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Commentary.

Identity politics are rampant from the Balkan states to Bangladesh. As a professor of biology, neurology and neurosurgery at Stanford University wrote in a recent article, “Considerable evidence suggests that dividing the world into Us and Them is deeply hard-wired in our brains, with an ancient evolutionary legacy.” <http://nautil.us/issue/49/the-absurd/why-your-brain-hates-other-people> But carried into the national setting, where the people of a nation must agree on some things in order to live together, the drumbeat of identity can easily divide the population. Some of this division, of course, is attributed to the global media, where hateful messages can resurface again and again, passed from one device and one platform to another. And some of it, too, is because politicians have found it useful to use identity to gain votes: “Vote for me because I am one of you, I understand you, and I will protect you.”

In the United States, the medical profession has been discussing how racism--one form of identity politics but far from the only one--affects medical treatment. Some patients shrink from treatment by doctors of another color or creed; some distrust diagnoses made by anyone other than a member of what the patient considers his group. <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1514939>; <https://www.statnews.com/2017/06/12/racism-bias-patients-doctors/> In a discussion with two experienced archivists, we could not think of an occasion when a researcher distrusted or even refused to accept service on an identity basis, but it is not a stretch to imagine a researcher suspecting that an archivist not of his or her identity would not provide the same fulsome service that another person would receive. And would this be more likely to happen if the records requested are related to rights and benefits or to a personal interest in genealogy?

Archives hold the records that validate personal identity. From birth certificates to voting records to records of employment to documents showing adherence to a faith, archives have them all. Archives properly make the existence of these records known and provide the access to them on an equal basis. Archives advertise their educational services and offer courses in how to find your family in the records. But is there a line that archives should not cross, when promoting the identity records it holds is complicity with the divisive identity situation in the country?

People were stunned when a presidential archivist recently advocated via Twitter that every household maintain an automatic weapon. <https://turkeypurge.com/presidential-archives-director-urges-to-arm-every-household-with-automatic-weapon-1000-bullets> But in many ways, the records held in archives can be as dangerous as household guns, as they provide the ammunition for division and labeling. Archivists like to think of themselves as the neutral parties, moving between records and requester. In extreme situations, archivists have secreted archives that would provide information on personal identities to a repressive state, obviously an unusual circumstance. But it is necessary to think about the ways in which we advertise our services, walking the line between helping us all know who we are and what things happened among us and promoting the identity claims that roil our world.

International news.

International Criminal Court (ICC). The public commission in the self-proclaimed eastern Ukrainian Donetsk People’s Republic “tasked with documenting the Kiev government’s war crimes” submitted “another package of documents on war crimes committed by the Ukrainian authorities in Donbass against nine children and 16 adults” to the ICC prosecutor, the *Donetsk News Agency* reported, as quoted by *Tass*.

“The commission has already submitted information about more than 200 victims of military crimes in eastern Ukraine.” <http://tass.com/world/950203>

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). At a conference in Sarajevo on the legacy of the Tribunal, prosecutors from the ICTY spoke of the importance of evidence in their investigations. One said that evidence about the goals of those alleged to be responsible for war crimes “could be discovered through the logic of statements given by leading officials at the time, particularly when one could hear bragging about something, instead of punishing [crimes].” Another pointed out the importance of preserving DNA evidence: “even if it cannot be used today, it can be used in the future.” The chief prosecutor said that the ICTY database “contained more than nine million pages” and that domestic prosecutions “had already used more than 120,000 pages from The Hague database.” <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/hague-tribunal-mulls-lessons-of-war-crime-probes-06-23-2017>

United Nations. In a commentary published in *BIRN*, two members of the nongovernmental organization Human Rights Watch argued that the United Nations should “reconsider its refusal to compensate Kosovo Roma who suffered lead poisoning at UN-run camps after the Kosovo war.” They noted that the members of the Human Rights Advisory Panel that conducted the investigation into the complaints of human rights violations by the UN mission in Kosovo after the 1998-1999 war sent a letter on June 8 to the UN Secretary General, warning that “at a time of backlash against human rights it is vital that the UN be seen to live up to the promise of the [UN] Charter and the obligations it has promoted.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-04.

http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/un-needs-to-properly-redress-kosovo-victims-06-21-2017?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=70dfbd936f-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-70dfbd936f-319755321

The UN appointed Catherine Marchi-Uhel of France as the head of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. In advance of the announcement, *Al Jazeera* published an essay on the task ahead. It noted, “There is no shortage of evidence. The Commission for International Justice and Accountability, . . . an independent group of lawyers based at a secret European office, has amassed some 700,000 pages of Syrian intelligence and security archives,” while the “US-based Syria Justice and Accountability Center has collated some 500,000 pages of official documents, complete with ‘official seals and stamps’ and thousands of videos uploaded to YouTube.” <http://static.un.org/press/en/2017/sga1744.doc.htm>; <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/05/syria-prosecutor-tribunal-work-170529110910869.html>

The UN Human Rights Council received four reports from the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. One report focused on “how to improve on the effectiveness of cross-border cooperation between states with respect to law enforcement on the issue of business and human rights,” an issue that has been a matter of great controversy between States, including the question of access to corporate information. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21713&LangID=E>

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published an “interpretive advice note on the banking sector’s responsibilities for managing the human rights impacts of its finance.” BankTrack, a nongovernmental organization based in the Netherlands that focuses on private banks, reported on the guidance, which says, “banks should have in place a policy statement on human rights, clearly communicate their human rights expectations to clients and other business partners, and a due diligence process to identify and assess impacts (drawing on relevant internal and external expertise, and in consultation with stakeholders), integrate the findings from their impact assessments across relevant functions and departments (including taking appropriate actions), and track and account for how impacts are addressed.” Fulfilling those requirements requires a robust archival program. https://www.banktrack.org/download/letter_from_ohchr_to_banktrack_on_application_of_the_un_guiding_principles_in_the_banking_sector/bankrack_response_final.pdf; <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/163/67/PDF/G1716367.pdf?OpenElement>

The High Commissioner for Human Rights also published its review of the compliance by Israel and Palestine with human rights norms as outlined in “64 reports and 929 recommendations from the Council, the U.N. Secretary General and U.N. rights investigators from 2009-2016.” The review was aimed at “ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian

Territory;” it found that both Israel and Palestine have failed to do so, *Reuters* reported. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-un-rights-idUSKBN19323G>

The High Commissioner for Refugees issued the annual Global Trends report. It said 65.6 million people worldwide are displaced from their homes, the highest number since World War II. Of that number, 40.3 million were displaced inside their own countries. Syrians continue to be the largest forcibly displaced population: 12 million people at the end of 2016. The report explained the importance of records to the refugee program: “Knowing basic details about the populations of concern to UNHCR is very significant. It is vital to know the sex, age and geographical location of a population in order to be able to plan for maternal and reproductive health, education, care of vulnerable individuals and much more.” <http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2016/>

World Bank. Using “data from the rural sample of the Labor and Skills Survey (LSS) wave 2, conducted in Pakistan in 2013,” World Bank researchers analyzed the impact of consanguinity (marrying first or second cousins) on “child cognitive ability and nutritional statuses.” They found that “children born into consanguineous marriages have lower test scores, lower height-for-age, and a higher likelihood of being severely stunted.” This is a model of the use of data collected for one purpose to answer a totally different question. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26846>

World Health Organization (WHO). Using “the best available evidence from 52 studies in 28 countries from different regions, including 12 low- and middle-income countries,” researchers for WHO found that around 1 in 6 people or “almost 16% of people aged 60 years and older were subjected to either psychological abuse (11.6%), financial abuse (6.8%), neglect (4.2%), physical abuse (2.6%) or sexual abuse (0.9%).” <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2017/abuse-older-people/en/>

World/general news.

