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WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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WQDEN POLITIQL PRISDNERS IN SQJ'IH AFRICA

This list of known women political prisoners in South Africa is compiled exclusively from newspaper reports. It is thus inevitably incomplete. Trials are reported only intermittently and in a fragmentary fashion. There are almost certainly women currently serving sentences whose trials have not been reported. Moreover, since South African law forbids the naming of defendants under 18 years old, it is impossible to determine the number of female juveniles serving prison terms for political offences.

While the exact number of women political prisoners is uncertain, there are clearly fewer women political prisoners than men. In some ways, prison conditions for the women are worse than their male counterparts. Gains made by prisoners are often not shared by women's political prisoners, at least not immediately. Evidence would suggest that female political prisoners have more difficulty than male political prisoners in, for example, obtaining access to visitors and in receiving letters and newspapers. Moreover, the reluctance of the South African government to allow political and non-political prisoners to mix, together with the relatively small numbers of men political prisoners, means that in many cases much of their sentence is spent in solitary confinement.

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The list is divided into three sections. The first deals with women sentenced to death. There are currently two women awaiting execution in South Africa as a result of political activity. They are, however, in two different prisons. Theresa Ikhshamola is in Pretoria Central and Daisy Ndlovu is in the Raphuthatswana bantustan's Central Prison. If either Theresa or Daisy is hanged, it would be the first execution of a woman political prisoner. In the late 1950s, a woman, Ivelin Nkomo, was sentenced to death for her part in the widespread opposition to the imposition of the Bantu Authorities Act: however, her sentence was later commuted following public protest.

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The second section deals with women political prisoners sentenced for activities relating to political mobilization and organization. Most of them were charged under the Internal Security Act or with the common law offence of treason.

The final section lists women convicted of other common law offences, for example public violence, murder or arson, in cases arising out of mass protest. Of note is the length of sentence handed down to women for these offences.

In all three sections, the list is in chronological order (ie according to date of sentence).

Abbreviations used in the list

CL (human Law)

ISA Internal Security Act

TA Terrorism Act

Section I: chen EQLitical Eisoners sentenced to death

Law Birthiate

Ranashanola, Theresa Born 1962

Sentenced: 13.12.85 - Death CL - Murder_

Cburt: Rani Suprane ISA - Subversion

Ramashamola and five others, collectively knom as the Sxarpeville Six, were sentenced to death for the killing of a Lekoa oomcillor, Jacd) Dlanini, "in Suarpeville, on 3 September, 1984 following the violent dispersal of a protest march against rent increases. Ramashamola, who was alleged to have incited the crowd to kill the councillor, said she withirew frcn the march after being hit on the head by a rubber bullet. The appeal of the Six was rejected in December 1987 and an appeal 1501' clanency to the State President was rejected in March 1%8. The date for their ececution was set for 18 March. 01 17 March, however, they were granted a stay of execution to allow their lawyers to apply for a re-opening of the trial to consider new evidence. This process is still continuing and on 12 July the stay of execution was made indef ini te .

Last knom prison: Pretoria Central (April 1988)

sziise, misy CL - Murder Born 1962

Sentenced: May 1937 - Death

Cburt: Tenba

A member of the Stinkwater Youth Organization. Few details are available but she was reportedly convicted with two others for participation in 'necklacings' and 'people's oourts' .

Last kmm prison: Raoigrond - BDphuthatswana Central Prison (October 1987) I '

Section II: Women political prisoners sentenced for activities relating to political mobilization and organization.

Law Birtshire

I-bgan, Barbara Born 1952

Sentenced: 21.10.82 - 10 years CL -- Treason

Court: Rani Supreme

An ANC member and post-graduate student researching into employment who sent documents to trade union organisations and coded messages to the ANC. Hagan was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for treason and four years for membership of the ANC, to run concurrently.

Last known prison - Pretoria Central (1986)

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Keagile, Lilian Born 1959

Sentenced: 18.3.83 - 6 years TA, ISA

Court: Johannesburg Regional

AM: member, detained November 1981, tortured and sexually assaulted during detention. Keagile was charged in November 1982 with promoting the aims of the ABC by acting as a courier, sending plans of strategic targets to the ANC and receiving training.

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Ml'zlongo, Eorgine YVonne Born 1958

Sentenced: 23.8.56 - 2 years and 6 months

Mkhize, Zarrile Born 1957

Sentenced: 2.9.85 - 3 years

(Court: Rani Supreme I ,

Mhlongo, a teacher in Soweto, and Mkhize, a nurse in urban, were both sentenced for refusing to testify in the trial of Lentswane, Nguenya and Malamba, who were later convicted of treason for conspiring to reconnoitre on behalf of the ABC.

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Mabdisse, Thandi Born 1959

Sentenced: 7.11.80 - 8 years TA

Court: Kanpton Park Regional

An AM: member. Mabdisse left South Africa after the 1976 Soweto uprising and received military training in Tanzania and Angola for the AMI. She was on active service inside South Africa for 18 months before being arrested. She was then pregnant and told the court that she was repeatedly assaulted while in custody. Charged with undergoing military training from 1976-78, possessing ammunition and explosives and placing explosives in the Johannesburg department stores.

Last known prison - Pretoria Central (1981)

Passtoors, Helene Born 1942

Sentenced: 19.5.86 - 10 years CL - Treason

Court: Rand Supreme

A foreign national entitled to both Belgian and mtch citizenship, Passtoors had been living in South Africa since February 1985. She ms detained in June of that year and - held in solitary oonfinament. She was alleged to have carried out reconnaissance work hr the AM: and established arms caches. She said that she supported the ANC and had learnt secret ANC codes.

