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## E-newsletter

Criminal justice news from  
February 2018



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

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

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**In this month's edition:**

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**In**

**the**

**spotlight:**

**The Sustainable Development Goals: making sure female offenders are not 'left behind'**

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In this blog, PRI's [Africa](#) Programme Manager, Doreen Kyazze, explains that educational opportunities and rehabilitation programmes in Uganda need to take into account the specific needs of women if the country is to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the 2017 O Level examinations, there was no female prisoner candidate.

The SDGs were the special focus of PRI's 2017 edition of [Global Prison Trends](#), and, while they are not legally binding, every UN member state is 'expected to take ownership and establish a national framework' for achieving them.

*Image: Kampala Women's Prison*

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### Closure of PRI's Moscow office

At PRI's Executive Board meeting on 25 January 2018, the future of the [Moscow office](#) was reviewed. Following this, the Executive Board reluctantly took the view that in the current financial climate, the organisation cannot continue its financial support of the Moscow office.

The Moscow office, one of the first PRI regional offices to be established, has worked since the early 1990s with government and non-governmental partners on a number of programmes in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Examples of past work in Russia include reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS inside prisons, promoting alternatives to detention, and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups of offenders.

We would like to thank all our PRI staff who have worked over many years to promote and implement international standards and good practice in the region. We will continue to seek to play a role in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus by working in partnership with government and non-governmental agencies.

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### Help us improve our newsletter

We are always looking for ways to improve our newsletter, and we would love to hear your thoughts and feedback. What information do you find most useful? What would you like to see more of? Is there anything you'd prefer to see less of?

Please help us to improve PRI's newsletter by taking a few minutes to [complete our quick survey](#).

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The first 20 participants will receive a print copy of this year's [Global Prison Trends](#) report (due to be printed in May 2018).

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### Tweet of the month

@PenalReformInt PRI's short guide to the UN #MandelaRules is now available in #Kirundi, as well as 9 other languages. Thanks to the @ICRC for the translation!

[22 February 2018](#)

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### New expert blog

#### Children of imprisoned parents: the increased risk of premature mortality

In this expert blog for PRI, Steve van de Weijer, a criminologist and postdoctoral researcher at the [Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement](#) (NSCR), discusses the key findings of his recent study, which found that children of imprisoned parents were more likely to die prematurely.



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### Conditions in detention and Nelson Mandela Rules

#### Training workshop for prison staff on human rights standards in Yemen



In February, PRI's [Middle East and North Africa](#) (MENA) office held a three-day Training of Trainers workshop for prison staff in Yemen on treating prisoners according to international human rights standards. The workshop was attended by approximately 20 prison managers and officers and was implemented as part of PRI's project on [Penitentiary system reform in Yemen](#).

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## PRI organises Kazakhstan study visit to Georgia on child-friendly justice systems



Last month, PRI organised for a delegation from Kazakhstan to visit Georgia to see examples of the country's good practice in the fields of child protection, welfare and justice. Meetings were held with UNICEF and Georgian NGOs that work with children, as well as with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour, Healthcare and Social Security, and the Chief Prosecutor's Office.

## Launch of EU-funded project on torture prevention in Kyrgyzstan

At the start of February, a partnership of PRI and a number of other civil society organisations launched a three-year torture prevention project in Bishek, Kyrgyzstan.

The project is being funded by the European Union and aims to build the capacity of civil society organisations to prevent torture through democratic dialogue with the government, enhance the capacity of law enforcement bodies to conduct effective and lawful interrogations, and improve the capacity of a newly established torture investigation unit.

## PRI attends conference on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for violent extremist offenders

At an international conference in Turin organised by the [United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute](#) on bridging the gaps between prison and community-based rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for violent extremist offenders, PRI's Executive Director, Alison Hannah, highlighted the role of religious leaders and family members in the rehabilitation process, during which she referred to the need for an individualised approach to tackling extremism in prisons. [Read more.](#)

## Justice Trends: Interview with PRI's Executive Director

[Justice Trends](#) is a print and online magazine covering contemporary best practices in the field of corrections and the latest developments in the execution of justice worldwide. In its latest issue, Alison Hannah, Executive Director of PRI, explains how PRI works and where its work is most needed.

## Justice and Corrections Update: United Nations Peacekeeping

The December issue of a newsletter from the [United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations](#) gives an update on the work of its Justice and Corrections Service. The newsletter includes sections on strengthening prison security in Mali, addressing pre-trial detention in Libya and preventing violent extremism in Somalian prisons. The newsletter also provides an update on the UN's [Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic](#), which aims to demilitarise the prison system, and which PRI [signed an agreement to support](#) in December 2017.