Business records. “The international funders behind the hydroelectric dam opposed by murdered Honduran environmentalist Berta Caceres are withdrawing from the project,” the *Guardian* reported. For background, see *HRWG News* 2016-09. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/04/honduras-dam-activist-bertha-caceres>

“France has launched a judicial inquiry into the Syrian activities of cement and construction group LafargeHolcim,” *Reuters* reported. For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-03. <https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2017/06/13/business/13reuters-lafargeholcim-syria.html?smid=tw-share& r=1>

“The widows of [four] men who were hanged by Nigeria’s military government in the 1990s have launched a civil case against [Royal Dutch] Shell, accusing it of complicity in their husbands’ executions,” the *Guardian* reported. In a briefing, Amnesty International, which has supported the legal team of the widows, “alleges that Shell encouraged security forces and military authorities to stop the protests” at which the men were leaders “even though the company know this would lead to human rights violations.” Amnesty said it has seen internal Shell documents proving that the company knew the trial was “unfair.” <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jun/29/ogoni-widows-file-civil-writ-accusing-shell-of-complicity-in-nigeria-killings>

Three human rights groups in France “submitted a complaint to a judge, accusing BNP [France’s biggest bank] of war crimes and complicity in genocide in Rwanda in 1994,” *The Economist* reported. A UN report in 1998 said the Banque Nationale de Paris, which later merged with Paribas in BNP, “financed a deal for 80 tonnes of weapons, including AK-47 rifles, ammunition, hand-grenades and mortars, delivered to the Rwandan army.” The article noted that “rights campaigners also want France’s new government to open archives expected to reveal complicity between French officials—not only bankers—and the genocidaires.” See also France/Rwanda below. <https://www.economist.com/news/business-and-finance/21724773-pillar-french-finance-haunted-its-past-bnp-paribas-faces-accusations>

See also Canada/Guatemala below.

Land title. *Thomson Reuters Foundation* published a major investigative report, “The Politics of Death,” asking, “What links global big business to murders in Brazil, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Honduras,

India, Kenya, Russia? More than 2,000 violent land conflicts worldwide.” It suggested that part of the problem may lie “in the fact that development projects are historically among the greatest drivers of displacement, with an estimated 15 million people pushed off their land a year since the mid-2000s, according to the most figures cited by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.” Records of land title are some of the most heavily used archival records. <http://www.thisisplace.org/shorthand/politics-of-death/>

Medical records. In December 2013 a 26-year-old woman in New Delhi, India, was raped and assaulted by her Uber driver, but Uber executives “apparently had trouble believing that the incident was entirely true,” reported *Recode*. The president of Uber business in Asia Pacific somehow obtained the medical records of the woman and shared them with other executives in the company. After “about a year” another Uber executive destroyed the copy. Uber now says that the employee who obtained the records “is no longer employed there” but “declined to comment further.” <https://www.recode.net/2017/6/7/15754316/uber-executive-india-assault-rape-medical-records>

STAT published a commentary on the problem of hospitals and medical centers not reporting to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on the problems with medical devices; the lack of documentation leads to poor monitoring of the safety of medical devices sold worldwide. <https://www.statnews.com/2017/06/07/medical-device-monitoring/>

Police records. Open Society Foundations, a U.S. nongovernmental organization, published a review titled, “Caught on Film: What the Law Says About Filming the Police in Europe.” It found that because the “European Court of Human Rights has not addressed the issue . . . this has allowed national approaches to vary.” Turning to the other side—the police using cameras on cars and worn on uniforms to film people they encounter--the *New York Times* looked at a number of cases of fatal shootings by U.S. police that were captured on film. In the prosecutions of police who fired shots, the video evidence “has not provided the clarity many expected” and has not “delivered the outcomes some prosecutors have hoped for.” See also United States below. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/caught-film-what-law-says-about-filming-police-europe;> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/25/us/police-shootings-trials-video-body-cam.html>

Privacy. “Facebook put the safety of its content moderators at risk after inadvertently exposing their personal details to suspected terrorist users of the social network,” the *Guardian* reported. “Of the 1,000 affected workers, around 40 worked in a counter-terrorism unit.” https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/jun/16/facebook-moderators-identity-exposed-terrorist-groups?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=230994&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection

Torture. In a case brought by three Iraqi nationals who were detained by the U.S. Army at Abu Gharaib prison in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia established the “applicable sources of law for defining the prohibitions” against torture; cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; and war crimes. The Iraqis are suing CACI Premier Technology, Inc., a private contractor to the U.S. Army that provided “interrogation services” at the prison. The court determined that a private party could be sued under the Alien Tort Statue and the definitions could be applied to the acts of its employees. For background, see *HRWG News* 2016-10. [Suhail Najim Abdullah Al Shimari, et al., v. CACI Premier Tech, Inc.](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/20/us/cia-torture.html)

The U.S. District Court in the state of Washington is hearing the case against James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen, the psychologists who designed the interrogation program used by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency against persons captured in Afghanistan in 2002 and 2003. The *New York Times* obtained copies of the video depositions of the psychologists and also of two former detainees that were subjected to the torture, as well as “newly declassified agency documents” that have been used in the case. It printed both an extract from the memo the psychologists wrote on “enhanced interrogation techniques” and drawings by one of the detainees of his treatment. In his deposition, Mitchell “revealed that he, along with others, urged the C.I.A. to destroy videotapes the agency had made of some interrogations.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2016-11. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/20/us/cia-torture.html>

World War II. A remarkable number of articles published this month related to records and World War II. In Chile, the police “declassified a trove of files shedding light on the activities of Nazi agents in the South American country during World War II,” including documents on a spy ring that “plotted to destroy the

Panama Canal,” *Deutsche Welle* reported. The police said they would “officially hand over the files to the country’s national archives.” <http://www.dw.com/en/chile-police-unveil-declassified-wwii-nazi-spy-documents/a-39377151>

