

Written and compiled by Trudy Huskamp Peterson, Chair, HRWG

Commentary. All summer we have been consumed by the pictures of refugees: Haitians fleeing the Dominican Republic, Rohingya from Myanmar dying in Thailand, waves of unsafe boats in the Mediterranean carrying people to European shores, the sad spectacle of refugees walking from Budapest to the Austrian border. Humanity despairs at the exodus.

What would you take if you had to flee your home because of war or weather, poverty or plague? You would probably take an identity card of some sort: a government-issued card, a passport, a driver's license, a social welfare card, a workplace identity badge. You would take money or the documents that allow you to get money (bank cards, account numbers). You might take a photograph or two of those you love. If you were worried that your home might be harmed, you might take a document showing your ownership or your right to live there, but you would have to be thinking ahead to grab that. You might take a marriage license or a birth certificate for your children; you might take something from a doctor showing what medical condition you have and what medicines you take. You would probably clutch a document giving the name and address of a relative living in another country, if you have one.

You would be lucky to cross a border with all those documents. They might be damaged in a rainstorm, lost when a boat sank, seized by border guards who want to strip you of your identity, as Serbian officials did when Kosovars fled into Macedonia in 1999. And if you arrive without any identification, the country where you land will need you to swear who you are and, if possible, get another person or two to also swear that you are you. And they will give you an identity document.

When the crisis is over, you may want to go home and reclaim your apartment, your job, your right to a pension, your health service. But what records will exist to support your claims? Have the records of the government, the business, the health service survived or were they destroyed in the crisis? Here is where the need for archival safe havens comes in. In countries where the risk of damage to archives is great, whether from war or global warming, archivists need to find a trusted repository in a safer location that will hold a security copy of the institution's most important archives.

The problem, of course, is having a copy that can be sent away for safekeeping. Most archives are not digital, and embarking on a digital copying program in the face of looming disaster is unrealistic. Shipping original non-digital records is a massive job that can only be undertaken with the help of major transportation services, which are not often available in times of crisis. Archivists who believe their holdings are in likely to be in danger in the future need to take steps now, identifying which records are the most important (with particular emphasis on records that support human rights claims), and embarking on a digital copying project for them.

Archivists in safer countries around the world should examine their mandates and their consciences and see whether they can offer a safe haven for digital copies (or, if they exist, microfilm copies) of archives that are at risk. This is entirely different from having a copy and making it available for research use; this is a service equal to an archival safety deposit box in a bank, holding materials that you preserve safely on behalf of other archivists who make the decisions on access to them and can recall them if needed. Archives are a global public good. We archivists must manage their security and preservation together, for the benefit of us all.

News of the Human Rights Working Group. The Human Rights Working Group will meet at the ICA annual meeting in Iceland at 2 p.m. on Saturday, September 26. The agenda is attached to this issue of the *News*; anyone who would like to put an item on the agenda, please send it to trudy@trudypeterson.com. On Sunday, September 27, there will be a joint meeting of the Working Group, the Section of Business Archives and the Section of Professional Associations. Anyone who is not part of those three groups but who wishes to attend the meeting should contact Trudy Peterson.

The Human Rights Working Group is looking for a French speaker and a Spanish speaker to share the work of translating the *News*. Cristina Bianchi has carried the entire burden of French translation for years, and we are indebted to her beyond what words can say. Now, however, she has other duties that make it impossible for her to do the translation each month, and she asks if there is someone who is willing to share the work with her. Roman Lescano translated into Spanish but is unable to continue; Gustavo Castaner has agreed to share the Spanish translation work with one or more other people. If you can help in Working Group by translating, please contact either Trudy Peterson or Cristina Bianchi.

International news.

International Criminal Court (ICC). Appeals court judges told the lower court to reopen a hearing into whether to take action against Kenya over allegations it obstructed ICC investigations into Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta, *Reuters* reported. Charges against Kenyatta were dropped last December because Kenya had not provided records that the ICC had requested. For background, see *HRWG News* 2014-12. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/19/us-kenya-court-idUSKCN0QOORB20150819>; for the opinion, see <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc2034599.pdf>

United Nations. The Security Council passed a resolution establishing an Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons/United Nations “Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify to the greatest extent feasible individuals, entities, groups, or governments who were perpetrators, organizers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons, including chlorine or any other toxic chemical, in the Syrian Arab Republic.” Records, both those obtained by and those created by this investigation, will be crucial sources for holding perpetrators accountable in the future. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc12001.doc.htm>

UNICEF. The UN children’s agency said that the West African Ebola epidemic “has disrupted birth registrations in Liberia, leaving hundreds of thousands of children without citizenship and in danger of being trafficked or illegally adopted,” reported *Thomson Reuters Foundation*. UNICEF plans a nationwide campaign in Liberia later this year to reach all children not registered since 2014; it recently registered 250,000 children in Sierra Leone, which was also devastated by the Ebola epidemic. http://www.trust.org/item/20150731000203-a8jfq/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+Digest+50815&utm_content=Weekly+Digest+50815+CID_7715dcfce3d9bd4d45d11fc018cb91ab&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=Ebola%20disrupts%20Liberia%20birth%20records%20poses%20trafficking%20threat-UN

