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Update on the Current Process for Licence Termination?

Prison Reform Trust: - IPP: How Will the Changes Affect You?

On 4th December, the Government tabled amendments to its Victims and Prisoners Bill to reform the Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) licence. These amendments have been agreed to by MPs and are now part of the bill. If and when the bill is enacted and these changes come into force, they will provide earlier opportunities for people serving IPP sentences in the community to bring the sentence to an end by having their licence terminated.

What is the current process for licence termination? Under current rules, people serving an IPP sentence are automatically referred to the Parole Board to have their licence considered for termination once 10 years have passed since they were first released on licence. This happens even for people who have been recalled to prison within this period. If the Parole Board decides to terminate the licence, this means that the person is no longer serving any part of the IPP sentence and can no longer be recalled to prison on that sentence. If, at the point of referral, the individual is in custody serving a recall against their IPP sentence, there is no licence for the Parole Board to terminate. However, the referral is still made and the Parole Board decides if the licence can be terminated when a future decision to release is made. If the Parole Board decides that it is not yet safe to terminate an IPP licence, the case is automatically considered again by the Parole Board every 12 months after this.

When will the Parole Board review my licence under the proposed changes? The proposed changes will reduce the qualifying period for an IPP licence termination review by the Parole Board from 10 to three years. This means that once three years have passed since you were first released on licence for an IPP sentence, you will be automatically referred to the Parole Board by the Secretary of State for a licence review. This will happen even if you have been recalled in that three-year period, unless you are currently in prison at the three-year point. Whether the licence is terminated at the review will be a decision of the Parole Board based on an assessment of risk. Whereas the current test asks the Parole Board to consider whether the licence needs to stay in place, the new test will be weighted more in favour of termination – it will say that the Parole Board should terminate the licence unless there is a clear need for it to stay.

What will happen if the Parole Board does not terminate my licence at the three-year point? If the Parole Board does not terminate your licence after the three-year point, your licence will be automatically terminated after you have spent a further two years in the community without being recalled or sent to prison for any other reason. Under the proposed changes, the Parole Board will no longer review licences every 12 months following an unsuccessful review at the three-year point.

What will happen if I am in prison at the three-year point? If you are in prison at the three-year point, your case will not be considered by the Parole Board for termination as it would be under current rules. However, the proposed changes will allow the Parole Board to release someone unconditionally if they meet both the test for release and licence conditions are not deemed necessary to protect the public. If this does not happen, when you are released you will then have to spend a period of two years in the community without being recalled, after which your licence will be terminated automatically.

What will happen if I am recalled before my licence is terminated? If you are recalled before the three-year point, you will still be automatically referred for a termination review unless you are in prison at the time the referral is due to happen. If the Parole Board decides against terminating your licence

after three years, but you are recalled before you have served a further three years in the community, those two years will begin again once you are released from custody.

How will the changes apply to people already serving an IPP on licence in the community? The legislation will apply to people who are already on licence for an IPP sentence in the community. If you were first released more than three years ago but less than five years ago, you will be eligible for consideration by the Parole Board to have your licence terminated. If you were first released five or more years ago and have been in the community without being recalled for the last two or more years, your licence will be terminated automatically when the law comes into force.

How will the changes help people serving IPP sentences who have never been released? Unfortunately, these changes will do little to help the many people who are currently post-tariff but have never been released. The Prison Reform Trust (PRT) supports the recommendation by the Justice Select Committee for the resentencing of people on IPPs, and continues to advocate for changes to the IPP sentence. We also seek to address the barriers to progression faced more widely by people serving indeterminate sentences.

When will the new rules come into force? It is important to understand that these changes are not yet law. The changes have been made by way of Government amendments to the Victims and Prisoners Bill. This means that the changes have the backing of the current Government. However, for a Bill to become law, it must be agreed to by both Houses of Parliament. The Bill has completed its progress through the House of Commons and is expected to complete its passage through the House of Lords by Easter 2024. Unfortunately, this means that there is still a possibility that things could change before the Bill becomes law – for example, if a General Election is called before the Bill has completed its passage through Parliament, this could result in the Bill not being passed. If the Bill is passed and becomes law, it may still take several months to come into force.

Escape of Daniel Khalife From HMP Wandsworth

Parliament: I wish to inform the House that the independent investigation into the alleged escape of Daniel Khalife from HMP Wandsworth on 6 September 2023 has concluded. Escapes from the prison estate are extremely rare—there were 16 escapes from establishments between April 2010 and March 2023, compared with 146 escapes from establishments between April 1997 and March 2010. However, it is vital for both public protection and confidence in the criminal justice system that our prisons are secure. On 7 September, I committed in the House that, in addition to the immediate internal investigations and reviews into the circumstances of the alleged escape, the categorisation decision, the placement and categorisation of all prisoners in HMP Wandsworth and the location of all those in the custodial estate charged with terrorism offences, I would commission an independent investigation into the incident.

