his co-accused in the dock. Dewani is suspected of having masterminded the murder of his wife, Anni, in Khayelitsha on 13 November 2010. Reported by the Mercury, 1 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/dewani-case-sa-waits-for-uk-1.1034158>

**Committal of Dewani to psychiatric hospital ordered by court:** The Guardian reported that Shrien Dewani, British businessman accused of plotting his wife's murder while they honeymooned in SA, is to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital in Bristol. According to the report Dewani had been on bail at his family home in Bristol, but South African authorities, who are calling for his extradition, fear he could try to harm himself, a concern which arose after he allegedly overdosed last month.

Lawyers for both sides reportedly agreed that Dewani, who is said to have severe post-traumatic stress syndrome, should be admitted. He remains subject to strict bail conditions, including a curfew. Dewani's extradition hearing is due to take place in early May. Reported by the Guardian, 16 March 2011, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/15/honeymoon-murder-suspect-shrien-dewani-priory-hospital>

**South African national accused extradited to United Kingdom:** The Mail and Guardian reported that South African national, George Champion Sithole, accused of murdering a six year old girl in the United Kingdom has been successfully extradited. Police spokesperson, brigadier Sally de Beers said Sithole was handed over to three British police officers and flown out of South Africa on 15 March 2011 under an extradition order. He is reportedly due to stand trial in the United Kingdom on charges of arson and murder. Reported by the Mail and Guardian, 16 March, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-03-16-sa-murder-accused-extradited-to-uk>

**Date set for Dewani extradition hearing:** The Times reported that Shrien Dewani, accused of organising the murder of his wife during their Cape Town honeymoon, will appear in court in two months to face extradition proceedings. United Kingdom District Judge Howard Riddle reportedly said that Dewani would appear for a two-day hearing beginning 3 May. Experts in forensic psychiatry and prisons are due to give expert evidence for the defence via video link from Cape Town. Reported by the Times, 23 March 2011, at <http://southafricantimes.co.uk/content/shrien-dewani-extradition-hearing-date-set>

**Zimbabwe national extradited to South Africa:** The Gazette Botswana reported that a Zimbabwe national would soon be extradited to South Africa to face charges of murder and house breaking. The man, Dennis Moyo, was arrested in Botswana. Granting the extradition order, the court said that it was satisfied that there was sufficient evidence linking the prisoner to the crimes in South Africa. Reported by Gazette Botswana, 30 March 2011, at [http://www.gazettebw.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=9105:zim-fugitive-to-be-extradited-to-south-africa&catid=18:headlines&Itemid=2](http://www.gazettebw.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9105:zim-fugitive-to-be-extradited-to-south-africa&catid=18:headlines&Itemid=2)

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## PAROLE AND SENTENCING

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**Offender gets lengthy sentence:** IOL reported that Mbuyiselo Paul Mkhize, convicted of committing a range of violent crimes, including housebreaking, robbery, rape and murder was sentenced to two life terms and a further 90 years imprisonment. He will reportedly be serving his sentence at Westville Prison. The sentencing Judge reportedly said that Mkhize was not a person who "appeared to be readily rehabilitated judging from his previous convictions from the age of 18." Reported by Anelisa Kubheka, 4 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/serial-killer-displayed-no-emotions-1.1036453?showComments=true>

**Nigerian citizen sentenced to 24 years for scam:** The Times reports that a Nigerian man was sentenced to 22 years in prison for fraud by the Germiston Regional Court. Peter Maxism Anyanyueze was sentenced to 10 years for fraud, 10 years for money laundering and two years for contravening the Immigration Act. According to evidence before the court, he had reportedly defrauded a Saudi Arabian businessman in a business deal that did not materialize. The report also adds that the accused had entered into a marriage of convenience with a South African woman in order to acquire South African citizenship. Reported by the Times, 4 March 2011, at <http://m.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/Nigerian-gets-20-years-for-fraud-20110304>

**'Political ties' evident in parole determinations:** IOL News reported that Gaye Derby-Lewis has 'lost hope' of ever seeing her 75 year old husband, Clive Derby-Lewis, freed. Drawing a comparison between her husband who is suffering from advanced prostate cancer, and convicted fraudster Schabir Shaik (who served only 2 years of a 15 year prison sentence before being released on medical parole), she reportedly claimed that 'political ties' were the reason the Department of Correctional Services had not dealt with Shaik's alleged parole violations. Clive Derby-Lewis, imprisoned for the murder of SACP leader Chris Hani, has been in prison for more than 17 years and has been denied parole twice. James Selfe, spokesperson for the Democratic Alliance, reportedly said that given the numerous parole violations, it was clear that the Department would go to 'great lengths' to cover up Shaik's actions. Reported by Noni Mukati and Nondumiso Mbuyazi, IOL News, 5 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/nothing-will-change-1.1036567>

**Shaik to appear before parole board:** IOL reported that the Department of Correctional Services has indicated that Schabir

Shaik, formerly released from prison on medical grounds, was to appear before the parole board to make representations in relation to a charge of assault laid against him by reporter Amanda Khoza. Shaik is accused of choking and slapping the reporter twice after she approached him at Sewgolum Golf Course in Durban. Reported by Matthew Savides and Masood Boomgaard, 6 March 2011, IOL News, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/schabir-on-shaky-ground-1.1036938>

**Minister of Correctional Services promises 'action' if Shaik is charged:** News24 reported that Minister of Correctional Services, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, said that action would be taken against parolee Schabir Shaik if he was found guilty of assaulting a journalist while playing golf in Durban. She reported said that the Department did not yet know whether Shaik had violated his parole conditions but that if police investigation led to charges against him then the Department would "do something about that." She added, however, that the Department would be conducting its own investigation. Reported by News24, 7 March 2011 at <http://m.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/Action-will-be-taken-if-Shaik-guilty-minister-20110307>

**Offender in line for parole:** The Cape Times reported that repeat offender Francois Coetzee, convicted of rape and the attempted murder of Alix Carmichele, would be considered for parole. Unconfirmed reports indicated that he was due to be transferred to Kynsa Prison, close to his hometown, to prepare him for release. Coetzee has reportedly been serving his 21 year sentence at Malmesbury prison where, in 2006, he was denied parole. Simphiwe Xako, Spokesperson for the Department of the Correctional Services said that Coetzee had attended various rehabilitation programs and had matriculated and enrolled with Unisa while incarcerated. Reported by Zara Nicholson, 9 March 2011, at <http://capetimes.co.za/victim-tearful-as-attacker-in-line-for-parole-1.1038564>

**Increase in medical parole applications:** Politics Live reported that the Minister of Correctional Services, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, had released figures showing an increase in medical parole applications subsequent to Schabir Shaik's successful application for medical parole. Responding to a parliamentary question, the Minister reportedly said that there were 68 applications in 2008 (the year Shaik was released), of which 61 were granted. In 2009 there were 169 applications, of which 109 were successful. The amount decreased in 2010 when only 119 offenders applied for medical parole, 29 of which were released. Reported by Brendan Boyle, the Politics Live, 10 March 2011, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/Politics/article960080.ece/Shaiks-release-sparked-rise-in-medical-parole-applications>

**24 die in prison after failed bids for medical parole:** Die Burger reported that as many as 24 prisoners who failed to convince the parole board that they should be released on medical grounds, have died in prison over the past three months. The Minister for Correctional Services, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, reportedly confirmed this in response to the Democratic Alliance. The report noted that the controversy surrounding the medical parole of Schabir Shaik and the prolonged parole bid by Clive Derby-Lewis have attracted criticism of the parole system. Judge Deon van Zyl, of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services is quoted in the report as saying that most of the families of the terminally ill patients are not able to care for the prisoners at home it was "in many cases better to die in prison." Original report in Afrikaans, Reported by Philda Essop, 11 March 2011, at <http://www.dieburger.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Altesaam-24-wat-mediiese-parool-vra-sterf-in-tronk-20110311>

