

experiencing lack of privacy, insufficient access to sanitary and washing facilities, and poor recreation and leisure facilities. There were consistent and credible reports that being detained in such conditions was adversely affecting the mental health of migrants. Conditions in open centres for refugees and migrants released from detention also remained inadequate.

■ On 30 June, Mamadou Kamara, a 32-year-old migrant from Mali, died in custody. He had attempted to escape from Safi Barracks detention centre, and was allegedly severely ill-treated when recaptured. Two officers were charged with his murder and a third with perverting the course of justice. On 2 July, the Prime Minister appointed a judge to lead an independent inquiry into whether the individuals involved in Mamadou Kamara's death had been negligent, had disregarded procedures or abused their powers. It was also to investigate whether the recommendations made by the inquiry into the death of Infeanyi Nwokoye in 2011 had been implemented.

■ The judicial investigation into the death of Infeanyi Nwokoye in April 2011 continued. Infeanyi Nwokoye, a Nigerian migrant, had died in hospital after being recaptured following an escape attempt from Safi Barracks detention centre. He had been living in Malta since 2006. His request for asylum had been rejected, and he was returned to the detention centre after documents needed for his deportation had been finalized. A government inquiry to examine the circumstances of Infeanyi Nwokoye's death had published a summary of recommendations in October 2011.

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

In June, the Criminal Code was amended to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of circumstances which would increase the punishment for certain crimes.

Also in June, the definition of discrimination in the Equality for Men and Women Act was extended to include discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The mandate of the national equality body, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, which monitors the implementation of equality legislation, was extended accordingly.

Amnesty International visits/reports

📄 S.O.S. Europe: Human rights and migration control (EUR 01/013/2012)

MAURITANIA

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

Head of state: **General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz**
Head of government: **Moulaye Ould Mohamed Laghdaf**

The authorities severely restricted freedom of expression, assembly and association. Protesters marched throughout the year, demanding the departure of President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. The authorities continued to threaten anti-slavery activists. Former Libyan intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senussi was arrested and extradited to Libya, where he could face the death penalty. At least six people were sentenced to death.

Background

President Aziz was shot by soldiers from an army unit in October. The authorities declared it a mistake. The President was transferred to France for medical treatment as coup rumours started circulating. Several demonstrations in November challenged the political and legal vacuum resulting from the President's absence.

In October, Mauritania ratified the International Convention against enforced disappearance, and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture.

Enforced disappearances

The authorities failed to disclose the whereabouts of 14 prisoners sentenced for terrorism-related offences and abducted from the central prison in the capital, Nouakchott, in May 2011. They included Mohamed Ould Chabarnou, Sidi Ould Sidina, Maarouf Ould Heiba, Khadim Ould Semane, Mohamed Ould Abdou, Abderrahmane Ould Areda and Mohamed Ould Chbih. The authorities maintained that their transfer to a secret location was a temporary measure for security reasons.

M

Freedom of expression

At least 36 people were arrested following peaceful demonstrations.

■ In February, peaceful demonstrations organized by University of Nouakchott students were violently repressed. More than 30 students were arrested. Some were released after a few days, while others were detained for more than a week without charge or trial.

Prisoners of conscience and political prisoners

■ In April, 11 members of an anti-slavery organization, Initiative pour la Résurgence du Mouvement Abolitionniste en Mauritanie (IRA-Mauritanie) were arrested, including Biram Ould Dah Ould Abeid, Yacoub Diarra, Ahmed Hamdy Ould Hamat Fall, Abidine Ould Salem, El Id Ould Lemlih, Oubeid Ould Imijine and Boumediene Ould Bata. The men had protested against Islamic scholars' writings, considered by IRA-Mauritanie to justify slavery. The men were charged with threatening state security, affronts to common decency and administration of an unauthorized organization. IRA-Mauritanie's president was also charged with apostasy. All were provisionally released in September after four months in detention. Their trial had not taken place by the end of the year.

■ Lemine Ould Dadde, former Commissioner for Human Rights, was provisionally released in December.

Counter-terror and security

At least 17 men were tried and imprisoned or sentenced to death for terrorism-related offences. Some trials did not comply with international fair trial standards.

■ At least three detainees convicted on terrorism-related charges, including Assad Abdel Khader Mohamed Ali, remained in detention despite being due for release. They were finally released after delays of four, 10 and 12 months.

Torture and other ill-treatment

Torture and other ill-treatment continued to be widely reported in detention centres, including in Ksar and Tevragh-Zeina police stations and in Nouakchott women's prison.

■ A student detained at Ksar police station following the February student demonstrations had his hands and feet tied together with a rope, and was beaten and stamped on during interrogation.

■ Two women detained at the women's prison reported being severely beaten when they were arrested in 2010, and during interrogation at a police station.

