

Written and compiled by Trudy Huskamp Peterson, Chair, HRWG

**Commentary.** A few of the stories we followed in the year 2014:

**January.** Some 55,000 photographs, nearly 30,000 of which were taken and smuggled out of Syria by a Syrian police photographer of detainees who were killed, were reviewed by an inquiry team of three lawyers (two former chief prosecutors of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the former lead prosecutor of the Slobodan Milosevic case at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) and three forensic specialists, who concluded that the photographs were authentic.

**February.** *Agence France Press* reported that declassified French documents show the “radioactive spread from French nuclear tests in Algeria in the 1960s” was much greater than previously acknowledged, stretching “across all of West Africa and up to southern Europe.”

**March.** Videotaped testimonies by prisoners “recorded on mobile phones, smuggled out of prison and obtained by journalists” include claims of torture and forced confessions and deplore the conditions in Egyptian prisons, reported *Al Jazeera*.

**April.** Irish Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams was arrested by the Police Service of Northern Ireland for questioning about the 1972 murder of Jean McConville. Information from oral history interviews held in the archives at Boston College was central to the arrest.

**May.** Judges at the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) declared that Europeans have a “right to be forgotten.”

**June.** The Swiss Cabinet announced “that it had removed access restrictions to archive files associated with capital and other export transactions with South Africa during the apartheid era,” reported *swissinfo.ch*.

**July.** The Council on Hemispheric Affairs, a U.S.-based non-governmental organization, issued a report on the unauthorized use of genetic material taken from the Huaorani people of Ecuador by U.S. scientists under questionable circumstances. The Council wrote, “Fewer than 20 percent of the participants signed an authorization for the procedure, and all were further under the impression that their blood was being extracted to conduct personal medical examinations.”

**August.** The National Truth Commission in Brazil allowed *Reuters* to review documents providing evidence that businesses during the military dictatorship in Brazil “secretly helped the military identify suspected ‘subversives’ and union activists on their payrolls.”

**September.** During negotiations in Havana, Cuba, between the Colombian government and the FARC guerilla group, the FARC representative called upon the government “to open-up all the archives, to declassify and lift all the legal prohibitions covering the most responsible people, and to impede the destruction of archives that has been occurring,” reported *telesurtv.net*.

**October.** *Inter Press Service* news agency reported that records published by India’s National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) show that 92 women are raped every day, and in 3,860 of the 5,337 rape cases reported in the past ten years, “the culprits were either acquitted or discharged by the court for lack of ‘proper’ evidence.”

November. The Punjab (Pakistan) government is computerizing its land records, but the Board of Revenue told the *Express Tribune* that it is “facing strong resistance from the land mafia and certain revenue functionaries. In several districts, some records, including the register haqdarar zameen, field books, garwari, taghaurat and mutations, have gone ‘missing.’”

December. The United Nations decided to open a new investigation into the death in 1961 of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and asked member government to declassify relevant documents.

**News of the Human Rights Working Group.** The Human Rights Working Group will meet on January 27 to consider all comments received on the draft “Basic Principles on the Role of Archivists in Support of Human Rights.” The draft is at <http://www.ica.org/15999/news-and-events/basic-principles-on-the-role-of-archivists-in-support-of-human-rights-give-your-opinion.html> . Comments should be submitted to [access@ica.org](mailto:access@ica.org).

An index of the countries and international institutions covered in the 2014 issues of *HRWG News* is available by writing to [trudy@trudypeterson.com](mailto:trudy@trudypeterson.com).

### **International news.**

European Commission Data Protection Authorities. In 1995 the European Parliament and Council issued a directive on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. Article 29 of the directive established a “Working Party on the Protection of Individuals with regard to the Processing of Personal Data,” which in late November issued a declaration of “European values.” While the declaration does not mention archives specifically, provisions 7 (“Unrestricted bulk retention of personal data for security purposes is not acceptable in a democratic society”) and 11 (“When public or private particles collect massive amounts of data which provide very precise information on the private lives of the individuals whose data are retained, they should organize the storage of this data in such a way that an independent authority can effectively control their compliance with the data protection requirements”) both have significant implications for archives in European Union countries. <http://europeandatagovernance-forum.com/pro/fiche/quest.jsp?jsessionid=4wh4cS7YCBxd7xN1Iu14uYD6.g1?surveyName=&main=&pg2=&pg3=&locale=1&zz0=&zz1=&zz2=&zz3=&zz4=&zz5=&zz6=&zz7=&zz8=&zz9=&scrollX=0&scrollY=0>

European Union. On the occasion of the Italian presidency of the European Union, the Italian Directorate General of Archives sent members of the European Board of National Archivists a survey on the regulation of the archival profession and on military and intelligence archives in European countries. The answers are now available on line at <http://www.archivi.beniculturali.it/index.php/cosa-facciamo/relazioni-internazionali/eag-ebna-meeting-torino-2014> Thanks to Giulia Barrera for the information.