**Convicted murderer gets lighter sentence following appeal:** The Sowetan reported that a hired killer, sentenced to 40 years imprisonment 14 years ago, could soon be released following a ruling from the full Bench of the North Gauteng High Court that reduced his sentence to 20 years. The Court found the effective 40 year sentence to be "disproportionate." The Court reportedly found that Freek Smit had a very low IQ and came from a dysfunctional, tragic background, factors that the trial court had failed to adequately take into account during sentencing. The trial court had also reportedly failed to take into account that Smit was initially reluctant to carry out the murder and that alcohol played a role in the offence. Smit had 11 previous convictions when he was first imprisoned by the trial court for his role in the 1996 murder of Harold Mayberry in Pretoria. He had reportedly admitted that a friend, Nick Grobler, had hired him and his girlfriend to kill Mayberry and were promised R500 000, a job and a car. Reported by the Sowetan, 11 March 2011, at <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2011/03/11/hired-killer-gets-lighter-sentence>

**HIV positive status no reason to deviate from prescribed minimum sentence:** The Beeld reported that two men convicted of the killing of a farmer in November 2008 were sentenced to life imprisonment. The two men had submitted to the North Gauteng High Court that they are HIV-positive and would not receive the necessary treatment in prison. This, they reportedly argued, amounted to substantial and compelling circumstances to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence of life imprisonment. The legal representative of one of the men stated that his client had seen how fellow prisoners die in prison

due to the lack of proper treatment. Judge Peter Mabuse, however, concluded that due to the seriousness of the crime, that the personal circumstances of the two convicted men become secondary. Original report in Afrikaans. Reported by Jeanne-Marié Versluis, Beeld, 12 March 2011, at <http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/MIV-lyers-vra-ligter-vonnis-na-moord-20110311>

**Life imprisonment for man who killed daughter:** IOL News reported that the Western Cape High Court had sentenced a Retreat man to life imprisonment for murdering his 13 year old daughter after she witnessed him attempting to sexually assault a friend of hers. Acting Judge Nonkosi Saba also sentenced Rashaad Kruger to two years imprisonment for incitement to commit a sexual offence and 12 months for common assault based on evidence that he lured his daughter's teen friend into the bathroom of his home, threatened her with a panga and attempted to sexually assault her. Reported by Fatima Schroeder, 15 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/life-for-killer-father-1.1041660>

**Prisons silent on Shaik:** The Times Live reported that the Department of Correctional Services had declined any further comment on Schabir Shaik's temporary re-imprisonment and parole review board hearing, saying that there would be no "operational updates". Shaik is accused of assaulting a journalist and a fellow worshipper at a mosque. Reported by the Times Live, 15 March 2011, at [www.timeslive.co.za/local/article970046.ece/Prisons-mum-on-Shaik-Cached](http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article970046.ece/Prisons-mum-on-Shaik-Cached)

**Shaik back in prison's hospital wing:** IOL reported that Schabir Shaik had been placed in the hospital wing of the Westville Prison in Durban while he awaits the outcome of a probe into allegations of assault and parole violations. 'He is lying isolated in the hospital section of the prison,' his lawyer, Reeves Parsee, was quoted saying. Reported by the IOL, 16 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/shaik-put-in-hospital-1.1042020>

**Shaik set to be released:** IOL reported that Schabir Shaik was due to be released from Westville Prison as the alleged victim of an attack, Mohamed Ismail, refused to lay charges and declined to speak or provide a statement to the Department of Correctional Services. The report that it was believed that this silence would lead to Shaik's "imminent freedom". The Department's investigation team reportedly met Shaik and three witnesses to hear their versions of the alleged incident and to determine whether Shaik had violated his parole conditions. Lack of evidence against Shaik appears to be the reason for his expected release. Shaik's lawyer, Carl van der Merwe, welcomed the prospect of his client's expected release, saying the entire legal process surrounding his arrest this week "had been flawed". Reported by Zora Mohamed Teke, IOL, 16 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/shaik-set-to-be-released-1.1042602>

**Shaik is released again:** The Citizen reported that parolee Schabir Shaik was released from Westville Prison hospital wing on 16 March despite having been twice accused of assault while out on parole. The Department of Correctional Services said that because they could not trace the man that accused Shaik of assaulting him outside a mosque on Friday, they had decided to release him. The report said that the decision was made after lengthy meetings with Shaik and his legal team. The Department did not explain why they had ignored an earlier complaint of assault by a reporter. Reported by the Citizen, 17 March 2011, at <http://www.citizen.co.za/citizen/content/en/citizen/local-news?oid=180270&sn=Detail&pid=333&Shaik--off-the-hook--again-%E2%80%93-for-now->

**Minister of Correctional Services Minister wanted before Portfolio Committee:** News24 reported that the Democratic Alliance had called for the Minister for Correctional Services, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, to appear before the Correctional Services Portfolio Committee regarding Schabir Shaik. According to the report, such appearance would enable the committee to "iron out a number of anomalies in the handling of Shaik's two alleged assaults on members of the public." In welcoming the Department's decision to probe the assaults, Democratic Alliance spokesperson James Selfe reportedly said that it was necessary to establish why the Department had said that the allegations levelled at Shaik could not be corroborated when, in both cases, witnesses were on hand when the alleged assaults took place. Reported by News24, 17 March 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/DA-wants-answers-on-Schabir-Shaik-20110317>

**MEC to oppose parole of Western Cape gang leaders:** The Cape Times reported that according to Community Safety MEC Albert Fritz more than 60 "top gang leaders" in the Western Cape will be considered for parole in the next few months, sparking fears that drug turf wars could erupt across the Cape Flats. Fritz reportedly said that he planned to oppose the parole of the gang leaders on behalf of the offenders' victims. The report noted that recidivism figures stand at around 80% and that "experts have warned that dangerous criminals were released daily without having undergone any rehabilitation." Reported by the Cape Times, 23 March 2011, at [www.capetimes.co.za/gang-leaders-considered-for-parole-1.1046415](http://www.capetimes.co.za/gang-leaders-considered-for-parole-1.1046415)

**Convicted paedophile not helped by rehabilitation programme:** The Cape Times reported that Ian Appleton, convicted of having raped regularly a 7-year old boy over a two year period, had previously attended a sex offenders program. The

prosecutor reportedly argued during the sentencing hearing that sending Appleton back to a rehabilitation program would again be of no use. Defence counsel had, however, urged the court to "heed the recommendation [of the director of the sex offender program] of correctional supervision and the rehabilitation programme as he would not survive in prison." This statement was reportedly met with "jeers from a packed court gallery." Reported by the Cape Times, 23 March 2011, at [www.capetimes.co.za/rehab-did-not-help-paedophile-1.1046486](http://www.capetimes.co.za/rehab-did-not-help-paedophile-1.1046486)

**Youth jailed for raping a doctor:** News24 reported that a 17-year-old Lesotho youth was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for raping a female state doctor on duty. Free State Judge President Musi sentenced the boy to serve time at a youth centre where he would be "rehabilitated and punished." Delivering judgment, Judge Musi said rape was a serious crime which was prevalent in the rest of the country. The report also said that the South African Medical Association called on the Minister of Health and provincial MECs to ensure the safety and security of all those working in the public health sector. Reported by News24, 25 March 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Youth-jailed-for-doctor-rape-20110325>