United Nations Panel of Experts on South Sudan. The Panel sent a letter to the Security Council with preliminary findings on the dire situation in war-torn South Sudan. The Panel reported that it is “investigating the chain of command” for all parties and looking into the “financing channels used by the Government and the opposition to prosecute the war and into those individuals and entities who gain financially from the continuation of the conflict.” The Panel urged that a durable settlement of the conflict needs to include “accountability for serious crimes committed throughout the war.” Records again are key to the investigations; the Panel’s records need strong, reliable protection. <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1524056.pdf>

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA reported that for the “first time in five decades, mortality rates have increased among Palestine refugee newborns in Gaza.” To get the data, they asked all mothers who had more than one child who came to one of the 22 UNRWA health centres to register their last-born child for immunization whether their preceding

child was alive or dead. These 3128 mothers, interviewed between August and October 2013, were given a verbal explanation of the “purpose of the research and the content of the interview” and their consent “was documented on the data collection sheet.” In addition to the questionnaire, “child health records and antenatal records were used.” The researchers concluded that “inadequate neonatal care” is contributing to the sad trend. http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/increasing_neonatal_mortality_among_palestine_refugees_in_the_gaza_strip.pdf

World/general news.

Facial recognition technology and privacy. According to *VICE News*, facial recognition technology—using a mathematical algorithm on an image of a face to create a digital “faceprint”—is a global big business worth \$1.3 billion and could double in size by 2022. “Google’s FaceNet algorithm reportedly identifies faces with 99.63 percent accuracy” and “Facebook’s DeepFace works 97.25 percent of the time.” A report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, released at the end of July, said, “No federal privacy law expressly regulates commercial uses of facial recognition technology, and laws do not fully address key privacy issues stakeholders have raised, such as the circumstances under which the technology may be used to identify individuals or track their whereabouts and companions. Laws governing the collection, use, and storage of personal information may potentially apply to the commercial use of facial recognition in specific contexts, such as information collected by health care entities and financial institutions.” https://news.vice.com/article/facial-recognition-technology-is-big-business-and-its-coming-for-you?utm_source=vicenewsemail; for the GAO report <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-621>

Nazi crimes. *i24.news* produced a feature on the efforts of Germany’s Central State Library and the University of Hamburg Library to return the books they hold that were taken from Jews by Nazis during the Second World War. The head of the Central State Library team trying to identify the books told the TV station, “About 2,000 of the acquired books were entered to a special ledger and given an inventory number beginning with the letter J, and we found about 1,500 – 1,600 of them. But the rest, which were entered after the war, were marked as ‘gifts’ and got mixed with the actual donations. So now we have no way of knowing which ‘gift books’ were looted, unless we find a name or other traces inside the books.” <http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/80492-150801-mission-impossible-german-libraries-try-to-return-nazi-looted-books>

Data hacked. The website of the “extra-marital dating service and social network” Ashley Madison was hacked and the personal information of about 39 million users was leaked to the media, including emails, credit card information and sexual preferences. Although many people showed little pity on those whose names were leaked, at least two people reportedly have committed suicide after their names were released, *The Guardian* reported, and, wrote *VICE News*, some of the persons named who were seeking same sex partners “are likely to be in some of the 79 countries where homosexuality is illegal, and in some, punishable by death.” Because the company is based in Toronto, Canada’s Office of the Privacy Commissioner is investigating the hack, said *thestar.com*. <https://news.vice.com/article/how-the-ashley-madison-hack-could-threaten-peoples-lives>; <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/24/toronto-suicides-ashley-madison-hack>; <http://www.thestar.com/business/2015/08/24/privacy-commissioner-investigates-ashley-madison-data-breach.html>

U.S. National Security Agency surveillance program. A team of researchers from the *New York Times* and *ProPublica* working through documents provided by Edward Snowden determined that “the National Security Agency’s ability to capture Internet traffic on United States soil has relied on its extraordinary, decades long partnership with a single company: the telecom giant AT&T.” They explained, “AT&T’s provision of foreign-to-foreign traffic has been particularly important to the N.S.A. because large amounts of the world’s Internet communications travels across American cables.” <https://www.propublica.org/article/a-trail-of-evidence-leading-to-atts-partnership-with-the-nsa>

