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GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

Department of Correctional Services accused of negligent loss of firearms: A member of the Freedom Front Plus wrote on PoliticsWeb that the Department of Correctional Services had negligently "lost" 28 firearms during the past three years. The Minister of Correctional Services reportedly confirmed this fact during a parliamentary briefing and stated that measures were being taken to prevent such incidences in the future. Reported by PoliticsWeb, 17 July 2012, at <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71654?oid=313137&sn=Detail&pid=71616>

SENTENCING AND PAROLE

Former National Commissioner of Police granted medical parole: New Zimbabwe reported that the Former National Commissioner of Police, Jackie Selebi, who was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for fraud and corruption in 2010, was released on medical parole on 20 July 2012. Reported by New Zimbabwe, 20 July 2012, at <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-8544-Medical%20pardon%20for%20jailed%20SA%20police%20chief/news.aspx>

Release on medical parole "lawful": News24 reported that in response to public scepticism surrounding the release of former Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi on medical parole, the African National Congress Chief Whip had stated that his release had been in line with the new medical parole policy and the Correctional Matters Amendment Act, which came into effect in March 2012. Reported by News24, 20 July 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Selebis-release-constitutional-ANC-20120720>

Release on medical parole challenged: allAfrica.com reported that the Democratic Alliance had criticised the release of former Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi on medical parole and had called on the Minister of Correctional Services to "provide evidence that the correct procedures were followed" leading up to his release." Reported by allAfrica.com, 20 July 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207201194.html> Similar stories was also reported at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/opposition-parties-last-selebi-release-1.1346273>; <http://www.businessday.co.za/Articles/Content.aspx?id=176798>; <http://www.timeslive.co.za/opinion/editorials/2012/07/23/is-selebi-truly-ill--or-is-it-our-justice-system-that-s-ailing>; <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Parties-divided-over-Selebi-parole-20120720>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/20/us-safrica-corruption-selebi-idUSBRE86J0OK20120720> and at <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/columnists/2012/07/23/a-dubious-parole>

Former National Police Commissioner in hospital subsequent to release: IOL reported that former National Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi, who was released on medical parole on 20 July 2012, will remain in the Steve Biko Academic Hospital until he is well enough to be discharged. Reported by Yolande Du Preez, 20 July 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/freed-selebi-too-ill-to-go-home-1.1346213>

Parole conditions set out: Die Beeld reported that the Department of Correctional Services issued strict conditions of release in relation to the medical parole of former National Police Commissioner Jacki Selebi. One of the reported conditions is that he is

prohibited from leaving Pretoria without authorisation. Original report in Afrikaans. Reported by Die Beeld, 23 July 2012, at <http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Selebi-onder-streng-wakende-oog-vry-20120723>

EXTRADITIONS

Extradition hearings to resume: The Citizen reported that extradition proceedings against Shrien Dewani, accused of murdering his wife whilst in South Africa, were to resume on the 31 July 2012 in the United Kingdom. Reported by The Citizen, 23 July 2012, at <http://www.citizen.co.za/citizen/content/en/citizen/local-news?oid=296071&sn=Detail&pid=334&Dewani-extradition-hearing-set-down>

PRISON CONDITIONS

Constitutional Court to hear case on contraction of tuberculosis in prison: Business Day reported that a man who contracted tuberculosis while awaiting trial in Pollsmoor Prison from 1999 to 2004 has approached the Constitutional Court seeking an order overturning a judgment from the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA). The SCA refused his claim for damages from the state on account of him failing to show that the state's negligence had in fact caused the contraction of tuberculosis. Reported by Business Day, 5 July 2012, at <http://www.businessday.co.za>

SOUTH AFRICANS IMPRISONED ABROAD

Woman detained in Zambia: Die Beeld reported that a South African woman, along with another two suspects, was being detained in a Zambian prison whilst awaiting trial on charges of murder. Original report in Afrikaans. Reported by Die Beeld, 11 July 2012, at <http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Sy-vas-na-hy-sterf-in-Zambie-20120711> Also reported at <http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Nog-2-vas-na-moord-in-Zambie-20120713>

REHABILITATION

Released prisoners "thoroughly rehabilitated": News 24 reported that the Deputy Minister of Correctional Services responded to public concern regarding prisoners released in terms of mass sentence remissions declared by the President during May 2012, by reassuring them that prisoners were being "sufficiently rehabilitated" and thus able to live "crime-free lives." Reported by News24, 6 July 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Freed-prisoners-well-prepared-official-20120706>