International Commission on Missing Persons. The Netherlands, Great Britain, Sweden, Belgium and Luxembourg signed a treaty declaring the International Commission on Missing Persons a “permanent international organization to deal with the issue of missing persons globally,” *BIRN* reported. Begun in 1996, it has “helped former Yugoslav countries to identify more than two-thirds of the 40,000 people who were declared missing during the 1990s conflicts, as well as providing vital evidence for war crimes trials.” The Commission’s headquarters will move from Sarajevo to The Hague. [http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/missing-persons-commission-becomes-permanent-global-body?utm\\_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=055f928664-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_561b9a25c3-055f928664-311109073](http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/missing-persons-commission-becomes-permanent-global-body?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=055f928664-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_561b9a25c3-055f928664-311109073)

International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC prosecutor announced she was dropping the charges against Kenya’s president Uhuru Kenyatta after “the trial chamber refused her request for an adjournment in order to secure more evidence,” wrote the *International Justice Tribune*. A serious problem for the prosecutor

was the Kenyan government's refusal to "hand over solicited documents, such as financial and phone records." For background, see *HRWG News* 2014-09. [www.justicetribune.com](http://www.justicetribune.com)

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). ICTR closed on December 31. The Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals is now responsible for the preservation and management of the archives of ICTR, as well as the archives of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. <http://www.unmict.org/en/about>

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The *Associated Press* quoted German newspapers *Der Spiegel* and *Bild* "citing NATO documents" that showed "Germany was among the countries that added names of insurgents" to NATO's Joint Prioritized Effects List, a list of Taliban targets in Afghanistan, some of whom were killed. <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-reportedly-contributed-nato-hit-list-27896051>

Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL). The defense teams are opposing a motion by the prosecutor to submit background evidence, including "testimonies by politicians, journalists and [Rafik] Hariri confidants, plus weighty documents relating to the end of Lebanon's civil war and the role of Syrian-backed party Hezbollah" to show "certain political events and developing tensions which fit together with the progress of the conspiracy," reported the *International Justice Tribune*. The source of the "weighty documents" is not reported. [www.justicetribune.com](http://www.justicetribune.com)

United Nations. The United Nations' Arms Trade Treaty came into force on December 24. It requires nations that ratified the treaty to "monitor all aspects of production—from sourcing to manufacturing and export—and will apply to a wide range of weapons, including Kalashnikovs, rifles, mortars, grenades, and shoulder surface-to-air missiles, even tanks and battleships," wrote Denise Garcia in *Foreign Affairs*. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/142734/denise-garcia/disarming-the-lords-of-war>; for the text of the treaty see <http://www.un.org/disarmament/ATT/>

The United Nations General Assembly approved by consensus a resolution requesting the Secretary-General to appoint an independent panel of experts to re-examine the death in 1961 of UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. The UN press release encouraged Member States "to release any relevant records in their possession," a reference, said the *New York Times*, "aimed largely at securing the declassification of American and British files, particularly intercepts thought to have been made at the time by the National Security Agency of the United States." <http://www.un.org/apps/news/printnews.asp?nid=49712>; [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/17/world/africa/dag-hammarskjold-death-inquiry.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/17/world/africa/dag-hammarskjold-death-inquiry.html?_r=0)

World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Program, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The three organizations jointly published a *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention* "containing data from 133 countries, covering 6.1 billion people and representing 88 per cent of the world's population." Among the horrific statistics: "homicide is the third leading cause of death globally for males aged 15-44 years;" "one in four children has been physically abused; one in five girls has been sexually abused; and one in three women has been a victim of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point in her lifetime;" and "around 4-6% of elderly people report significant abuse in the last month." [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49564#.VJ0c\\_QDy](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49564#.VJ0c_QDy); <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs357/en/>

## World/general news.

U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence summary report on the Central Intelligence Agency's detention and interrogation program. In more than 500 pages, the summary report describes detention practices between 2001 and 2009. Dozens of articles about the summary were published. The National Security Archive, a U.S. non-governmental organization, reported that the summary includes "2725 footnotes to specific CIA documents," while *Secrecy News* noted "agency emails turned out to be a critical source of information, a fact that illuminates the Committee's sharp response recently to the (now suspended) CIA proposal to the National Archives to destroy most Agency emails of non-senior officials." In Eastern Europe, the summary implied that various governments assisted in the CIA program; in South Africa it suggested that the government "participated in illegal renditions;" and the European Center for

Constitutional and Human Rights urged the German Minister of Justice to open investigations into the actions of former CIA head George Tenet, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other members of the administration of former US President George W. Bush, accusing them of the war crime of torture.