ExxonMobil and human rights abuses. In a case that has been going on since 2001, a group of Indonesian citizens sued ExxonMobil, alleging that the corporation aided and abetted the torture, kidnapping, sexual assault and murder of villagers by security forces in the Aceh province where ExxonMobil was operating gas fields. In July a U.S. Federal judge ruled that a case could proceed under the U.S. Alien Tort Statute (ATS). A human rights lawyer told the news organization *100Reporters* that the decision “appears to offer a roadmap for other plaintiffs who may want to use the Alien Tort Statute in the future.” A academic

blogger from the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, after noting that in 2013 the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that ATS could not be used in a case against Royal Dutch Petroleum, wrote, “What made the difference in the ExxonMobil claim was the information uncovered by the claimants’ lawyers among the documents released by ExxonMobil during the discovery phase. After reviewing those documents, the claimants alleged that the parent company executives seated in the US were not only aware of the abuses, but were also involved in the abuses.” The blogger then explained that the situation is very different in continental Europe “as there is no discovery or disclosure rule obliging the other party to divulge information in its possession” creating “almost an impossibility for the victims.”

<https://100r.org/2015/07/exxon-human-rights-case-survives-claim-that-execs-knew-all-along/>; <http://blogs.essex.ac.uk/hrc/2015/08/27/the-impact-of-enhanced-corporate-transparency-on-access-to-remedy-for-victims-of-corporate-human-rights-abuses-some-reflections-on-the-decision-of-the-us-court-in-the-exxon-mobil-case/>

Bilateral and multilateral news.

Chile/United States. Following the arrests in July 2015 of former military personnel involved in the killing and defacement of two Chilean teenagers in 1986, the U.S. nongovernmental organization National Security Archive posted five redacted White House, CIA and Defense Department records, including a July 14, 1986, showing that the U.S. government knew at the time that Army units were involved. Peter Kornbluh, the Archive researcher who obtained the documents, says that the “evening briefing paper” for the President that was released is “the only known time when a specific human rights crime in Chile was included in the evening briefing papers of the President of the United States.” The declassified documents could provide evidence for the prosecutors in Chile to use in the current case. For background, see *HRWG News* 2015-07. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB523-Los-Quemados-Chiles-Pinochet-Covered-up-Human-Rights-Atrocity/>

France/Germany. As the fifty-year commemorations of the end of World War II came to a close, a group of French historians demanded that the records of the Nazi occupation of Paris, particularly those of the Gestapo, be made available. They also demanded that any surviving records relating to the collaboration of French citizens with the German occupiers be preserved and opened for research.

http://www.lepoint.fr/societe/collaboration-quand-les-archives-vont-parler-13-08-2015-1956528_23.php

http://www.lepoint.fr/histoire/gestapo-les-dossiers-les-plus-interessants-ont-disparu-13-08-2015-1956418_1615.php

India/United Kingdom. (1) The Commonwealth War Graves Commission released online the records of the World War II Commonwealth casualties buried at various sites around the world, including the records of troops from British India, reported *The New Indian Express*. (2) A retired Director General of the Indian state police Intelligence Branch (IB) was researching the pre-independence records of persons the British considered “terrorists.” He told *The Times of India* that he “found that most of the entries in the files of the IB office dating back to the pre-independence times are incomplete with key pages missing” but he found that the “missing pages have been preserved serially” at the British Library in London.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/CWGC-Declassifies-Records-of-Indian-Soldiers-Killed-in-WW-II/2015/08/15/article2975274.ece>;

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Ex-cop-traces-lost-Rash-Behari-Bose-records/articleshow/48507376.cms>

Ireland/United Kingdom. An Irish researcher wanted to “obtain the names of informants who worked against Irish secret societies between 1892 and 1910” by cooperating with the U.K. police service, reported *The Sunday Times*. After being denied access to the police records he sued. A three judge court ruled against him (two-to-one majority), saying that “releasing the informers’ names would risk harm to their descendants and hamper the recruitment of informants” and that since “there are lingering embers” from the “Irish conflict” the names should be withheld “in perpetuity.”

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/ireland/News/article1597113.ece>

Islamic State. *Bloomberg News* interviewed Zainab Bangura, the UN special envoy on sexual violence in conflict. She said that on a trip to Iraq in April she was “given a copy of an Islamic State pamphlet” which included a slave price list, “showing that captured children as young as one fetch the highest price.” She said she has “verified that the document came from Islamic State and reflects real transactions.”

Bloomberg published the list. http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-08-03/sex-slaves-sold-by-islamic-state-the-younger-the-better?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWfF9wsRonv6rAd%2B%2FhmjTEU5z17u0kUKCg38431UFwdcjKpmjr1YIHRMBjI%2BBSLDwEYGJlv6SgFSLHM Ma12z7gLXxI%3D

The *New York Times* published a long report on the enslavement and systematic rape of captive Yazidi women and girls by Islamic State fighters. The Islamic State “has developed a detailed bureaucracy of sex slavery, including sales contracts notarized by the ISIS-run Islamic courts.” Women who managed to escape said that “their status as a slave [was] registered in a contract. When their owner would sell them to another buyer, a new contract would be drafted, like transferring a property deed.” At least one woman was set free and given a “Certificate of Emancipation” signed by an Islamic State judge. Some of the captive Yazidi women “were bought by wholesalers, who photographed and gave them numbers to advertise them to potential buyers.” Also, a “growing body of internal policy memos and theological discussions has established guidelines for slavery, including a lengthy how-to manual issued by the Islamic State Research and Fatwa Department just last month” (July 2015).