**Victim participation in parole hearings:** Eye Witness News reported that the Department of Correctional Services would soon unveil a programme that allows victims of crime to participate in the parole hearings of offenders. These measures are reportedly a direct response to calls for the Department to make public names of parole applicants who were incarcerated for violent crimes. Department spokesperson, Sonwabo Mbananga, reportedly emphasised the need to democratise decision making by involving survivors. Reported by Regan Thaw, 28 March 2011, at <http://www.eyewitnessnews.co.za/articleprog.aspx?id=62624>

**Constitutional Court confirms prison sentence:** The Business Day reported that a woman who appealed her prison sentence on the ground that she had minor children to look after failed in her bid to serve a non-custodial sentence. The constitutional court confirmed that the lower court had carefully considered the circumstances of the woman's children and what would be in their best interests before passing judgement. Reported by Ernest Mabuza, 30 March 2011, at <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=138586>

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## PRISON CONDITIONS

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**High Court awards damages to TB sufferer:** The Cape Times published an opinion piece by Lukas Muntingh describing a recent judgment of the Cape High Court in which the Department of Correctional Services was ordered to pay a former prisoner, Dudley Lee, damages related to his having contracted Tuberculosis whilst incarcerated. The Court reportedly found that the Department, given their apparent awareness of the prevailing conditions in Pollsmoor prison, had failed to take measures to prevent the spread of TB. Such failure, the Court reported held, was a breach of the Department's statutory duty to protect the rights of inmates. Reported in the Cape Times, 24 March 2011, at <http://www.capetimes.co.za/crowded-musty-jails-a-breeding-ground-for-killer-1.1046599>

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## SOUTH AFRICANS IMPRISONED ABROAD

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**10 year sentence for smuggling heroin:** The National reported that a South African national was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for attempting to smuggle more than two kilograms of heroin into Dubai. The accused, identified only as MM, told a Dubai Criminal Court that she did not know what was in the bag, which had been given to her by a friend who asked her to deliver it to his brother in Dubai. Prosecutors said MM entered Dubai International Airport on July 24, 2010, and was found carrying 2.69kg of heroin in one of her two bags. Reported by the National, 22 March 2011, at <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/courts/10-year-sentence-for-heroin-smuggling>

## LAW REFORM

**Correctional Matters Amendment Bill:** The Saturday Star reported that the Correctional Services Portfolio committed had approved a re-drafted version of the Correctional Matters Amendment Bill. The Bill seeks, amongst other things, to "manage remand detainees." One of the provisions in the Bill would, according to Committee Chairperson Vincent Smith, stipulate that remand detainees would only be released into police custody with the permission of the Correctional Services Commissioner, and for a finite period of 7 days. In addition, if released into police custody, a remand detainee would have to be medically examined before and after his or her release. Another provision of the Bill places a time limit of 2 years on the amount of time that an accused can be detained. Reported by Eleanor Momberg, 5 March 2011, The Saturday Star at <http://thestar.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

**Changes envisaged in South African prison law:** The New Age reported that Parliament had tabled far-reaching changes in the country's prison laws, with proposals to change the category of inmates who qualify for medical parole. Another reportedly "radical" amendment is the introduction of uniforms for remand detainees intended to prevent escapes. Members of Parliament had reportedly re-crafted the Correctional Services Amendment Bill initially submitted by the Department of Correctional Services for consideration. The Bill envisages that not only terminally ill prisoners be considered for medical parole, but also those who are incapacitated. This particular amendment was necessary, according to the Minister, because there were many very sick inmates who could not take care of themselves but did not qualify for medical parole because they were not terminally ill. Reported by Siyabonga Mkhwanazi, 8 March 2011, at [http://www.thenewage.co.za/12121-1007-53-farreaching\\_changes\\_in\\_SA%E2%80%99s\\_prison\\_laws](http://www.thenewage.co.za/12121-1007-53-farreaching_changes_in_SA%E2%80%99s_prison_laws)

## REHABILITATION

**Prisoners to use skills to benefit society:** Fin24 reported that the Minister for Correctional Services had said that she wanted to see prisoners use their "skills and labour" to contribute to their communities while they were in jail and that it was the Department's "stern belief" that offender labour would contribute "a great deal" to an inmate's "personal journey to rehabilitation". The Minister also said, according to the report, that the transformation of the prison system from a retributive one to one "which focuses on correcting offending behaviour" was in line with the ethos of our democracy. Reported by Fin24, 7 March 2011, at <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/Prison-name-changes-for-free-20110307>

**Young offenders become Information and Communications Technology graduates:** ItWeb reported that over 200 offenders have graduated from an ICT skills development programme initiated by the Department of Communications and the Department of Correctional Services. The programme, known as the eLiteracy Programme for Youth Offenders, provides offenders between the ages of 14-35 with ICT skills as a means of contributing to the rehabilitation of those who are nearing the completion of their sentences. According to the report, 81 offenders as well as 12 officials from the Department of Correctional Services also received International Computer Driver's Licence certificates, digital literacy and computer technical training. Reported by Farzana Rasool, ItWeb, 14 March 2011, at [http://www.itweb.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=41996:youth-offenders-become-ict-graduates](http://www.itweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41996:youth-offenders-become-ict-graduates)

**Trend towards rehabilitation:** The New Age reported, in an article authored by the National Commissioner for Correctional Services, Tom Moyane, that SADC countries had witnessed a "paradigm shift from the repressive prisons that instituted hard-line stances but did little to break the cycle of crime, to correction systems which placed the correction of offending behaviour and rehabilitation of offenders at its centre." It was acknowledged, however, that various SADC countries were at "different levels of the continuum" of this trend. The Commissioner wrote that one of the gaps which the Southern African Consultative Conference on Corrections (set to commence on the 23 March) sought to plug was the "apparent lack of a sense of urgency and low levels of networking between various heads of correctional services and prisons." It was noted that some progress had recently been made with the establishment of a sub-committee on prisons and corrections in the Southern African Development Community. Reported in the New Age, 23 March 2011, at [http://www.thenewage.co.za/blogdetail.aspx?mid=186&blog\\_id=%20377](http://www.thenewage.co.za/blogdetail.aspx?mid=186&blog_id=%20377)

**"Jailbirds" help hardened criminals to reform:** Msnbc.com reported that a South African prison is rehabilitating criminals by giving them the responsibility to rear parrots and other birds. The Correctional Bird Project at Cape Town's Pollsmoor Maximum Security Prison encourages inmates to take care of chicks and young birds before they are sold as tame pets to bird lovers. Inmates responsible for the rearing of the chicks must adhere to a ban on gangsterism, smoking, swearing, and drugs. In return, the inmates are given privileges like single cells. Reported by David R Arnott, 28 March 2011, at [http://photoblog.msnbc.msn.com/\\_news/2011/03/28/6360136-jailbirds-help-hardened-criminals-to-reform](http://photoblog.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2011/03/28/6360136-jailbirds-help-hardened-criminals-to-reform)

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## SECURITY AND ESCAPES

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**Kidnapping and armed robbery suspect escapes from holding cell:** The Independent on Saturday reported that a prisoner accused of kidnapping and armed robbery had escaped from a Durban Magistrate's Court holding cell while awaiting trial. The report said that Xolani Sikhakane escaped from the holding cell by cutting through three thick steel bars. It further said that the suspect was part of a gang of five who kidnapped and robbed a taxi driver and its eight passengers in 2008. At the time of the writing this story investigations were underway to establish the circumstances of the prisoner's escape. Reported by Tania Broughton, 2 March 2011, at <http://www.tios.co.za/houdini-baffles-officials-1.1034798>

