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Commentary.

If you take the road from Laura (a village named by U.S. sailors after the World War II movie star Lauren Bacall but misspelled) around the atoll to Majuro, the capitol of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, to your right is the Pacific Ocean splashing on the rocks and to your left is the lagoon, hosting half a dozen Japanese fishing boats waiting to load catches of prize yellow fin tuna and barracuda and swordfish. The road gets some shade from palm trees and pandanus, but the stretch of land is so narrow that you can usually see both ocean and lagoon by simply turning your head. And while it sounds like a postcard paradise, it is an Eden under threat from global warming: sea level rises and storm surges could merge the lagoon and the ocean, no matter what sea walls are built.

Small island nations are vulnerable. The Marshall Islands average of 2 meters (6 ½ feet) above sea level and already are subject to violent erosion. A sea level rise of even half a meter would put small island nations like Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and the Maldives “in existential danger,” according to the Climate Institute. <http://www.climate.org/publications/Climate%20Alerts/Autumn2009/HighStakesforSmallIslands.html> The president of Kiribati just bought eight square miles of land in Fiji to relocate his population as necessary <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/07/01/3455135/island-bought-land-to-escape-climate-change/> On these islands today there is no safe place for archives.

And yet the people who live on these threatened islands create and need to preserve the records of their governments and their larger documentary heritage. UNESCO recently adopted a policy paper on preserving documentary heritage (see below) and the climate conference in Paris secured promises from 196 countries to take measures to reduce global warming. But no one can predict how successful the Paris agreement will be, and it is prudent to assume that for the near future we will see continued global warming, with intensified storm surges, coastal flooding, and coastal erosion.

The problem of safety of archives in states threatened by climate change cannot be solved by the affected nations alone. UNESCO is thinking about archives at risk, and that effort should have a special track for the archives that are endangered by climate change. For the low-lying nations, the only obvious protection for their archives is to place a digital security copy of their most important records in another geographic location. In conversations in November with both UNESCO and the International Council on Archives, we discussed the possibility of convening a joint meeting of the national archivists of the nations in danger from countrywide climate change, with a special focus on island nations, and the institutions willing to be receiving institutions, in order to work out strategies for preservation. We need to move forward—
together. We need to move forward—now. Seas don't wait.

International news.

European Union/Interpol. The European Union (EU) Justice and Home Affairs Ministers decided that all EU external border control points will be “connected to INTERPOL’s global databases” which contain “details of some 6,000 individuals, with more than 50 per cent of the data coming from non-EU sources” and “details of nearly 54 million documents from 170 countries, including information on 250,000 passports reported lost or stolen—among them bank documents—by Syria and Iraq,” reported *Eurasia Review*. The ministers also called on “all EU states to carry out systematic registration, including

fingerprinting, of third country nationals illegally entering the Schengen area.” The Secretary General of INTERPOL said, “Every additional record made available across borders builds a new opportunity for Europe, but every piece of information left unexploited creates a new risk.” http://www.eurasiareview.com/23112015-eu-ministers-want-access-to-interpols-databases-at-border-points/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

International Criminal Court. The International Criminal Court released its 2015 “Report on Preliminary Examination Activities” with reports on ten “situations” and discussions of the sources available to the Court. <https://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/otp/OTP-PE-rep-2015-Eng.pdf>

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Officials of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and “Rwanda judicial leaders” met and discussed issues related to the closure of the Tribunal on December 31. *The New Times* reported, “Rwanda will not relent in its push to host the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) genocide archives even when the court closes.” The archives are in the custody of the Tribunal’s Residual Mechanism in Arusha, Tanzania, where ICTR was located, and are the property of the United Nations. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201511170537.html>

UNESCO. At its session in November the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously adopted without revision the draft of “a new normative instrument” on the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form. For the draft that was adopted, see <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002339/233916e.pdf>; for the press release see http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/unesco_general_conference_adopts_unanimously_a_new_normative_instrument_on_the_preservation_of_documentary_heritage/#.VmeLYN-ZMnE

United Nations. In an unusual action, two UN Special Rapporteurs and three UN Independent Experts issued a statement supporting a draft law under discussion in Argentina which would establish a “truth commission on economic complicity” to “assess the role and responsibility of business people for violations during the 1976-1983 dictatorship.” The officials said, “The creation of such a Commission represents a great opportunity to establish the truth and promote accountability for past violations committed with the complicity or active participation of the business sector.” In September scholars from the UN Human Rights Council and the Center for Legal and Social Studies in Buenos Aires published *The Economic Accomplices to the Argentine Dictatorship: Outstanding Debts*, an edited volume of case studies investigating the role played by such actors as Ford, Mercedes Benz, the press, and foreign banks during the dictatorship. <http://www.ohchr.org/FR/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16733&LangID=E>