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/14/world/middleeast/isis-enshrines-a-theology-of-rape.html?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWwF9wsRonv6vKdO%2FhmjTEU5z17u0kUKCg38431UFwdejkPmjrlYIHRMFqI%2BSLDwEYgJlv6SgFSLHM Ma12z7gLXxI%3D& r=0

Israel/Palestine. A 3.5 minute video posted online of an Israel Defense Forces soldier, who was wearing a face mask and holding in a headlock a 12-year-old Palestinian boy with a broken arm in a sling, went viral, reported *Al-Monitor*. The force commander ordered the soldier to let the boy go, but the public release of the video again raised the issue of the number of children and youths arrested yearly by IDF forces. According to an attorney who represents Palestinians, almost all arrested teenagers are held in custody pending trial. He said that he always argues that it was a false arrest of the youth, but “in the end the military comes up with a video clip or some other type of documentation of the event.” <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/nabi-saleh-west-bank-idf-soldier-childrens-rights-arrest.html>

Mexico/United States. Two nongovernmental organizations, the Washington Office on Latin America and the Violence Policy Center, used a “database of indictments from U.S. court records” and found that 59% of the semiautomatic assault rifles seized by U.S. law enforcement as they were being illegally exported to Mexico, were manufactured abroad and imported into the U.S. to be trafficked onward. According to the report, these rifles “account for significant portions of the arsenals of Mexico’s drug cartels.”

http://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/Gun_Running_Nation.pdf

Sri Lanka/United Kingdom. Freedom from Torture, a U.K. nongovernmental organization, released a report saying “the torture of minority Tamils in Sri Lanka by the police and military remains a major problem six years after the end of the civil war with victims beaten, burned and sexually abused.” The report, “Tainted Peace: Torture in Sri Lanka since May 2009,” is based on doctors’ forensic reports on 148 survivors now in the U.K., documenting their physical and psychological injuries from torture carried out from 2009 to 2013. It says 100% were brutally beaten, 78% burned, and 71% sexually abused; a third of the cases were Sri Lankans who returned to the country after a stay in the U.K.; the “overwhelming majority of cases in the study were Tamil (139 out of 148 cases or 94%).” The charity provides care for persons arriving in Britain and assesses their claims of torture; if confirmed, the report on the person is submitted to the Home Office to support a claim for asylum. <http://www.freedomfromtorture.org/print/news-blogs/8506>; <http://www.trust.org/item/20150813070405-22f1r/?source=dpMostPopular>

United Kingdom/United States. In a remarkable discovery, two colonial records in the U.K. National Archives, long overlooked, specifically name the four Native American groups who came together near what is today Macon, Georgia, to form the Creek Indian Tribe. One of those groups was the Chickasaw, who previously were not known definitively to have lived there. This discovery “has important implications for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Program,” the *examiner.com* wrote, because tribes who lived in an area have a say on the disposition of human remains and sacred goods found there. The records “had been sitting in a box for over 2 1/2 centuries, but two years ago were given an inventory number by the United Kingdom’s National Archives, which made their discovery possible.” The importance of archival description could not be clearer. <http://www.examiner.com/article/colonial-documents-reveal-chickasaws-as-co-founders-of-creek-confederacy>

National news.

Australia. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse held a second public hearing on the experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church. According to the *Washington Post*, "From 1950 to 2014, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society amassed 5,000 files detailing sexual abuse of Australian children by 1,006 of its members." All complaints to the church "were carefully recorded in sealed files, along with the church's . . . responses."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/jehovahs-witnesses-face-child-sex-abuse-investigation-in-australia/2015/08/14/d8a58eda-406e-11e5-9561-4b3dc93e3b9a_story.html

Bangladesh. The *Dhaka Tribune* reported that "60% of outstanding civil litigation cases in the country, involving some 1.8 million litigants, relate solely to land disputes. While backlogs in the judicial process exacerbate this number, the root cause of this huge backlog is poor record-keeping and corrupt administration in the land management system." The newspaper called for digitizing land records "so that ownership of land can be transparently confirmed online for a small fee."