**Seven remand detainees escape:** News Time reported that seven prisoners had escaped from uMthatha Correctional Centre by shooting and wounding a prison officer. The prisoners were reportedly facing charges ranging from theft to murder. At the time of the writing of this report, the Department of Correctional Services had instituted investigations to determine the circumstances leading to the escape. In particular, officials were reportedly eager to determine how the firearm had found its way into the Correctional Centre. Reported by News Time, 21 March 2011, at [http://www.newstime.co.za/SouthAfrica/Seven\\_Awaiting\\_Trial\\_Prisoners\\_Escape\\_In\\_uMthatha/22786](http://www.newstime.co.za/SouthAfrica/Seven_Awaiting_Trial_Prisoners_Escape_In_uMthatha/22786)

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## OTHER

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**Re-naming of prisons:** Times Live reported that the Department of Correctional Services is scheduled to hold public hearings on the renaming of prisons across the country. A spokesperson for the Department reportedly said that the consultative process would be as inclusive as possible so as to ensure that as many people as possible would be "afforded an opportunity to influence the renaming of correctional centres process." The Minister for Correctional Services was reportedly going to launch the public hearings at Grace Bible Church in Soweto on 7 March 2011. Reported by Times Live, 3 March 2011, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article947677.ece/Public-hearings-for-renaming-of-prisons>

**No limits on potential prison names:** Times Live reported that all names would be considered in the process of renaming various prisons around the country. The report quoted the Department of Correctional Services saying "all names proposed are valid and will be considered by the leadership of the Department of Correctional Services, as no pre-conceived names were selected." The public hearings have reportedly attracted significant attendance - approximately 5000 at the time of writing. Reported by the Times Live, 15 March 2011, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article968355.ece/No-limits-for-prison-names>

**Department of Correctional Services to host prison heads:** The BuaNews reported that the Department of Correctional Services would host various heads of correctional departments and prisons from southern African countries for the Southern African Consultative Conference on Corrections. According to the report, one of the key objectives of the conference would be to strengthen partnerships between correctional and prison services in the region with a view to support and transform these centres into rehabilitation driven institutions, with good governance and improved service delivery. The Conference would also, according to the report, provide a platform for South Africa to interact with its counterparts from the region and to share insights and exchange best practices in tackling some of the common challenges. The Conference would also seek to address particular problems, namely: overcrowding, the parole system, rehabilitation, the role of society in the rehabilitation of offenders, alternatives to incarceration and conditions of detention and provision of health care services. Other issues such as the "professionalization" of correctional services and the prioritising of the well-being of the officials would also, reportedly, be

up for discussion. Reported by BuaNews, 21 March 2011, at <http://www.buanews.gov.za/news/11/11031810151001>

**Prison treaty signed in South Africa:** The Zimbabwean reported that a number of prison heads in the Southern African region had signed a treaty aimed at the "transformation and harmonisation of prisons." Members reportedly discussed issues such as the provision of decent meals, medication, regional cooperation on rehabilitation, alternatives to imprisonment and the profiling management of offenders. Reported by Mxolisi Ncube, 30 March 2011, at [http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=38509:prison-treaty-signed-in-sa&catid=69:sunday-top-stories&Itemid=30](http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38509:prison-treaty-signed-in-sa&catid=69:sunday-top-stories&Itemid=30)

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## OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

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### ANGOLA

**Imprisonment to suppress anti-government demonstrators:** Internacional reported that the Angolan authorities warned that it would imprison organisers of anti-government demonstrations. The report said 20 people had been imprisoned as a measure to suppress possible demonstrations against the regime of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. It also reported that the Dos Santos government - which has been in power for 32 years - is being accused of corruption. Original report in Portuguese. Reported by Internacional, 7 March 2011, at [http://www.pco.org.br/conoticias/ler\\_materia.php?mat=27184](http://www.pco.org.br/conoticias/ler_materia.php?mat=27184)

**Angolan journalist imprisoned for defamation:** SW Radio Africa reported that a court in Namibe province sentenced a free-lance journalist to one year imprisonment for charges of defamation relating to coverage of a sexual harassment scandal implicating the province's top judicial official. Judge Manuel Araujo sentenced Armando José Chicoca, who writes for United States funded broadcaster Voice of America, without a lawyer present. Reported by SW Radio Africa, 3 March 2011, at <http://www.swradioafrica.com/pages/angolan040311.htm>

**Calls for the release of journalist imprisoned for 'defaming' Judge:** AllAfrica.com reported that Human Rights watch have called for the immediate quashing of the conviction of Armando José Chicoca, a Voice of America journalist who was convicted after an "unfair trial for stories critical of a local judge." The report also called on Angolan authorities to amend the country's press laws criminalizing defamation. Reported by the AllAfrica.com, 17 March 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103160007.html>

**Lawyer unlawfully imprisoned:** The RFI reported that the Angolan authorities had unlawfully detained a lawyer and human rights activist who had tried to leave the country to access medical treatment in Portugal. The report said Francisco Luemba had previously been imprisoned in connection with the attack on the Togo national football team in 2009. He was re-arrested and imprisoned after police failed to acknowledge that he was no longer required to follow an order issued by a court in 2010, which banned him from travelling until his case was finalised. It also said that at the time of his arrest another court order had been issued acquitting him of all the charges. Original report in Portuguese. Reported by RFI, 20 March, at <http://www.portugues.rfi.fr/africa/20110320-francisco-luemba-detido-quando-tentava-sair-de-angola>

**State secretary for human rights visits Namibe:** allAfrica.com reported that the Angolan State Secretary for human rights visited South West Namibe province where he had the opportunity to speak to more than 200 inmates at Bento Bembe prison. He reportedly reiterated Angola's culture of respect, value and human dignity. The state secretary also reportedly emphasised the need for the prisoners to uphold values that contribute to the development of society once they were released from prison. Reported by allAfrica.com, 23 March 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103230159.html>

### BENIN

**One step further towards preventing torture in Benin:** The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) reported that it had welcomed Benin's publication of the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture's (SPT) report. The SPT report provides an overview of the formal safeguards against ill-treatment in Benin as well as comments on draft legislation establishing the National Observatory for the Prevention of Torture. The SPT highlighted a few concerns regarding the "future composition of the NPM (National Preventive Mechanism)," the need to include medical professionals, financial autonomy and management.

Reported by the APT, 22 March, at

[http://www.apr.ch/index.php/en/aboutapr/region/africa/content/view/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=1058%3Aone-step-further-in-torture-prevention-in-benin-the-spts-report-is-now-public&lang=en](http://www.apr.ch/index.php/en/aboutapr/region/africa/content/view/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1058%3Aone-step-further-in-torture-prevention-in-benin-the-spts-report-is-now-public&lang=en)

## **BOTSWANA**

**Politicians call for the lifting of voting ban on prisoners:** The Mmegi reported that Botswana Movement for Democracy's Nehemiah Modubule had renewed calls for the government to allow prisoners to cast their votes. The report quoted him as follows, "Yes they might be incarcerated for whatever charges they face. Some of their rights are limited while in prison, however those rights do not include the right to vote". He reportedly said that voting is the fundamental right of a person, hence a prisoner not convicted of an election-related crime should be allowed to vote. Reported by Isaiah Morewagae, 22 March 2011, at <http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?sid=1&aid=1867&dir=2011/March/Tuesday22>

## **BURKINA FASO**

**Student protests over police brutality:** Radio Netherlands Worldwide reported that universities in Burkina Faso had closed for two days in March following student protests over the "suspicious death of a fellow student" whilst in police custody. The "official reports" reportedly stated that the cause of death of Justin Zongo was meningitis. However, "students claim that police brutality" ultimately caused Zongo's death. The report quotes a student protester: "there was a police blunder in Koudougou. We are in a free country so we have the right to demand justice. Impunity is rampant in this country and it is frustrating." Students in Ouagadougou had initially planned to meet and protest earlier in the month, however the government decided to close down and blockade all public universities, including residencies and cafeterias, leaving "many students homeless and hungry." Reported by Yaya Boudani, 17 March 2011, at <http://www.rnw.nl/africa/article/burkina-faso-students-protest-against-police-brutality-0>