Majority of prisoners remain rehabilitated: The New Age reported that only five of the 7482 prisoners released from prisons in KwaZulu-Natal in terms of the President's mass remission of sentences had reverted to "a life of crime." The statistics were reportedly released by the Deputy Commissioner of Correctional Services at Westville prison on 11 July 2012. Reported by Sihle Mavuso, 12 July 2012, at http://www.thenewage.co.za/55935-1010-53-Most_freed_prisoners_stay_clean

Rehabilitation model proposed: Times Live reported that the Minister of Correctional Services proposed that South African prisons adopt a rehabilitation model which permits the deduction of time from a prisoner's sentences for every book successfully completed and reviewed. He was quoted as saying that reading "empowers the inmate with the skills to read and be analytical, and be able to make use of the time at his disposal". Reported by McKeed Kotlolo, 12 July 2012, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2012/07/12/minister-s-lessons-for-prisoners>

Magistrates sceptical over effectiveness of rehabilitation: The Citizen reported that the National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders recently released results from an informal survey that indicates that magistrates are generally sceptical about the ability of prisons to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders back into society. Reported by The Citizen, 16 July 2012, at <http://www.citizen.co.za/citizen/content/en/citizen/local-news?oid=293981&sn=Detail&pid=334&Magistrates-sceptical-about-prisons>

OTHER

Department of Correctional Services makes donation: allAfrica.com reported that the Minister of Correctional Services and prisoners from Witbank, Mogwase and Losperfontein Correctional Centres donated goods worth thousands of Rands to the Ezakheni Combined School in Mpumalanga as part of the 2012 Nelson Mandela Day celebrations. Reported by allAfrica.com, 17 July 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207170420.html>

OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

ANGOLA

Investing in prisoner education: allAfrica.com reported that the Ministry of the Interior is in the process of implementing “long distance” education programmes in prisons across the country. The report also noted that the government had increased the number of classrooms in prisons. Reported by allAfrica.com, 24 July 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207240888.html>

BURUNDI

Children detained in poor conditions: Reuters reported that there are currently 404 children in detention in Burundian prisons. The conditions in which they are detained are reportedly poor. Children are not separated from the adult prison population and are forced to fend for themselves as prison officials and the police, although present, “remain on the outside” of the walls of the prison. Reported by Reuters, 5 July 2012, at <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/burundi-prisons-run-by-the-prisoners-a-general-for-the-minors-watches-over-the-safety-of-the-youngsters>

Released prisoners unable to return home: IWACU reported that several prisoners from Rumonge prison that had benefitted from mass presidential sentence remissions in June 2012 were unable to return to their homes as they could not afford the transportation costs. The local population reportedly fear a rise in the commission of petty crimes as a result of the sentence remissions. Original report in French. Reported by Félix Nzorubonanya, 22 July 2012, at <http://www.iwacu-burundi.org/spip.php?article3259>

CAMEROON

Prisoners struggle to survive: Jade Cameroun reported that the extreme shortage of resources forces prisoners to rely on family and friends for food and medication that the state is unable to provide. Those prisoners that do not receive visitors reportedly need to find other means with which to earn money in order to survive. Original report in French. Reported by Christian Locka, 18 July 2012, at <http://www.jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=253>

Shortage of provisions for imprisoned mothers: Camer reported that the Human Rights Commission, which, from time to time conducts prison visits, noted that there are many infants being kept in prison with their mothers in conditions which do not cater for their needs. Human rights activists have reportedly argued that infants should either be removed from the prison environment or detained in an environment suitable to the needs of mothers and children. Original report in French. Reported by Léger Ntiga, 31 July 2012, at <http://www.camer.be/index1.php?art=20672&rub=11:1>

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Civil society denounces prolonged police detention: Radio Okapi reported that members of civil society in Ubundu denounced the arbitrary arrest and prolonged detention of 30 persons in police cells that are reportedly only designed to accommodate a maximum capacity of six persons. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 7 July 2012, at <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2012/07/07/ubundu-la-societe-civile-denonce-des-detentions-prolongees-dans-le-cachot-du-commissariat/>