<http://www.dhakatribune.com/editorial/2015/aug/25/digitalise-record-keeping-root-out-corruption-land-offices>

Bosnia. In June the state court convicted three former soldiers of rape during the Balkan wars of the 1990s and ordered them to pay compensation to their victims "for the first time in the country," reported *BIRN*. The convicted men will appeal, but if the conviction is upheld, the men will have to "submit statements about their property and confirm, under threat of criminal sanctions, that those statements are correct." The lawyer for one of the convicted men said that it is "very hard" for him to pay because he "is not registered as the owner of any real estate," bringing into the case the records of land registration in Bosnia.

http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-struggles-with-war-rape-compensation-08-13-2015?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=54a1085dfc-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_561b9a25c3-54a1085dfc-311109073

Canada. Following several cases of black men shot by Toronto police, activists wanted to understand the historical pattern of police killings, only to find that "no race-based statistics on fatal police encounters are kept by [the] province's police watchdog—or Statistics Canada, Toronto police or the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services," reported *The Star*. *The Star* asked Ontario's Special Investigations Unit (a civilian watchdog of the police) for information on every fatal shooting incident since 1990. The Unit provided a list that "contained only dates of fatal police-involved shootings." *The Star* "cross-referenced" the dates with news archives and press releases to identify the person killed. Of the total of 51 killings, in 33% of the cases *The Star* could not determine the race of the person shot, but in 35% the person was a black male (Toronto's black population is roughly 9%).

<http://www.thestar.com/news/crime/2015/08/16/how-many-black-men-have-been-killed-by-toronto-police-we-cant-know.html>

Colombia. The nongovernmental organization Somos Defensores maintains data on the attacks on human rights defenders in Colombia. In its semiannual report, it says that even as the peace process with the FARC is going forward, every five days a human rights defender was murdered in the first half of 2015. In addition, 332 rights defenders were threatened. For *teleSUR*'s article on the report, see

<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Report-1-Colombian-Human-Rights-Defender-Murdered-Every-5-Days-20150819-0019.html>; for the report <http://somosdefensores.org/index.php/en/publicaciones/informes-siaddhh/134-los-nadie>

Egypt. Forced disappearances have increased in 2015, and in response a group of activists launched the Al-Horriya lil Gedaan initiative, compiling "a database documenting 163 forced disappearance cases without investigation from different governorates from April until June 7. Among these cases, the whereabouts of 66 people were unknown, and the fate of 31 was unclear. Sixty-four people were found 24 hours after they were detained without investigation, which is against the constitution. Two people were killed after their disappearance," wrote *Al-Monitor*.

http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-forced-abduction-arrest-campaigns-police.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=8eebdadde3-August_20_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-8eebdadde3-93088897#

Although the legal age for marriage in Egypt is 18, underage marriage, especially for girls, persists. After a man posted a photo online of the engagement ceremony of his 5-year-old daughter to her 8-year-old cousin "a wave of criticism ensued," reported *Al-Monitor*. The falsification of marriage contracts (mostly of the ages of the persons married) is punishable by a fine and a prison sentence; however, "the falsification of marriage contracts makes 'a huge fortune' for the officiants involved," an officiant told *Al-Monitor*. Marriage contracts are necessary for obtaining birth certificates and health services including vaccinations.

http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-underage-marriage-wedding-law-officiant-bribery.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=eb7e0602dc-August_27_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-eb7e0602dc-93088897

India. India seems to have records problems. (1) According to a legal researcher who is working on a comprehensive study of capital punishment in India, an official report in 1967 said that 1410 persons had been executed between 1953 and 1963, but for the entire period since 1947 the prison system has data on only 765 cases. The professor leading the research told *TIME* magazine, “There’s a complete lack of information—they don’t even have the names of the prisoners, let alone the official files. It just shows the callousness of the record-keeping system in the jails.” He said there is “no central authority” enforcing rules for records in the prisons and that prisons say the missing records were “lost or destroyed by termites.” <http://time.com/3981848/india-execution-records-destroyed-termites/>; <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Death-penalty-files-lost-eaten-by-termites/articleshow/48322218.cms>

(2) The *Times of India* reported that over 200,000 “photographs and thumb impressions on documents of registered property owners, 15,993 registration deeds of firms and societies and over 4,000 certificates, including marriage certificates, are missing from the records of 43 sub-registrar offices.” These were all electronic documents created between 2003 and 2014, and “even the back-up mechanism, a routine feature for any electronic documentation, has failed.” Hard copies of the documents are available only prior to 2011.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/2-lakh-e-records-missing-from-stamps-and-registration-department/articleshow/48384241.cms>

(3) A court in Delhi sentenced a man to four years in prison for entering the court’s records storage room and “stealing the judicial records of a case of domestic violence filed by his wife.” The theft was caught on CCTV cameras, reported *The Indian Express*.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/caught-on-camera-man-steals-judicial-files-on-case-filed-by-wife-jailed/#>

The government released the religion-based data collected during the 2011 decennial national census. It showed that 79.8% of the population is Hindu, a decline of 0.7% since 2001, and Muslims are 14.2%, an increase of 0.8%. Christian are third, and the official statement said there was “no significant change in the proportion of Christians.” That is important because during the past decade Christian missionaries “have been accused of converting tribal people and those from the beleaguered ‘untouchable’ caste. Laws were enacted to end conversion, police cases were filed” and some missionaries attacked, reported *UCAN*, but apparently whatever conversions occurred did not change the relative proportion of the Christian population.