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) issued a joint report on the “serious abuses and violations of international law” that occurred in Libya between 1 January and 31 October 2015. UNSMIL obtained the information from interviews with a variety of persons; in addition “where possible and relevant, UNSMIL reviewed medical records, legal complaints, court documents, photographic and audiovisual evidence, and other information.” http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/UNSMIL_OHCHRJointly_report_Libya_16.11.15.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The High Commissioner issued a report estimating that 70,000 stateless children are born annually: one every ten minutes. The report “highlights how not being recognized as a national of any country can create insurmountable barriers to education and adequate health care and stifle job prospects.” It emphasizes the critical need for birth registration: “Lack of birth registration creates a particularly high risk of statelessness for specific groups, such as refugees and migrants, as well as nomadic and border populations. Birth registration is therefore of vital importance to, for example, Syrian refugee children born in countries of asylum, many of whom have been separated from their parents or families; it would help prevent statelessness among these children, ensure they are recognized as Syrian nationals and allow them to return to Syria when conditions permit.” <http://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/i-belong-i-am-here/>

World Bank. The World Bank published a study of urbanization and property rights, which demonstrates their “joint dynamics” and that reducing the cost of “land tenure formalization” (that is, land titles) enhances the welfare of the population. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2015/11/25260752/urbanization-property-rights>

World/general news.

Big data. A technology specialist at the Ford Foundation reported that, contrary to the popular idea is that big data will help “companies, governments and organizations make better and more efficient decisions,” big data’s “application and use is not impartial or unbiased” and it “can actually perpetuate and exacerbate existing systems of racism, discrimination, and inequality.” <http://www.fordfoundation.org/ideas/equals-change-blog/posts/can-computers-be-racist-big-data-inequality-and-discrimination/>

Business archives. Following reports by human rights groups and the media about widespread labor and human rights abuses in the seafood industry in Thailand, Nestle, a giant Swiss food company, announced an action plan to make sure that the seafood it obtains is not coming from workers who suffer such abuses. The plan relies heavily on records; not only does it call for written contracts for workers on the fishing boats but also says Nestle will set up a system “to improve the traceability of seafood ingredients used by Nestlé, from fishing vessels to manufacturing sites. This system will begin implementing an identification system for fishing vessels. Commercial contracts will include a traceability goal as well as the implementation of a monitoring and remediation system on human rights and labour standards. This will help the identification of all potential origins (farms, mills, back to fishing vessels) of the seafood ingredients used by Nestlé. Once identified, these suppliers’ sources will then be continuously assessed and assisted to ensure that they meet our Responsible Sourcing Guideline standards.” <http://www.nestle.com/csv/rural-development-responsible-sourcing/responsible-sourcing/fish-seafood>

The New York attorney general began investigating Exxon Mobil to see if it “lied to the public about the risks of climate change,” reported the *New York Times*. The investigation began with a subpoena for “extensive financial records, emails and other documents.” For background see *HRWG News* 2015-10. <http://www.nytimes.com/images/2015/11/06/nytfpage/scan.pdf>

Electronic surveillance. *Der Spiegel* reported that the German intelligence agency BND “systematically spied” on “allies” including embassies of European Union member states, U.S. government offices, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Care International, and Oxfam. From the report it is not clear how much invasion of personal privacy this entailed. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-bnd-intelligence-spied-on-friends-and-vatican-a-1061588.html>

Land. A coalition of indigenous and human rights groups and researchers developed a mapping tool to show the land rights claims by indigenous groups who “have often been exploited due to lack of maps and data,” reported *Thomson Reuters Foundation*. The World Resources Institute, one of the participating organizations, said the LandMark map will demonstrate the existence of indigenous peoples and communities to persons “making decisions about climate change, economic development, poverty alleviation, and national resources conservation.” http://www.trust.org/item/20151110185408-cemon/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+Digest+11+Nov+2015&utm_content=Weekly+Digest+11+N