## **CAMEROON**

**Imprisoned musician fights for freedom of musical expression:** The Voice of America reported that Lapiro de Mbanga, one of Cameroon's best known musicians, would be spending Cameroon's annual International Music Day at Douala Court house. de Mbanga would be challenging his arrest and imprisonment nearly three years ago for charges relating to a song he wrote called "Constipated Constitution" which denounces a constitutional amendment giving the President of Cameroon, Paul Biya, unlimited terms in office. Reported by Voice of America, 9 March 2011, at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/arts-and-entertainment/music/Jailed-Cameroonian-Musician-Fights-for-Freedom-of-Musical-Expression-117398078.html>

**Cameroonian journalists targeted:** Afrique en ligne reported that the Committee to Protect Journalists had called on Cameroon authorities to "end the judicial harassment of journalists reporting on public corruption" in response to the handing down of a suspended prison sentence against an editor of a newspaper. In addition, the editor, Jean Marie Tchatchouang was reportedly ordered to pay a fine and the newspaper was suspended indefinitely. The charges were reportedly linked to the newspaper's publication of "letters from current and former personnel of [the city's] main bus company, alleging mismanagement and abuse. Another Cameroonian journalist, editor of La Boussole, is also reportedly facing a prison sentence for "investigating a leaked official document suggesting alleged executive interference in a high profile corruption investigation." Reported by Afrique en ligne, 30 March 2011, at <http://www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news/cameroonian-newspaper-banned,-editor-on-suspended-prison-sentence-201103306949.html>

## **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

**Gonorrhea spreads in Aru Prison:** Radio Okapi reports that 75 male prisoners have contracted gonorrhea since 3 March in Aru Prison in the Oriental Province. The disease has reportedly spread through the sharing of toothbrushes and using the same toilets and bathrooms. Prisoners have demanded that measures be put in place to improve hygiene and access to clean water in order to avoid the spread of diseases. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 1 March 2011, at <http://radiookapi.net/sante/2011/03/16/bunia-75-prisonniers-infectes-de-gonococcie-a-aru/>

**NGO calls for release of 17 detainees:** Radio Okapi reported that NGO La Voix des Sans Voix (the voice of the voiceless, VSV) called upon the government to respect the rights of all those who were detained following an attack on the official residence of President Kabila on 27 February. Along with this appeal, VSV published a list of 17 detainees whom they say are doubtlessly innocent and called for their immediate release. Government spokesman, Lambert Mende, responded that it is not up to an NGO to declare their innocence, but up to the justice system. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 1

March 2011, at <http://radiokapi.net/actualite/2011/03/20/attaque-contre-la-residence-de-kabila-la-vsv-exige-la-liberation-de-17-detenus-innocents/>

**Immigration detainees awarded compensation for wrongful detention:** The Guardian reported that two immigration detainees had been awarded nominal damages of £1 each as compensation for being illegally imprisoned for two years under a secret policy operated by the Home Office. The Supreme Court ruled that, Walumba Lumba and Kadian Mighty, from Congo and Jamaica respectively, were unlawfully imprisoned for two years. The majority judgment by the Supreme Court criticised the previous government's reliance between 2006 and 2008 on unpublished regulations governing the detention of foreign national prisoners pending deportation. Reported by the Owen Bowcott, 23 March 2011, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/mar/23/immigration-detainees-win-damages?INTCMP=SRCH>

**MONUSCO donation for female prisoners:** Radio Okapi reported that MONUC (United Nations Mission to DRC) donated food and other goods to 85 female prisoners and their children at Makala Central Prison in Kinshasa in celebration of International Women's Day. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 9 March 2011, at <http://radiokapi.net/actualite/2011/03/09/8-mars-la-monusco-distribue-des-vivres-aux-detenues-de-la-prison-de-makala/>

## EGYPT

**Inmates tortured and killed while in custody:** The Bikya Marsr reported that Amnesty International had released a video showing graphic images of Egyptian inmates who had been tortured before being killed. The international human rights watch dog had called for an urgent investigation by the Egyptian authorities to establish how the inmates met their deaths and bring to justice anyone found responsible for carrying out unlawful killings, torture or ill-treatment. About 21 600 inmates are reported to have been released or to have escaped from Egyptian prisons in unclear circumstances after the Ministry of Interior responsible for running prisons quit office on 28 January 2011 following protests. Reported by Bikya Marsr staff, 8 March 2011, at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/video-footage-shows-egyptian-prison-inmates-apparently-tortured-and-killed-2011-03->

**Women protesters forced to take 'Virginity Tests':** Amnesty International reported that they have called on the Egyptian authorities to investigate serious allegations of torture, including forced 'virginity tests', inflicted by the army on women protesters arrested in Tahrir Square earlier this month. After army officers violently cleared the square of protesters on March 9, at least 18 women were held in military detention. Amnesty International reported that it opposes the trial of civilians before military courts in Egypt, which have a track record of unfair trials and where the right to appeal is severely restricted. Reported by Amnesty International, 23 March 2011, at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/egyptian-women-protesters-forced-take-%E2%80%98virginity-tests%E2%80%99-2011-03-23>

**Clashes at prison leave two inmates injured:** The almasryalyoum.com reported that two inmates were injured late on 26 March 2011 during clashes between 4000 prisoners and security forces at al-Qatta prison, south of Cairo. Inmates are said to have caused the riot by demanding release after serving half their sentences. Trouble is said to have ensued when some inmates decided to protest because the Minister of Interior's decision to release some prisoners who had served half their sentences was not implemented. Reported by almasryalyoum.com, 27 March 2011, at <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/376382>

## ETHIOPIA

**Ethiopia accused of detaining activists to deter uprising:** Voice of America reported that Ethiopia had detained dozens of political activists as part of what opposition groups called "a crackdown aimed at preventing a North African or Middle Eastern style popular uprising." The crackdown is focused on the politically sensitive Oromia region where opposition leaders said that "as many as 100 of their party members were arrested during federal police sweeps over the past two weeks." Reported by Voice of America, 23 March 2011, at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Ethiopia-Accused-of-Detaining-Activists-to-Deter-Uprising--118543469.html>

## GABON

**New prison for Libreville:** Gabon Actualités reported that the Gabonese Council of Ministers adopted three decrees regarding

the creation of a new central prison in Libreville. The planned construction of this prison should improve the general conditions of detention as well as alleviate the problem of overcrowding. The decrees are an important part of implementing the late President Ali Bongo Ondimba's pledge, made in 2007, to improve conditions at the original central prison. Original report in French. Reported by Narcisse Leroy, 4 March 2011, Gabon Actualités, at [http://www.gabonactualites.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=144:une-nouvelle-prison-centrale-pour-libreville&catid=25:politique&Itemid=28](http://www.gabonactualites.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=144:une-nouvelle-prison-centrale-pour-libreville&catid=25:politique&Itemid=28)