For the report see <http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/study2014.html> ; for commentaries, see [http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/torture\\_archive/report.html](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/torture_archive/report.html) ; <http://fas.org/blogs/secrecy/2014/12/torture-remedies/>; impact Eastern Europe <http://www.tol.org/client/article/24607-us-torture-report-reverberates-in-eastern-europe-australia-might-send-coals-to-kyiv.html#1> ; [http://www.eurasiareview.com/10122014-poland-ex-president-admits-cia-ran-secret-prison-country/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/10122014-poland-ex-president-admits-cia-ran-secret-prison-country/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29) ; impact South Africa [http://www.eurasiareview.com/27122014-cia-torture-report-will-south-africa-oped/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/27122014-cia-torture-report-will-south-africa-oped/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29); [http://www.ecchr.de/el\\_masri\\_case.html](http://www.ecchr.de/el_masri_case.html) ; <http://www.institutesi.org/worldsstateless.pdf>

Police body-cameras. Cambridge University, U.K., published “the first full scientific study of the landmark crime experiment they conducted on policing with body-worn-cameras in Rialto, California, in 2012,” reported *Eurasia Review*. “The experiment showed that evidence capture is just one output of body-worn video, and the technology is perhaps most effective at actually preventing escalation during police-public interactions: whether that’s abusive behavior towards police or unnecessary use-of-force by police” because the “knowledge that events are being recorded creates ‘self-awareness’ in all participants during police interactions.” The researchers cautioned that “vital questions” remained “about how normalizing the provision of digital video as evidence will affect prosecution expectations, as well as the storage technology and policies that will be required for the enormous amount of data captured.”

[http://www.eurasiareview.com/26122014-report-shows-police-body-cameras-can-prevent-unacceptable-use-force/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/26122014-report-shows-police-body-cameras-can-prevent-unacceptable-use-force/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

Annual reports. The end of the year brought a number of reports from non-government organizations.

The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion said the number of stateless people worldwide “likely exceeds 15 million” and said “better data” would help the campaign against statelessness, which denies people basic rights and benefits. <http://www.institutesi.org/worldsstateless.pdf>

The Bonn International Center for Conversion issued its first Global Militarization Index including “historical as well as current data, starting in the 1990s up to 2012, the most recent year for which data has been available.” <http://gmi.bicc.de/>

And Transparency International published its Corruption Perceptions Index, showing serious problems in two-thirds of the countries and noting, “Poorly equipped schools, counterfeit medicines and elections decided by money are just some of the consequences of public sector corruption.” <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014>

## **Bilateral and multilateral news.**

Afghanistan/Iran. *Radio Zamaneh* reported that Iran renewed the visas of 450,000 Afghan nationals for six more months, a break in the threat to deport all 760,000 “non-status Afghans whose residency visas had expired” but leaving in doubt what the lack of a piece of paper—a visa—will mean for the other 310,000.

[http://www.eurasiareview.com/13122014-iran-renews-visas-450000-afghans/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/13122014-iran-renews-visas-450000-afghans/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

Al-Qaeda/United States. Prosecutors in the terrorism trial of Nasih Abdul-Hamed al-Ruqai, who is charged with conspiracy in plots including the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in East Africa that killed 224 people, asked a U.S. Federal District Court to allow them to introduce into evidence letters seized by the United States during the raid in 2011 that captured and killed Osama bin Laden, reported the *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/16/nyregion/us-seeks-to-use-letters-found-in-bin-laden-raid-in-terrorism-trial.html>

Central America/Mexico. Mexico’s federal prosecutor “declassified a document on the suspected participation of police in the kidnapping and massacre of hundreds of migrants” in the city of San Fernando in northeast Mexico in August 2010 and 2011, reported the National Security Archive. The dead migrants are believed to have come from countries in Central America. <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB499/>

China/Japan. The State Archives Administration of China released records on the Nanjing massacre of 1937-1938, including photographs, diary entries, and records of the local Red Cross Society of China. [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-12/05/c\\_133835858.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-12/05/c_133835858.htm); [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-12/11/c\\_133848475.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-12/11/c_133848475.htm)

Czech Republic/France/Germany. Records of some German military tribunals during the Second World War were found by chance in 1945 by Soviet troops and stored in Prague. Among them was a list of 835 French resisters—738 men and 96 women—who mostly disappeared in Nazi jails. Now *Le Cherche Midi*, in collaboration with the ministry of Defense, has published the list in *Tribunal de guerre du III<sup>e</sup> Reich*. [http://www.paris.maville.com/actu/actudet\\_-les-archives-du-tribunal-du-iii-e-reich-devoilees\\_52749-2676907\\_actu.Htm](http://www.paris.maville.com/actu/actudet_-les-archives-du-tribunal-du-iii-e-reich-devoilees_52749-2676907_actu.Htm)

Czech Republic//Slovakia. The central archives of the former Czechoslovak communist secret police, StB, are held in the Czech Republic. The Slovak National Memory Institute (UPN) and the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes announced that Slovakia will receive the portion of the records that include data on Slovak citizens. Most of the records will be digital copies; Slovakia will also receive a copy of the central registry of the StB archives, reported the *Prague Post*. This resolves a dispute over custody; for background, see *HRWG News* 2014-09. <http://www.praguepost.com/eu-news/43345-slovakia-to-get-czech-stb-documents>

Dominican Republic/Poland/Vatican. A Polish prosecutor “suspended” an investigation into a defrocked priest who was accused of sexually abusing boys when he served in the Dominican Republic because neither the Dominicans nor the Vatican have provided documents that the prosecutor requested, reported the *New York Times*. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/world/europe/poland-suspends-inquiry-into-a-former-vatican-envoy.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/world/europe/poland-suspends-inquiry-into-a-former-vatican-envoy.html?_r=0)