Landmines. *Thomson Reuters Foundation* also reported on a study by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines that showed that “the past year has seen disturbing steps backward in terms of new use of and casualties from land mines.” Rebel groups used the mines in 10 countries, the largest number since 2006. Three states (Myanmar, Syria and North Korea) also used mines. http://www.trust.org/item/20151126090219-tyvwf/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+digest+December+2+2015&utm_content=Weekly+digest+December+2+2015+CID_5a6573d5b51e6346b532ba9abb7ba2ef&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=Global%20landmine%20casualties%20increase%20Afghanistan%20largely%20to%20blame-study

Privacy. A study by researchers at three universities showed that “nearly three-quarters of Android apps and close to half of iOS apps are inappropriately sharing smartphone users’ information,” reported *securityintelligence.com*. <https://securityintelligence.com/news/university-researchers-show-how-widely-mobile-apps-share-users-personal-information/>; for the study, see <http://jots.pub/a/2015103001/>

Google has “deleted links to more than 500,000 websites from the European versions of its search engines” since the European court’s 2014 “Right to be Forgotten” ruling, reported *siliconbeat.com*. <http://www.siliconbeat.com/2015/11/24/98677/>

U.S. drone strikes. A Freedom of Information Act lawsuit by the New York Times and the American Civil Liberties Union asked for the release of about 10 documents regarding “targeted killing operations against noncitizens abroad.” However, a federal appeals court ruled “that the Justice Department could continue to conceal internal documents related to targeted killings in the fight against Al Qaeda,” reported the *New York Times*. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/24/us/politics/appeals-court-rules-targeted-killing-memos-can-stay-secret.html?_r=0

Bilateral and multilateral news.

Armenia/Turkey/Vatican. The Vatican published seven volumes containing “all the documents on the Armenian Genocide from the period of the Hamidian massacres till the post-Genocide year of Kemalist rule preserved in the Vatican closed archives,” reported a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. <http://asbarez.com/142152/documents-on-armenian-genocide-from-vatican-archive-published-in-7-volume-set/>

Australia/Indonesia/Timor-Leste. Indonesia occupied Timor-Leste from 1975 to 1999. *ABC News* reported that a researcher at the National Archives of Australia located a handwritten document from August 1975, given to the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesian, by a person working for an Indonesian “think tank.” Titled “Steps to Prevent Communist Agitators to Escape,” the document lists 19 prominent members of the independence political party in East Timor; the researcher and a former Australian consul in Timor characterize the document as a “death list.” <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/australian-received-east-timor-hit-list/6979268>

France/United States. Under an agreement between the U.S. and France, the U.S. State Department will administer a \$60 million fund provided by France to pay compensation to Holocaust survivors, their spouses and heirs “for the deportations of Jews and other prisoners to Nazi death camps aboard French trains,” reported *CBS News* and others. Applicants must provide “all available identifying information and documentation regarding the relevant individual’s deportation from France during the Second World War, including if possible the date, convoy, and place of departure and arrival of such deportation,” says the State Department’s web page on the program, adding, “Information about individuals who were deported from France during the Holocaust is available in the archives of the Mémorial de la Shoah, at <http://www.memorialdelashoah.fr/index.php/en/>. However, information about such individuals is not available on the archives of Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français (SNCF).” <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/french-to-pay-60m-in-reparations-to-holocaust-survivors-in-u-s-and-beyond/>; <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/hlcst/deportationclaims/index.htm>;

Kosovo/Serbia. The Kosovo War Crimes Research Institute published four books on the 1998-1999 war in Kosovo, including one on “Challenges of Researching War Crimes in Kosovo 1998-99.” A member of the Institute said the “wartime killings and expulsions had to be documented in order to prove genocide,” reported *BIRN*. Kosovo’s Justice Minister said the documentation in the books will help Kosovo bring a suit against Serbia for crimes committed during the war. http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-institute-publish-books-on-serbian-war-crimes-11-04-2015?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=39cac74cae-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_561b9a25c3-39cac74cae-311109073

United States/Vietnam. Between 1981 and 1990 five Vietnamese-American journalists were killed in the United States, all of whom worked for small publications serving the Vietnamese refugee community. No arrests were made. *ProPublica* and *Frontline* reopened the investigation into the murders, using “thousands of pages of newly declassified FBI documents, as well as CIA cables and immigration files.” The journalists concluded that a U.S.-based group called the National United Front for the Liberation of Vietnam, “a prominent group led by former military commanders from South Vietnam,” operated “a secret assassination unit in the U.S.” The Front tried “to restart the Vietnam War, even launching three failed invasions from the borders of Thailand and Laos” in violation of the U.S. Neutrality Act “which bars residents and citizens of this country from efforts to overthrow a foreign government.” <https://www.propublica.org/series/terror-in-little-saigon> ; <http://www.propublica.org/article/how-we-reported-murder-of-vietnamese-journalists>

National news.

