

OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE NOTE – ZIMBABWE

A Review (January 2014)

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Introduction:

This document provides a review of the country information in the OGN (Feb 2013) for Zimbabwe produced by the Home Office (UK Border Agency). It is commissioned by the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information, and is drafted in line with instructions received through the IAGCI Chair, Dr Laura Hammond. This document is therefore only concerned with the country information in the OGN (and does not comment on aspects of procedure or policy or UK caselaw) and is produced in conjunction with a review of the *COI Report on Zimbabwe* (COI), where fuller details on the author's credentials are provided.

Substantive Content – Suggested Amendments and Additions:

Country Assessment

Para. 2.2 – The FCO annual report does offer a good overview of human rights issues in Zimbabwe, but surely there is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained from including one or two other alternative sources that include similarly reliable and authoritative overviews, especially where these have been edited with similarly/appropriately focused objectives and updated versions are regularly published? (Presumably this last element is key if the reference is to remain consistent).

For example, the US State Dept Country Reports on Human Rights is frequently cited in the body of this document – indicating that it is otherwise considered a useful source. Is this a reason to exclude it from this paragraph? The most recent publication from such a source appears to be that of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour's *Country Report on Human Rights Practices* (April 2013) available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2012/af/204183.htm> (accessed 29 Dec, 2013).

And is there not an additional argument for including a similar source that is non-Governmental? For example, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum publishes a *Biannual Report on Human Rights and National Institutions* available at <http://www.hrforumzim.org/category/biannual-human-rights-report/> (accessed 6 Jan 2014).

Actors of Protection

Para.2.3.2 – This appears to cover the key elements and information and simply needs updating with reference to more recent versions of the same selection of authoritative sources.

Para 2.3.3 – 2.3.6 POLICE:

There seems to be only one obvious omission from this section that is particularly relevant to the police role as “actors of protection” and this is their common practice of arrest and detention of people (opposition activists, civil society leaders, LGBT people etc.) on charges that either never actually get to court or are eventually thrown out of court as baseless. The COI report contains many examples of such action (eg. sections 14, 16, 20) which, combined with the culture of impunity, allows the police to operate as an instrument of intimidation, harassing people for months before even the courts whose independence is compromised are obliged to dismiss the charges as baseless.

Para 2.3.8 – 2.3.10 MILITARY :

Some mention of the JOC and its role would seem appropriate here. This is particularly the case as this section could be argued to understate the significance of the military in maintaining specific structures of governmental power and leadership, and their involvement in key sectors ordinarily not considered the domain of the military (eg. their engagement in governance, party leadership, business, mining, agricultural land ownership etc.) (see COI ss.8 and 29). Thus while the section makes clear the military’s support of ZANU-PF, it is important to acknowledge the extent to which the party is dependent on maintaining the support of the military, and the power that this gives senior military leadership.

Para 2.3.11 WAR VETERANS:

It needs to be acknowledged that the war veterans do not always enjoy an easy relationship with government and repeatedly hold government hostage through volatile expressions of discontent that continue to this day¹, resulting in payouts that significantly impact the public purse (as is clear from COI para.3.08).

¹ News Day (30 Oct 2013) “Protesting war veterans clash with police in Harare” <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2013/10/30/protesting-war-veterans-clash-police-harare/> ; also Zimbabwe Independent (16 August 2013) “War vets make fresh demands”

Also important is the recognition that while the ZNLWVA is the largest war veterans association and is intricately associated with ZANU-PF, it is not the only war veterans association. For example, the Zimbabwe Liberators Platform (ZLP)² have been repeatedly and actively critical of government in their long campaign for social justice³. The ZLP and the Zimbabwe Liberators for Peace Initiative are MDC aligned and in 2003 were suggested to have a combined membership of 21000 (while the ZNLWVA was assumed to have about 30 000 members at the time)⁴.

Paras. 2.3.12 – 2.3.15 ZANU-PF YOUTH MILITIA:

While attempts were made by the GNU to disband these volatile gangs responsible for significant violence directed (primarily but not exclusively) at MDC members, there have been announcements since the re-election of ZANU-PF of their resuscitation.⁵

It may also be relevant (in reference to “actors of protection”) to note that it is frequently these militia who attack and threaten legal counsel defending human rights and civil society leaders in court, including by invasion of the actual courtroom to disrupt the trial process (as is consistent with the final line of para 2.3.17).

