

regular legal status. No steps were taken to implement the decision in 2014.

There were ongoing reports during the year of migrants without regular status setting up makeshift accommodation and facing threats of eviction. In June, a pilot project in Amsterdam to accommodate rejected asylum-seekers was closed.

DISCRIMINATION - ETHNIC PROFILING

NGOs and intergovernmental bodies continued to raise concerns about ethnic profiling by law enforcement agencies, in particular around the lack of clear guidelines to avoid racial profiling, and on data gathering in stop-and-search operations. In response to criticism by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and Amnesty International, among others, the Dutch government and the Dutch police both explicitly rejected ethnic profiling as discriminatory.

INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

On 6 September 2013 the Netherlands Supreme Court found the Dutch state liable for the deaths of three men during the Srebrenica genocide.² Dutch troops serving as UN peacekeepers in Srebrenica sent three Bosniak Muslim men, part of a larger group of over 300 men, away from a “safe area” on 13 July 1995, effectively handing them over to Bosnian Serb forces, who killed the majority of those handed over. In July, the Hague District Court ruled that the Dutch state was liable for the loss suffered by the families of the more than 300 men and boys mentioned above, but not for the acts of the Dutch troops prior to the fall of Srebrenica, or the failure of those troops to hold the “safe area”.

UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

In November, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Netherlands’ investigation into the fatal shooting by army personnel of an Iraqi civilian in June 2004 in Iraq violated his right to life and awarded the victim’s father compensation of €25,000.

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1. Netherlands: Do not return ICC witnesses at risk of death penalty, ill-treatment and unfair trials to the Democratic Republic of Congo (EUR 35/001/2014)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR35/001/2014/en
 2. Netherlands Supreme Court hands down historic judgment over Srebrenica genocide (PRE 01/449/2013)
www.amnesty.org/en/news/netherlands-supreme-court-hands-down-historic-judgment-over-srebrenica-genocide-2013-09-06

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand

Head of state: **Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Jerry Mateparae**

Head of government: **John Key**

Economic, social and cultural rights lacked equal legal protection to civil and political rights. Māori (Indigenous People) continued to be over-represented in the prison system. Family violence was widespread and levels of child poverty remained high.

LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL OR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The government did not respond formally to recommendations made in the 2013 Constitutional Advisory Panel report to improve the Bill of Rights Act.

New Zealand’s second UN Universal Periodic Review took place in January 2014 where concerns included the lack of human rights oversight in parliamentary processes. New Zealand rejected many recommendations to strengthen domestic human rights protections.¹ Economic, social and cultural rights lacked full protection in domestic legislation, and remedies for breaches remained inadequate.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention visited New Zealand in 2014 and expressed

concern that Māori made up 50% of the total prison population and 65% of the female prison population, despite being only 15% of the general population.

The Working Group underlined the inadequacy of legal protections for 17-year-olds, considered adults under criminal law, and criticized New Zealand's reservation to Article 37(c) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the detention of youth and adult offenders in the same facilities.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The 2013 Technical Report on Child Poverty found that 27% of New Zealand children remained in poverty. Māori and Pacific Island children were disproportionately represented in child poverty statistics, highlighting systemic discrimination.

Violence against women and children remained high. Māori were over-represented as both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 aimed to protect children from violence but there was no national plan of action to combat domestic violence.

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

New Zealand retained the option to enact legislation to utilize offshore immigration detention centres. Disparities remained in the quality of services provided to refugees who arrived under the humanitarian intake of UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, and those arriving in the country spontaneously and whose refugee claims were accepted by the government.

RIGHTS TO PRIVACY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

A 2013 report found the Government Communication Security Bureau (GCSB) illegally spied on individuals within New Zealand. Domestic legislation was subsequently amended to allow the GCSB to target New Zealanders' communications.

In 2014 the government passed the Countering Terrorist Fighters Legislation Act

which significantly impacted rights to privacy and freedom of movement. The extremely limited time period for consideration of the bill restricted public consultation and prohibited a robust assessment of compliance with international human rights standards.²

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1. New Zealand rejects international recommendations to address inequality (Press release)
www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/new-zealand-rejects-international-recommendations-address-inequality-2014-0
 2. Joint statement on the Countering Terrorist Fighters (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014 (Public statement)
www.amnesty.org.nz/files/NEW-ZEALAND_Joint-Statement-on-Countering-Terrorist-Fighters-Bill.pdf

NICARAGUA

Republic of Nicaragua

Head of state and government: **Daniel Ortega Saavedra**

Changes introduced by the government to the Comprehensive Law against Violence against Women raised serious concerns. The total ban on abortion remained in place.

BACKGROUND

Amendments to the Constitution entered into force in February, allowing the President to be elected with a simple majority. Restrictions on consecutive presidential re-election were also lifted.

In May, the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture expressed deep concern at the situation of people deprived of liberty in the country. Nicaragua's human rights record was assessed under the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The state accepted recommendations relating to discrimination against Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent but rejected calls for the decriminalization of abortion and to accede