Algeria. Algeria's former counter-terrorism chief, who was responsible for "leading a war against various groups that lasted over 20 years," was sentenced to five years in prison "for allegedly breaching orders and destroying documents," reported *Jurist*. <http://jurist.org/paperchase/2015/11/algeria-sentences-former-counter-terrorism-chief.php>

Australia. In July the Queensland government established a commission of inquiry into the previous state administration's closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre in Brisbane in January 2014 and the subsequent deaths of three "high-risk" teenagers. The commission asked all government departments to provide relevant documents. According to *ABC News*, the state's Education and Health Department told the commission that "many of Health's millions of emails need to be restored to modern readable form and until that happens emails can't be searched." The Department warned that the cost of restoration "is likely to run into millions of dollars," and the state's Premier said "the development of archive systems has not kept pace with email as the preferred means of communication." <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-19/emails-hard-to-recover-for-inquiry-into-barrett-centre-closure/6956420>

Bahrain. Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a report on torture and abuse of persons detained in Bahrain. It based its report on interviews with fourteen people, but most importantly compared what it learned with "similar torture methods" it documented in 2010 and the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry documented in 2011, again showing the importance of retaining records in human rights organizations. HRW noted that "little information is available" from the three bodies established in 2012 to reform detention practices (the Office of the Ombudsman in the Interior Ministry, a Special Investigations Unit in the Office of the General Prosecutor, and the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission). <http://www.eurasiareview.com/23112015-bahrain-detainees-tortured-abused-says-hrw/>; for the report see <https://www.hrw.org/node/283352>

Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust held a meeting to discuss the "main obstacle to enforcement of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act 2013," reported *New Age*. One participant noted that "the police don't enter the names of some of the detained persons in the police stations' registers" with the result that "these people remain untraced though they are in custody." <http://newagebd.net/173478/custodial-deaths-torture-political-interference-blamed/>

Brazil. The Brazilian newspaper *Folha* found that shootings by military police were "reclassified without notice in April" as "deaths caused by police intervention" which allowed the state governor of Sao Paulo to claim that the homicide rate was falling more rapidly than it actually has. "The change allowed 102 deaths to be removed from the statistics in just six months," including revenge attacks "that left up to 23 dead." The revenge attacks "often" involved "off-duty police, vigilantes and drug traffickers" who "frequently check victims' names or ask whether they have criminal records before shooting." <https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/4593-brazil-murders-by-military-police-disappear-from-official-statistics>

Mud from a dam that burst in November at an iron ore mine, killing 12 people and polluting an important river, "contained high levels of toxic heavy metals and other toxic chemicals," the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said. This contradicts claims by the mine operator, Samarco (owned jointly by the Anglo-Australian company BHP Billiton and Brazil's Vale) that the mud released "presented no danger to human health and did not contain water contaminants." The High Commissioner said its statement was based on "new evidence" but *The Guardian* said that the UN agency "did not identify the studies that were the basis for the evidence or say who conducted them." <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/nov/26/mud-from-brazil-dam-disaster-is-toxic-un-says-despite-mine-operator-denials>

Canada. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation opened at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. It is the permanent home for all statements and other records of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. <http://umanitoba.ca/nctr/>

China. China is considering entering some 13 million "unregistered people" into the "hukou" or household registration system, reported *RFA*. "The Ministry of Public Security in Beijing says the one percent of Chinese people who have been excluded from official records also lack access to fundamental social services, including education and healthcare." <http://www.eurasiareview.com/29112015-plan-to-register-13-million-unofficial->

chinese-sparks-doubts/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

Egypt. “More than 2,000 Egyptian women have been detained since the 2013 military coup against President Mohamed Morsi, the Revolutionary Coalition for Egypt’s Women said this week,” reported *The Daily Sabah*. The Coalition said “it has documented 20 cases of rape against female political prisoners in Egyptian jails.” http://www.dailysabah.com/mideast/2015/11/25/ngo-documents-20-cases-of-rape-against-female-political-prisoners-in-egypt?mkt_tok=3rkmnjwff9wsronvajpe+/hmjteu5z17u0kukcg38431ufwcdjcpmjr1yijscjgi+sldweyglv6sgfslhmma12z7glxxi=