Last knom prison - Kroonstad (March 1988)

W

Sparg, Marion Nonica Born 1958

Sentenced: 6.11.86 - 25 years CL - Treason

Court: Rani Supreme

An Am manber and journalist who underwent military training in. Angola, brought limpet mines into the country in 19% and planted than at police headquarters in John Varster Square, Johannesburg and at an East London police station. The latter device did not explode.

Apelgren, Greta Margaret Born 1957

Sentenced: 14.4.87 - 21 months ISA

Cburt: Pietennariztburg Supreme

Apelgren, a social worker from Wentworth in Durban, orginally faced charges of murder, attempted murder and 'terrorism' arising out of the escape of an AM: ccmbatant - Gordon Webster - from hospital in May 195:5 and a car bcmb attack in Durban in June 1986. She was eventually acqntted on all coults relating to the bombing but was foud guilty of assisting in Webster's escape and reconnoitring targets for action. Her co-defendant, Rabert John maride, was sentenced to death for the Durban banbirg.

Madunise, Regina Tseleng Born 1949

Sentenced: 22.6.88 - 5 years ISA

Cburt: Kroodstad Regional

Madmise, a former dcmeestic mrker, was detained in October 1987. At her trial she was said to have received 'AN: traming' in Angola and returned to South Africa with instructions to observe police and SADF offices. She is the mother of a deaf son.

Sofute, Blkiwe Gertrude Barn 1953

Nziabeni, Nontembiso Born 1957

Sentenced: 9.9.87 - 6 years ISA

Court : Port Elizabeth

In cmtody since August 1985, their case was only heard after 12 postponauents. 'They were charged with furthering the aims of the Ann, 'terrorism', mlawfully importing arms.and ammmition and both tmdergoirg and providing military training.

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mala, Gloria Born 1969

Sentenced: 3.4.88 - 1 year ISA

Court : Bethal

'IWala, a high school student and assistant secretary of the Witbank Youth Cbrgress, was comicted with 11 other Witbank cccmmity activists. She was in solitary confinement frat: bbvenber 1986 until the time of the trial.

Khan, Farieda Born 1963

Sentenced: 8.6.w - 6 months ISA

Cburt: Cape wan

Khan, a pre-school teacher, pleaded guilty to being a member of the ANS. She admitted joining the organisaticn in Botswana with her husband vho is still resident there. Sue was detained in July 1987 with her mother arxi sister and was held for 3 months under section 29 of the ISA.

Section III: when Eitcal Eisoners convicted far activities
relatigg to mass grotest; mless otherwise stated all have been
cogged with carmon law offences

Birthdate

Unnated girl Earn 1968

Sentenced: 6.7.85 - 8 years

Cburt: Kimberley

Convicted of arson during school protests in Kimberley.

Madise, Monica Barn?

Musi, Aletta Born?

Sentenced: July 86 - ?

Court: Klerksdorp

Nbdise and Mlsi were convicted of public violence and attending an illegal gathering, after incidents involving the stoning of police vduicles.

Matroos, Regina Born 1960

Memani, Pmelia Born 1964

thasi, Rita Born 1963

Manxenyne, Jacqueline Born 1968

Lhnaned wanan Born 1947

Sentenced: 3.9.% - 10 years

Cburt: Worcester

All convicted of public violence fuelling the petrol-bombing of property owned by vigilantes. ,

Fante, Phyllis Notutuzelo mm ?

Sentenced: 23.3.87 - 15 years

(hurt: Cape 'Ibwn

Fante was one of eight Zolani residents jailed for the attempted murder of a vigilante's wife, whose evidence as a state witness had led to the jailing of Fante's husband for eight years on an arson charge .

'Imla, Sannah - Life imprisonment Ram 1964
Matamg, Nhtlakala Elizabeth - 10 years Born 1959
Sdoun, Iorraine Zanele - 10 years Ram 1954
Unanamed girl - 2 1/2 years Born 1971
Sentence: 24.6.87
Court: Pretoria

All were convicted for murder following -the killing of a suspected police informer in July 1985. Ma is the first woman sentenced to life imprisonment for a political offence.

WK
SETI, K011 iswa Born 1969
Sentenced: November '87 - 15 years
Court: Bisho
Imprisoned in a Ciskei bentustan jail, Seti was amongst five people imprisoned for the killing of a suspected vigilante in July 1986. A co-accused was given the death sentence.

WM
Ngwata, Punla - 12 years Born 1965
Jikela, lealmgisa - 3 1/2 years Born 1969
Sentenced: 24.11.87
Court: Grahamstown
Ngwata and Jikela were convicted of public violence and culpable homicide following the death of a man and girl when a mine was burnt down, during a period of intense repression of unrest and boycotts in Freetown Beaufort in March 1985.

MM
Miola, Nontopeko Born ?
Sentenced: 18.1.87 - 18 years
Court: Grahamstown , '
Miola was convicted with seven other residents of Ikhono in the Eastern Cape of murder following the stoning of a man in December 1985. Four of her co-defendants were sentenced to death.
Dyandi, Neliswa Nonua Born 1968
Convicted: 12.1.87 - details of sentence due beginning of August
(Court: East London)
Dyandi was convicted of murder and public violence following the killing of a man in November 1985 during a period of police repression and consumer and educational boycotts in Stutterheim. During the trial Dyandi testified that she had been assaulted by the police and forced to make a confession.

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