The National Archives of the United Kingdom released the final set of files on the compensation provided to British victims of Nazi persecutions, reported *The Jewish Chronicle*. For background see *HRWG News* 2017-03. <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/thousands-of-stories-of-nazi-persecution-revealed-as-holocaust-compensation-scheme-records-published-1.434553>

An historian at the Jasenovac Memorial Site in Croatia published a book containing “all the photos in possession of the Memorial Site, as well as those in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb, the Archives of Yugoslavia in Belgrade and the Archives of Bosnia and Herzegovina” that were taken at the Jasenovac World War II concentration camp between 1945 and 1947. The photographs, *BIRN* reported, “tackle unsupported claims that the Communists also killed many prisoners” at the site after the war.

http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/post-wwii-jasenovac-photos-discard-communist-camp-stories-06-07-2017?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=801efd65ce-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-801efd65ce-319755321

The Lancet reported on historian Paul Weindling’s project to “discover the names and life stories of victims of the Nazi-era medical experiments” and on an exhibition in London showing the extent of the experiments. [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)31492-7/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)31492-7/abstract)

And *STAT* published an article by a psychiatrist describing the impact of the photographs taken by Henryk Ross in the Lodz, Poland, ghetto during the war, some of which are now on display in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Ross and his wife “buried their 6,000 negatives in 1944” and after the war were able to recover “many” of the images. The psychiatrist, the son of Lodz survivors, argued that “photographs have immense power to heal,” and that “people who have been traumatized can use them to create a community of trust between themselves and others.” He termed it “therapeutic photography.”

<https://www.statnews.com/2017/06/15/photographs-selfies-healing-power/>

Bilateral and multilateral news.

Bosnia/Netherlands. A Dutch appeals court found the Netherlands “partially liable for the deaths of around 300 Bosniaks from Srebrenica who were killed after being expelled from a Dutch UN peacekeeper’s base in 1995,” *BIRN* reported. For background, see *HRWG News* 2016-10. And more than 200 former UN peacekeepers from the Netherlands “are to sue the Dutch government for sending them to Srebrenica.” Their lawyer argues that “they are still experiencing damages in all aspects of their lives and believe that the defence ministry should be held responsible.” http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/srebrenica-netherlands-peacekeepers-verdict-06-27-2017?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=186f3c69a3-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-186f3c69a3-319755321

Bosnia/Switzerland. A Swiss politician was convicted for racial discrimination “because he wrote that the 1995 genocide of Bosniaks from Srebrenica was a lie” in two articles he published in 2012; the conviction has been upheld by an appeals court, *BIRN* reported. http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/switzerland-convicts-politician-of-srebrenica-genocide-denial-06-20-2017?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=84f77b61d6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-84f77b61d6-319755321

Canada/Guatemala. The Supreme Court of Canada allowed the lawsuit “brought by several Guatemalan men for injuries they suffered during the violent suppression of a peaceful protest” at Tahoe Resources Inc.’s mine in Guatemala to go forward. Tahoe is a Canadian company, which had argued that the case should be tried in Guatemala. For background, see *HRWG News* 2015-11. <http://www.cci.ca/news/supreme-court-canada-declines/>

The Walrus Foundation, a nongovernmental organization based in Canada, published a report on the Canadian companies working in Guatemala that asked, “Is Canada to Blame for Human Rights Abuses in Guatemala?” Using Canadian government records, including correspondence from the Canadian embassy in Guatemala, military documents from Guatemala, and wiretaps introduced in a court case, the researchers

concluded that indigenous protesters against “Canadian extractive companies” (mining) are “victims of the Canadian government’s failure to regulate and standardize corporate behavior abroad.”

<https://thewalrus.ca/is-canada-to-blame-for-human-rights-abuses-in-guatemala/#.WVgax-uhTEk.email>

Egypt/Israel/Jordan/Syria. On the 50th anniversary of the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel released 150,000 “confidential documents” on the war, although Israeli law permitted them to remain closed until 2037, *Asia Times* reported. “As Israel opens its archives, the Arabs sat dumbfounded, with no counter-archive to challenge Israeli alibis. The Egyptian archives remain classified, with many doubting that they actually still exist, while those of other Arab countries, such as Iraq and Syria, have been destroyed by years of neglect, corruption, and the present wars in both countries.” <http://www.atimes.com/article/opening-1967-israeli-archives-disturbs-old-arab-wounds/>

France/Ireland/United Kingdom/Northern Ireland. In 1999 Ireland and the UK set up the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims Remains (ICLVR) to recover the bodies of “The Disappeared,” sixteen people “who were separately abducted, murdered and secretly buried by Irish Republican paramilitaries during the 30-year conflict in Northern Ireland known as The Troubles,” *Al Jazeera* reported. “Searches come only after methodical testing of the confidential information the ICLVR has garnered. Investigators trawl resources – historic records, maps and photos.” In 1999 a member of the political wing of the Irish National Liberation Army gave the family of Seamus Ruddy, one of the disappeared, “a black and white map of a forest in France with an X marked on it” that in May 2017 helped ICLVR recover Ruddy’s remains. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/05/disappeared-life-death-seamus-ruddy-170524080859203.html>

France/Rwanda. According to an article published in the journal *XXI*, the French government reamed the genocidaires in Rwanda some months after the massacres, *Le Monde* reported. Based on information supplied by a senior official who saw the French archives on the Rwanda genocide, opening those archives has not been effective because “extremely compromising” items have not been released. http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/06/27/genocide-au-rwanda-des-revelations-sur-le-role-de-la-france_5151690_3212.html

Guatemala/United States. A former member of the Guatemalan army’s special forces unit known as the Kaibiles was arrested and pleaded guilty to fraudulently trying to gain U.S. citizenship by lying on his citizenship application form and repeating the lie during his citizenship interview. He claimed he had “never participated in any crimes for which he had not been tried” and did not list his membership in the Kaibiles, reported the *Buenos Aires Herald*. He is wanted in Guatemala “on criminal charges of murder, war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the Dos Erres massacre;” he is the fifth participant in the massacre to be arrested in the U.S. <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/article/225820/three-decades-on-crimes-against-humanity-finally-catch-up-with-guatemala-repressor>

Israel/United States/Yemen. *Israel Hayom* published “an exclusive report exposing doctors’ testimonies that unauthorized medical tests were performed on children who went missing in the early years of the state and whose fates were unknown to their families. It “obtained protocols that record testimonies of experiments that were conducted,” including that “children who died were autopsied without the consent of their parents.” A doctor who was involved told an inquiry in the late 1990s that “all the testing had been meticulously documented, but that he had heard rumors that ‘someone destroyed then [the records] seven years later.’” The *Jerusalem Post* reported that the doctor said “the US National Institutes of Health . . . gave a pathology institute of an Israeli hospital a sum of 1600,000 liras--the Israeli currency at the time--to fund a study on the functioning of Yemenites’ hearts” to determine “if and why there were no heart diseases in Yemen.” The study used hearts from 60 fetuses. http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=43119
<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/US-doctors-accused-of-paying-for-research-on-hearts-of-murdered-Yemenite-kids-496884>