Poor conditions of detention: Radio Okapi reported that the Minister of Justice and Human Rights criticised the conditions of detention in prisons in the Oriental Province and stressed the need to address overcrowding. She reportedly made such statements following monitoring visits. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 16 July 2012, at <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2012/07/16/bunia-la-vice-ministre-de-la-justice-juge-catastrophiques-les-conditions-de-detention/>

EGYPT

Pressure to release prisoners: News24 reported that President Mohammed Morsi is being pressured by human rights activists to release approximately 10 000 prisoners who were tried and convicted during the aftermath of uprising against former President Mubarak by military courts not open to the public. Reported by News24, 4 July 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Detainee-fate-an-early-test-for-Morsi-20120704>

ETHIOPIA

Journalists imprisoned ‘unnecessarily’: Radio Netherlands reported that two Swedish journalists, convicted of terrorism and sentenced to eleven years of imprisonment one year ago, have stated that their imprisonment is unnecessary. The case has reportedly drawn heavy criticism from human rights groups who have called for the “immediate and unconditional release of the pair.” Reported by Radio Netherlands, 2 July 2012, at <http://www.rnw.nl/africa/bulletin/journalists-ethiopia-jail-say-held-unnecessarily>

Journalists sentenced to imprisonment: Bikyamasr reported that six journalists were sentenced to imprisonment after being convicted of publishing stories “promoting terrorism.” One of the journalists, an award-winning blogger, was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment. The remaining five journalists were reportedly sentenced in absentia. Reported by Bikyamasr, 16 July 2012, at <http://www.bikyamasr.com/72913/ethiopia-sentences-6-journalists-to-stiff-jail-terms-on-terrorism-charges/>

GABON

Information technology centre opened established at Libreville prison: Ecofin reported that a new information technology centre had been opened at the Libreville prison. The aim of the centre is to provide skills to juvenile and young detainees in order to facilitate their reintegration into society upon release. Original report in French. Reported by Ecofin, 10 July 2012, at

<http://www.agencecofin.com/nouveaute/1007-5715-gabon-un-centre-multimedia-a-la-prison-centrale-de-libreville>

IVORY COAST

Prisoners escape: [boston.com](http://www.boston.com) reported that twelve prisoners escaped from Abidjan's main prison on 8 July 2012. The report noted that in early May 2012, 50 prisoners escaped from the same prison, "prompting a statement of concern from the country's UN missions regarding the high number of mass prison escapes." Reported by [boston.com](http://www.boston.com), 9 July 2012, at http://www.boston.com/news/world/africa/articles/2012/07/09/official_12_escape_from_ivory_coast_prison/

Prison upgrade projects receive funding: Abidjan.net reported that the European Union pledged to support several projects to upgrade detention and training facilities as well as rehabilitation programmes for prisoners. Original report in French. Reported by Olivier Dion, 20 July 2012, at <http://news.abidjan.net/h/437564.html>

LIBYA

Immigrants detained in desert: World News Australia reported that thousands of illegal immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa are being detained in the desert in southern Libya. The conditions are reportedly extremely difficult as there is very little food and water and the detainees are forced to sleep out in the open, without tents or shelter. Reported by Luc Mathieu, 4 July 2012, at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1665662/Thousands-of-immigrants-detained-in-Libyan-desert>

MALAWI

Prisoners pardoned: The Nyasa Times reported that President Banda pardoned 377 prisoners on 6 July 2012 in commemoration of 48 years of independence. Most of the prisoners released had reportedly "served at least half of their prison sentences" and had not been convicted of serious crimes. Reported by Green Muheya, 6 July 2012, at <http://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi/2012/07/06/jb-pardons-377-prisoners-to-celebrate-malawi-independence/> This story was also reported at <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/12539728-11-prisoners-denied-freedom>

Prisoners protest against unfair and poor treatment: The Nyasa Times reported that prisoners at the Zomba Maximum Prison were protesting against the presidential pardoning of certain offenders who, it is alleged by the protesters, were reportedly convicted of more serious crimes than many prisoners who did not receive such pardons. The report also noted that certain prisoners at the prison were on hunger strike in protest against severe overcrowding, degrading conditions, torture and other ill-treatment. Reported by The Nyasa Times, 8 July 2012, at <http://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi/2012/07/08/malawi-prisoners-riot-over-pardon-of-rapist-murderer/>