http://www.eurasiareview.com/27082015-india-census-casts-doubts-on-forced-christian-conversion-claims/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

Iraq. The Iraq National Library and Archives has “a major preservation and digitization project underway” on the records of the Interior Ministry from 1939 to 1958, reported the *Associated Press*. Although archives “from 1977 to 2003 burned to ashes” at the start of the U.S.-led occupation in 2003 when “arsonists set fire to the library,” “earlier archives from 1920 to 1977, including sensitive Interior Ministry documents, had been stored in rice bags and survived the blaze.” <http://uk.businessinsider.com/iraq-is-rushing-to-digitize-its-national-library-under-the-threat-of-isis-2015-8?r=US&IR=T>

Israel. The contents of audio recordings made by former Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak for the two persons who are “ghostwriting” his autobiography were leaked to the media. In the recordings Barak “explains why Israel did not attack Iran’s nuclear facilities in 2012,” reported *Al-Monitor*, adding that the recordings actually contained little news because the “vast majority of the information had previously been published in numerous media outlets.”

http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/israel-ehud-barak-attacking-iran-tapes-netanyahu.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=6d5b5b2989-August_25_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-6d5b5b2989-93088897

Kosovo. Parliament amended the constitution and established a War Crimes Court to try former Kosovo Liberation Army fighters accused of war crimes. The court is to be made up of international judges and based in The Hague. *Balkan Insight* published a clear analysis of how the court will work and noted, “The court’s archive and documents will be held in a dedicated depository outside Kosovo.”

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/how-will-special-kosovo-court-work--08-05-2015>

Libya. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that a nine-minute video obtained by *clearnews*, an online news site, “appears to show officials and guards at al-Hadba prison interrogating and ill-treating several detainees, including al-Saadi Gaddafi” (the son of former dictator Muammar Gaddafi). Calling it a “graphic video that seems to show prisoners being beaten,” HRW said Libyan authorities should immediately investigate the treatment of detainees in the prison. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/08/03/libya-jail-video-alleges-gaddafi-son-abused>

Macedonia. Macedonia will end its “much-disputed lustration process on January 1, but plans to keep banning anyone declared to be a former secret police collaborator from working in state institutions,” reported *BIRN*. “The commission has so far combed through thousands of secret files and declared some 300 people former collaborators.” For background see *HRWG News* 2014-01 and 2014-10. http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/macedonia-scraps-lustration-keeps-sanctions-against-spies--08-26-2015?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b088966840-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_561b9a25c3-b088966840-311109073

Mexico. The Interdisciplinary Group of Experts appointed by the government and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights to investigate the disappearance of 43 students in Iguala in September 2014 told the press that they have not been permitted to interview the military personnel believed to be involved. The Group also said “security videos containing evidence may have been destroyed,” reported *BBC News*. For background, see *HRWG News* 2015-06. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-33969394>

Pakistan. A gang of men in three Pakistani villages over the last decade abducted more than 280 children, forced them to perform sex acts, and videotaped them. They then used the videos to blackmail the victims and their families and may have been sold videos to porn site operators in the United States, the United Kingdom, and in Europe. For a summary of the sordid story, with links to much of the reporting, see *Foreign Policy*. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/11/child-sex-abuse-and-blackmail-the-horrible-scandal-rocking-a-pakistani-village/>

Palestine. *Al-Monitor* ran a story on the difficulties that researchers have to find archives on the history of Palestine. On August 11 Mohammed Buhais, the director of the Palestinian National Archives, announced a plan to gather archives first from Arab countries, then from “friendly countries such as Turkey, Spain and Canada,” and the third from former colonial powers. Buhais said, “Neither Israel nor the entire world could deny any negotiation on the restoration of Palestinian rights, should it be supported by documents.” http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/09/palestinian-plan-retrieve-archive-diaspora-inside.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=4f95368055-September_03_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-4f95368055-93088897#

Russia. In July the Russian State Archives posted on its website a 1948 report written by the USSR Chief Military Prosecutor that questioned the common wisdom of the heroism of Panfilov’s 28 Guardsmen during World War II (for background, see *HRWG News* 2015-07). At the end of July the Russian Minister of Culture, at a meeting on archival work, announced “that workers of the Russian State Archives should not give their own evaluations of archival documents,” reported *TASS*. The Minister said, “The question of what archival workers should be doing has arisen. They should do what the government pays them to do, and they shouldn’t try to master other professions in the process,” that archivists can provide documents “but then journalists should draw their own conclusions” and the director of an archives “is not a writer, a journalist, or a fighter against the fabrication of history.” A film on the 28 Guardsmen, depicting them as heroes, will come out in the autumn of 2015; the Ministry of Culture “allocated funds for its production” and the Russian Military History Society, chaired by the Minister, endorsed the film. <https://meduza.io/en/news/2015/07/31/ahead-of-patriotic-film-release-russian-culture-minister-tells-archival-workers-to-pipe-down>