I appointed Keith Bristow QPM to lead this and asked him to consider whether the relevant protocols were in place at HMP Wandsworth and whether there were the means to apply them, including whether staffing was sufficient to do so, and whether and how they were applied at the time of the event. I also asked Mr Bristow to consider the facts of the case, including the categorisation of the prisoner, risk assessments and decisions around Toggle showing location of Column 6WS employment in the prison, the processes and actions that enabled access to materials that might have facilitated the alleged escape, the implementation of the counting protocol, and relevant security measures, including checks relating to the delivery vehicle. I asked him to produce findings and recommendations which can be implemented at HMP Wandsworth and, where relevant, in the wider prison estate. On behalf of the Government, I would like to thank Mr Bristow for his rapid, clear and thor-

ough work. Due to the ongoing criminal proceedings, and the need to protect prison security, it would not be appropriate for me to provide a detailed account of the investigation's findings and recommendations at this time. The criminal investigation could also uncover further evidence and we will keep this under close review. However, I can assure the House that I, and the Government, take the findings and the recommendations of the independent investigation extremely seriously and I am committed to minimising the likelihood of any such incident occurring in the future. Mr Bristow has made recommendations of both an operational and strategic nature. In addition to the measures taken immediately after the alleged escape to ensure the security of the prison, and further improvements in the weeks since in response to internal investigations and reviews, I have asked HMP Wandsworth, HM Prison and Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice to take forward the independent investigation's recommendations as a matter of priority. I am committed to sharing what further information I can when the criminal proceedings conclude.

Blasphemy Is Bogus

If any god, prophet, or saint were to show up in a courtroom and testify about the injury they claimed to have suffered due to some person's words, then I might – might – be convinced blasphemy is a crime. Until that happens, however, I will consider all such charges bogus. There is simply no “there” there in blasphemy. No victim, no harm, no nothing. It's a manufactured crime with zero foundation in objective reality. Unfortunately, despite being absurdly invented, the “crime” of blasphemy is used to punish innocent people in many parts of the world, encompassing many different faiths. People can receive fines, prison sentences, and even death sentences. One particularly egregious example comes from Indonesia, where 74-year-old Apollinaris Darmawan has spent more than three years behind bars under the country's “blasphemy” law. His story demonstrates just how nonsensical such laws are everywhere. Darmawan is a retired railway company executive who converted from Islam to Catholicism. He wrote a book and social media posts criticizing Indonesia's Muslim leaders and Islamic law. In August 2020, a Muslim mob stormed his home in Bandung, West Java, dragged him into the street, and stripped him. Police came to Darmawan's rescue but then took him into custody and charged him with the “crime” of blasphemy. He was accused of defaming Islam and insulting the Prophet Muhammad. In December 2020, the Bandung district court convicted Darmawan, sentencing him to five years in prison and handing him a fine equivalent to US\$ 55,000. It's not his first time either: Darmawan spent several years behind bars for an earlier blasphemy conviction, as well.

As my colleague and Indonesia expert Andreas Harsono details, his prosecution and conviction violate Darmawan's rights to freedom of expression and belief, which are protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other treaties ratified by Indonesia. And, of course, it's not just one case nor just one country that's the problem here - the basic concept of “blasphemy” laws is inherently flawed. The UN Human Rights Committee, which provides authoritative interpretations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has made it clear: “blasphemy laws ... are incompatible with the Covenant.” Such laws may not “discriminate in favour of or against one or certain religions or belief systems, or their adherents over another, or religious believers over non-believers. Nor would it be permissible for such prohibitions to be used to prevent or punish criticism of religious leaders or commentary on religious doctrine and tenets of faith.”

Yes, some people might be offended by what somebody says about their sacred ideas or holy objects. I get that, and I wouldn't go out of my way to insult anyone's religious beliefs. I would personally consider it rude to do so. But, at most, that's all it would be: rude. And if we're only allowed to say what offends no one, then we hardly have freedom of speech, right?

Police Forces Failing to Perform Clare's Law Checks

Maria Siti, Justice Gap: Police forces across England and Wales are refusing to provide background checks of suspected abusers. More than of 20,226 requests for background checks were rejected during a six-month period. Refusal to disclose background checks on suspected domestic abusers is leaving women's lives at risk. The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) was implemented in March 2014 across all police forces in England and Wales, which allows police to release information to protect a potential victim of domestic violence. It is also known as also known as “Clare's Law”, after Clare Wood, 36, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend. Under this scheme, potential victims have “a right to ask” and “a right to know”.