Guatemala. The International Platform Against Impunity in Central America and MiningWatch Canada commissioned an investigation of the Escobal mining concession belonging to Tahoe Resources, a Canadian-U.S. mining company, and the public resistance to its mining operations. Using a variety of sources, including Canadian court records and the website of Tahoe Resources, the report provides details of the “quasi-military security strategy” adopted by Tahoe Resources and the “militarization of community life.” http://www.miningwatch.ca/sites/www.miningwatch.ca/files/solano-under_seige_report_2015-11-10.pdf

Hungary. During the renovation of an apartment in Budapest, about “6,300 registration forms used to register the Budapest Jewish population in 1944” were found in a cavity behind a wall, *AFP* reported. “The registration cards were sent to all homeowners, and had to be completed within 24 hours. The information on the forms included names of the owners, the tenants, rent figures, as well as the number of Christians and Jews.” <http://www.timesofisrael.com/thousands-of-holocaust-papers-found-in-budapest-apartment/>

Iraq. In late October Iraq passed a National Identity Card law. Its Article 26 says, as reported by *Al-Monitor*, “A non-Muslim may switch his religion according to the law. A minor is registered as Muslim following a conversion of any of the parents to Islam.” A representative of the Yazidi minority told *Al-Monitor* that the provision on conversion of the child “is reproduced from a law passed under Saddam Hussein.” The law provides no option for a Muslim to change religion. Religious minorities and civil society organizations staged several demonstrations and protest rallies against the law in various regions of Iraq in early November. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/11/iraq-law-id-discrimination-minorities.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=0fb32507ac-November_20_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-0fb32507ac-93088897

Kenya. Recurring drought is a problem in Kenya, causing farmers to dig deeper and deeper wells to obtain water. According to *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, “One key problem is lack of data . . . According to the Kenya Water Industry Association, not one of the country’s several water regulation agencies, including the Water Resources Management Authority, has reliable data that captures the distribution, quantity and quality of available groundwater.” UNESCO and Kenya are working on a four-year Kenya Groundwater Mapping Programme to build “a comprehensive database of the nation’s groundwater wealth.” The UNESCO director in East Africa said the project will both help manage ground water and help the Kenyan staff “learn how to use modern technologies such as GPS and geographic information systems . . . to gather and keep reliable data.” http://www.trust.org/item/20151030082053-5dgt/?source=jtOtherNews2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+Digest+04+Nov+2015&utm_content=Weekly+Digest+04+Nov+2015+CID_6f31f33f9b52f36c8b4a6ac81b028286&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=To%20arm%20against%20drought%20Kenya%20maps%20its%20water%20resources

Lebanon. During the 15 year Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) an estimated 17,000 people went missing. The International Committee of the Red Cross hopes to begin a DNA testing program, reported *Al-Monitor*, collecting samples from family members that will be stored in “a lab the ISF [Lebanon’s Internal Security Forces] will provide” to be matched with DNA from “skeletal remains found in mass graves all over the country.” However, the law that would “officially commission the DNA investigation” has not been passed and the project “is still waiting for ministerial approval to store samples with the ISF, whose crime lab will later create a database to identify the missing.” <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/11/lebanon-missing-civil-war-icrc-dna-program.html#ixzz3rgDG66aC>

Protests were held in central Beirut in early November “demanding the Lebanese law be amended to allow women married to foreigners to pass their nationality to their children,” reported *Middle East Monitor*. “The participants held banners that read ‘nationality is not identification papers’ and ‘the mother is the

origin’.” https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/22104-lebanese-women-demand-right-to-grant-citizenship-to-their-children?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRonva7Jc%2B%2FhmjTEU5z17u0kUKCg38431UFwdcjKPmjr1YIJT8NmI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFSLHMMa12z7gLXxI%3D

Peru. The government announced it will “create a national registry for the victims of forced sterilization in the 1990s,” reported *International Business Times*. The registry, said the government, “is meant to provide a legal framework to help implement services such as legal assistance, psychological treatment and holistic health for the victims.” For background see *HRWG News* 2015-05 and 06. <http://www.ibtimes.com/peru-victims-forced-sterilization-registry-not-political-calculation-against-2176008>