Mexico/United States. In March 2011 gunmen from the Zetas drug trafficking cartel destroyed the town of Allende, Mexico. *Pro Publica* and *National Geographic* investigated the cause, using records from both governments. They reported that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency learned the “trackable cellphone identification numbers of two of the cartel’s most wanted kingpins,” the Tevino brothers, and turned the information over to the Mexican federal police. The information “almost immediately” got to the brothers, who destroyed the town of the person they believed leaked the numbers. Government reports “indicate that state emergency response authorities were deluged that Saturday [during the destruction] with some 250

calls from people reporting general disorder, fires, fights and home invasions throughout the region. But numerous people interviewed said no one came to help.” <https://www.propublica.org/article/allende-zetas-cartel-massacre-and-the-us-dea>

Middle East war. *Airwars* has been “modeling Coalition airstrike data since the start of operations in August 2014” in Syria, with all “graphs and tables . . . based on official data releases from the Coalition, and from individual member states.” Their graphics are very much worth reviewing. For example, *Airwars* “has tracked more than 2,000 reported events in which Russian or Coalition aircraft have allegedly killed civilians.” <https://airwars.org/data/> It is useful to compare this with the statement by a commissioner on the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, who said in mid-June, “We have documented the [civilian] deaths caused by the coalition air strikes only and we have about 300 deaths, 200 in one place, in al-Mansoura, one village,” *Reuters* reported. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-warcrimes-idUSKBN19511O>

Human Rights Watch and various media outlets, including the *Washington Post*, published reports that the U.S.-led coalition “appears to have used white phosphorus-loaded munitions on at least two occasions in densely populated areas of Mosul and in the Islamic State’s de facto capital of Raqqa, according to videos posted online.” White phosphorus can be used to create a cloud to obscure activity, but in the process may cause “horrific civilian harm” to people that come in contact with the chemical, Human Rights Watch said. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/06/09/u-s-led-forces-appear-to-be-using-white-phosphorous-in-populated-areas-in-iraq-and-syria/?utm_term=.6673dfb7cfc4; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/14/iraq/syria-danger-us-white-phosphorus>

A fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) issued a report to the United Nations saying that sarin nerve agent or a similar poison was used in an April 4 aerial attack in the northern Syrian town of Khan Sheikhoun. That attack killed nearly 100 people. OPCW wrote, “A rigorous methodology was employed for conducting an investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons that took into account corroboration between interviewee testimonies; open-source research, documents, and other records; and the characteristics of the samples including those provided by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.” <https://www.opcw.org/news/article/opcw-fact-finding-mission-confirms-use-of-chemical-weapons-in-khan-shaykhun-on-4-april-2017/>

The *New York Times* reported that U.S. raids on ISIS targets are yielding “vital data”: “cellphones and other material swept up by Special Operations forces proved valuable for future raids.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/25/world/middleeast/islamic-state-syria-raqqa-special-operations.html?clickSource=story-heading&WT.nav=top-news>

Russia/Ukraine. In 2015 Russian authorities raided the Moscow Library of Ukrainian Literature and took away both books and computers containing library records. Now a court has given the former head of the Library to a four-year suspended sentence on the grounds that the library’s holdings were disseminating hostile ideas and inciting interethnic enmity and hatred, the *Associated Press* reported. For background, see *HRWG News* 2015-10. <http://www.apnewsarchive.com/2017/A-Moscow-court-has-convicted-the-director-of-a-Ukrainian-library-of-inciting-ethnic-hatred-to-Russians-and-imposed-a-four-year-suspended-sentence/id-f22927819823430e80bb793ed03c8070>

National news.

Belgium. The Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs officially transferred to the Belgian State Archives “the African Archives [that] begin with the recognition of the Independent state of Congo (1885), the Development Cooperation in the aftermath of decolonization and the Diplomatic Archives from the early hours of the Belgian State in 1830.” Given the human rights violations known to have occurred in the Belgian Congo, these are extremely important records. In less positive news, the State Archives reported that an amendment to the Organic Law of the Intelligence and Security Services extended the period for transfer from 30 years to 50 years. https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/newsroom/news/2017/fps_foreign_affairs_transfers_archives_of_significant_historical_value_to_the_belgian_state_archives; <http://www.arch.be/index.php?l=fr&m=actualites&r=toutes-les-actualites&a=2017-06-09-nouvelles-dispositions-concernant-les-archives-des-services-de-renseignement-et-de-securite>

Brazil. Three United Nations rapporteurs and one from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights warned that indigenous and environmental rights are under attack. They were particularly concerned that a

Congressional report recommended that the National Indian Foundation, “the body which supports indigenous peoples in the protection of their rights,” should be “stripped of responsibility for the legal titling and demarcation of indigenous lands.” They also found “a number of draft laws” that would weaken environmental protection, including legislation that “would remove the need for environmental licenses for projects involving agri-business and cattle ranching, regardless of their size, location, necessity, or impact on indigenous lands.” <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21704&LangID=E>

Human Rights Watch released a report, “One Day I’ll Kill You: Impunity in Domestic Violence Cases in the Brazilian State of Roraima.” Brazil’s homicide rate for women is higher than that of any OECD country [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; 35 countries with high-income economies and high Human Development Indexes], and Roraima State has the highest homicide rate for women in Brazil. A February 2017 survey found that only a quarter of the women who suffer violence report it; military police said that “for lack of personnel, they do not respond to all emergency calls from women who say they are experiencing domestic violence”; some civil police officers in the state capital “decline to register domestic violence complaints or request protection orders;” and in the capital “police have failed to do investigative work on a backlog of 8,400 domestic violence complaints.” Police said “most cases languish for years until they are eventually closed because the statute of limitations on the crime expires—without any prosecution.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/21/brazil-domestic-violence-victims-denied-justice>

Canada. *The Canadian Press* reported that the Defence Department has no “firm sense” of the number of people who were forced out of the military for being gay or lesbian between 1969 and 1992. The Armed Forces spokeswoman said, “It may entail pulling and reviewing every single personnel file from Library and Archives Canada to determine the circumstances of each case.” The Trudeau government “has signaled its intention to apologize to former military members.” <http://www.timescolonist.com/military-faces-intensive-archival-search-to-pinpoint-gay-purge-numbers-1.20401638>

In 2016 the Federal Court ruled that it was illegal for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to “indefinitely keep data on people who posed no threat to Canada’s national security . . . for future analysis.” In an October 2016 memo obtained by *The Star* under the access to information law, the director of CSIS told the Public Safety Minister that CSIS “may continue to retain associated data linked to a target’s communications, it will no longer be able to retain (metadata) linked to third-party communications found to be unrelated to threats. This is a shift from current practice, as since 2006, CSIS has retained all (metadata) and inserted it into ODAC [Operational Data Analysis Centre] for future investigative purposes.” <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/06/08/csis-kept-all-metadata-on-third-parties-for-a-decade-top-secret-memo-says.html>

The Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in *Google v. Equustek*, upholding the validity of an injunction requiring Google to remove search results on an international basis. <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/16701/index.do>

Central African Republic. *CrisisWatch* reported that the President appointed a Canadian attorney as the deputy international prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court, which is to prosecute those responsible for war crimes in the Republic between 2003 and 2015. The court still does not have an investigation team to support the prosecution, but MINUSCA [United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic] released its “mapping report” of violations that took place during the period. It identified 620 “serious incidents,” based on “a desk review, analysing information from more than 1,200 confidential and open sources contained in documents such as United Nations reports, reports by international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media reports, academic articles and books. To fill priority information gaps identified by the desk review, the project conducted investigations and visits to sites of alleged incidents in most regions of the CAR. Investigators conducted interviews with around 120 persons, including victims and witnesses, State authorities, religious and community leaders, human rights defenders and alleged perpetrators.” <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/>; <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/CARProjetMapping2003-2015.aspx>

AFP reported that the UN is sending home 600 troops from Congo-Brazzaville that were serving with MINUSCA. The Code Blue Campaign by the nongovernmental organization Aids-Free World in early June released leaked internal UN documents detailing alleged sexual abuse and misconduct by the peacekeepers.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/congo-withdraw-un-peacekeepers-accused-misconduct-225639573.html>;
<http://www.codebluecampaign.com/welcome#recentstatements>

Chile. The nongovernmental International Center for Transitional Justice published an essay on Chile's progress in prosecuting state agents for their roles in forced disappearances, following two court decisions that convicted a total of 139 officials for the disappearances of 21 Chileans. One case in the lower court sentenced 106 agents for the enforced disappearance of 16 persons; their names had "appeared on two fake publications as having killed themselves in internal infighting among leftist groups," one of the classic techniques of the Chilean officials when families inquired about the missing. https://www.ictj.org/news/judgments-chile-progress-prosecuting-state-disappearances?utm_source=International+Center+for+Transitional+Justice+Newsletter&utm_campaign=3d2ec14b80-World+Report+June+2017&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2d90950d4d-3d2ec14b80-237813513

Cyprus. Cyprus' Committee on Missing Persons is using a Geographic Information System "that links all information gathered from archives, investigators and eyewitnesses to give a more exact estimate of possible burial sites," *PressTV* reported. The Committee has found the remains of "more than half" of the estimated 2000 Greek and Turkish Cypriot victims of the civil war (1955-1964). "Officials estimate the archival search will boost the inflow of information by up to 20 percent." <http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/06/24/526370/Cyprus-Committee-on-Missing-Persons>

Democratic Republic of Congo. The UN Human Rights Council resolved to send a team of international experts to investigate "alleged human rights violations and abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law in the Kasai regions." The High Commissioner for Human Rights said, "We expect and count on the full cooperation of the authorities, particularly in providing unfettered access to all sites, files, people and places." The UN estimates that since 2016 "some 1.3 million people from the Kasais have been internally displaced by the violence, while some 30,000 refugees have fled to Angola." For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-05. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/media.aspx?IsMediaPage=true>

Egypt. The Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS) released a study that found "around 42.5 percent of Egyptian women experience psychological violence from their husbands," 37 percent of illiterate women face physical violence from their husbands, and "most Egyptian women—a staggering 86 percent—experience psychological problems as a result of violence perpetrated by their husbands." The statement did not explain what archives were used to make the analysis. https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170616-egyptian-families-pay-huge-price-for-gender-based-violence/?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTUdZek9ETTNOVEE0WXprMiIsInQiOiJXK0MwckJUeldkciNXNDUyNkxyTnNHRERzRzNVUE54aWdEcFlGd1ZuVGNBScTcaVYyRzI0Uc2aWhmMUIsckJlSnlycDVSQTl4blBoeW5menBMRjVvYR01TSnlMV0UxRjVZUXRiSjB3JrM1RkclQ2b1VwdmT1VHNBdlwvT2w0K1EifQ%3D%3D

Ethiopia. Endalk Chala, an Ethiopian graduate student in the United States, "has been napping the deaths of men and women killed in Ethiopia's Oromia region since violence erupted in November 2015," *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. The protests began over a government plan to annex farmland to the capital for urban development; that plan has now been canceled but violence continues. Chala said he "started to collect the information from the internet: Facebook, Twitter and blogs," then "friends and activists began to send details, including photographs of those injured and killed," contacting him "via social media and instant messaging applications like Viber." <http://news.trust.org/item/20170629000311-yv7qw/>

France/Guadeloupe. A workers' strike in Guadeloupe in 1967 was brutally put down by French police and soldiers, and 50 years later there is renewed interest in understanding what happened. A French inquiry in 2016 said that "due to lack of evidence, it was impossible to ascertain the number of people who died," reported *Al Jazeera*. A researcher said "the intelligence police reports from 1967, initially classified for 50 years . . . were mandated—on the eve of the half century anniversary of the brutality—to remain closed for another 25 years." A man who was shot during the crisis said, "The true witnesses are dead, and they [the state] have already made the papers, the evidence, disappear." For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-04. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/05/50-years-guadeloupeans-remember-french-brutality-170525130554921.html>

Germany. The Bundestag (parliament) voted "to quash the convictions of 50,000 gay men sentenced for homosexuality under a Nazi-era law which remained in force after the war" and to give each man a lump sum payment plus a payment for each year spent in prison. More than 42,000 men were convicted during

the Nazi era, *AFP* reported; an estimated 5,000 of those are still alive. <https://www.thelocal.de/20170623/germany-finally-clears-gay-men-convicted-under-nazi-era-law>

Iraq. “Iraq will open a special court to try alleged ISIS members accused of committing crimes against the Yezidi population when the extremist group carried out genocide against the minority community,” *Rudaw* reported. A spokesperson for the Supreme Judicial Council said the reason for the “special judicial body” was “to document the crimes committed against this component and make sure the suspects do not escape justice.” The Kurdistan Regional Government also hopes to establish a special tribunal to prosecute alleged ISIS members; a commission it has established “has been collecting evidence of ISIS crimes, including victim testimony, since September 2014.” The only Yezidi member of the Iraqi parliament, Vian Dakhil, said she would like to see an “Iraqi court, in cooperation with the Kurdistan Region since all the testimonies of our abducted girls are with us, and to have several international judges, so that we can indeed make it an international case.” <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/12062017>

Ireland. An Irish woman was “carrying a baby with no chance of surviving” but could not get a legal abortion in Ireland, reported *The Times*. She “eventually obtained her medical files and sent them herself to Liverpool [United Kingdom] Women’s Hospital” where the procedure took place. She then complained to the UN Human Rights Committee, which ruled that Ireland must compensate the woman, “take steps to change its abortion law and, if necessary, its constitution, to ensure other women did not go through the same experience.” <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/ireland/un-hits-out-at-abortion-laws-in-new-cruel-case-lrwd95z3k>
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20077&LangID=E>