The Independent reported that one woman, Hilary Stinchcombe has claimed that the lives of her daughter and granddaughter, Ella Dalby, 11 could have been saved by a Clare's Law disclosure. Laura Mortimer, 31, and Ella Dalby, 11, were stabbed 42 times at their home in May 2018 by Mortimer's partner, Christopher Boon. Boon had previously been given a suspended sentence months for assaulting a partner and her mother. Ms Stinchcombe, claimed that the Gloucester police had misapplied the rules and wrongly denied the family's application. The Observer reports that significant variations were observed in the execution of Clare's law. The rate of disclosure in England and Wales has fallen from 47.9% in 2019 to 38.5% in the year to March 2023, with some forces fulfilling requests in up to 75% of cases.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary found that Merseyside Police went far beyond the 28-day limit and took up 90 days in one case to disclose information following a Clare's law request. Wiltshire Police Force have identified failures to disclose information dating back to 2015, leading to an urgent review of 3,500 cases. Alex Davies-Jones, Labour's shadow minister for domestic violence said that missed opportunities to protect victims of domestic violence comes at a cost of losing lives, and “far too many have already been lost.” Domestic abuse commissioner for England and Wales, Nicole Jacobs, said that refusing applications means that “opportunities to protect victims” were “being missed”.

Placement of Mentally Ill Individuals In Prison System Violation of Article 3 & 5 § 1

In Chamber judgment¹ in the case of *Miranda Magro v. Portugal* (application no. 30138/21) the European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been: 1) a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment) of the European Convention on Human Rights, and 2) a violation of Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security). The case concerned Mr Miranda Magro's preventative detention, which had been ordered by the courts following a finding in 2019 that he was not criminally responsible for a number of alleged offences owing to his mental disorder (having been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in 2002). The Court found in particular that there had been a failure to ensure appropriate care to Mr Miranda Magro during his detention, which had implications for his health. It also found that his detention in a prison facility – inappropriate for a mentally ill person – without adequate care had caused confusion and fear, in violation of his rights. The Court held under Article 46 (binding force and execution of judgments) that the violations were not attributable solely to Mr Miranda Magro's personal circumstances, but were the result of a structural problem. It urged the Portuguese State to ensure appropriate living conditions and suitable and individualised treatment to mentally ill individuals.

Principal facts: The applicant, Rui Miguel Miranda Magro, is a Portuguese national who was born in 1975 and lives in Évora (Portugal). Mr Miranda Magro was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in 2002. In September 2019 he was found guilty of, but not criminally responsible for, criminal dam-

age, making threats and sexual harassment. The Évora Criminal Court ordered his preventative detention for a maximum of three years in a psychiatric facility. However it suspended that order on the condition that he undergo the necessary psychiatric treatment at the Espírito Santo Hospital in Évora. As Mr Miranda Magro had missed some appointments or had not seen a specialist when at the appointments, and further serious criminal allegations had been made against him, the authorities concluded that he was in a vulnerable situation. As a result, in February 2021 the Criminal Court concluded that he had broken the terms of the suspension of his preventative detention, and ordered his confinement. In April of that year owing to a shortage of space at the Júlio de Matos Hospital in Lisbon, he was placed in the psychiatric unit of the Caxias Prison Hospital to await admission outside the prison system.

On an unspecified date Mr Miranda Magro's brother lodged a habeas corpus application with the Supreme Court of Justice, claiming that his brother was being unlawfully detained at the Caxias Prison Hospital. That was dismissed, but the Supreme Court did note the temporary nature of his detention in the Caxias Prison Hospital and that he should be urgently transferred to a healthcare facility outside of the prison system. As regards conditions and care in the Caxias Prison Hospital, the applicant submitted that he had not received the medical treatment required by his mental health condition but had instead been treated with excessive medication which had long-lasting effects. He asserted that the prison hospital was not a mental-health institution and had not been an appropriate facility in which to hold him, and had led to a deterioration in his condition.

The Government stated, however, that Mr Miranda Magro had received appropriate care. There had been an agreed treatment plan carried out by a multidisciplinary team. He had received the correct medication and had been able to take part in activities while in detention, and to maintain contact with his brother. Furthermore, the conditions of his detention had been adequate, and he had not been subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment. On 18 October 2021 Mr Miranda Magro was transferred to the Sobral Cid Psychiatric Clinic, a mental-health facility in Coimbra.