Para 2.3.18 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

In addition to the restrictive limits of the HRC’s remit (as is recognized here), the HRC is further compromised by its dependence on government for funding, and the failure of government to allocate the resources necessary for it to even start operating. The first Chairman of the HRC (Prof Reg Austin) resigned in protest at the totally inadequate resources provided for the HRC to function⁶. His successor Jacob

<http://www.theindependent.co.zw/2013/08/16/war-vets-make-fresh-demands/> both accessed 7 Jan 2014.

² Details of this organisation are listed on Kubatana, though the site also suggests it is not contactable as of August 2008 (<http://www.kubatana.net/html/sectors/zim026.asp>). I am not sure why this is, as the organisation clearly still exists and operates as can be seen from more recent articles featured on Kubatana itself

(http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/opin/110816kub2.asp?sector=opin&year=2011&range_start=61) and from those cited below.

³ For example, see SW Radio (1 June 2011) “Zim Liberators Platform launches scathing attack on Brigadier” <http://www.swradioafrica.com/news010611/zimliberators010611.htm> ; also Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (27 August 2013) “National Hero selection process condemned” <http://www.crisiszimbabwe.org/advocacy/local-advocacy/item/949-national-hero-selection-process-condemned.html> both accessed 7 Jan 2014.

⁴ McCandless, E. “Polarisation and Transformation in Zimbabwe” Lexington Books; 2011; p.92.

⁵ Zimbabwe Situation (19 Oct 2013) “Zim Govt Revises Infamous Youth Militia Training” http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit_zim-govt-revises-infamous-youth-militia-training/ accessed 8 Jan 2014.

⁶ Zimbabwe Situation (12 Sept 2013) “New government to cripple human rights commission?” <http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/zimsit-government-to-cripple-human-rights-commission/> accessed 7 Jan 2014.

Mudenda (whose impartiality was contested) has since been appointed Speaker of Parliament, and the acting Chairperson is Ellen Sithole. The HRC is not yet operational and efforts to change this are still ongoing and uncertain, and remain in the gift of the very government it is designed to hold to account⁷.

Main Categories of Claims

Para 3.6 - MDC Supporters, human rights defenders and other perceived opponents of ZANU-PF

The initial 3 paragraphs of this section provide historical context that remains relevant and is accurately reflected. However, it would seem very important (to the specific objectives of this document) to acknowledge that despite the participation of both MDC's in the GNU alongside ZANU-PF there was little change in the culture of impunity advanced to violent agents acting in support of ZANU-PF, yet any allegations of criminal offences committed by MDC supporters, human rights defenders and perceived opponents of ZANU-PF continued to be pursued by the police and prosecuted as far as possible. The GNU did end the high levels of political violence seen in June 2008, but ZANU-PF's retention of control over the coercive state apparatus meant that the GNU could not inhibit the uneven pattern of criminal prosecutions whereby recourse to law remains the privilege of ZANU-PF (see for example COI paras 10.10 and numerous paras in sections 14 & 16, amongst others).

Para 3.6.9 refers to the intention to hold the referendum on the new constitution in March 2013, followed by the general elections in late July 2013. In updating this section to reflect the passing of both these events, it is worth noting that while the constitution was adopted prior to the elections, the short interval of time between the two ensured that it was impossible to implement the institutional and structural reforms promised by the new Constitution and necessary for a free, fair, and properly democratic process⁸ (see paras 3.6.15 & 17 of OGN as well). Thus, after Mugabe won the Presidential elections with 61% of the vote in the first round and ZANU-PF gained a two-thirds majority in parliament, monitors and observers (including from the AU and SADC) focused on praising the poll for being peaceful, but noting

⁷ Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (30 Oct 2013) *Crisis Report – Issue 233* “Civil Society welcomes prospect of rights commission secretariat”

http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/demgg/131030ciz.asp?sector=DEMGG&year=0&range_start=1 accessed 7 Jan 2014.

⁸ Research and Advocacy Unit (3 October 2013) “Of Camels, Constitutions and Elections” and “Report on the Conditions for the 2013 Harmonised Elections” both (and others) available at http://researchandadvocacyunit.org/index.php?option=com_docman&view=list&slug=2013-elections&Itemid=159 accessed 3 Jan 2014.

numerous irregularities they omitted to pronounce it “fair”⁹. Significant rigging of the voters roll, various machinations around the location, capacity and use of polling stations (including a very high number of “assisted voters” where individuals are accompanied by one or more “helpers” into the booth) are just a few of the strategies widely agreed to have ensured Mugabe’s landslide¹⁰. Importantly, ZANU-PF’s two-thirds majority in parliament also means they have the power to change the constitution, leaving open to question not only the implementation of the new Constitutions’ reforming provisions, but their very existence.