Kazakhstan. Religious affairs caused controversy in June, *Eurasia Review* reported. A number of Muslim adherents were fined for saying the word “Amen” aloud in mosques during prayers. In two Baptist congregations, state officials filmed a worship service from the door, took the men and one woman to police stations and “took fingerprints from all of them, photographed each face on and from the side, and recorded their personal data, including home addresses,” and fined them, *F18News* reported. (Forum 18 is a charitable foundation registered in Denmark.) An official of the Zhambyl Regional Religious Affairs Department said, “Their services were illegal—worship without state registration is banned.” Told that the Baptists were exercising rights set out in the Constitution, he responded: “Of course the Constitution allows it, but under the law it is banned.” Asked what would happen to the fingerprints and photos of the Baptists taken at the police station [he] responded: “They were taken to provide evidence.” http://www.eurasiareview.com/11062017-kazakhstan-fingerprints-mugshots-fines-follow-worship-raid/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

Kenya. The President gave the Nubian community “a certificate of incorporation for the 288 acres of land left of the Kibera military reserve,” *AllAfrica* reported. The land, now in the suburbs of Nairobi, was originally part of a military reserve established in 1902 by the British, who conscripted Nubians from the Upper Nile region into their forces in Kenya. “After independence in 1963, the lack of formal title to the land where they settled under the British also contributed to the unwillingness of the government to recognize the Nubians as citizens of Kenya, leaving the community at risk of statelessness,” the Open Society Justice Institute wrote. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201706020633.html>; https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/press-releases/after-long-struggle-kenyas-nubian-minority-secures-land-rights?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed

The audit firm KPMG on June 9 reported “irregularities in [the] voter list and recommended removal of names of over 92,000 dead people,” *CrisisWatch* reported. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>

Kosovo. The Specialist Chamber of Kosovo’s Constitutional Court approved “the revised rules of procedure and evidence for the new Specialist Court, allowing it to issue its first indictments of former Kosovo Liberation Army fighters soon,” *BIRN* reported. The Chamber, which sits in The Hague, will try alleged crimes committed during and after the war with Serbia, 1998-2000. For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-02. http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-war-court-rules-finally-approved-06-2017?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=a036c0fc86-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-a036c0fc86-319755321

Liberia. *FrontPageAfricaNewspaper* published an article on the arrests of various alleged perpetrators of crimes during Liberia’s bloody civil war, 1989-2003. It argued that photographic images “appear to be

playing a major role in bringing many former warlords and their associates to book.” <http://www.frontpageafricaonline.com/index.php/news/4352-war-time-photos-helping-to-bring-perpetrators-of-liberia-s-war-to-justice>

The chairman of the National Elections Commission appeared before the Senate to explain “largescale irregularities in [the] final voter roll” for the October elections, *CrisisWatch* reported. He said the “misplaced names against voters’ photographs” were due to human error and the commission is working to correct mistakes. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>

Malawi. Malawi and UNESCO are testing the effectiveness of drones in humanitarian emergencies and other development uses, *Reuters* reported. The “test corridor” is focusing in three areas: “generating aerial images of crisis situations, using drones to extend Wi-Fi or mobile phone signals across difficult terrain in emergencies, and delivering low-weight emergency supplies.” Preserving the drone-generated data will be a critical responsibility. <http://news.trust.org/item/20170629125057-ek6vt/>

Mexico. Using “collected data from attorney general offices” from twelve states, academic and human rights researchers found that “more than 1000 clandestine graves have been discovered in Mexico, with over 2,014 skulls found.” http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/More-Than-1000-Clandestine-Graves-Found-in-Mexico-Report-Confirms-20170625-0014.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=8

Government statistics showed a record-breaking number of homicides in May, the highest since modern recordkeeping began in 1997. The first five months of the year saw 9,916 murders, roughly a 30% increase over the same period last year. http://secretariadoejecutivo.gob.mx/docs/pdfs/victimas/Victimas2017_052017.pdf

Nepal. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission received 58,052 complaints from conflict victims. It has now sent 1000 complaints to each of its six provincial offices for investigation and “asked the Ministry of Home Affairs to provide security to provincial offices and the files of the complainants,” *The Himalayan Times* reported. <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-hands-1000-cases-six-provinces-probe/>

Nigeria. Following “violent clashes between Fulanis and other ethnic tribes in the Mambilla plateau,” the governor of Taraba State established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, an administrative panel of inquiry, and a peace committee “comprising representatives of the stakeholders,” reported *This Day*. All will create new state government records. <http://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2017/06/26/ishaku-sets-up-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-administrative-panel-to-resolve-mambilla-crisis/>

Pakistan. The government issued its first “passport with a transgender category,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. An “X” was printed under the gender category on the travel document. <http://news.trust.org/item/20170628151952-67lml/>

In late May, the Federal Investigation Agency “initiated investigations into some 200 social media accounts for ‘spreading negative material’ against army and other institutions,” *CrisisWatch* reported. Then in June an antiterrorism court sentenced a man to death for committing blasphemy in posts on social media. According to the *New York Times*, the prosecutor in the case said, “The forensic report of his mobile phone showed that he had committed blasphemy in at least 3,000 posts.” This appears to be the first ever death sentence for blasphemy because of social media posts. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/world/asia/pakistan-blasphemy-sentence.html>

Russia. *Novaya Gazeta* analyzed a “5-gigabyte archives” covering July 2012-October 2014 that allegedly belongs to Russian corporate lawyer Andrei Pavlo. The email correspondence was “originally leaked onto the internet by unknown parties,” and it shows “a man deeply implicated in large-scale fraud who is able to use his connections to skew judicial processes in his favor.” Some of the correspondence relates to the Magnitsky case. Sergei Magnitsky was an auditor working for a “capital management fund” that was prosecuted for tax crimes; he was arrested and charged with tax evasion and died in jail “from abuse and neglect.” <https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/6620-emails-allegedly-belonging-to-russian-lawyer-reveal-hidden-influence-on-magnitsky-case-investigations>

A private museum in Podolsk, a town south of Moscow that is also home to the Central Archive of the Russian Ministry of Defense, focuses “on the relentless persecution that followed Russia’s 1917 Bolshevik revolution, creating fertile ground for anti-Soviet treachery during a war [World War II] that cost 25 million Soviet lives,” the *New York Times* reported. The creator of the museum, Sergei Melikhov, after “years of work collecting and reading old books and documents,” became convinced “that what Mr. Putin and his allies in the Orthodox Church and elsewhere celebrate as Russian tradition grossly distorts the past.” He has now been “denounced on state television as a traitor, Russian border guards have defaced his passport to prevent him from leaving the country,” and he was found guilty by a Podolsk court of “illegal weapons possession” and sentenced to a year of “restricted freedom.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/21/world/europe/vladimir-putin-russia-vladimirmelikhov.html>