## Detention: Addressing the human cost

The latest International Review from the [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) focuses on detention. The Review takes stock of practices and policies, and focuses on a range of challenges related to maintaining human dignity in detention – including overcrowding and ageing prison populations.

## Health in Prisons European Database

A new database from the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) provides comprehensive, consistent and reliable public health data on prison populations and their health needs, across WHO European Region Member States.

## State of the World's Human Rights 17/18

This year's annual [report from Amnesty International](#) documents overcrowding in prisons as a recurring issue over the past year, including in Brazil, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Romania, Sierra Leone and Venezuela.

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Click here for more news and resources on conditions in detention

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### Women in the criminal justice system

**Pregnant women will no longer await trial in Brazilian jails**

On 20 February 2018, Brazil's Supreme Court issued a landmark [ruling](#) that pregnant women, mothers of children up to 12 years of age and mothers of persons with disabilities should await trial under house arrest, rather than detention, when accused of non-violent crimes.

The decision means that up to 15,000 women pending trial could be released, and follows Rule 58 of [the Bangkok Rules](#), which calls on alternatives to pretrial detention for women to be implemented wherever possible.

**Other news and resources**

**Canada:** [Prison system overhauls transgender inmate policy](#)

**Mexico:** [Mexico's women prisoners: doubly punished for not living up to female roles](#)

**United Kingdom:** [Why are more women being returned to prison than ever before?](#)

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### Justice for children

#### Gathering data for Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty

The UN Global study is now collecting information on children deprived of liberty globally. A questionnaire is [available online](#) for stakeholders to complete in order to provide qualitative statistical data. At an [event this week](#) in Geneva on Thursday 8 March, the questionnaire and an update on the study will be presented to member states.

#### Youth Confinement: The Whole Pie

This latest [report from Prison Policy Initiative](#) looks into the 53,000 children in the USA held in detention facilities. Nearly 67 per cent of these children are held either in the juvenile justice system's version of prisons or in actual adult prisons. The report also finds that for almost a quarter of these children, the most serious charge levelled against them is a technical violation or a status offence.

**2018 World Congress on Justice For Children: Newsletter**

The [2018 World Congress on Justice For Children](#), co-organised by PRI, will take place in May 2018. The event will focus on the issues of children's involvement in violent extremism, the need for more effective ways to reduce juvenile offending, and the question of how to improve protection mechanisms for vulnerable children.

The first newsletter for the event is [out now!](#) To register for the Congress, please click [here](#).

**Other news and resources**

**Australia:** [Removal of 17-year-old prisoners from Queensland adult jails delayed](#)

**United Kingdom:** [Teenager arrested for stealing sweets found hanging in prison 37 minutes after calling for help](#)

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### Drug policy

**VIDEO: A guide to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

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This video from the [International Drug Policy Commission](#) (IDPC) explains what the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) is, and how NGOs can engage in the process.

The CND is the central policy-making body for the UN drug control system, and comprises 53 elected UN member states. Member states are due to meet at the CND's [61st session](#) between 12–16 March 2018 in Vienna. As well as the video above, the IDPC will be posting a series of webinars in the first week of March and will provide real-time updates during the CND debates.

[Click here](#) to read a 10-point plan, devised by PRI in partnership with the IDPC, on reforming criminal justice responses to drugs.

## Measuring the world drug problem: beyond traditional indicators

Between 29–31 January, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) [held an expert consultation](#) to discuss ways to improve data collection on drugs, including reviewing the [Annual Reports Questionnaire](#) (ARQ). The ARQ is the key mechanism by which the UN system collects data on various facets of the state of the world's illicit drug market.

This [article by the IDPC](#) explains why we must move beyond the traditional metrics, noting that there remain considerable problems with the reporting system for the ARQ. The [report of the UNODC](#) meeting has now been published, but fails to include any mention of human rights.

## Annual Report of the International Narcotics Control Board

The 2017 Annual Report of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) examines the global drug control situation and makes recommendations to governments and international organisations. The report focuses on treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration for drug use disorders as essential components of drug remand reduction, as the INCB has [called for](#) moving away from focusing only on prevention measures.

## Other news and resources

- [Cambodia: Anti-drug campaign leads to sharp rise in prison inmate numbers in Cambodia](#)
- [Costa Rica: Could drug law reform for women open door to wider change?](#)
- [Fiji: FNCDP backs police's war on drugs](#)
- [Germany: Police group calls for complete cannabis decriminalisation](#)
- [Malaysia: Poor governance, graft hindering SE Asia's war on drugs](#)
- [New Zealand: Ross Bell: Public safety the most important thing when it comes to debate on drug law reform](#)
- [Philippines: The War on Drugs in Southeast Asia](#)
- [Philippines: Can the ICC probe end Duterte's deadly war on drugs?](#)
- [Singapore: A country that punishes drug traffickers with death is investing in medical marijuana](#)
- [Thailand: Women's prison highlights need for reform, drug policy rethink](#)

**United States of America:** [Non-violent drug sentencing has left thousands of people buried alive in prison](#)

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## Pre-trial justice and alternatives to imprisonment

### Reducing the use of pre-trial detention in the Commonwealth

On 13 April, PRI's Executive Director Alison Hannah will take part in an expert panel event on reducing pre-trial detention, on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London. The event will take place from 12pm at Clifford Chance, London. To register for a free ticket, [click here](#).

