

London, United Kingdom
June 23rd. 2023

Reference: 2nd. Request Improvement Prison System Mauritius regarding respect the Human Rights Agreements between the State of Mauritius and various other parties.

LETTER TO COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS MAURITIUS

Dear Commissioner of Prisons,
Dear Mr. Jaganaden Rungadoo,

Unfortunately we did not received any reply back on our letter dated 18-06-2023 although the matter is extremely serious for those who are detained pre-trial under extremely poor circumstances.

We are writing to you with great concern about the poor prison conditions that are being experienced in Mauritius prisons. Reports show that the prison system is failing to adhere to human rights agreements that have been made with various parties.

Of particular concern is the plight of foreign prisoners who are currently detained for periods as long as 8 years without any charges having been lodged against them. As such, these prisoners are pleading for immediate intervention from yourself in order to address this situation.

The prisoners report to have no proper access to legal aid as the government lawyers do little or nothing to facilitate the trial's of the inmates. There are several detainees who have pleaded guilty by letter but still been held in remand custody without any trial or legal representation.

This has gravely affected the mental health of some detainees . I would like to mention that repatriation process for qualified detainees whose countries are treaty bound for prison transfers are been poorly implemented and considering that these detainees are foreigners who have no access to their families it would be in the interest of fairness that they are allowed to serve their sentences in the prison of their countries as per applicable treaties .

Reports indicate that prisoners are being deprived of basic amenities such as toiletries, including toilet paper, and even access to clean and warm water, causing side effects and loss of human dignity amongst the inmates. Furthermore, there is a lack of daily programming and educational activities, which is exacerbating the situation as prisoners are unable to keep themselves busy and learn new skills.

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Prisoners are also unable to keep in contact with their families due to the poor communication policy implemented in the prisons. Moreover, the respect of the fundamental rights of the prisoners is being disregarded as they are not allowed to communicate with their lawyers without guards listening in, leading to a situation where they are unable to adequately prepare themselves for their upcoming trials.

Given the various reports coming in on the state of Mauritius prisons, we plead that you do your utmost in respecting the human rights agreements that have been established and closed between the state of Mauritius and human rights organizations.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. We look forward to your urgent reply in the above matters.

Best regards,

NGO Foreign Prisoners Network

Paula Tierney
CEO