South Africa. In October 1971 anti-apartheid campaigner Ahmed Timol was arrested and five days later “fell from a 10th floor window at a notorious regime security building and died,” *AFP* wrote. He was declared a suicide; in 1996 his mother told the story to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and asked for a reopening of the case. Nothing happened. His nephew then “began to investigate the case, poring over old documents to get to the truth which led him to apply to prosecutors to reopen the file.” After numerous setbacks and with the help of the Foundation for Human Rights, the National Prosecuting Authority agreed “that there is compelling evidence that necessitates reopening the inquest” and a hearing was held on June 26. The nephew continues to press for the release of archives relating to the case, writing on the website devoted to his uncle, “Retrieving records from the apartheid archives is a long and tedious process. Bureaucrats who have no understanding of our struggle history are responsible for making decisions to de-classify these records. If this information is not de-classified, I intend to escalate the matter to the Information Regulator.” http://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1456288/-safrica-confronts-apartheid-era-custody_deaths; <http://www.ahmedtimol.co.za/>

Spain. In a first, a lawsuit has been filed against torturers from the Francisco Franco era. The suit was brought by Luis Suarez-Carreno, who was tortured by them and after three days signed a “confession they had forged for him,” *Deutsche Welle* reported. Suarez-Carreno said he brought the suit “to establish what really happened and avoid having history rewritten.” <http://www.dw.com/en/lawsuit-filed-against-franco-regime-torturer/a-39378664>

The Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory obtained a court order allowing them to excavate a mass grave dating from the civil war era in the cemetery in Gaudalajara. They started work “in the knowledge—thanks to the cemetery’s burial records—that there was a mass grave under every headstone. The records also informed them that each pit was four meters deep and contained between 20 and 25 bodies, piled on top of each other in groups,” *euronews* reported. On June 9 the Madrid genetics laboratory announced that one set of remains was that of Timoteo Mendieta. But the records were faulty: Mendieta “was thrown into a pit but registered in another.” <http://www.euronews.com/2017/06/16/spanish-archaeologists-uncover-mass-graves-with-victims-of-franco-s-regim>

Sri Lanka. Representatives of families of persons who disappeared in the North during and after the 1983-2009 civil war met with the President and gave him a letter with five demands: “the release of lists of all who surrendered to the armed forces, during and after the war, particularly during the last phase, a list of all secret detention centers, their status and list of detainees, and a list of all political prisoners held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act . . . [and] release to the public all reports by commissions appointed over the years to address the issue of disappearances and the Government’s response to those reports,” *ColomboPage* reported. The President “promised that he would issue directives to the National Security Council to release lists of persons who surrendered to the Armed forces in final phase of the war, detainees, and political prisoners.” http://www.colombopage.com/archive_17A/Jun13_1497332611CH.php

Syria. The Syrian Justice and Accountability Center, a nongovernmental organization that is creating a “repository of comprehensive, high-quality and usable documentation that is prepared to feed into justice mechanisms,” published a very helpful discussion of the “complex legal and methodological questions” that they face while working “to tag, label, and link documentation and actors, enabling the creation of case files and investigations into specific events.” https://syriaaccountability.org/updates/2017/06/01/7-complex-legal-issues-sjac-has-addressed-in-its-data-analysis/?utm_source=SJAC+Weekly+Update&utm_campaign=316f03e07a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_06_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0a7405c641-316f03e07a-90540617

Taiwan. In remarks made at the opening of an historical symposium, the President “said that her administration would continue work to declassify old government records as part of its transitional justice efforts,” the *Taipei Times* reported. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2017/06/25/2003673259>

Uganda. Global Witness, a nongovernmental organization, issued the findings of its 18-month investigation into Uganda’s mining sector. It used “public structured data from the online Mining Cadastre collected on a bi-weekly basis,” “requested over a hundred company records to identify ownership of companies with licenses,” “conducted well over a hundred interviews,” and “conducted extensive internet based research on specific deals, companies and individuals.” The team leader said, “We’ve got evidence of deals awarding mining licenses in UNESCO World Heritage sites, companies run by twenty-somethings from London given licenses in a matter of days, and children working with dangerous chemicals in high-risk gold mines.” Global Witness concluded, “Pervasive corruption in Uganda’s mining sector allows crooked officials and the investors they partner with to profit at the expense of the country’s economy, people and environment.” https://www.globalwitness.org/en-gb/campaigns/oil-gas-and-mining/uganda-undermined/?utm_source=Supporter+Email+List&utm_campaign=241a08bd05-UgandaUndermined_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_06_05&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2246df3038-241a08bd05-130032821

Ukraine. The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) issued a report on the situation between 16 February and 15 May. The findings are “grounded in data collected by HRMMU through in-depth interviews conducted with 252 witnesses and victims of human rights violations and abuses, as well as site visits in both Government-controlled and armed groups-controlled territory.” They recorded 193 conflict-related civilian casualties, a 48% increase from the previous three months; they cautioned that the number of civilian and military casualties they reported “is a conservative estimate based on available data. This data is incomplete due to gaps in coverage of certain geographic areas and time periods, and to overall under-reporting, especially of military casualties. Injuries have been particularly under reported.” HRMMU recorded “new accounts of summary executions, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, and torture/ill-treatment committed on both sides of the contact line, most of which occurred prior to the reporting period, but were only recently documented.” It added that “not all new cases are reflected in this report,” as “several victims and witnesses interviewed . . . either did not want to share essential information or did not consent to their accounts being publicly reported, for fear of reprisals.” http://www.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Documents/Countries/UA/UAReport18th_EN.pdf&action=default&DefaultItemOpen=1

United Kingdom. On 15 April 1989, 96 people were killed and hundreds more injured, crushed to death at a football match at Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield, England. In 2012 the Hillsborough Independent Panel reviewed all the evidence about the disaster, including massive quantities of archives; following the Panel’s report the police opened a new criminal investigation into the event. Now, approaching 30 years later, six people “including two former senior police officers, have been charged with criminal offences over the deaths . . . and the alleged police cover-up that followed,” reported the *Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/28/hillsborough-six-people-including-two-senior-police-officers-charged?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=232674&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection

United Kingdom/Scotland. “An inquiry into the historical abuse of children by their carers will be hampered by the destruction of records that were held by many of the charities who ran residential homes, a lawyer representing the victims has said,” *The Times* revealed. “In the case of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, papers had been damaged by fire or deteriorated in a flood. Barnardo’s, the children’s charity, operated seven residential homes in the 1940s and 1950s, but said that staff records had been destroyed as the homes closed down in recent years.” <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/scotland/scotlands-child-abuse-inquiry-told-records-have-been-lost-xp3mxxlqb>