France/Germany. A German court ruled that there was insufficient evidence and dismissed the case against a former German SS gunner who was accused of participating in the massacre of 642 villagers of Oradour-sur-Glane in France on June 10, 1944. *AFP* reported that the case was opened in 2010 “when a historian discovered documents implicating six suspects” and prosecutors “after trawling through files of the Stasi secret police in the former communist east that came to light after German reunification in 1990” identified 12 living members of the regiment that was in the town during the massacre. <https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/25727325/case-dismissed-against-german-over-wwii-french-massacre/>

India/United Kingdom/United States. The *New York Times* reported that the intelligence services of India, the U.K. and the U.S. all were tracking the plotters as they planned the attacks in Mumbai in 2008 that killed 166 people, but “did not pull together all the strands gathered by their high-tech surveillance and other tools, which might have allowed them to disrupt” the plot. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/22/world/asia/in-2008-mumbai-attacks-piles-of-spy-data-but-an-uncompleted-puzzle.html>

Ireland/United Kingdom. The Irish government announced that it will ask the European Court of Human Rights to “reconsider its 1978 judgment” on the U.K.’s treatment of internees in Northern Ireland because recently discovered “British government records from the 1970s which were withheld from Ireland and from the ECHR at the time of the original case” have relevant contents, reported *The Conversation*. <http://theconversation.com/hidden-files-on-policing-could-change-the-definition-of-torture-34992>

Kosovo/Serbia. On the International Day of Human Rights, the Humanitarian Law Center, a Serbian non-governmental organization, uploaded to its *The Kosovo Memory Book* website personal data on 13,517 persons killed or disappeared in connection with the war in Kosovo in the period between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 2000. The data include the date and place of birth and place of residence until the death or disappearance of every victim, the date and location of the murder or disappearance, as well as information on whether the victim was a civilian or a member of the armed forces. [www.hlc-rdc.org](http://www.hlc-rdc.org)

Myanmar/Thailand. Thailand is planning a hydropower dam on the Salween River near the border of Thailand and Myanmar. People who fled from Myanmar to Thailand to escape military campaigns and now live in the vicinity of the proposed dam are worried that they will lose “everything” if the project goes forward. One woman told *Thomson Reuters*, “I don’t have a Thai citizenship card. We don’t have titles for the land we live on. . . . We won’t receive any compensation if we have to leave this village.” <http://www.trust.org/item/20141204120143-4211s/?source=gep>

Syria/Turkey. Turkey began issuing identification cards to Syrian refugees that will grant them access to basic services like health care and education, reported the *New York Times*. To get a card a refugee must register and provide “biometric data.” A police officer “overseeing the registration process” said, “Syrians used to avoid coming to the station out of fear that they would be deported . . . [b]ut these cards have brought them out of the shadows into the light. They now have physical proof of their legal rights.” A refugee, however, told the *Times*, “I think the data could be used by Europe to send us back when we get smuggled there.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/world/europe/turkey-strengthens-rights-of-syrian-refugees.html>

## National news.

Azerbaijan. “State inspectors” raided Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s office in Baku, “seizing computers and personnel files and sealing the office shut.” <http://www.rferl.org/content/media-watchdog-condemns-raid-on-rferl-baku-office/26765074.html>

Bangladesh. Using videos taken by the Global Garment factory’s closed circuit camera, investigations by a workers’ rights group and by a U.S. apparel company “determined that the camera footages showed that factory managers directed” attacks on union leaders at the factory last November, reported the *New York Times*. The apparel company said it would “terminate” its contract with Azim Group (which owns the factory) if Azim did not take “strong, demonstrable steps by Dec. 31 to guarantee workers’ rights and assure no further violence against union leaders.” A Hong Kong firm also announced it was suspending orders with Azim. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/business/international/attacks-on-union-leaders-at-azim-factories-in-bangladesh-are-documented.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/business/international/attacks-on-union-leaders-at-azim-factories-in-bangladesh-are-documented.html?_r=0)

Belgium. The department of foreign affairs will transfer the “African archives” of the former Ministry of Colonies and the Governor-General of the Congo, 1885-1962, to the General State Archives during the next three years. <http://www.arch.be/index.php?l=fr&m=actualites&r=toutes-les-actualites&a=2014-12-11-le-spf-affaires-etrangeres-transferera-ses-archives-africaines-aux-archives-de-l-etat-des-2015>

Brazil. The National Truth Commission released its report on human rights violations in Brazil between 1946 and 1988, with special emphasis on the period of the military dictatorship (1964-1985). The report, based heavily on archival sources (although a number of potentially incriminating documents have reportedly been destroyed), identifies 377 perpetrators of human rights crimes by name, over 400 individuals killed by the military, many of them “disappeared” as the military sought to hide its abuses. During its investigation, the Commission located and identified the remains of 33 of the disappeared; some 200 other victims remain missing. The report also sheds significant light on Brazil’s role in the cross-border regional repression known as Operation Condor. For the report, see <http://www.cnv.gov.br/index.php/outros-destaques/574-conheca-e-acesse-o-relatorio-final-da-cnv>; [www.justicetribune.com](http://www.justicetribune.com)