Article 3: The Court noted the disagreement between the parties as to Mr Miranda Magro's conditions of detention. However, the Court did reference the relevant reports by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the United Nations, which highlighted mental-health-related issues as one of the main challenges facing the prison system in Portugal. The CPT, in particular, stated that such patients did not have "an adequate therapeutic environment". As to the Caxias Prison Hospital, it was intended for the temporary detention of regular inmates with mental-health problems, not for permanent care.

The Government had failed to provide any evidence of an individual treatment plan for Mr Miranda Magro and failed to refute his consistent allegations as regards the level of care received. The nature of his condition had rendered him more vulnerable than the average detainee and his detention may have exacerbated to a certain extent his feelings of distress, anguish and fear. The failure of the authorities to provide him with appropriate assistance and care had unnecessarily exposed him to a risk to his health and had to have resulted in stress and anxiety. Overall, the Court therefore concluded that there had been a violation of Article 3.

Article 5: It was not disputed that Mr Miranda Magro had been deprived of his liberty and that Article 5 was applicable. The detention had been "prescribed by law", as confirmed by the Portuguese Supreme Court, and had been ordered owing to the risk to others. Again, the Court noted that the Caxias Prison Hospital, where Mr Miranda Magro had been held for about six months, was not part of the healthcare system. It reiterated that keeping detainees with mental illnesses in the psychiatric ward of ordinary prisons pending their placement in a

proper mental-health establishment without the provision of sufficient and appropriate care was not compatible with the protection guaranteed by the Convention for such individuals. The care, beyond basic care, and the environment had not been appropriate for Mr Miranda Magro's situation. *His detention in a prison facility environment must have aggravated his state of confusion and fear. There had therefore been a violation of Article 5 § 1 of the Convention.*

Just satisfaction (Article 41): The Court held that Portugal was to pay the applicant 34,000 euros (EUR) in respect of non-pecuniary damage.

Mr D's, Conditions of Imprisonment - Violation of Article 3

The case concerned the applicant's time in prison between 2008-17, during which he allegedly suffered ill-treatment as a result of the informal caste system into which the inmates were organised and the alleged failure of the authorities to tackle the problem. Mr D was in the lowest caste (the *kreisie*). He relies on Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment) of the European Convention.

Between 2008 and 2017 the applicant Mr D served a sentence of imprisonment, initially in Valmiera Prison and Rīga Central Prison and, after 16 July 2013, also in Šķīrotava Prison. It transpires from the applicant's submissions to the domestic authorities and the Court that, within the prison environment, an informal hierarchy divided the inmates into three distinct groups, or castes: the "blatnie" (the highest caste), the "mužiki" (the middle caste), and the "kreisie" (the lowest caste). The applicant found himself in the lowest caste because of the sexual nature of the offence he was convicted of.

Prisoners in the lowest caste faced a range of restrictions regarding their use of communal facilities. They were not permitted to sit on the same benches, nor to walk or stand in the same areas as other prisoners. Specific toilets, sinks, and dining areas were designated solely for their use. Moreover, they were prohibited from mingling with other inmates in the queue to the prison shop or the medical department. Participation in communal sporting activities or sharing shower facilities was also forbidden. They had to sleep on the least comfortable beds, located towards the edges of the living areas, and could not go into areas reserved for the other two castes. In addition to these restrictions, inmates of the lowest caste were tasked with performing undesirable or menial labour on behalf of other prisoners, which included standing guard, cleaning rooms, and laundering clothes.

On 27 January 2014 the applicant lodged a formal complaint with the Prison Administration, alleging that the informal inmate hierarchy existing in Šķīrotava Prison in particular was infringing on his human rights. He detailed experiences of discrimination, such as being verbally abused and pushed out of queues at the medical unit by inmates belonging to "higher castes". In response, the Prison Administration conducted an inspection and reported, on 27 February 2014, that, when questioned, the applicant failed to name specific persons, dates, or corroborating facts to support his allegations. They advised him to submit another, more detailed complaint if he maintained that his rights were violated.

ECtHR Conclusion - The fact that the applicant chose to comply with the demands and limitations set by the informal hierarchy, rather than opposing or challenging them, does not undermine the Court's conclusion regarding the degrading nature of these dehumanising practices. The applicant's emphasis on his own resilience, rather than on the tangible effects of the hierarchical norms imposed, provides the Court with insight into the coping mechanisms that prisoners in his situation may employ. While such mechanisms could potentially mask the full extent of emotional distress, it is imperative to recognise that the lack of overt confrontation and violent incidents does not lessen the reality of the underlying suffering. Life in such a hostile environment often results in a continuous accumulation

of stress, particularly for individuals subjected to inequity, and not solely from immediate or chronic threats. The mere anticipation of such threats can also cause enduring mental harm and anxiety of an intensity exceeding the level of stress caused by detention under normal conditions.