United States. In 2014 the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a report on the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) “brutal detention and interrogation procedures carried out on terrorism suspects . . . between 2001 and 2006,” the *Washington Post* reported. The 525-page summary of the report was made public, but the detailed, over 6,000-page report was not; copies were provided to the President and to a number of Federal agencies. Now the chairman of the Committee has demanded that the copies held by the agencies

be returned to the Committee. A copy is among the President's records in the custody of the National Archives, and its return apparently was not requested. At least one copy also remains under seal in a Federal court. For background, see *HRWG News* 2016-12. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/republican-senator-moves-to-retrieve-copies-of-secret-report-on-cias-brutal-detention-program/2017/06/02/01aa4e9c-47cf-11e7-a196-a1bb629f64cb_story.html?utm_term=.7ca50a940c45&wpisrc=nl_headlines&wpmm=1

A trial to test appropriate oxygen levels to deliver to premature infants “began in 2005 at two dozen hospitals across the U.S. and involved more than 1,300 infants,” *STAT* reported. The trial was Federally funded. The nongovernmental organization Public Citizen used the freedom of information act and, eventually, a lawsuit to obtain Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) records that “show that investigators were notified in 2008 that oxygen monitors used in the trial were not working properly and might be delivering lower-than-expected oxygen levels to trial participants,” that oversight bodies were “not properly notified” and the study continued until 2009. Public Citizen sent a letter to HHS calling for a deeper investigation. <https://www.statnews.com/2017/06/14/premature-infant-study/>

The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a nongovernmental organization, published a report on lead in food. “EDF evaluated data collected and analyzed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from 2003 to 2013 as part of the agency’s Total Diet Study (TDS). Since the 1970s, the TDS has tracked metals, pesticides, and nutrients in food.” EDF looked only at baby food samples, and found that 20% of the samples “had detectable levels of lead,” most commonly in fruit juices, root vegetables, and cookies. They noted, “No safe level of lead in blood has been identified. In children, even very low blood lead levels can cause behavioral problems and lower IQ.” <https://www.edf.org/health/lead-food-hidden-health-threat>

Throughout the autumn of 2016 and winter of 2017, the Standing Rock Sioux tribe of Native Americans protested the construction of a pipeline through land they recognize as their own. An investigation by *The Intercept* found that TigerSwan, the private security company hired by the pipeline, had “infiltrated protest camps, monitored activists, and waged an anti-protest campaign via social media.” A TigerSwan contractor leaked “more than 100 internal documents” to *The Intercept*, which also obtained “a set of over 1,000 documents . . . via public records requests.” The documents not only revealed “that TigerSwan operatives monitored the movements of activists—online and physically with drones and a small detail assigned to follow movement leaders” but also show TigerSwan that “provided local and federal law enforcement agencies with daily ‘intelligence updates’ on the protests—all the while likening protesters to ‘jihadist’ fighters and describing protest camps as a ‘battlefield.’” <https://theintercept.com/2017/05/27/leaked-documents-reveal-security-firms-counterterrorism-tactics-at-standing-rock-to-defeat-pipeline-insurgencies/>; https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/28/surveillance-standing-rock-policing-native-lands?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA++Collections+2017&utm_term=232674&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection

Using data from U.S. island territories, Puerto Rico and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reviewed information about “2,549 women who had a possible Zika infection and completed their pregnancies. Among the pregnancies, there were 120 that resulted in birth defects from Zika,” *Time* reported. “The first trimester of pregnancy was the most at-risk time for the Zika virus to do damage” but damage was also found in the second and third trimesters. <http://time.com/4811518/zika-virus-birth-defects-cdc/>

Researchers at CDC examined fatal injuries to children “by using data from the National Vital Statistics System and nonfatal injuries by using data from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System.” Additionally, “incident characteristics and circumstances were examined by using data from the National Violent Death Reporting System.” Reporting in the journal *Pediatrics*, they found that “nearly 1300 children die and 5790 are treated for gunshot wounds each year. Boys, older children, and minorities are disproportionately affected.” This makes gunshots “the second leading cause of injury-related death in children, exceeded only by car accidents.” <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/1/e20163486>

The *Washington Post* published a feature article on the difficulties encountered by people who have no identity documents and the hurdles they must overcome to prove their identity. The executive director of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty said, “Without an ID, basically you don’t exist.”

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/what-happens-to-people-who-cant-prove-who-they-are/2017/06/14/fc0aaca2-4215-11e7-adba-394ee67a7582_story.html?utm_term=.8fda932cc67e

A multidisciplinary team of researchers at Stanford University published “the first systematic analysis of police body camera footage” and found that “officers consistently use less respectful language with black community members than with white community members.” The team “first developed a new artificial intelligence technique for measuring levels of respect in officers’ language” and then “applied this technique to the transcripts from 981 traffic stops the Oakland [California] Police Department made in a single month.” The lead researcher said she was “hopeful that, with the development of computational tools . . . more law enforcement agencies will approach their body camera footage as data for understanding, rather than as evidence for blaming or exonerating.” http://www.eurasiareview.com/06062017-study-claims-police-speak-less-respectfully-to-blacks-than-to-white-residents/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

United States/Illinois. After comparing the Chicago police dashcam video of the shooting death of Laquan McDonald with the written reports made by three officers at the scene, a grand jury issued indictments to the officers “on felony charges alleging they conspired to cover up the details of the death to protect” the officer who did the killing, the *Chicago Tribune* reported. <http://www.latimes.com/nation/ct-laquan-mcdonald-shooting-charges-20170627-story.html>

Conferences, Publications.

The Australian Society of Archivists 2017 Conference will be held in conjunction with the Information Technologies Indigenous Communities Symposium in Melbourne, 25-28 September. Registration is open and the program is available at <https://www.archivists.org.au/learning-publications/schedule>

The Carter Center released an animated video highlighting the Global Access to Information Program’s efforts to empower women by helping them obtain life-changing information. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXdRC_0X9Sg&feature=youtu.be

Good reads.

The International Center for Transitional Justice published “You Don’t Forget Your Torturers”: Wachira Waheire’s 30-Year Quest for Justice in Kenya” https://www.ictj.org/news/wachira-waheire-torture-justice--kenya?utm_source=International+Center+for+Transitional+Justice+Newsletter&utm_campaign=d979c8a7d8-ICTJ+In+Focus+Issue+69+June&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2d90950d4d-d979c8a7d8-237813513 and a thoughtful “briefing” by Paul Seils on reconciliation <https://www.ictj.org/publication/reconciliation-transitional-justice>.

The Responsible Data Forum published a discussion of making technology choices; it features Amnesty International’s log-ins for volunteers. <https://responsibledata.io/when-the-rubber-hits-the-road/>

An essay by Rebecca Wexler in the *New York Times*, “Computers are Harming Justice,” argued that “intellectual property claims keep relevant evidence out of court.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/13/opinion/how-computers-are-harming-criminal-justice.html>

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