Burundi. Voter registration was completed over the objections of opposition members and civil society groups who said there was fraud. The head of the Association for the Defence of Human and Prisoners’ Rights told *Reuters* that “civil society monitors had found 100 cases of fake ID cards being used in the capital” and cited reports from the provinces of hundreds of others “distributed by local government officials and some members of the ruling party.” <http://news.yahoo.com/burundi-groups-urge-halt-voter-registration-cite-fraud-134421658--sector.html>

Canada. “Detailed tax information about the private lives of hundreds of Canadians--many of them rich and famous--was sent to *CBC News* by Canada’s tax agency in a major privacy breach.” The information covered the years 2008-2013 and included home address and the value of tax credits taxpayers were granted, the *News* said. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-revenue-agency-privacy-breach-leaks-prominent-canadians-tax-details-1.2849336>

Democratic Republic of Congo. Amnesty International wanted to investigate reports of forced evictions near the Luiswishi Mine in the Katanga Province; the eviction on November 24, 2009 apparently was “to prevent artisanal miners from stealing” minerals from the mining area. Amnesty asked the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to compare satellite imagery (“GPS points”) and a

“hand drawn map” of seven neighborhoods near the mine in May 2009 and May 2010. AAAS found that a “high percentage” of structures were missing in three of the seven neighborhoods, suggesting “that the removals in these three neighborhoods were the result of a planned policy, which is consistent with reports of forced relocations.” <http://www.aaas.org/page/satellite-imagery-assessment-forced-relocations-near-luiswishi-mine>

Egypt. A survey by the anti-harassment initiative Harassmap found that 95.3 percent of Cairo women have been sexually harassed, “most often in broad daylight while walking down the street or riding public transport.” The survey questionnaire was distributed to 300 women and 150 men in the greater Cairo area. Of the male respondents, 77.3 percent admitted to perpetrating sexual harassment. The survey records need to be preserved carefully by the NGO. [http://harassmap.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Towards-A-Safer-City\\_full-report\\_EN-.pdf](http://harassmap.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Towards-A-Safer-City_full-report_EN-.pdf)

The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), a prominent human right group, announced that it would register with the government because the government issued an ultimatum that groups who “fail to register will face prosecution,” reported *The Associated Press*. EIPR “monitors police abuse, provides legal counselling and documents violations in the country’s complex criminal justice system.” The security of its records is a concern. <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/egypt-group-register-restrictive-law-27748544#.VJhLMaSOdpE.email>

India. India’s Department of Electronics and Information Technology announced it is building a database platform to “integrate police, court and criminal files” and another platform “for uniform payment, property registration and social assistance systems,” said *AsiaNews.it*. The latter apparently includes the data of the Aadhar project which is “to give every Indian a unique biometric identity” that will be stored in the cloud “enabling them to access services if they move to a different state, apply for a job or request assistance.” At present, 720 million of the 1.2 billion people in India have Aadhar identities. <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Delhi-wants-a-digital-single-archive-for-1.2-billion-of-people-32920.html>;

The Central Information Commission held that “refusing to issue a caste certificate on the ground of not having Aadhar card is unlawful” and the government cannot use the “absence of Aadhar cards to deny the rights of the people,” reported *igovernment.in*. According to the government’s official website, “A Caste Certificate is the proof of one’s belonging to a particular caste, especially in case one belongs to any of the ‘Scheduled Castes’, as specified in the Indian Constitution. . . . as part of the Indian system of Protective Discrimination, there exist certain special privileges granted to this category of citizens, such as reservation of seats in the Legislatures and in the Government Service, waiving off a part or the whole of the fees for admission to schools and colleges, quotas in educational institutions, relaxation of upper age limits for applying to certain jobs, etc. To be able to avail these privileges, a citizen belonging to a Scheduled Caste must be in possession of a valid Caste Certificate.” <http://www.igovernment.in/news/1001133/issuing-caste-certificate-aadhar-unlawful#.V1xk2XN4xgY.email>

During World War II, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose led the anti-British, Japanese-supported “Provisional Government of Free India” (Azad Hind). At the end of the war, Chandra Bose died when the Japanese plane he was on crashed and burned on takeoff from Taipei. Some followers refused to believe that he died, and the Indian government appointed two commissions to investigate the disappearance, one reporting in 1974 and the other in 2005. The files of the commissions are in the National Archives, an additional 29 files related to Bose are in the Ministry of External Affairs and 60 in the Prime Minister’s office, all of which are closed. Following a Right to Information request, two files from the Prime Minister’s office, one relating to funds of the Azad Hind group and the other on the appointment of one of the inquiry commissions, “have been declassified and sent to the National Archives of India,” reported *Express News Service*, but the rest remain closed because their disclosure “would prejudicially affect relations with foreign countries,” said the Prime Minister’s Office. <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-bjp-wanted-files-on-netaji-subhas-chandra-bose-made-public-now-government-says-no-2039760> ; <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/two-top-secret-netaji-files-declassified-says-govt/> ; <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/national-archives-has-4-files-related-to-azad-hind-government-haribhai-parathibhai-chaudhary/articleshow/45554095.cms>