In the light of the above, the Court finds that the applicant's physical and social segregation, coupled with restricted access to basic prison resources and denial of human contact, has led him to endure mental anxiety that must have exceeded the unavoidable level of suffering inherent in detention, even though he has not been subjected to physical violence (compare S.P. and Others, cited above, § 96). That situation which he endured for years on account of his position in the lowest caste of prisoners in an informal hierarchy amounted to a treatment prohibited under Article 3 of the Convention.

Prisoners: Suicide

Lord Harries of Pentregarth: To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the number of suicides in prison. - Lord Bellamy: Every death in custody is a tragedy and we continue to do all we can to improve the safety of prisoners. We know that relationships between staff and prisoners plays an important role in preventing self-inflicted deaths in prisons and that is why we have announced additional investment in our workforce. As of 30 September 2023, there were 23,058 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Band 3-5 prison officers in post, an increase of 1,441 FTE since 30 September 2022. This means staff can provide more support for prisoners and better monitor the risk of harm. In addition to recruiting new officers, we are developing and phasing in a new safety training package for staff. It brings together information on related safety topics, including suicide and self-harm prevention, understanding risks, triggers and protective factors. This training is complemented by a revised version of the case management approach used in prisons to support people at risk of suicide or self-harm. We will continue to fund the Samaritans (£625,000 each year until March 2025) to deliver the Listener scheme where prisoners are trained to provide emotional support to each other. We have also worked with the Samaritans to design an additional support service for prisons in the period following a self-inflicted death, with the aim of reducing the risk of further deaths.

Human Rights Watch Report on the UK for 2023

Global leaders have failed to take strong stands to protect human rights during 2023, a year of some of the worst crises and challenges in recent memory, with deadly consequences.

The UK's human rights record is in significant decline. It has introduced laws that violate rights and aim to dismantle the international protection framework. The government is attempting to send asylum seekers who arrive to the UK irregularly, to Rwanda, a country that is not safe, and has proposed draconian immigration legislation that bans most asylum seekers from even claiming asylum. Rising food, rents, and energy prices, and inadequate social protections threaten the rights of people on the lowest incomes, including to food and housing. The UK government's efforts to act multilaterally to promote human rights obligations in some contexts, was undermined by its aggressive domestic anti-rights agenda and refusal to acknowledge its serious violation of rights in colonial contexts such as its ongoing crimes against humanity against the Chagossian people.

The Report Covers 12 Areas. Rule of Law and Human Rights - Asylum and Migration - Right to Social Security, Adequate Standard of Living - Right to Food - Right to Safe and Adequate Housing - Conflict-Related Abuses - Women's Rights - Racism and Ethnic Discrimination - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity - Covid-19 - Climate - Foreign Policy

The UK government in 2022 adopted laws that violate rights and proposed significantly weakening human rights protections in domestic law. The government signed an agreement to transfer asylum seekers who arrived irregularly in the United Kingdom to Rwanda, putting them at risk. Rising food, rents, and energy prices, and inadequate social protections threatened the rights of people on the lowest incomes, including to food and housing. The government failed to take meaningful steps to address institutional racism including in policing. Although the UK government worked with partners to press other states failing to uphold their human rights obligations, it did not consistently prioritize human rights in its foreign policy agenda and undermined international standards.

Rule of Law and Human Rights: Four laws adopted in a single week in April raised grave human rights concerns: an immigration law that dismantles key aspects of existing asylum and refugee protections, replacing them with a discriminatory system; a police law that restricts and increases penalties for protests; an election law requiring voter identification, likely to create disenfranchisement based on race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, and reducing the independence of electoral oversight; and a law limiting people's rights to judicially review social security, and immigration tribunal decisions. In June, following a flawed consultation process, the government announced legislation to repeal the Human Rights Act, which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law, replacing it with a weaker Bill of Rights. The proposals sought to diminish the influence of the European Court of Human Rights on domestic courts, to reduce public authorities' obligations to protect rights, and to limit the responsibility of the UK authorities to protect rights outside UK borders. The proposed legislation attracted widespread criticism, including from domestic civil society groups, United Nations experts, and the Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights. At time of writing, the status of the plans was unclear following changes to the prime minister and cabinet ministers in September and October.

