

Masuku, and eight others facing charges under both laws in three separate trials. The application was due to be heard in the High Court in March 2015.

The trial of Mario Masuku and youth leader Maxwell Dlamini was due to begin in February 2015. They were charged with sedition and remanded in custody in connection with slogans they allegedly shouted at a 2014 May Day rally. There was considerable concern at Mario Masuku's deteriorating health after he was remanded into custody. At the end of October there was a renewed attempt to secure his and Maxwell Dlamini's release on bail. On 31 October the High Court judge scheduled to hear the application was withdrawn. The application was heard and rejected in November by Judge Mpendulo Simelane.

Seven members of PUDEMO, which is banned under the STA, were also facing trial at the end of the year on charges under the STA following their arrest at the High Court during the trial of Thulani Maseko and Bheki Makhubu in April.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Despite high levels of gender-based violence, the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill had not been enacted by the end of the year. The Bill had been under discussion and consideration by parliament since 2006. Women's rights and service-providing organizations appealed for the enactment of the Bill in November.

1. Swaziland: Deplorable sentences against journalist and lawyer stifle free speech (News story)
www.amnesty.org/en/news/swaziland-deplorable-sentences-against-journalist-and-lawyer-stifle-free-speech-2014-07-25

SWEDEN

Kingdom of Sweden

Head of state: **King Carl XVI Gustaf**

Head of government: **Stefan Löfven (replaced Fredrik Reinfeldt in October)**

An Egyptian national, who had been subjected to rendition from Sweden to Egypt in 2001, and subsequently tortured, was granted permission to return to Sweden. Investigations into an illegal Swedish police database of Romani people were ongoing. A governmental commission began to review shortcomings in rape investigations and prosecutions.

TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

In November, the UN Committee against Torture recommended that Sweden adopt a definition of torture into its Criminal Code which was consistent with the UN Convention against Torture.¹ The Committee also called on Sweden to refrain from using diplomatic assurances as a means of returning a person to another country where the person would face a risk of torture.

In April, Egyptian national Mohammed al-Zari was granted a residence permit in Sweden. He was detained with Ahmed Agiza in Sweden in December 2001 and subjected to rendition from Sweden to Egypt on a CIA-leased plane. Both men were subsequently tortured and otherwise ill-treated while being held in Egypt. In 2008, the Chancellor of Justice awarded both men financial compensation for the human rights violations they suffered. Mohammed al-Zari was released from prison in October 2003 without having been charged with any crime. The award of a residence permit partially fulfilled his right to redress for the human rights violations he suffered. However, an effective, independent investigation into these violations remained outstanding.

DISCRIMINATION

In September 2013, the CERD Committee expressed concern about racially motivated hate speech against visible minorities, and called on Sweden to effectively investigate, prosecute and punish all hate crimes. The Committee also raised concerns about racist and extremist organizations continuing to function in Sweden.

On the same day that the CERD Committee raised concerns about discrimination against Roma, a Swedish newspaper revealed that the Skåne police department was operating an illegal database, named Travellers or Nomads (*Kringresande*), containing details of about 4,000 Romani people, for no apparent reason other than their ethnicity.² Local and national authorities apologized publicly following the revelations. The matter was subsequently investigated by Sweden's Commission on Security and Integrity Protection (*Säkerhets- och integritetsskyddsmyndigheten*) and the National Police-related Crimes Unit (*Riksenheten för polismål*), as well as internally by the National Police Board (*Rikspolisstyrelsen*), the latter of which found no illegality. The matter was under investigation by the Justice Ombudsman, whose findings were expected in November.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

In August, following an initiative by the parliamentary Committee on Justice, the government announced that it would set up a commission to examine how rape investigations are dealt with by the police and justice system. The aim was to analyze high rates of attrition in investigating and prosecuting reported rapes, and to recommend improvements to the legal process in rape cases. The commission is expected to review the penal provisions on the offence of rape and to consider a requirement for genuine consent.

1. Sweden: Submission to the United Nations Committee against Torture: 53rd Session (EUR 42/001/2014)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR42/001/2014/en
2. Sweden: Skåne police database violates human rights of Romanis (EUR 42/001/2013)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR42/001/2013/en

SWITZERLAND

Swiss Confederation

Head of state and government: **Didier Burkhalter**

The Swiss National Commission for the Prevention of Torture (NCPT) and NGOs continued to raise concern about the use of force during deportations. "Popular initiatives" that were incompatible with international law were left unimplemented.

DISCRIMINATION

In March, the UN CERD Committee recommended that the government introduce a clear and comprehensive definition of direct and indirect racial discrimination covering all fields of law. The Committee further called on the government to establish effective data collection on discrimination and to take measures to prevent targeting of individuals for identity checks, searches and other police operations on the grounds of race and ethnicity.

In November, the Administrative Court in the canton of St Gallen ruled that a school's ban on a Muslim student wearing a headscarf was disproportionate.

In September 2013, residents of the canton of Ticino had voted to ban the wearing of the full face veil. The ban cannot enter into force without the approval of the Federal Parliament.