Para 3.6.12 – In recommending that “case owners ensure that they obtain the latest information about the situation in the relevant province”, it would seem sensible to include a link/reference to suitable sources from which to obtain this information. As the COI can only reflect the latest information for a short period after its publication, case-owners should be directed to sites that collate and publish relevant data on a more regular basis, such as the Quarterly Political Violence Reports published by Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (<http://www.hrforumzim.org/category/reports-on-political-violence/>), or the National Reports of the Zimbabwe Peace Project (<http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/>), both of which are cited in the COI and the FCO updates (see OGN para 3.6.16 & 17). These sources are cited elsewhere in the OGN, so it seems odd not to include a link to them here, so that case-owners can act directly on the recommendation of the OGN to “obtain the latest information about the situation in the relevant province”.

Para 3.7 – Teachers

In addition to the incidents mentioned here, it was at Masvingo Teacher’s College that the Masvingo Provincial Party Chairman of ZANU-PF announced that it was mandatory for ZANU-PF supporters to display a sticker on their house to identify themselves as members¹¹. More comprehensively, Sokwanele offers a database recording incidents of violence and intimidation directed at teachers throughout 2012

⁹⁹ Richard Dowden (12 August 2013) “How an Exultant Robert Mugabe took on the world and won Zimbabwe” <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/12/how-robert-mugabe-won-zimbabwe> accessed 8 Jan 2014.

¹⁰ For the most concise and clear analysis see Election Resource Centre (15 Aug 2013) “Zimbabwe election: A guide to rigging allegations” <http://www.erc.org.zw/index.php/new/107-zimbabwe-election-a-guide-to-rigging-allegations>; but also see Research and Advocacy Unit (1 Nov 2013) “Fairly Fair: The 2013 Elections” (and other RAU publications available at http://researchandadvocacyunit.org/index.php?option=com_docman&view=list&slug=2013-elections&Itemid=159 :all accessed 7 Jan 2014.

¹¹ ZPP (23 Nov 2012) “ZPP statement on ZANU-PF’s call for members to have stickers on their homes” http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24:zpp-statement-on-zanu-pf-s-call-for-members-to-have-stickers-on-their-homes&catid=11:statements&Itemid=161 accessed 7 Jan 2014.

and 2013 in the lead up to the elections at the end of July (<http://www.sokwanele.com/search/node/Teachers> - accessed 8 Jan 2014).

Para 3.8 – Gay men, lesbians, bisexual and transgender persons

Para 3.8.2 cites the *US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2011: Zimbabwe* (footnote 71). It is important to note that there is a significant error in the original source. Immediately following the information (“one year in prison or a fine..”) that appears in the OGN, is the sentence “There were no known cases of charges being brought to prosecute consensual same-sex sexual activity”. While this latter sentence is not quoted in the OGN (in fact the OGN contradicts this in para 3.8.5 and footnote 79), it is quoted verbatim in the COI (para 20.09) and also appears in the 2012 edition of the same US State Dept report. To avoid further repetition and because it is a significant error, it is necessary to correct it here.

First, Nigel Ruredzo (28) and Shine Njawara (29) appeared in the Bindura Magistrates Court on charges of sodomy on 19 December 2010.¹² Second, in October 2011, I received personal communications from GALZ and from ZLHR about the arrest of two men for having consensual sex. The incident was also reported in the press¹³ and is well summarized by Amnesty as follows:

“On 20 October two men, Lionel Girezha, aged 27, and Ngonidzashe China, aged 28, were arrested in the suburb of Mbare in Harare and charged with sodomy. They deny the charges. They were beaten by the people who reported them before being taken into police custody. When the trial started, members of the ZANU-PF-linked Chipangano gang harassed and threatened the lawyers with violence for representing people suspected of being gay. Police failed to protect the lawyers, who had to appeal to the High Court to have the location of the trial changed from Mbare”.¹⁴

Para. 3.8.3 suggests that Tsvangirai reversed his initial denouncement of LGBT rights to support their inclusion in the new Constitution. In fact, this is only one of a number of reversals on the issue by Tsvangirai who was unable to sustain this

¹² New Zimbabwe 19 December 2010 “Gay Pair Plead Guilty on Sodomy Rap” <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-4092-%E2%80%98Gay+pair%E2%80%99+admit+sodomy+charges/news.aspx> accessed 7 July 2011.