Saudi Arabia. Two videos showing the harassment of women during Eid al-Fitr celebrations were published on YouTube; one attracted more than 1.5 million views, reported the *Huffington Post*. The *Post* reprinted statistics on harassment cases in Saudi Arabia that were compiled by the newspaper *el-Watan* from statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice, which showed that 3,982 harassment cases were taken to court during the year 2013-2014. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/08/07/sexual-harassment-saudi-arabia_n_7934850.html?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRonv6rAd%2B%2FhmjTEU5zI7u0kUKCg38431UFwdejkPmjir1YIHRMBjI%2BSLDwEY_GJlv6SgFSLHMMa12z7gLXXi%3D

Sweden. The government announced that it “believes that business and respect for human rights go hand in hand and must be part of an active corporate social responsibility policy. The Government has therefore drawn up a national action plan for business and human rights.” Good recordkeeping is essential to the practical application of the plan. <http://www.government.se/information-material/2015/08/action-plan-for-business-and-human-rights/>

Syria. Stephen Rapp, the former US Ambassador-at-large, was interviewed by *Al-Monitor* just after he left office. Rapp called for holding Syrian president Bashar al-Assad accountable for crimes committed during the on-going war. The “only bright spot” in moving towards accountability, Rapp said, “is the way the regime generated so many ‘documents with stamps on them’ that have fallen into the hands of the opposition.” The documentation, he said, “can be purchased by the kilogram from one group or another in various parts of the country.” http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/stephen-rapp-no-syria-peace-assad-prosecution.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=61821873ba-August_13_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-61821873ba-93088897

Turkey. *Today's Zaman*, quoting *Taraf* daily news, reported that the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) “has destroyed two truckloads of official documents since it lost its overall majority in Parliament for the first time in 13 years in the June 7 general election.” Civil servants were ordered by the AK Party “to destroy official documents such as those pertaining to discretionary fund expenditures and documents profiling dissenters.” http://www.todayszaman.com/national_report-ak-party-has-destroyed-2-truckloads-of-documents-since-election_396088.html

Turkey has some 53,000 village and neighborhood mukhtars, elected in municipal elections every five years, who are “responsible for relaying to relevant authorities citizens’ records on issues such as birth, death, military service and residency relocation,” explained *Al-Monitor*. They report through an electronic Mukhtar Information System, which has a special line that they can use to send messages (“various topics, including complaints, wishes, tip-offs, opinions and proposals”) to the Interior Ministry’s Local Administrations Directorate, which redirects them “to the relevant agencies.” In a meeting with a group of mukhtars, Turkish president Erdogan told them that they have an “intelligence duty” and they “certainly know which people are terrorists and must report this to the nearest security unit.” Appraisal and scheduling of the electronic system needs to consider the rights of the individuals about whom information is conveyed. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/turkey-erdogan-intelligence-support-from-headmen.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=63c3878d4a-WR_August_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-63c3878d4a-93088897

United Kingdom. In yet another episode in the ongoing investigation of sexual abuse of children in institutions like children’s homes, the Wiltshire police are investigating an allegation that former prime minister Edward Heath “may have been involved in offenses concerning children.” At the same time the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) announced it was investigating claims that a trial was halted in the 1990s because it would have resulted in the exposure of the allegations about Heath. “The IPCC said the claims originated from a former senior Wiltshire police officer,” reported *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/aug/05/investigation-edward-heath-child-abuse-claims-go-national>; <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/aug/11/edward-heath-abuse-claims-allegations-received-2001>

MI5, the U.K.’s Security Service, released a group of files which included redacted documents from its file on Nobel Prize winning author Doris Lessing, who died in 2013. *VICE News* reported that MI5 began the surveillance of Lessing in the 1940s, conducting its surveillance “in close cooperation with London’s Metropolitan Police, which maintained its own file on Lessing.” <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/latest-top-secret-mi5-files-released/>; <https://news.vice.com/article/mi5-spied-on-a-nobel-prize-winning-author-for-over-a-decade-new-files-reveal>

The British Library was offered a large collection of Taliban-related documents, including official newspapers, maps and radio broadcasts, but decided not to take them, reported the *BBC*. It quoted a Library spokeswoman saying, “Although the archive was recognized as being of research value, it was judged that it contained some material which could contravene the Terrorism Act, and which would present restrictions on the Library’s ability to provide access to the archive for researchers.” <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-34088661>