## GAMBIA

**Inmates in Bawku to acquire new skills:** The Ghana News Agency reported that the Bawku Municipality is to revamp prison education in an effort to provide skills training to inmates. Mr Sulemana Bukari, Bawku Municipal Non-Formal Coordinator, reportedly said that the inmates needed to be trained in order to acquire skills to help them to make a living after their prison terms. The skills to be taught include reading, writing, numeracy and developmental activities such as tree planting. Income generating activities such as shea butter extraction, malt preparation, rice processing, dressmaking, and agro-processing undertaken by inmates had been able to support the programme. Reported by the Ghana News Agency, 23 March 2011, at [http://www.ghananewsagency.org/s\\_social/r\\_26950/social/prison-inmates-in-bawku-to-acquire-skills](http://www.ghananewsagency.org/s_social/r_26950/social/prison-inmates-in-bawku-to-acquire-skills)

## KENYA

**Activist detained in Ugandan prison:** The Standard reported that human rights lawyer and activist, Al-Amin Kimathi, was arrested upon his arrival in Uganda where he intended to "defend the rights of other Kenyans who had been renditioned to Uganda." Kamithi is reportedly being held at Kampala's Luzira prison in solitary confinement and is forced to sleep on the cold, hard floor. He has since been charged with "79 counts of murder, ten counts of attempted murder and three counts of terrorism in connection to the terrorist bombings in Kampala on July 11 last year." Six months after his arrest Kamithi's wife reportedly says that "there is no hope of him being released anytime soon." According to the report, before his arrest, Kimathi had "been in the forefront in exposing and documenting human rights violations, arbitrary detention and unlawful renditions in the context of counter-terrorism operations in East and Horn of Africa." Moreover, he had repeatedly accused the Kenyan and United States governments for their complicity in renditions that have been carried out in Kenya since 2007. Reported by Alex Kiprotich, 11 March 2011, at <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/InsidePage.php?id=2000031006&cid=4>

**Poor prison facilities:** The Nation reported that two government officials had disagreed with a Kenya National Commission on Human Rights report that documented "the poor state of human rights in the prisons." The Home Affairs Permanent Secretary and the Acting Senior Deputy Commissioner of Prisons argued that the report did not reflect the situation on the ground. In particular, they took exception to the parts in the report on congestion, torture, poor sanitation and corruption. Another point of disagreement was the claim that prison reforms had considerably declined following changes at the Home Affairs ministry and the Office of the Commissioner of Prisons. Reported by Dave Opiyo, 29 March 2011, at <http://www.nation.co.ke/News/PS+faults+report+on+the+state+of+Kenyas+prisons+/-/1056/1135374/-/22v303/-/>

**"Ocampo 6" to appear before the International Criminal Court:** AllAfrica.com reported that International Criminal Court would not be arresting the "Ocampo Six" when they appear at the Hague. The Court's registrar reportedly said that "those persons are free. They are not detained and will not be detained. They will come on the day of the hearing, and the next day they can be back in Kenya." However, the report noted that there were bail conditions imposed by the ICC which the six accused were mandated to obey. Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta, Head of Public Service Francis Muthaura, suspended Higher Education Minister William Ruto, Orange Democratic Party chairman and suspended Industrialisation Minister Henry Kosgey, Postmaster-General Hussein Ali and radio presenter Joshua Sang are accused of crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the post-election violence. Reported by Peter Leftie and Caroline Wafula, 29 March 2011, allAfrica.com at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103291126.html>

**United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime pledges support to Kenya:** Coastweek.com reported that the head of UNODC, Yury Fedotov, in a visit to Nairobi, had assured Kenya of UNODC's support in combating regional security threats. UNODC's work in Kenya reportedly forms part of the wider Eastern Africa regional approach which focuses on certain priority areas such as "the capacity building of international cooperation on law enforcement, strengthening of border control, anti-corruption and prison reform." In particular, counter piracy activities would continue to be aimed at building the capacity of Kenya's criminal justice systems, prosecuting suspected pirates in Somaliland and Puntland, as well as improving prison conditions to meet minimum international standards. UNODC has reportedly been "particularly active in Shimo Le Wawa where the newly built courtroom and refurbished prison ensure sufficient levels of security, as well as humane prison conditions for . . . on trial

prisoners." Reported by Coastweek.com, 31 March 2011, at [http://www.coastweek.com/3412\\_nairobi.htm](http://www.coastweek.com/3412_nairobi.htm)

## LIBYA

**United Nations investigating allegations of torture:** Voice of America reported that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture said that he had received complaints alleging torture, arbitrary detentions and extra-judicial killings in Libya, which came to light since fighting erupted. Juan Mendez also reportedly said that he would be "looking into these cases," which, thus far, had only been allegedly perpetrated by the Gadhafi regime. He had not received any allegations of wrongdoing on the part of the rebel forces. Reported by Voice of America, 9 March 2011, at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/north/UN-Investigator-Receives-Allegations-of-Torture-in-Libya-117657768.html>

**Libyan rebel forces arresting and detaining suspected mercenary fighters:** The Globe and Mail reported that as Libyan rebel forces continue to capture suspected Gadhafi loyalists along the way to the capital, they are forced to "take steps to deal with the rising number of prisoners." Despite assurances from rebel forces that they are not harming those captive, there are allegations that rebels are imprisoning and torturing African migrant workers suspected of being mercenary fighters employed by the Gadhafi regime. The "rebel council" has, however, reportedly allowed the International Committee of the Red Cross and Human Rights Watch to visit prisoners and both organizations say that the rebels have been open to suggestions as to how to improve their detention system. Reported by Graeme Smith, 28 March 2011, at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/africa-mideast/in-a-rebel-prison-any-african-is-a-mercenary/article1960597/>

## MALAWI

**Malawi will not abolish death penalty:** The Nyasa Times reported that Malawi will not be abolishing the death penalty. The report quoted Attorney-General, Jane Ansah, telling the United Nations Human Rights Commission that it is not the wish of the people of Malawi to outlaw the death sentence. Murder, treason and armed robbery are punishable by hanging in Malawi. However, the country has not carried out an execution since 1992. Reported by the Nyasa Times, 17 March 2011, at <http://www.nyasatimes.com/national/malawi-will-not-abolish-death-penalty.html>

## MAURITANIA

**Death penalty handed down:** News24 reported that a Mauritanian court had handed down the death penalty to Mohamed Abdollahi Ould H'Mednah, the main perpetrator of the murder of American educator Christopher Legget. His co-accused, Didi Ould Bezeid and Mahmoud Ould Khouna received 12 year and 3 year prison terms, respectively. Reported by news24, 16 March 2011, News24 online, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Death-penalty-for-Killer-of-American-20110315>

## MOZAMBIQUE

**Three convicted of poaching:** The Defence Web reported that South African National Parks had welcomed the conviction and imprisonment of three rhino poachers by the Nelspruit Regional Court on 14 March 2011. The three offenders, all Mozambican nationals, were found guilty of illegally hunting rhinos and imprisoned for five years without the option of a fine. Reported by the Defence Web, 16 March 2011, at [http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=14179:sanparks-welcomes-poacher-conviction&catid=3:Civil%20Security&Itemid=113](http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14179:sanparks-welcomes-poacher-conviction&catid=3:Civil%20Security&Itemid=113)

**Arrested policemen tortured in prison:** AllAfrica.com reported that five Mozambican policemen, arrested on 18 January, accused of facilitating the escape of 68 Somali refugees from the Maratane refugee camp in the northern province of Nampula, claimed that they had been tortured while in the provincial prison in Nampula city. The report said that the policemen had been the target of constant death threats by other inmates, allegedly at the behest of prison officials. Reported by allAfrica.com, 22 March 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103171078.html>

## NAMIBIA

**Prisons should not be a crime school:** allAfrica.com News reported that President Hifikepunye Pohamba had issued a stern warning on the need for correctional facilities to ensure that rehabilitation is effective. Speaking at the inauguration of the Elizabeth Nepemba Correctional Facility in the Kavango region, the President said that Namibia had adopted a policy to promote the rehabilitation of offenders. The new prison was named after Elizabeth Nepemba who the President said believed in the

maintenance of law and order as well as the protection of the community from criminal elements. The new facility was designed to be the main rehabilitation and correctional centre for young offenders. Reported by AllAfrica.com, 10 March 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103070662.html>