Prisoners escape: The Nyasa Times reported that seven prisoners escaped from the Zomba Maximum Security Prison on 2 July 2012. Security forces reportedly re-arrested four of the escapees. Reported by Green Muheya, 9 July 2012, at <http://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi/2012/07/09/seven-malawi-prisoners-escape-from-zomba-jail/>

MOROCCO

Differential treatment in prison: Al Bawaba reported that former government officials charged with the laundering of state money are awaiting trial in "luxurious" conditions despite the fact that "ordinary" detainees are subjected to what they describe as "deplorable" prison conditions. A former detainee from the Sala prison in northern Morocco reportedly stated that the prison is divided into two sections: "one for regular detainees and another for public figures." Reported by Al Bawaba, 17 July 2012, at <http://www.albawaba.com/editorchoice/luxury-morocco-prisons-434215>

Prison overcrowding: Aswat reported that during a parliamentary session, the Minister of Justice explained that prison overcrowding in Morocco was caused by several factors, including higher crime rates, an outdated criminal code, and inadequate use of pre-trial detention. Original report in French. Reported by Aswat, 24 July 2012, at <http://www.aswat.ma/fr/actualite/actualite-maroc-et-regions/les-prisons-marocaines-surpeuplees/2238>

MOZAMBIQUE

Prisoners escape: allAfrica.com reported that 70 prisoners escaped from Mizeze prison in the Cabo Delgado province on 17 July 2012. The prisoners reportedly managed to escape when a prison official failed to lock one of the prison gates. Thirteen of the escapees were reportedly been re-arrested. Reported by allAfrica.com, 19 July 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207190622.html>

NAMIBIA

Training manual reviewed and updated: New Era reported that delegates from the Southern Africa Development Community held a meeting in Windhoek for the purpose of drafting a training manual for the country's Department of Correctional Services. Although training manuals had already been in use for some time in the prisons, there had reportedly been a proposal in May 2011 to form a taskforce that would review and refine the manual in order to ensure that they were in line with model contemporary standards in training. Reported by New Era, 27 July 2012, at <http://www.newera.com.na/articles/46627/Model-training-manual-for-SADC-prison-officers>

NIGERIA

Federal Senators focus on prison issues: The Nigerian Observer reported that various Senators of the Federal Republic have “canvassed” the establishment of six “regional centres” designed to take care of and cater for children born in prisons. Senators have also reportedly urged the Chief Justice to initiate an “awaiting trial detainee release programme” with the aim of reducing the current number of remand detainees by 50 per cent. Reported by Joses Sede, 31 July 2012, at <http://nigerianobservernews.com/06072012/news/Other%20News/othernews15.html>

Senate endorsement of prison-focused initiatives: Leadership Nigeria reported that the Federal Senate endorsed a number of initiatives concerning prisons in Nigeria. These included the following: the takeover of the Prison Decongestion Programme of the Federal Government by the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, an increase in funding for the purpose of repairing decaying prison infrastructure and to “boost the welfare of inmates and prison officers,” as well as bi-annual visits to prisons by Chief Judges in order to exercise the “Prerogative of Mercy.” Reported by Leadership Nigeria, 4 July 2012, at <http://www.leadership.ng/nga/articles/28893/2012/07/04/prison-decongestion-senate-endorses-takeover-legal-aid-council.html>

Measures to prevent of torture: Africa Independent Television News reported that the National Human Rights Commission and the Federal Government Committee on torture were collaborating in order find ways to prevent the use of torture during criminal investigations. The Federal Government Committee on torture was reportedly established by the Attorney General and is charged with the specific task of investigating and taking proactive measures to deal with cases of torture in Nigeria. Reported by Africa Independent Television News, 20 July 2012, at <http://aitnews.com.ng/s/2012/07/20/eradicating-torture/>

Police warned against the use of illegal detention: Leadership Nigeria reported that the Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice and the former President of the West Africa Bar Association cautioned the police against the detention of persons without first taking them to the courts to be formally charged, emphasising that the practice was an infringement on fundamental human rights. The remarks were reportedly made at a training programme for lawyers and law enforcement personnel, Reported by Leadership Nigeria, 26 July 2012, at <http://www.leadership.ng/nga/articles/30835/2012/07/26/lagos-falana-warn-police-against-illegal-detention.html>