United States. Scandals continued to surround the Veteran's Administration (VA). In an "unannounced inspection" of the VA's Los Angeles office, the VA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) found nine claims-related documents "incorrectly placed in . . . shred bins," eight of which "had the potential to affect veterans' benefits." The OIG said the staff "couldn't provide any documentation at all on what documents it had shredded over the past two years," reported the *Washington Examiner*, and the OIG report said the staff working with records "lacked training regarding maintaining, reviewing, protecting and appropriately destroying veterans' and other governmental paper records." In South Dakota, at the VA's Hot Springs campus, someone during an office move in May threw "files containing personal information on 1,100 military veterans" into a dumpster, where they were found and retrieved, reported the *Rapid City Journal*. <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/va-caught-sending-vet-mail-to-the-shredder/article/2570354>; <http://www.fiercecontentmanagement.com/story/va-office-caught-ignoring-records-management-policies-shredding-documents/2015-08-26>; http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/veterans-files-thrown-in-garbage-at-v-a-hot-springs-vets/article_c53c039d-6795-541c-8033-d99b65d148d7.html

For more than a century, law enforcement agencies have had the right to ask the Postal Service to "record names, return addresses and other information from the outside of letters and packages before they are delivered to the home of a person suspected of criminal activity," a program called "mail covers." Now the record of an audit by the Postal Services' Inspector General has been released under the Freedom of Information Act. It shows that about 1000 requests were made from 2011 to 2013, with most coming (unsurprisingly) from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Department of Homeland Security. According to the *New York Times*, the "audit questioned the Postal Service's efficiency and accuracy in handling mail cover requests." <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/14/us/copy-of-postal-service-audit-shows-extent-of-mail-surveillance.html>

ProPublica, which has published a series of investigative articles on medical services, produced two more. One reported on the opponents of abortion who "dig through the trash" of abortion clinics "in search of patient information." Activists who find records then call on government offices to secure the material and prosecute the clinics for sharing patients' medical information without their consent, an act prohibited by Federal law. http://www.propublica.org/article/foes-dive-for-discarded-records-in-abortion-clinic-dumpsters?utm_source=et&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=&utm_name= and http://www.propublica.org/article/activists-pursue-private-abortion-details-using-public-records-laws?utm_source=et&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=&utm_name=

A second article reported that an "analysis of government inspection reports found that, between 2011 and 2014, at least 165 nursing home residents were hospitalized or died after errors involving Coumadin or its generic version, warfarin." The Federal government is now telling health inspectors to "be on the lookout for errors by nursing homes" in managing the drug. http://www.propublica.org/article/feds-call-for-more-scrutiny-of-nursing-home-errors-involving-blood-thinner?utm_source=et&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=&utm_name=

Following the release of the grand jury testimony of David Greenglass, whose testimony against Ethel and Julius Rosenberg in 1951 led to their execution as spies in 1953, the sons of the Rosenbergs called on the government "to formally exonerate Ethel Rosenberg." Greenglass died in 2014; the sons believe that his grand jury testimony differs from the testimony he gave at the trial and shows that Ethel was not involved in the espionage. http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/r/ethel_rosenberg/index.html

United States/Missouri. Allegations that a baby-selling operation was operating out of a St. Louis hospital between 1950 and 1979 were found to be untrue when the records of the hospital, which closed in 1979, were released to the public following an investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office, reported the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/editorial-a-baby-theft-ring-no-just-poor-record-keeping/article_e6330a2b-67c9-511a-9dcd-3a105b0f5c52.html

Yemen. Amnesty International issued a report based on interviews in Yemen between May and July, saying that all sides in the conflict committed war crimes. Amnesty researchers "documented hundreds of cases of civilians, many of them children and women, killed or injured while asleep in their homes or going about their daily activities – fetching water, buying food, visiting relatives." http://www.amnesty.org.au/images/uploads/crisis/Amnesty_Report_on_Yemen_Nowhere_safe.pdf

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Agenda

Saturday, September 26, 2015, at 2:00 PM
Reykjavik, Iceland

1. “Basic Principles on the Role of Archivists in Support of Human Rights”
Report, Trudy Peterson, Giulia Barrera
2. Business archives, transparency and human rights; joint meeting with SPA and SBA
3. ICA project on a standard agreement on copying archives and exporting copies
Report, Michael Hoyle and Graham Dominy
4. UNESCO Memory of the World, Sub-Committee on Education and Research
David Sutton
5. Newsletter, call for translators and contributors
Translations? Notices? Elements to add or eliminate? Does it reach ICA leadership? Does it reach concerned archivists around the world?
6. ICA Congress 2016 in Seoul – program ideas
7. HRWG leadership, 2016 – 2020
8. HRWG membership
9. Directory project – future?
10. Possible projects
Ethics of “safe haven” projects (refer to UNESCO PGI-81/WS/3 “Model Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements and Conventions Concerning the Transfer of Archives”)
Bibliography of basic writings on archives and human rights
Human rights in the training of archivists
Other ideas
11. Round table discussion