The Central Information Commission decided that “land records, describing boundaries, ownership and extent of possession, are public records which cannot be treated as personal information,” reported *The*

*Times of India*. <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/land-records-are-not-personal-information-cic/articleshow/45678646.cms>

The minister for women and child development reported that the number of women complaining to the National Commission for Women about sexual harassment in the workplace has doubled since 2011, and the data from National Crime Records Bureau show an increase in reporting of child marriage cases, wrote *The Times of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Rise-in-sexual-harassment-cases-at-workplace-Govt/articleshow/45576173.cms?>

Japan. Under a new state secrecy law, “the government will likely designate around 460,000 documents as ‘special secrets’ in the areas of diplomacy, defense, counterterrorism and counterespionage,” reported the *Japan Times* and *Kyodo News*. For background and the protest against the law by archivists, see *HRWG News* 2013-11. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/12/01/national/politics-diplomacy/new-law-460000-documents-likely-called-special-secrets/#.VH1qDsm26nk>

Kenya. The government “de-registered 510 non-governmental organizations working in Kenya,” froze their assets and revoked all work permits for the expatriates working for them. In addition, all NGOs, both local and international, with expatriate staff must come to the government to “update the work permit records of their employees.” The organizations, which the government says failed to submit financial reports as required by law, include international groups operating orphanages and working in health services. Fifteen of the groups were accused of links to terrorism. For the press release on the de-registration, see <http://thisisafrika.me/kenyan-authorities-de-register-500-ngos/>; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30494259>

New Zealand. A man was convicted of starting a fire at a self-storage depot which “contained irreplaceable records of the landmark campaign for Homosexual Law Reform,” reported *gaynz.com*. [http://www.gaynz.com/articles/publish/2/article\\_16168.php](http://www.gaynz.com/articles/publish/2/article_16168.php)

Pakistan. Minority Rights Group International, a non-governmental organization, released a report, “Searching for Security: The Rising Marginalization of Religious Communities in Pakistan.” It concluded that the Pakistani government “has done little to stop the mistreatment of minorities, who are systematically denied social and political rights.” Based on interviews with activists, legal advocates and minority members, the identity of all the respondents had to be anonymized in the report, highlighting the need for security for the records of NGOs. <http://www.minorityrights.org/13005/press-releases/pakistan-religious-minorities-face-acute-levels-of-persecution-report.html>

Russia. “Soviet security agencies from Lenin on were infected by an often vicious Russian nationalism which led their officers to attack non-Russians far more frequently than Russians, according to a new study based on archival sources by Aleksey Teplyakov, a Novosibirsk historian,” wrote a reviewer for *The Interpreter*. <http://www.interpretermag.com/extreme-russian-nationalism-widespread-in-soviet-security-organs-archives-show/>

Russia/Chechnya. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch protested the arson that destroyed the office of the Joint Mobile Group (JMG), a human rights organization in the Chechen capital of Grozny. The day after the fire, police entered the apartment of two JMG staff members and “ransacked the building, confiscated mobile phones, several photo cameras, laptop computers, and other electronic equipment. They also conducted body searches of the two JMG staff members and a search of their car.” <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/12/14/russia-end-persecution-activists-chechnya>

Rwanda. The National Commission for the Fight against Genocide and the Aegis Trust announced a plan “to preserve, digitize and make accessible the documents and audiovisual files created through the Gacaca Courts—including 8,000 recordings and . . . sixty million pages of documentation” and will build “a world class Gacaca Archive” at the Kigali Genocide Memorial. <http://www.aegistrust.org/index.php/International-Justice/cnlg-and-aegis-trust-announce-plan-to-preserve-gacaca-archives-worlds-largest-collection-on-transitional-justice.html> ; <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-12-12/183974/>

South Africa. The High Court in Johannesburg “halted the auction of anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko’s original autopsy documents,” reported the *Mail and Guardian*. The document had been held by the personal secretary to one of the autopsy pathologists; the secretary died and her heirs provided it to the



auction house. The court gave the Biko family until the end of January to argue that the item should be the family's property. <http://mg.co.za/article/2014-12-02-biko-family-files-interdict-to-stop-auction-of-slain-activists-autopsy>

The *Archival Platform*, a blog from the University of Cape Town, posted a long article on the records of the Department of Home Affairs that registers births and deaths, certifies marriages, approves or declines residence and study permits, and issues passports and identity documents. The blog says the Department's "filing system is flawed and some documents are missing."