¹³ Nehanda Radio (1 Dec 2011) “Court frees ‘sodomy’ accused residents” <http://nehandaradio.com/2011/12/01/court-frees-%E2%80%98sodomy%E2%80%99-accused-residents/>; and New Zimbabwe.com (2 Aug 2012) “Mbare men charged with sodomy” <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news/printVersion.aspx?newsID=8734> both accessed 9 Jan 2014.

¹⁴ Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Annual Report 2012 - Zimbabwe*, 24 May 2012, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4fbc38fe1a.html> accessed 9 January 2014

support¹⁵, and the OGN needs to note that the newly adopted Constitution not only omits sexual orientation from the prohibited grounds of discrimination, but goes so far as to explicitly prohibit same-sex marriage (s.78 Constitution)¹⁶. Tsvangirai paid lipservice to recognizing gay rights in front of the International press, but balked at any expression of support when addressing a local audience. In March 2010, at a local celebration of International Women's Day, Tsvangirai publicly concurred with homophobic comments made by Mugabe and, dismissing calls to include "gay rights" in the New Constitution, he stated "Women make up 52% of the population; there are more women than men, so why should men be proposing to men"¹⁷.

However, immediately after this expression of Tsvangirai's support for Mugabe's homophobia, his press office issued a "clarification" asserting that 'Human Rights are indivisible and so gay rights are human rights' and that the final content of the constitution would be determined by Zimbabweans. Tsvangirai confirmed to the BBC Newsnight team that he would like to see Zimbabwe's constitution protect freedom of sexual orientation¹⁸. He did not want to be seen as contradicting the international human rights to which the MDC's own struggle and alliances laid claim, but ZANU-PF's persistent attempts to associate both homosexuality and the MDC with degenerate western values and re-colonization, worked to make MDC support for gay rights far too costly with voters for it to be publicly sustainable.

Para 3.8.6 – Drawing from the FFM interview with GALZ in August 2010, this paragraph ends with the sentence "GALZ is not aware of any active police persecution of lesbians nor of any cases of lesbians being detained, but there is a lack of police protection". It seems more than misleading to include this statement in the OGN, seeing as it directly contradicts the information given in response to the FFM interview the following year (August 2011), a copy of which appears as Annex E of the COI (July 2012). The FFM interview in 2011 and many readily accessible press reports that are clearly cited in the COI (section 20) offer explicit and well documented accounts of the arrest, detention, and persecution of a number of lesbians.

The well publicized arrest and detention of Ms Ellen Chademama and Mr Ignatius Muhambi took place in May 2010, prior to the FFM initial interview in which this claim

¹⁵ Alex Magaisa's remarks are extremely useful here in detailing all the debates and dynamics and shifting positions on this issue in his interview with Violet Gonda in New Zimbabwe 23/7/2012 "All you need to know about the draft Constitution" <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/opinion-8575-New%20constitution%20the%20key%20changes/opinion.aspx> accessed 5 Jan 2014.

¹⁶ S.78 Marriage Rights, Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013 <http://www.sokwanele.com/zimbabweconstitution/sections/2589?page=0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C7> accessed 9 Jan 2014.

¹⁷ The Herald, Friday 26 March 2010 <http://www.herald.co.zw/inside.aspx?sectid=16975&cat=1> (accessed April 26, 2010)

¹⁸ Newnight, 24 October 2011, <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2011/10/24/zimbabwe-prime-ministers-says-gay-rights-are-human-rights/> (accessed 11 January 2012).

was made¹⁹. Deliberately obstructing their access to lawyers and repeatedly abusing rules of due process, police detained them in custody for 6 days, during which time they were physically assaulted as the police pressed them hard for a list of the members of GALZ²⁰. Both defendants were acquitted of all charges six months after arrest²¹, but that had been six months of police attention and continual menace which eventually led Ms Chademama to leave the country and seek asylum in North America.

“In 2011, GALZ documented over 30 cases of arrest and detention of individuals because of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in cities across the country”, and this includes lesbians (GALZ “*Violations Report 2011*” August 2012 pp. 16-22)²². This publication is an overview of the LGBT human rights violations, arrests, detentions and incidents of extortion reported to GALZ in 2011. It also includes GALZ’s analysis of relevant media reports and political statements issued over that period.