Saudi Arabia. In October the Saudi Shoura Council voted to amend the Civil Service Law to enhance women’s rights. A key change is that every female citizen will have an identification card and the “information of a husband and wife and their family members must be registered at a ministry of interior Civil Status Department office to ensure that the rights of a wife are not lost should the husband marry another women,” reported *Saudi Gazette*. Women must apply for an ID card “within 60 days of marrying” and provide “documentary evidence for the matrimonial relationship.” Women will also have the right to report births and deaths. http://saudigazette.com.sa/saudi-arabia/finally-saudi-women-have-their-own-id-cards?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRonva7Jc%2B%2FhmjTEU5z17u0kUKCg38431UFwdcjKPmjr1YIJTMNrI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFSLHMMa12z7gLXxI%3D

South Africa. On October 27, the 44th anniversary of Ahmed Timol’s death in detention in a police station, “a partial set of inquest documents kept by one of the [Timol] family’s legal representatives” was made public, reported *VOC News*. Timol was a well-known anti-apartheid activist. The documents were given to the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation; a nephew said he is working with the Foundation for Human Rights “exploring the possibility of reopening the inquest.” <http://www.vocfm.co.za/timol-inquest-papers-made-public/>

Spain. The legacy of the Franco years continues to stir Spanish politics, even 40 years after Franco’s death. The city of Valencia has a history commission, which is “likely to recommend changing 30 to 60 street names” that are linked to the Franco regime, reported the *New York Times*. Careful record-keeping of the changes to street names is critical, as these names are often needed to identify locations of and ownership of properties, particularly after a period of civil war or repression. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/20/world/europe/in-spain-civil-war-legacy-continues-to-divide-politics-and-streets.html?ref=europe&_r=1

Turkey. The Turkish army has amended the rules of pre-draft medical examinations, ending some practices that humiliated homosexual men and drew harsh criticism. Gay men “no longer need to provide visual proof of their homosexuality” to avoid the military draft, reported *Al-Monitor*. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/11/turkey-military-gay-rights-homosexual-picture.html?utm_source=Al-Monitor+Newsletter+%5BEnglish%5D&utm_campaign=5f63132eba-WR+November+21+2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28264b27a0-5f63132eba-93088897

The Izmir Bar Association’s Women’s Rights and Legal Support Office told *Hurriyet Daily News* that “the number of women who are subjected to violence and murder has increased, but so has the brutality of the violence.” The Office believes that between 5000 and 6000 femicides (killing of women) occurred in that last “few years,” but because “state bodies either cannot or do not disclose exact records” the data are obtained through “media monitoring.” A journalist has made an interactive “Femicide Map” of Turkey, and the chairman of the Izmir branch of We Will Stop Femicides Platform, an advocacy group, said it has “attended all femicide court cases around Turkey,” an example of monitoring as a source of documentation when records from the state are not available. http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/violence-against-women-in-turkey-increases-both-in-number-and-brutality.aspx?pageID=238&nid=91880&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRonva7Jc%2B%2FhmjTEU5z17u0kUKCg38431UFwdcjKPmjr1YIJSjgI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFSLHMMa12z7gLXxI%3D

United Arab Emirates. The Dubai Foundation for Women and Children said it has reports of “over 1,500 cases of domestic violence against women,” but the government has “no official figures” on such cases in Dubai. <http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/society/more-women-are-speaking-up-about-domestic-violence-1.1625716>

United Kingdom/Northern Ireland. The Police Service of Northern Ireland said it “wants to relinquish ownership of the thousands of legacy files in its ‘murder archive’ and hand them over to a new investigations unit being proposed under the Stormont House Agreement,” reported the *Irish Times*. The

police said the archives contain “almost 12,000 boxes relating to murders committed since 1968, including over 3,700 attributed to the Troubles.” <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/psni-wants-to-hand-over-murder-files-if-ni-talks-reach-deal-1.2415900>

United States. The Justice Department announced that it will share Federal criminal and civil records with ten Native American tribes in a trial program that may be expanded to other tribes. Called the Tribal Access Program for National Crime Information (TAP), it grants access to national crime information databases and will provide technical support “to tribes in analyzing their needs for national crime information and help provide appropriate solutions, including a state-of-the-art biometric/biographic computer workstation with capabilities to process finger and palm prints, take mugshots and submit records to national databases, as well as the ability to access the FBI’s Criminal Justice information Service (CJIS) systems for criminal and civil purposes through the Department of Justice.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/06/us/politics/us-to-share-criminal-records-with-native-american-police.html>; for the press release, see <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/department-justice-announces-10-tribes-participate-initial-phase-tribal-access-program>