[http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/missing\\_documents\\_at\\_the\\_department\\_of\\_home\\_affairs/](http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/missing_documents_at_the_department_of_home_affairs/)

Sudan. In an essay published in the *Washington Post*, a professor reports that someone leaked to him and to a website "minutes and important documents" of the Sudanese government, including "minutes of a security meeting held Aug. 31 by top military and security officials in Sudan. Prominent in the document are plans for further genocidal tactics in parts of the country" including plans to starve parts of the country and disperse people residing in displaced persons camps. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/sudan-embraces-genocide-terrorism--iran/2014/11/30/2ed603ae-75bb-11e4-a755-e32227229e7b\\_story.html?postshare=8741417401519290](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/sudan-embraces-genocide-terrorism--iran/2014/11/30/2ed603ae-75bb-11e4-a755-e32227229e7b_story.html?postshare=8741417401519290)

Tunisia. The Truth and Dignity Commission began work. Persons can lodge complaints until December 14, 2015, "in the form of written and in-person testimonies" and the commission will have access to government archives, reported the *International Justice Tribune*. [www.justicetribune.com](http://www.justicetribune.com)

Turkey. Conflict over land titles in southeastern Turkey continues, reported *Al-Monitor*. The president of the Syriac Unity Association said "[h]ardly a Christian village in Tur Abdin, the ancient heartland of the Syriac church between the Tigris and the Syrian border, has been left unaffected by the turmoil over landownership that was triggered by the modernization of Turkish land registry records in the 1990s and 2000s." Because the registration was "undertaken at a time when most Christians and Yazidis, as well as many Kurds, were living in European exile . . . many lost their land to the [state] treasury, which is entitled to confiscate land when it has lain fallow for 20 years, or to the [state] forestry, which can seize all forested land." In addition, the land of non-Muslim minorities "was appropriated by Kurdish tribes that either registered it to their names or simply seized it by force." A lawyer told *Al-Monitor* the land conflict is "the single biggest obstacle to a wider return of Syriacs and Yazidis to the region." [http://www2.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/12/turkey-southeast-kurdish-tribes-land-grabs-christians.html?utm\\_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm\\_campaign=02ccf1af81-December\\_8\\_2014&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_28264b27a0-02ccf1af81-93088897#](http://www2.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/12/turkey-southeast-kurdish-tribes-land-grabs-christians.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=02ccf1af81-December_8_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-02ccf1af81-93088897#)

United Kingdom. "More than 220,000 files on immigrants who should have been removed from Britain were found," reported the *Daily Mail*, "piled up in meeting rooms and cupboards at centres in Sheffield and elsewhere." Further, an inspection of the private firm under contract to the Home Office "to improve removals" found "significant inaccuracies" in the firm's records.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2877936/Number-missing-illegal-immigrants-TWICE-high-previously-thought-files-223-600-foreigners-discovered-lying-unopened.html>

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request by the Press Association, statistics from eleven police forces show "a rise in transphobic hate crimes," with the Metropolitan London police reporting that offences against transgender people increased by 44% in 2014. *The Guardian* reported that the Association of Chief Police Officers said transphobic crime had been "significantly under-reported."

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/26/transphobic-transgender-hate-crime-rise-uk-police-figures#.VJ2A-CymR9E.email>

In his annual report, the Commissioner for the Retention and Use of Biometric Material said "thousands of foreign crime suspects have had their DNA and fingerprint samples deleted from British databases because police are barred from storing details of offenders convicted abroad," which the Commissioner said was an "obviously unsatisfactory state of affairs." <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/11296907/Foreign-criminals-DNA-and-fingerprint-records-must-be-destroyed-by-police.html>

Daniel Morgan was an independent journalist investigating police corruption when he was murdered in 1987. In May 2013 the government established the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel to investigate the circumstances of the murder and the handling of the case over the period since 1987, but it has been slow to work. Lawrence Serewicz, the information manager for the Durham County Council, published an article

explaining to the Panel how they can map relationships through records because, he argues, “the case revolves around records management issues.” <http://lawrencerewicz.wordpress.com/2014/12/29/mapping-the-daniel-morgan-murder-thoughts-on-the-independent-panel/>

United States. An internal investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation found that FBI agents “in every region of the country have mishandled, mislabeled and lost evidence,” reported the *New York Times*. The problems could lead to evidence being thrown out of court, vitally affecting ongoing cases. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/20/us/politics/fbi-evidence-keeping-criticized.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/20/us/politics/fbi-evidence-keeping-criticized.html?_r=2)

Meanwhile, the FBI released its hate crime statistics report for 2013, based on reports through the nationwide Uniform Crime Reporting Program. The numbers were down slightly from 2012, but there were still 5,928 hate crime incidents reports, involving 6,933 offenses. <http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2014/december/latest-hate-crime-statistics-report-released/latest-hate-crime-statistics-report-released>

Two police officers were killed in New York City, and police tried to trace the history of the ownership of the gun used. The Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives maintains records of gun purchases, and its database showed that the “gun was last purchased in a legally traceable transaction in 1996” from Arrowhead Pawn Shop in Georgia. The *New York Times* noted, “Information in the federal database on which gun dealers turn up most frequently in these traces is closed protected, as a result of legislation passed in 2003. But *The Washington Post* obtained four years’ worth of trace data in 2010 and found Arrowhead was the fifth-largest source of crime traces in the country.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/25/nyregion/tracing-the-gun-used-to-kill-2-new-york-city-police-officers.html>