Police raided the launch of this *Violations Report 2011* on 11 August 2012, arresting 44 GALZ members, assaulting them with baton sticks and clenched fists and detaining them overnight. Over the next two weeks, many of these 31 men and 13 women were taken in for further questioning and further raids were carried out as police “ransacked” the GALZ centre and confiscated computers and other property²³ (and see OGN para 3.8.11). On 23 August 2012, Ms Martha Tholanah (the GALZ Chairperson) was charged with running an “unregistered” organization under s.6 (iii) of the Private Voluntary Organization Act, and on 4 December 2013 she finally received a summons to appear in Court on this charge²⁴.

The above instances make it clear that there are a significant number of lesbians who have been arrested, detained, or persecuted. The last statement of this paragraph (3.8.6) is therefore misleading and should be removed from the text.

¹⁹ Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (OMCT) (28 May 2010) “Zimbabwe: Judicial harassmen against Ms. Chademama and Mr Ignatius Muhambi” <http://www.omct.org/human-rights-defenders/urgent-interventions/zimbabwe/2010/05/d20729/> accessed 8 Jan 2014.

²⁰ ZLHR Press Release (24 May 2010) “Police Press fresh charges against employees of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe” <http://www.sokwanele.com/thisiszimbabwe/archives/5720> accessed 9 Jan 2014.

²¹ See Human Rights Watch, 'Zimbabwe: Drop Charges Against Rights Defenders', 29 May 2010; and also 1/22/2011 Ellen Chademana: "For six days and six nights I was in this hell." (www.africanactivist.org accessed 20 January 2012)

²² Available at <http://www.iglhrc.org/binary-data/ATTACHMENT/file/000/000/575-1> (accessed 9 Jan 2014).

²³ Amnesty International (17 August 2012) “Zimbabwe: Halt police intimidation of activists” <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/zimbabwe-halt-police-intimidation-gay-and-lesbian-activists-following-violent-arrests-2012-08-1> accessed 8 Jan 2014.

²⁴ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (4 Dec 2013) “Martha Tholanah summoned to stand trial on charges of running an “unregistered” organisation” <http://www.hrforumzim.org/alerts/martha-tholanah-summoned-to-stand-trial-on-charges-of-running-an-unregistered-organisation/> accessed 9 Jan 2014.

Para 3.8.8 – This same paragraph appears in the COI (paras 20.45 & 20.66) as well, in my review of which I offered the following comment that I believe applies similarly to the OGN:

“..the suggestion that Bulawayo is more gay-friendly needs to be qualified considerably. It does not seem possible to source any further support for the contention that Bulawayo is therefore free of the significant homophobia that clearly exists in the rest of the country, even if it does appear to be relatively more tolerant. My own research has failed to reveal any dedicated openly gay club in the centre of Bulawayo (although ordinary (heterosexual) night clubs that admit gay people do exist), but it does appear that the Sexual Rights Centre in Bulawayo attracts far less hostility than GALZ (though this could well be because the name of the SRC does not make explicit allusion to the challenging words “gay and lesbian” as GALZ does).

However, the relativity of this “tolerance” is best illustrated by the very recent report (5/1/14) of 5 senior ZANU-PF Youth League members in trouble (suspension/expulsion is threatened) for attending a “gay party” in Bulawayo just before Christmas 2013. Police arrested 5 members of GALZ during the party (two of whom “suffered serious injuries during the arrest”) for wearing T-shirts displaying a rainbow flag and the words “same love”²⁵.

The suggestion that Bulawayo offers a distinctly different opportunity for open gay living in contrast to the rest of Zimbabwe, needs to be significantly qualified; it is important to recognize that notions of what represents “tolerance” in Zimbabwe are not likely to be the same as in the UK. This paragraph needs qualification”.

Para 3.8.12 – The information concerning the arrest of a suspected gay couple in Kadoma (one of whom was wearing female clothing) is gleaned from the State-owned Herald newspaper. Subsequent to its publication, it became clear that this was one of a number of fabricated stories published by the government controlled press to foment salacious and fearful discussion of homosexuality in the lead up to the constitutional referendum and the election, putting the MDC under ever greater pressure (see above comment on para 3.8.3)²⁶.

Reports on issues relating to homosexuality that emanate from government owned press need to be verified through reference to other sources not owned by government (including claims of arrests). If the same reports or claims cannot be located in other credible sources, then those stories appearing only in the government press need to be treated with considerable caution as they may well have been fabricated, particularly in 2012.