ProPublica published an article on the lack of Federal jurisdiction over violations of patient privacy by companies offering home paternity tests or data collected by fitness trackers or health apps. http://www.propublica.org/article/privacy-not-included-federal-law-lags-behind-new-tech?utm_source=et&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=&utm_name=

United States/Illinois. A judge ordered the release of a video “from a police dashboard camera showing the fatal shooting of a black 17-year-old by a white Chicago police officer on a Southwest Side street a year ago,” reported the *New York Times*. According to the *Associated Press*, “hours after” the city of Chicago released the “audio-free dashcam video” a 35-second excerpt with sound appeared online, which was viewed at least half a million times on social media. The video brought public condemnation and outrage and led to mass street protests in Chicago. By early December “experts, city police and an *Associated Press* analysis” concluded that the 35-second video excerpt had been doctored, but by whom or why was not known. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/20/us/laquan-mcdonald-chicago-police-shooting.html> ; <http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:cd993ba1711843d38437dbd2aa6462e5>

United States/New York. During the course of a lawsuit claiming that a man died from exposure to asbestos fibers during his employment with J-M Manufacturing, the plaintiffs learned that on two occasions J-M’s documents were “lost,” once in 1990 when the company’s corporate headquarters were moved from California to New Hersey and once in 1997 when an employee discarded 27 “bankers’ boxes” during the renovation of a facility. The judge ruled that the plaintiff is entitled to have the jury in the case instructed that “the missing documents would have supported the plaintiff’s claims.” The court stated, said *National Law Review*, “that the documents lost in 1990 were lost because of ‘gross negligence’” and “that the 1997 document loss occurred due to J-M’s bad faith, i.e., even though they had a document retention policy, they failed to instruct employees to preserve relevant evidence.” <http://www.natlawreview.com/article/new-york-city-asbestos-litigation-presiding-judge-rules-manufacturer-should-have>

United States/West Virginia. Donald Blankenship, the former chairman of Massey Energy, one of whose coal mines exploded, killing 29 employees and exposing the company’s poor safety record, was convicted of conspiring to violate mine safety regulations but acquitted of felony fraud. For background to this case, which featured Blankenship’s audio recordings of his conversations, see *HRWG News* 2015-10. <http://www.thenation.com/article/blankenship-convicted/>

Zambia. A second break-in occurred at the Lusaka Magistrates Court complex, with “various items” stolen from the offices and “registries.” According to *Zambia Reports*, the court’s registrar said “it is suspected that those involved are targeting some Court documents,” but all the court case files are digitized, with a backup stored “at a secure location.” <http://zambiareports.com/2015/11/05/thieves-terrorise-lusaka-magistrate-courts-targeting-records/>

Announcements and Publications.

The University of East London has “been awarded a small amount of seed funding” from the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration to establish a “Working Group for Archiving and Documentation of History of Forced Migration.” Anyone interested in participating should look at the initial webpages <http://iasfm.org/adfm/> or write to Paul Dudman at p.v.dudman@uel.ac.uk

The archives at Casa Rui Barbosa, Rio de Janeiro, launched a website “about slavery, abolition and the post-abolition period in Brazil.” In addition to the researcher portion of the site, the design includes “an area devoted to a younger audience where it is possible to explore digital copies of historical documents while playing memory games, quizzes, word games and palaeographical challenges.”
<http://www.memoriaescravidao.rb.gov.br/>

The Akevot Institute for Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Research in Tel Aviv, Israel, marked its first anniversary by adding the 20,000th digitized document to its Repository of Conflict Records from sources including the Israel State Archives, Israel Defense Forces and Security System Archives, Knesset Archives, Central Zionist Archives and more. <http://www.akevot.org.il>

The National Security Archive (a United States non-governmental organization) posted documents from a briefing book it compiled for the “critical oral history” conference in The Hague last June on the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. The press release says, “The documents show the Srebrenica genocide represented a debacle for international peacekeeping and a turning point towards more forceful intervention, culminating in the Dayton accords that ended the Balkan wars on November 21, 1995.” The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and The Hague Institute for Global Justice co-organized the conference with the Archive's support, and published the conference transcript and rapporteur's summary to mark the 20th anniversary of the Dayton agreement. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB535-Srebrenica-genocide-on-road-to-Dayton-accords/>

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