### The impact of the growth of community corrections and what should be done about it

A new report from Columbia University, *Too big to succeed*, analyses the expansive community supervision apparatus in the USA. The report notes that it has grown four times over since 1980, meaning that the country not only has a mass incarceration problem – but a 'mass supervision' one, too.

### Other news and resources

**Canada:** [Calls grow for Indigenous justice systems in wake of Boushie case](#)

**Haiti:** [More than 75 per cent of prisoners in Haitian prisons have never been tried](#)

**Ireland:** [40 per cent drop in people being sent to prison](#)

**Israel:** [Ahed Tamimi: Who is Palestinian teenage protester and why is she being detained?](#)

**Morocco:** [40 per cent of Moroccan inmates held in Pre-trial Detention](#)

**Nigeria:** [Nigeria releases 475 Boko Haram suspects for rehabilitation, some having been held without trial since 2010](#)

**United Kingdom:** [First online courtroom hearings to pave way for digital justice](#)

**Thailand:** [Government takes up justice reform to reduce incarceration](#)

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## Conditions in detention

### News and resources:

**Human Rights Watch:** [Abuse and neglect of prisoners with disabilities in Australia](#)

**Balearic Islands:** [Permanent prison sentence proposal rejected by Balearic parliament](#)

**Bangladesh:** [Convicts to receive mobile phone facilities in prison](#)

**Brazil:** [Rio de Janeiro violence: Hostages freed as prison riot ends](#)

**Cambodia:** [Pay-to-stay prison to be ready by year's end](#)

**Canada:** [Mentally ill man who died in Lindsay jail was pepper sprayed, held down with leg irons, subdued by officers, report says](#)

**Canada:** [Government appeals court ruling on solitary confinement](#)

**Canada:** [Watchdog calls for 'compassionate' parole as prison system adopts new assisted death policy](#)

**China:** [Almost no prison breakers in China: Ministry of Justice](#)

**China:** [Chinese prisoners allegedly made products for H&M and C&A](#)

**France:** [France to seal off 1,500 radicalized inmates in prisons](#)

**Gambia:** [Moratorium announced on death penalty](#)

**Haiti:** [Ranked worst country for most overcrowded prisons in the world](#)

**Italy:** [Cabinet approves prison reform](#)

**India:** [Prison reforms: Supreme Court seeks details of jails having over 150 per cent occupancy](#)

**Namibia:** [Extra-long prison terms ruled unconstitutional](#)

**New Zealand:** [Prison inmate numbers hit all-time high](#)

**New Zealand:** [Justice Minister lays out plan to cut prison population](#)

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**Nepal:** [Population of foreign inmates on the rise](#)

**Nigeria:** [Nigerian Govt To Construct 6 Ultra-Modern Prisons Nationwide](#)

**Norway:** [Country to stop leasing jails to Netherlands](#)

**Philippines:** [Nine hurt in five-minute riot at Quezon City jail](#)

**Portugal:** [Anti-torture committee urges Portugal to address poor treatment of prisoners](#)

**Singapore:** [Number of repeat offenders remains low and stable: Prison service](#)

**Sri Lanka:** [Over 500 prisoners released to mark 70th Independence Day anniversary](#)

**Turkey:** [UK high court refuses Turkey extradition due to overcrowded prisons](#)

**Turkey:** [6567 student prisoners enrolled in open university are faced with the deprivation of education due to unpaid tuition fees](#)

**Uganda:** [Plan to turn prison farms into large-scale production centres](#)

**United Kingdom:** [Let terrorists off jail because they may become more radicalised inside, say MPs](#)

**United Kingdom:** [Inmates receive payouts of £2m for poor healthcare amid 'unprecedented pressures' in prisons](#)

**United Kingdom:** [Prisoner dies at HMP Nottingham three weeks after watchdog makes stark warning that 'lives are at risk' in jail](#)

**USA:** [Latino, Native American prisoners least likely to get early-release option](#)

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#### **Other criminal justice news**

#### **New position with DIGNITY – Danish Institute Against Torture**

DIGNITY, the Danish Institute Against Torture, is currently recruiting for a Programme Advisor. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

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