Asylum and Migration: In April, the UK and Rwandan governments signed an agreement, allowing migrants and asylum seekers arriving by irregular means into the UK to be sent to Rwanda where their cases would be determined, undermining the refugee protection system. In June, the European Court of Human Rights issued three decisions temporarily halting the UK's plans for the first such transfer flight. The plan's legality was subject to a court challenge at time of writing. The Nationality and Borders Act, enacted in April, discriminates against and criminalizes those seeking asylum through irregular routes, provides for pushbacks at sea and offshore processing, and increases powers to strip citizenship. It was roundly criticized by the UN Refugee Agency, UN experts, and more than 200 domestic civil society groups. The UK continued to lack a time limit on immigration detention.

Right to Social Security, Adequate Standard of Living: People with lower incomes were particularly hard hit by a cost-of-living crisis precipitated by sharp increases in energy and food prices, and slow government efforts to mitigate these impacts. Inflation reached a four decade high of 10.1 percent in July, with single-parent households (overwhelmingly women-led), households led by a Black, Bangladeshi or Pakistani person, and single pensioners worst affected. A study projected that inflation would reverse the modest decrease in child poverty recorded the previous year. Restrictive social security policies continued to negatively impact the right to an adequate standard of living, to food, and to housing for families with children and other recipients of social security support, including many people in paid employment. An overall cap on the amount of social security support a household can receive affected 123,000 families, while a cap on social security payments to larger families affected around 400,000 households and 1.4 million children. A below inflation increase in social security support levels in April's budget and a failure to reverse a 2021 cut to the main social security program left people who rely on social security worse off in real terms. The government refused to review disability-linked benefits, ignoring a July recommendation made by a parliamentary committee.

Right to Food: The country's largest food bank network, the Trussell Trust, said in March that it had distributed 2.1 million emergency food parcels to people in need, an 81 per cent increase since 2017. The Independent Food Aid Network reported in October that 91 percent of its member organizations had experienced an increase in demand since July, and that one in four was reducing the size of food parcels because their supplies had been affected. Official data on food security published in March showed single-parent households, households led by Black people, and people in social housing were more likely to be food insecure. Survey data gathered by the Food Foundation showed that nearly one in 25 adults now reported that they or someone in their household had gone a whole day without eating. People with disabilities and people receiving social security support were nearly four times more likely to be food insecure.

Right to Safe and Adequate Housing: Homelessness numbers rose, after pandemic mitigation measures such as eviction bans and increased support to house rough sleepers ended. Data from England and Scotland showed the end of the eviction ban in June 2021 and reduced support networks contributed to increasing homelessness. Data from England, published in July, showed that “no fault evictions,” a legal provision allowing a private landlord to evict a tenant without providing a reason, had increased dramatically during 2022. In response, the government published a consultation paper in June, which proposed ending the “no fault” loophole, among other measures that could better protect housing rights. Local authorities in England, particularly in Greater London, continued to over-rely on substandard “temporary accommodation,” including over the medium- to long-term, to address the shelter needs of people who would otherwise be completely unhoused. The overreliance on temporary accommodation is in part exacerbated by cuts to affordable housing programs.

An official inquiry into the June 2017 Grenfell Tower fire that killed 71 people concluded its public hearings and began preparing its final report. The government passed building safety legislation in April, and fire safety regulations for high rise residential buildings in May, implementing many recommendations from the inquiry's first phase, including greater oversight of building safety during planning, making landlords responsible for replacing dangerous cladding, and greater retrospective liability where homes are found to be unfit for habitation. However, the government refused to include a legal requirement for people with disabilities living in high-rise buildings to have personal evacuation plans, prompting strong criticism and legal action considering the deaths of 15 of the Grenfell Tower's 37 residents with disabilities in the fire.

Conflict-Related Abuses: Legislation relating to killings during the conflict in Northern Ireland continued to make its way through parliament. Rights groups and the Council of Europe's Commissioner of Human Rights raised serious concerns, particularly about proposals for a conditional amnesty for killings, and the inadequacy of a proposed review mechanism to satisfy human rights obligations to investigate killings. Legislation introduced in June to replace the Human Rights Act would ban all human rights claims relating to UK armed forces acting overseas, including abuse by soldiers, and by soldiers trying to enforce their human rights. The bill was suspended following the appointment of a new prime minister in September.

Women's Rights: In July, the UK ratified the Istanbul Convention, but did so with reservations that exclude from protection migrant women who depend on their abuser—leaving them without access to crucial support and a pathway to escape violence—and limit the possibilities of prosecution for violence committed outside UK territory. The convention took effect on November 1. Women and girls in Northern Ireland continue to face significant obstacles and variation between hospital trusts in accessing abortion services. In August, Scottish legislation came into force requiring local authorities and education providers to ensure availability of free products to manage menstruation for all.