## RWANDA

**Rwanda prison officials attend training on international human rights:** allAfrica.com reported that prison officials drawn from different prisons completed a three-day workshop on international human rights laws on 13 March 2011. The training, which was organized by the National Human Rights Commission in partnership with the United Nations, focussed on minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners, standards of living and health, and the rights of female inmates. Participants were also trained on the rights and treatment of people living with HIV/Aids and the respective conventions against torture and discrimination. Reported by Bonny Mukombozi, 14 March 2011 at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103141100.html>

**Rwanda official gets sentence of life imprisonment:** News24 reported that the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda had sentenced a former public servant to life imprisonment for taking part in the 1994. The official, Jean-Baptiste Gatete, was found guilty of being responsible for the killing of hundreds of Tutsis. Reported by News24, 29 March 2011, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Court-gives-Rwandan-official-life-for-genocide-20110329>

## SENEGAL

**Senegal releases coup leaders:** The BBC reported that Senegal released four people who were arrested last week on suspicion of planning a coup. Government spokesman Mamba Guirassy reportedly said that there had not been enough evidence to prosecute them. The report also said that security forces had thwarted a coup attempt by detaining a "commando" group linked to the opposition. Opposition leaders reportedly said that the arrests were a "deliberate attempt to deter anti-government rallies in Dakar." Demonstrators reportedly blamed President Abdoulaye Wade's government for rising prices and worsening power outages in the West African country. Reported by the BBC, 23 March 2011, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12839105>

## SIERRA LEONE

**Freetown prison a "living hell":** The Independent published a lengthy article on conditions of detention in Sierra Leone. John Carlin describes in detail the difficulties experienced by child inmates (who are not separated from adults), in particular, the deplorable conditions of the prison, poor standards of health care and nutrition, inadequate and corrupt judicial services and the very lengthy periods of time that suspects are detained before being formally tried. Reported by John Carlin, 5 March 2011, at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/a-boy-named-abdul-sierra-leones-child-inmates-2229670.html> Also discussed in <http://www.worldpress.org/Africa/3712.cfm>

**Opening the doors to justice in Sierra Leone:** The Awoko reported that the Pilot National Legal Aid established by the government of Sierra Leone and the Justice Sector Development Program on the 6 January 2011, would focus primarily on providing advice, assistance and representation at the entry points of prisons, police stations and courts. The report mentioned that the majority of the people held in prisons in Sierra Leone do not have access to legal assistance or advice during court proceedings. The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice reportedly commended the fact that the Legal Aid Bill, establishing the National Legal Aid Scheme, will be enacted into law in the near future. Reported by Nancy Koroma, 7 March 2011, at <http://www.awoko.org/2011/02/23/%E2%80%9COpening-doors-to-justice%E2%80%9D-pnla-outlines-successes/>

## SOMALIA

**Suspected pirates to be tried:** NBC News reported that seven Somalis had pleaded not guilty in a United States federal court to piracy, kidnapping and possession of firearms - charges related to the hijacking of a yacht that left four Americans dead in February 2011. If convicted of piracy, the suspects face mandatory life sentences. Reported by the NBC News, 15 March 2011, at <http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Somali-Pirates--118026544.html>

**Ugandan Amisom peacekeepers imprisoned for shooting civilians:** BBC News Africa reported that three Ugandan soldiers from the African Union force in Somalia had been sentenced to two years in prison for injuring civilians in two shooting incidents in the capital, Mogadishu. The two were sent to Uganda to serve their sentence. Amisom commander Maj Gen Nathan Mugisha

reportedly said that the jail terms illustrated that "any acts of carelessness and irresponsibility will not be condoned or tolerated". Reported by the BBC News Africa, 22 March 2011, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12764412>

**United Nations to set up special prison for pirates in Hargeisa:** RBC Radio reported that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had funded a new prison for captured pirates in Hargeisa, the capital of Somalia's break-away region, Somaliland. The detention centre, which will be the first "pirate prison" in the region, will reportedly be the "biggest" for Somali pirates seized during counter piracy operations in the Horn of Africa. Somaliland currently holds 88 suspected pirates in its detention centers. The report states that in the past, foreign countries have been reluctant to detain suspected pirates due to their unwillingness to deal with the criminal trials. Reported by Abdalle Ahmed, 27 March 2011, at <http://www.raxanreeb.com/?p=88724>

**Somaliland not accepting pirates detained by foreign powers:** France24 reported that Somaliland inaugurated a UN-funded prison aimed at "holding pirates." It reportedly warned, however, that it "was not yet accepting those detained by foreign powers." The report noted that this may be seen as a "setback to attempts by the international community to repatriate Somali pirates arrested on the high seas to east Africa or the Horn of Africa for trial." The new prison was reportedly refurbished at a cost \$1.5 million with the aim of making "conditions there acceptable to countries wishing to repatriate Somali pirates." Kenya, the first country to indicate its willingness to try Somali pirates recently stated that it was "unwilling to take more." Seychelles, however, in 2010, indicated that it would prosecute Somali pirates. Reported by AFP, 29 March 2011, at <http://www.france24.com/en/20110329-somaliland-warns-will-not-take-foreign-seized-pirates>

## SWAZILAND

**Serial murder suspect could be sentenced to death:** IOL reported that a Swazi man was convicted on 23 March 2011 of murdering 28 people, mostly women and children. Simelane is due to be sentenced on 1 April and faces the possibility of being sentenced to death. Reported by IOL, 23 March 2011, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/serial-killer-could-face-death-1.1046219>

## TANZANIA

**Reformed female inmates in plea for presidential pardon:** Ippmedia reported that female inmates at Isanga prison had appealed to President Jakaya Kikwete to issue a presidential amnesty to female inmates who have admitted their wrong doing and reformed. The call was made during a visit by journalists to the prison keen to learn about prison conditions. Speaking on behalf of her fellow inmates, Noti Mtachi said that while in prison they had learnt many skills and they were eager to show the society what they had learnt. She called on members of the public to consider inmates as human beings entitled to all basic human rights except those which must necessarily be limited during incarceration. Reported by the IPPMEDIA, 15 March 2011, at <http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php/oi.poc/wwwaripoti.coatopenx/dfc/?l=27074>

**Overcrowding in prisons:** Ippmedia reported that the Tanzanian Prison Services had significantly improved the problem of prison overcrowding through the use of parole, the expansion of facilities and the granting of bail to inmates whose cases were pending. This was reportedly said by the Principal Commissioner of Prisons, Augustine Nanyaro, at a three-day training workshop in Dar es Salaam. It was also reported that despite the successful reduction in numbers, "efforts to further decongest prisons [were] hampered by the fact that many of the inmates do not qualify for bail." The Commissioner also reportedly acknowledged that "some of the prison guards" had deliberately mistreated and humiliated prisoners. Reported by Ippmedia, 22 March, at <http://ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=27271>

## UGANDA

**Torture and illegal detention by Ugandan Police Rapid Response Unit:** Human Rights Watch has released a report critical of the conduct of the Ugandan Police Rapid Response Unit. The unit is accused of frequently operating outside the law, carrying out torture, extortion, and in some cases, extrajudicial killings. The report urges Ugandan authorities to open an independent investigation into the unit's conduct and activities and to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations. The Human Rights Watch report is based on investigations spanning the period November 2009 to January 2011. Reported by Maria