²⁵ New Zimbabwe (5/1/14) “Zanu PF officials at Byo gay shindig” <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-13756-Zanu+PF+officials+at+Bulawayo+gay+shindig/news.aspx>

²⁶ This was confirmed to me in personal communications with Chesterfield Samba, Director of GALZ, but is best explained in Gay Star News (8 Sept 2012) “Activists claim Zimbabwe media invent gay shock stories” accessible at <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/activists-claim-zimbabwe-media-invent-gay-shock-stories080912>).

Para 3.9 - General Humanitarian situation

The dire situation described in this section remains critical. Following the death of over 4000 people in 2008 in a Cholera outbreak in Harare, urgent warnings of the imminence of another outbreak resurfaced in November 2013; it was also estimated that more than 3000 cases of Typhoid had been reported in Harare during the year leading up to that date.²⁷

Para 3.10 – Prison Conditions

While this section offers a comprehensive overview of prison conditions the majority of which appears up to date, the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services (ZPCS) recently admitted that by 3rd December at least 100 prisoners had died from nutrition-related illnesses during 2013 in Zimbabwean prison facilities²⁸. This is because of severe food shortages owing to a massive shortfall in funding - \$1.2 million dollars is needed for food each month, but the ZPCS only receives \$300 000 each month. Deputy Commissioner for Prisons Aggrey Machingauta told a parliamentary committee that prison farms are not receiving enough seed and fertilizer for the government to feed inmates, so prisoners are only receiving one meal a day, fueling fears of a return to the disastrous period in 2008 when about 8 prisoners died each day²⁹. She also stated that the prison population currently stands at 18 460 inmates, which considerably exceeds the 14 000 recorded in para 3.10.3 of the OGN, as well as the maximum capacity of 17 000.³⁰

Furthermore, the suggestion in para. 3.10.11 of the OGN that “Prisons, with support from NGOs, provided sanitary supplies for women”, is contradicted in a research report “Risking Lives” published in December 2013, by the Research and Advocacy Unit and the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association³¹:

“The conditions in detention facilities remain a cause of concern as cells both at police stations and in remand prison are small, poorly lit and dirty with poor ablution facilities,” reads the report.

²⁷ Human Rights Watch (27 Nov 2013) “Dispatches: Averting Another Cholera Outbreak in Zimbabwe” <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/11/27/dispatches-averting-another-cholera-outbreak-zimbabwe> accessed 9 Jan 2014.

²⁸ SW Radio (3 Dec 2013) “100 die from hunger in Zimbabwe’s prisons” <http://www.swradioafrica.com/2013/12/03/100-die-from-hunger-in-zimbabwes-prisons/> accessed 6 Jan 2014.

²⁹ Reuters (3 Dec 2013) “Zimbabwe inmates starving in cash-strapped jails” <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/12/03/uk-zimbabwe-prisons-idUKBRE9B20BF20131203> both accessed 6 Jan 2014.

³⁰ ZLHR (2 Dec 2013) “Zimbabwe prisons turn into death traps as 100 inmates die in detention” <http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/hr/131202zhr.asp?sector=HR> accessed 8 Jan 2014.

³¹ RAU & ZWLA (12 Dec 2013) “Risking Lives” http://researchandadvocacyunit.org/index.php?option=com_docman&view=document&alias=339-risking-lives-1&category_slug=womens-programme-1&Itemid=115 accessed 7 Jan 2014.

“The toilets in the cells were dirty, most of them had no running water and could only be flushed from outside and the police and the prison officials did not provide toilet paper nor did they provide sanitary wear to the majority of women human rights defenders.”

According to the report, while in police custody, women were not given a change of clothes and had to wear the clothes they were arrested in for the duration of their stay³².

REVIEWER’S CLOSING REMARKS:

While there are naturally some areas of the Country Information in the OGN that are in need of updating or amendment, the selection of material presented seems impressive and strikingly apposite as a concise articulation of the key issues specifically relevant to its scope and purpose.

The structure is very clear and well-designed for easy access and effective engagement by users.

I trust that this review will contribute to constructing an effective platform for the fair and just adjudication of claims from Zimbabwe.

³² NewsDay (12 Dec 2013) “Female prisoners live in hell”
<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2013/12/12/female-prisoners-live-hell/> accessed 9 Jan 2014.