SENEGAL

Alleged acts of torture: PressAfrik reported that several civil society organisations claim that the police are torturing suspects at an alarming rate during interrogations, sometimes fatally. Two police officers were reportedly recently sentenced for having tortured someone in February 2012. Original report in French. Reported by Mamadou Sakhir Ndiaye, 29 July 2012, at http://www.pressafrik.com/Senegal-Tortures-dans-les-bureaux-d-enquete-de-la-police-et-de-la-gendarmerie-les-acteurs-se-penchent-sur-la-question_a86717.html

SIERRA LEONE

Education for women on legal rights: Voice of America reported that an NGO, Advocaid, has created a television programme designed to educate women about their legal rights. It is hoped that this initiative will remedy the plight of women who fall victim to detention on spurious charges and are ill-equipped to represent themselves. Reported by Nina de Vries, 12 July 2012, at <http://www.voanews.com/content/sierra-leone-television-show-offers-legal-advice-for-women/1403619.html>

TANZANIA

Request for conjugal rights: The Citizen reported that female prisoners in the Kahama District, Shinyaga, requested that the Constitution Review Commission incorporate a section in the Constitution that permits women and men in prison to exercise their conjugal rights. Reported by Sharifa Kalokola, 15 July 2012, at <http://thecitizen.co.tz/sunday-citizen/-/24029-conjugal-rights-for-prisoners> also reported at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201207280179.html>

New prisons to be built: The Citizen reported that the government was planning to construct 36 new prisons. The report added that prisons located far away from the national power grid would be supplied with energy from alternative sources. Reported by Patty Magubira, 19 July 2012, at <http://thecitizen.co.tz/news/4-national-news/24162-govt-to-build-36-prisons-in-new-districts.html>

TUNISIA

Campaign to end torture: TunisiaLive reported that human rights organization, Human Rights First, in collaboration with a number of other organisations, launched a “global campaign against the use of torture by security services across the globe” on 4 July 2012. Some of the conference delegates will reportedly be visiting Tunisian government officials, security forces, and training institutes to combat torture inside the Tunisian security apparatus. Reported by TunisiaLive, 5 July 2012, at <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2012/07/05/global-campaign-to-end-torture-kicks-off-in-tunisia/>

UGANDA

HIV positive prisoners in poor health: New Vision reported that there are approximately 2000 prisoners with HIV in Uganda. Many of them, however, do not have access to anti-retroviral medication. In addition, prisons reportedly lack the necessary nutrition to cater for HIV positive prisoners rendering the “already appalling conditions of HIV positive prisoners even worse.” Reported by Petride Mudoola, 13 July 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/632631-living-positively-behind-bars.html>

Additional courts to reduce case backlog: The Observer reported that Chief Justice Benjamin Odoki announced during a media briefing that the judiciary was planning to set up “special courts” country wide for the purpose of handling less serious criminal matters. This would reportedly reduce the case backlog as well as “boost village, parish and divisional local courts.” Reported by Siraje Lubwama, 15 July 2012, at http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19850:judiciary-forms-special-courts-for-lighter-cases&catid=34:news&Itemid=114

Pilot health project handed to Uganda Prison Service: Reuters reported that a five-year health pilot project, spearheaded by the International Committee of the Red Cross, is being handed over to the Uganda Prison Service. Over 2500 prisoners in Uganda’s western region have reportedly benefited from the project over the last five years, particularly in relation to HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Reported by Adebayo Olowo-Ake, 19 July 2012, at <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/uganda-icrc-hands-over-prison-health-project>

ZIMBABWE

Prison conditions below international standards: The Zimdiaspora reported that the conditions in Zimbabwe’s 46 prisons fall below international standards. A spokesperson for the Zimbabwean Prison Service (ZPS) reportedly acknowledged that the prisons needed to be upgraded in order to meet international standards but stated that the ZPS would be unable to meet such requirements due to financial constraints. Reported by The Zimdiaspora, 1 July 2012, at http://www.zimdiaspora.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8748:46-zim-prisons-below-international-standards&catid=38:travel-tips&Itemid=18

Police officer sentenced to imprisonment for assault: The Zimbabwean reported that a police officer has been sentenced to 21 years imprisonment after having been convicted of fatally assaulting a detainee who was in police custody. Reported by Tichaona Sibanda, 7 July 2012, at http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/news/zimbabwe/59300/mutare-rejoices-at-the-jailing.html?utm_source=thezim&utm_medium=homepage&utm_campaign=listarticle&utm_content=headinglink



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