

The NDC recommended that universities and other higher education institutions should reserve 30% of places for the admission of women students, and that the new Constitution should require government agencies to operate a 30% quota for employing women.

REFUGEES' AND MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

Yemen dealt with a large flow of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants seeking safety, protection or economic opportunities during the year. Many entered Yemen after crossing by boat from Ethiopia and Somalia. Transit and reception centres were fully managed by UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, and its implementing partners without the government taking an active role.

DEATH PENALTY

The death penalty remained in force for a wide range of crimes. Courts continued to impose death sentences and executions were carried out. Prisoners on death row reportedly included dozens of juvenile offenders sentenced for crimes committed while they were under 18 years of age.

ZAMBIA

Republic of Zambia

Head of state and government: **Guy Scott (replaced Michael Chilufya Sata in October as acting President)**

The human rights situation continued to decline under the late President Sata's government. Fundamental freedoms came under attack, with political opponents, civil society and sexual minorities being systematically targeted.

BACKGROUND

Guy Scott became acting President following the death of President Sata in October. Tensions within the ruling Patriotic Front to elect a presidential candidate for the presidential by-election set for 20 January 2015 resulted in some violent protests by rival party supporters.

FREEDOMS OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION AND ASSEMBLY

In January, the leader of the opposition Alliance for Better Zambia party, Frank Bwalya, was arrested and charged with defamation for allegedly comparing President Sata to a sweet potato during a live radio broadcast. The authorities alleged that Frank Bwalya had used a Bemba (Bantu language) idiom used to describe a person who does not take advice. He was acquitted by the Kasama Principal Magistrate in July in a ruling that upheld his freedom of speech.

In February, a Lusaka court acquitted human rights activist Paul Kasonkomona. He had been charged in April 2013 with "soliciting for immoral purposes" after he urged the government to recognize the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people as part of a comprehensive fight against HIV/AIDS during a television debate. The court ruled that the state had failed to prove its case. The government indicated its intention to appeal against the ruling.

Also in February, 460 NGOs resolved not to register under the Non-Governmental Organizations Act of 2009, the provisions of which may be deemed unconstitutional due to restrictions on freedoms of association and movement. The government had announced in 2013 that NGOs failing to register under the Act would not be allowed to operate.

On 12 March, 49 young people were arrested by police during a march to commemorate Youth Day in the capital Lusaka. The young activists were arrested for wearing T-shirts and carrying placards bearing the message "Give us our constitution

now". They were separated and detained for at least six hours, before being cautioned and released. Four of the youths were reportedly assaulted by police officers who beat them with their fists during their detention at Lusaka Central Police Station, resulting in one sustaining a serious ear injury. The activists were allegedly forced to remove their T-shirts, leaving some, including young women, partially undressed.

RIGHTS OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX PEOPLE

Individuals were harassed, intimidated and prosecuted for their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. LGBTI individuals continued to live in fear as a result of homophobic attacks backed by the authorities. Following statements by senior government officials in 2013 urging people to report LGBTI people in their communities, individuals continued to suffer harassment and intimidation by their relatives, their communities and the police. Most suffered quietly with no support or protection from the state.

On 3 July 2014, a court in the town of Kapiri Mposhi acquitted two men charged under the country's anti-sodomy laws. James Mwape and Philip Mubiana were released after being held in custody for over a year. They denied the charge of "having sex against the order of nature". The judge found that the state had not proved its case beyond reasonable doubt. The two men, both aged 22, were first arrested on 25 April 2013, and detained until 2 May 2013, when they were released on bail. They were rearrested on 5 May 2013 and forced to undergo anal examinations - which violate the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment - by government doctors.

ZIMBABWE

Republic of Zimbabwe

Head of state and government: **Robert Gabriel Mugabe**

The executive continued to enforce old unconstitutional laws including those limiting the rights to freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Violations of economic and social rights continued, including forced evictions in rural and urban areas. Mass job losses occurred as companies closed due to an unfavourable economic climate. Intra-party violence was recorded in the ruling ZANU-PF party and the main opposition party. There were reports of torture by the police.

BACKGROUND

Despite adopting a new Constitution in 2013 most laws that were rendered unconstitutional by the new Constitution remained in operation. The economy continued to lose the traction gained during the period of the Government of National Unity (February 2009 to August 2013). Intra-party jostling for positions within President Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party came to a head towards the party's sixth congress in December 2014. The intra-party tension, mainly fuelled by the uncertainty over the succession of the 91-year-old President, resulted in violent clashes during faction-sponsored demonstrations. Nine provincial chairpersons lost their positions, including party stalwarts Joice Mujuru (who was also the country's Vice-President), Rugare Gumbo, Nicholas Goche, Webster Shamu and Olivia Muchena, in an unprecedented purge of party structures fronted by President Mugabe's wife, Grace Mugabe. The purge created a sense of uncertainty and government ministers were split into two main factions.