Racism and Ethnic Discrimination: An April government policy paper on race and ethnic disparities, asserting that institutional racism had disappeared, received widespread criticism from anti-discrimination groups. During the year, multiple reports evidenced the negative impact of institutional racism in various areas of life, including at work (particularly for women of color), in pre-natal and maternity care, the broader medical system, sport, policing, and mental health detention. The independent police oversight mechanism for England and Wales published recommendations in April for police to address the disproportionately discriminatory use of “stop and search” powers, citing data that Black people were seven times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people. In April, Parliament approved new anti-trespass powers specifically linked to informal settlements, likely to negatively impact Roma, Gypsy, and Traveller people.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: The UK dropped from 10th to 14th in ILGA's 2020 European ranking reflecting the negative climate for transgender people, with trans and non-binary people continuing to face an often-hostile environment in the media and public debate, as well as inadequate legal protections. An independent review into health services related to gender identity for children and young people in England published an interim report in February, indicating a need to improve the quality of care and increase capacity. In March, Scotland's authorities proposed legislation to make it easier to obtain legal gender recognition without the medical diagnosis and two-year wait required elsewhere in the UK. UK national government plans to reform gender recognition are stalled.

Covid-19: A public inquiry into the UK authorities' handling of the Covid-19 pandemic began preliminary public hearings in October. The inquiry is tasked with identifying lessons learned to inform future pandemic responses. At time of writing, more than 200,000 people had died of Covid in the UK. 200,000 people have died of Covid in the UK.

Climate: The United Kingdom is among the top 20 emitters of the greenhouse gases responsible for the climate crisis, which is taking a growing toll on human rights around the globe. Prior to hosting the 2021 UN climate conference, the UK embraced ambitious emissions reduction targets—through its national climate plan commitment to reduce emissions by 68 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, and a legislated target to reach a 78 percent reduction by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. According to the Climate Action Tracker, the UK's 2030 target is aligned with the Paris Agreement goal to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. However, current programs are not on track to reach net-zero targets. The UK still produces over 40 percent of its electricity from gas, despite significant renewable energy potential. The reliance of UK homes on gas for heating and insufficient government programs to increase energy-efficiency measures are exacerbating the climate crisis and putting the right to an adequate standard of living at risk for millions of low-income people.

In July, temperatures in the UK exceeded 40°C for the first time on record, leading to a surge in hospitalizations and fires. Scientists calculated the July heatwave was made at least 10 times more likely by climate change. According to the UK's climate advisory body, the UK's climate adaptation efforts have not kept pace with the country's increasing climate risks, including risks of heat-related health impacts and climate impacts on infrastructure and food security. More than a year after a regulation was adopted by Parliament to restrict imports of agricultural commodities linked to illegal deforestation or the violations of laws pertaining to the ownership or use of land, the government is yet to determine essential aspects of the legislation's implementation such as enforcement mechanisms and the commodities that are covered. Results from a public consultation, which were released in June, show overwhelming support from the public for the legislation to be implemented promptly and ambitiously.

Foreign Policy: The UK has shown its commitment to addressing several key issues, including

taking concerted action with partners to press states failing to uphold their human rights obligations. However, in the face of competing policy interests, the UK has failed to consistently prioritize human rights in its foreign policy agenda and undermined international standards. The UK continued to take coordinated action in response to violations committed by the military junta in Myanmar. In 2022, it sanctioned 6 individuals and 12 entities, and joined its G7 partners in condemning the junta's executions of 4 pro-democracy activists. In August, the UK took an important step to tackle impunity by announcing its intention to intervene in The Gambia's case before the International Court of Justice alleging Myanmar's atrocities against the Rohingya violated the Genocide Convention. As penholder on Myanmar at the UN Security Council, the UK proposed a resolution responding to abuses stemming from the February 1, 2021 military coup. The UK continued to lead in seeking to hold the Chinese government accountable for its ongoing violations and crimes. It consistently pressed China to grant the UN high commissioner for human rights full and unfettered access to Xinjiang, and called on UN member states to, at minimum, debate the Commissioner's long-awaited report on Xinjiang. The UK also joined the G7 in underscoring its grave concerns with the erosion of civil and political rights in Hong Kong; but has not yet sanctioned implicated officials.

The UK responded robustly to Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, supporting accountability efforts, including mobilizing countries to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court prosecutor for investigation, imposing sanctions, and establishing a Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine scheme. However, it failed to waive visa requirements for those fleeing Ukraine and replicate the schemes for Afghans. The resettlement schemes for Afghans are still not functioning properly, with many at-risk Afghans unable to find safety in the UK. The April agreement between the UK and Rwanda allows the UK to expel people there, despite most never having set foot in Rwanda and it not being a safe third country for asylum seeker transfers. In June, the UK prime minister attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Rwanda and failed to publicly raise any human rights concerns. Through its Gulf Strategy Fund, the UK provides support and funding to several regimes involved in egregious human rights violations, including Bahrain.