No investigations were opened into allegations of torture and ill-treatment in police custody and during interrogation.

Extradition

In March, former Libyan intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senussi was arrested as he arrived from Morocco. In July, the authorities stated that he had entered the country illegally and that they were considering different options for his extradition, including a request by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC had issued an arrest warrant for alleged crimes against humanity in Libya. Mauritania's authorities finally extradited him to Libya in September, where he could face the death penalty.

Death penalty

At least six people were sentenced to death during the year.

■ In April, at least three people, Mohamed Saleck Ould Cheikh, Youssef Galissa and Mohamed Lemine Ould Mballé, were sentenced to death. They were charged with attempting to commit a terrorist offence and being members of a terrorist group.

■ Mohamed Abdellahi Ould Ahmednah Ould Mohamed Salem's 2011 death sentence was confirmed in April after a Nouakchott Criminal Court appeal hearing. He was accused of being a member of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb and of responsibility for the murder of a US national.

Slavery

■ Four IRA-Mauritanie activists were arrested on 11 January and detained for four days after they complained about a slavery case in Ayoun, a town in southern Mauritania. They were accused of attempting to resist law enforcement and to provoke a rebellion.

Migrants' rights

Migrants – mostly from Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular Mali, Guinea and Senegal – continued to be arbitrarily arrested and detained on suspicion of trying to reach Europe. At least 4,000 migrants were arrested and sent to either Mali or Senegal.

■ In April, armed security forces arrested between 400 and 800 migrants, mostly from West Africa, in

Nouadhibou. They were held for days in immigration detention centres in Nouadhibou and Nouakchott, and most were sent back to Mali and Senegal. They had no opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention or their collective expulsion.

Amnesty International visits/reports

- ✈️ Amnesty International delegates visited Mauritania in June and July.
- 📄 Mauritania: Activists held in unknown location (AFR 38/002/2012)
- 📄 Mauritania: The families of 14 prisoners subjected to enforced disappearance for over a year have the right to know their relatives' whereabouts (AFR 38/008/2012)
- 📄 Mauritania: Amnesty International calls on Mauritania to live up to their obligations after the ratification of two key international instruments (AFR 38/009/2012)
- 📄 Former Libyan intelligence chief must be sent to the ICC (PRE01/145/2012)

MEXICO

UNITED MEXICAN STATES

Head of state and government:

Enrique Peña Nieto

(replaced Felipe Calderón Hinojosa in December)

President Calderón's government continued to ignore evidence of widespread human rights violations, such as arbitrary detentions, torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, committed by security and police forces. During his six-year presidency, which ended in December 2012, more than 60,000 people were killed and 150,000 displaced as a result of drug-related violence. Drug cartels and other criminal gangs were responsible for the vast majority of killings and abductions, but often operated in collusion with public officials. The criminal justice system remained gravely flawed with 98% of all crimes going unpunished. Indigenous Peoples were at particular risk of unfair criminal justice proceedings. Migrants in transit were victims of attacks, including abduction, rape and people trafficking. Several journalists and human rights activists were killed, attacked or threatened. A protection mechanism for human rights defenders and journalists was established in law. Violence against women and girls

was widespread. Impunity for grave human rights violations committed during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s persisted. The National Supreme Court (Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, SCJN) incorporated human rights obligations into groundbreaking rulings, including restrictions on military jurisdiction. The new government of President Enrique Peña Nieto signed a pact with other political parties, which included some human rights commitments, and made promises to combat continuing high levels of poverty.

Background

In June, Enrique Peña Nieto of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Prevolucionario Institucional, PRI) was elected President and took office in December. The PRI also gained several state governorships and increased its representation in the Federal Congress. The acrimonious election campaign witnessed the emergence of a youth social protest movement, *Iam132#* (YoSoy132#), critical of the electoral process and the PRI candidate.

Insecurity and violence arising from President Calderón's militarized response to organized crime dominated political debate. In May, a drug cartel was allegedly responsible for leaving 49 dismembered bodies in Caldereyta, Nuevo León state; the identities of the dead had not been established by the end of the year. The Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity continued to call for an end to violence and for all those responsible to be held to account. President Calderón's government vetoed the General Law on Victims. The Law, which the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity had promoted and which Congress approved, strengthened the rights of victims of the violence, including the right to reparation. In December, the new government of President Enrique Peña announced that the veto on the law was withdrawn.

In August, despite the failure of Mexican authorities to meet human rights conditions set by the US Congress as part of the Merida Initiative – a regional security co-operation agreement – the US State Department recommended that Congress release the 15% of funds subject to the conditions.

UN thematic committees on racial discrimination, discrimination against women and torture reviewed Mexico's compliance with treaty obligations and issued recommendations during the year. Mexico took