Burnett, 23 March, at <http://www.hrw.org/node/97144>

## ZAMBIA

**Detained Zambians await trial:** The Zambian Watchdog reported that two Zambian women, arrested in Pakistan and South Africa respectively on drug trafficking charges, are currently awaiting trial. Christine Musonda Banda, arrested at Benazir Bhutto International Airport after being caught with 860 grams of heroin, is reportedly being detained in Rawalpindi. Catherine Mukala, another citizen from Zambia was detained at Oliver Tambo International Airport when she was found in possession of heroin on her arrival from Pakistan. This brings the number of Zambian women arrested for drug trafficking in the past two years to 47, of which four have since died in different Asian prisons. Reported by the Zambian Watchdog, 9 March, at <http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/2011/03/06/two-zambian-women-arrested-in-pakistan-sa-for-drug-trafficking/>

**Judge urges speedy prosecution of cases:** The Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation reported that the Kitwe High Court urged state prosecutors to hasten the clearance of criminal cases in order to reduce the number of people in remand detention. According to the report, Judge Makungu said that it was "against the laws of Zambia to keep suspects in custody for long periods of time without producing adequate evidence to allow quick expedition of cases." The report also refers to Chief Superintendent Officer Patrick Mundia Nawa who reportedly said that there is an urgent need for new or extended prison facilities in the [Copperbelt] province, which, according to him, house 2793 inmates, an amount "way above the capacity of the prisons." Reported by the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, 9 March, at <http://www.znbc.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=11&id=1299593954>

## ZIMBABWE

**Kidnapping suspect granted bail:** News Day reported that Job Sikhala, MDC 99 President, had been granted \$500 bail by a Mutare magistrate's court on kidnapping charges. The state had initially proposed that Sikhala deposit \$2000, but the magistrate had dismissed this amount stating that "bail should not act as a punishment to the accused" and that \$2000 was "way too much." Counsel for Sikhala, Obed Shava, reportedly stated that Sikhala had been detained in "terrible conditions" and had been assaulted whilst being held in Harare. An affidavit before the court reportedly stated that upon his arrest, Sikhala had been told that his arrest was linked to the "one million-men march due to take place on March 1 2011 in a bid to topple the government through 'Egyptian style' revolution and that he was going around the country mobilising people to participate." Sikhala was reportedly surprised when charged formally the next day with kidnapping. Reported by Chengetai Murimwa, 2 March 2011, at <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-03-02-sikhala-charged-with-trespassing>

**Zimbabwe Exile Forum condemns arrest and torture of activists:** The Zimbabwean reported that the Zimbabwe Exiles Forum had condemned the torture of human rights and political activists arrested in Zimbabwe on 19 February 2011. The group issued the statement following the solidarity march at the Zimbabwean Consulate in Johannesburg demanding the release of the activists. The activists were arrested as they gathered at a private meeting organised for the purpose of discussing recent uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. The Zimbabwe Exiles Forum urged the Inclusive Government in Harare to ratify regional and international protocols outlawing torture. Reported by the Zimbabwean, 4 March 2011, at [http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=37774:zef-condemns-arrests-and-torture-of-activists&catid=52&Itemid=32](http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37774:zef-condemns-arrests-and-torture-of-activists&catid=52&Itemid=32)

**Accused legislator released on bail:** SW Radio Africa reported that a High Court Judge granted bail to MDC-T Member of Parliament for Nyanga North, Douglas Mwonzora, and 24 other activists from the Nyanga region following their arrests a month ago. All 24 are accused of instigating violence during a constituency feedback meeting. Also appearing in court was a MDC-T Member of Parliament for Mazowe Central who was arrested in Chiweshe a few days earlier on charges of digging and stealing quarry stones. Another MDC-T legislator reportedly languishing in police cells is MDC-T legislator for Gokwe, who was arrested on allegations of committing violence in Kadoma. Another legislator from Zhombe was reportedly also arrested on charges of threatening a chief. In Harare, the High Court postponed a bail application by six activists charged with treason reportedly linked to "discussing the mass protests" that toppled the former Egyptian president. Reported by Tichaona Sibanda, 11 March, at <http://www.swradioafrica.com/news110311/mwonzora110311.htm>

**Prisoners detained in poor conditions:** The News Day reported that seven detainees have complained to a regional magistrate's court of inhuman treatment while in remand prison. Albert Mugove Matapo, facing treason charges and a charge connected to allegedly attempting a prison escape with six other prisoners, reportedly told the court that he was kept naked for a month in darkness and in leg-irons. This came out in an application for referral of the case to the Supreme Court made by the prisoners' lawyers, Charles Warara and Gift Nyandoro, before regional magistrate Morgan Nemadire. The report said that

Warara wanted the Supreme Court to determine whether it was constitutional for accused persons to appear in court wearing labelled clothes and standing trial while in leg-irons. Matapo's lawyer was reportedly "not happy" that he was removed from a normal prison cell and taken to a cell called "FB1" where there is no natural light. Reported by Charles Laiton, 15 March, at <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-03-15-prisoners-stay-naked-in-condemned-cells>

**March for Zimbabwe prisoners:** The New Age reported that a march would take place in Hillbrow on Monday, 21 March 2011, in protest of the six people arrested in Zimbabwe for treason after they met to discuss revolts in North Africa. The march was organised by, amongst others, the Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum, the Movement for Democratic Change, Johannesburg Youth Assembly, Amnesty International and the Freedom of Expression Institute. The report quoted alliance spokeswoman Rowena McNaughton in a statement saying, "Each week more and more people are being detained and many continue to be charged for spurious reasons... we want to send a message to dictators everywhere...that an injury to one is an injury to all." Solidarity demonstrations would also be taking place in other cities, including New York and London. Reported by the New Age, 16 March 2011, at [http://www.thenewage.co.za/12970-1007-53-March\\_in\\_Hillbrow\\_for\\_rights\\_of\\_Zim\\_prisoners](http://www.thenewage.co.za/12970-1007-53-March_in_Hillbrow_for_rights_of_Zim_prisoners)

**Human rights activists released from detention:** The Zimbabwean reported that human rights activist Munyaradzi Gwisai and five others detained on treason charges in Harare, were granted bail on Wednesday 16 March, more than three weeks after their arrest. They are reportedly required to report three times a week to the police station. Reported by the Zimbabwean, 19 March 2011, at <http://www.dailynews.co.zw/news/34-news/1901-gwisai-six-others-freed-on-bail.html>

**Uproar over Zimbabwe Prison Services Deputy Commissioner:** Talkzimbabwe reported that service delivery at the Zimbabwe Prison Services (ZPS) was declining at an alarming rate as the newly promoted Deputy Commissioner responsible for administration, procurement and finance was preoccupied with issues such as witch hunts, frustration of those perceived as adversaries and reversal of decisions made by the procurement board prior to his appointment. The Deputy Commissioner is also accused of working at cross purposes with the current procurement board by deliberately stalling procurements as well as payments for supplies. Reported by Ratidzai Chakona, 24 March 2011, at <http://www.talkzimbabwe.com/uproar-over-zps-deputy-commissioner-cms-1272>

**Energy Minister detained despite court order of bail:** Voice of America reported that Energy Minister Elton Mangoma, a close ally of Prime Minister Tsvangirai and a member of the Movement for Democratic Change, remains in custody despite a court order on the 22 March 2011 directing his release on bail. Prosecutors reportedly invoked a "strict clause of the criminal law requiring suspects to remain in custody while their case is investigated". Mnagoma's detention reportedly prevented him from casting a ballot in a "critical" vote in parliament. Reported by Voice of America, 29 March 2011, at <http://blogs.voanews.com/breaking-news/2011/03/29/page/7/>

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