As political conflicts over immigration continue, the Native People Council decided to offer a pathway to citizenship for people without criminal backgrounds, the *Daily Current* reported. The Chief of the Wampanoag nation, speaking for the Council, said, “We are prepared to offer White people the option of staying on this continent legally and applying for citizenship. In return, they must pay any outstanding taxes and give back the land stolen from our ancestors.” <http://dailycurrent.com/2014/12/12/native-american-council-offers-amnesty-to-220-million-undocumented-whites/>

“The first diagnosis of an Ebola case on U.S. soil in late September has prompted improvements in some areas of electronic record-keeping, particularly when it comes to alerting doctors about patients most vulnerable to a disease,” reported *Reuters*. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/17/health-ebola-usa-records-idUSL1N0U027L20141217>

The Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press is suing the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, because it is not allowing access under California’s FOIA law to records of a California crime commission. Apparently Bancroft got the records from an individual donor and so is treating them as a restricted gift; the Reporters Committee is arguing that they remain state records subject to the Public Records Act. Press release is at <http://www.rcfp.org/browse-media-law-resources/news/reporters-committee-sues-university-california-access-historic-gover> ; litigation documents at <http://www.rcfp.org/litigation>. Thanks to Peter Hirtle for this story.

The ex-husband of the heir of the man who managed the Colored Waifs Home in New Orleans in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century has some records from the Home. Shown to a reporter from the *Times-Picayune*, the records establish that Louis Armstrong was in the home as of October 1910, provides his name and age, seems to show he was sent to the Home after being arrested for “pilfer,” and on November 8, 1910, was released to the custody of an aunt “pending trial.” Armstrong was known to have been in the Home in 1913 when he began to learn to play the bugle and cornet, but it was not previously known that the jazz great had been arrested and sent to the Home in 1910. The Home merged with another home and moved in 1932; any other records of the Home appear to have been destroyed. This is another instance of important institutional records ending up in private hands. <http://www.nola.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2014/12/our-times-the-louis-armstrong.html>

United States/Missouri. Although the county prosecutor said in November that he had released all the grand jury records in the case of a Ferguson, Missouri, police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown, additional records were released on December 8 and 12. For background, see *HRWG News* 2014-11; for

links to the new documents, see <http://www.ksdk.com/story/news/local/ferguson/2014/11/25/ferguson-grand-jury-documents/70100296/>

United States/Ohio. After a 21-month investigation into the use of force by Cleveland police, the U.S. Justice Department said the police had “abysmal record-keeping” and failed to produce records relating to deadly force investigations that took place after April 2013, reported *The Plain Dealer*. In a letter to the mayor, the Justice Department said the inability to find documents shows a systemic breakdown and “also suggest that CDP [Cleveland Department of Police] does not accept that they are accountable for documenting and explaining their decisions in such matters to civilian leadership, the City, and the community as a whole.” [http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2014/12/us\\_justice\\_department\\_blasts\\_c.html](http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2014/12/us_justice_department_blasts_c.html)

United States/Virginia. A judge in Fairfax County ordered county police “to provide vast portions of their investigation into the police shooting death of an unarmed . . . man to the attorneys for the man’s family,” reported the *Washington Post*. The judge instructed the police to redact “the home addresses, phone numbers and identifying data of the law enforcement and civilian witnesses.” [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/judge-orders-fairfax-county-to-disclose-information-in-john-geer-police-shooting/2014/12/22/6c0945e8-8a14-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/judge-orders-fairfax-county-to-disclose-information-in-john-geer-police-shooting/2014/12/22/6c0945e8-8a14-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html)

**Publications and conferences.** Anne-Emmanuelle Tankam and Hans von Rütte published “A Different Approach to an Ethics based Understanding of Professional Document Management: The Principles of Access to Archives of the International Council on Archives,” in Amélie Valloton ,et al. (ed.), *Ethical Dilemmas in the Information Society: How Codes of Ethics Help to Find Ethical Solutions. Papers from the IFLA/FAIFE Satellite Meeting in Bossey/Geneva 2014, Global vol 11*, ed. by Globethics, Geneva 2014, p. 115 – 137. See <http://www.globethics.net/web/ge/publications> (scroll down to volume 11 of the series).

The Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM), with the support of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, will hold a one day symposium on 19 June 2015 at the University of London to consider the tension between secrecy and openness in government information management. Offers of papers should include the author’s contact details and an abstract of no more than 500 words. The deadline for submissions of abstracts is 20 February 2015. Abstracts should be sent to [jlowry@irmt.org](mailto:jlowry@irmt.org). Suggested paper topics are:

The application of secrecy laws and instruments in the context of Freedom of Information and Data Protection

The progress towards open government between the Waldegrave Initiative and the Open Government Partnership

Digital technology’s impact on the permeability of government; leaks, whistleblowing and viral information dissemination

The effects of organisational culture on the openness of Commonwealth bureaucracies

Changing policies and practices (for instance revisions to protective marking policies or the transition to a 20-year rule) and their implications for access

Innovative approaches to opening archives to the public and how they address or challenge legacy secrecy measures

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