The UK played a largely positive role at the Human Rights Council, including leading on Sri Lanka, tabling a resolution ensuring continued reporting on Sudan, supporting the establishment of a commission of inquiry to investigate abuses in Ukraine, a special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Russia and a group of experts on Nicaragua, and joining a statement on China. It supported a resolution on women and girls in Afghanistan and renewal of the independent expert on sexual orientation and gender identity. However, it continues to oppose the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, and voted against the resolution on racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia.

The UK played an obstructionist role at the World Trade Organization on a proposed waiver of intellectual property rules for the Covid-19 response. The text adopted in June 2022 failed to address barriers to increasing Covid-19 vaccine production and excluded tests and treatments.

Prisoners: Home Leave

Earl of Sandwich: To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to grant short periods of home leave over Christmas for non-violent prisoners who have demonstrated good conduct during their sentence. - Lord Bellamy: The Prison Rules in England and Wales provide that a prisoner may be allowed to leave prison for short periods on temporary licence (ROTL). The main purpose of ROTL is to aid resettlement and suitable, risk assessed prisoners may be

allowed out during the day to, for example, work, attend college, attend an interview or maintain/re-establish links with their family. They are also, once at the required stage of their sentence, allowed to apply for temporary release overnight for a maximum of four consecutive nights a month. The decision to allow temporary release is taken by the prison governor, on behalf of the Secretary of State, who must always balance the needs of the prisoner and the purpose of the ROTL applied for, against the need to maintain public safety and the public's confidence in the criminal justice system. Each decision is taken on a case by case basis to safeguard the public.

Inquest Opens Into 18-Year-Old's Death at HMP Styal

Annelise Sanderson was only 18 when she died by ligature at HMP Styal in December 2020. She is the youngest person to have died in a women's prison in 20 years. An inquest will now examine the circumstances. Annelise's death is one of 11 self-inflicted deaths at the prison since 2007, more than any other women's prison in England. Annelise grew up in Runcorn, Cheshire. A tomboy from an early age, Annelise was interested in biking and playing football. A passionate, loving and forgiving person, her family said she cherished the relationships of those to whom she was closest. Annelise had a complex history of mental ill health, self-harm and suicide attempts. She had spent time in local authority care and had experienced significant trauma. In June 2020, shortly after turning 18, Annelise was arrested after she had been witnessed trying to drink or pour petrol on herself at a petrol station and had assaulted emergency workers who tried to intervene. She was very unwell and was brought to A&E before being transferred to court. She was subsequently sentenced to 52 weeks in prison and was sent to HMP Styal. Upon arrival at the prison, her behaviour was described as volatile, and she was observed acting bizarrely and threatening staff. After three days, a safety plan for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm (known as an ACCT) was put in place. During one of her interactions with staff she was observed to have tied a ligature. Her ACCT was closed eight days later. On 22 December 2020, a prison officer found Annelise ligatured in her cell. Staff commenced CPR and an ambulance was called. She was pronounced dead shortly after. The inquest into her death will seek to explore the following issues: An overview of Annelise's mental health prior to entering the prison, including the handover from social services, during inductions to the prison and the assessment of her risk in June 2020. Mental health care whilst in prison, including the ACCT process, assessment and management of her risk to self, and information sharing around risk between organisations charged with her care. Annelise's state of mind in the days leading up to the final incident. Events of 21 and 22 December 2020 with a focus on her state of mind.

Deborah Coles, Director at INQUEST, said: "Deaths in HMP Styal in the early 2000's led to Baroness Corston's landmark review. This recommended the dismantling of women's prisons and replacing them with community alternatives. Here we are at the start of another inquest almost 16 years later asking the same fundamental question. Why was Annelise sent to prison in the first place? This inquest must answer why such a vulnerable teenager died when she was supposed to be in the care of the state. Deaths in Styal prison are at a record high with two self-inflicted deaths in December raising serious questions about women's health and safety." Michela Carini and Amy Ooi, at Bhatt Murphy Solicitors, said: "Annelise had turned 18 just two months before being sent to HMP Styal. She was extremely vulnerable and had a history of trauma and mental ill health. The death of someone like Annelise who was so obviously in need of support is shocking. Annelise's family now look to the Coroner for a full and thorough investigation into what action was taken by agencies charged with her care, and whether today measures are in place to keep vulnerable young people like Annelise entering the prison estate safe."