



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



# COUNTER-PIRACY PROGRAMME

Support to the Trial and Related  
Treatment of Piracy Suspects

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Project Part Funded by the EU



# Counter-Piracy Programme

## What we do

The UNODC Counter Piracy Programme has been in place since May 2011, supporting those states in the Indian Ocean that are prosecuting piracy cases. The programme has two related aims:

1. The support of regional piracy prosecutions
2. The delivery of additional prison capacity in Somalia through the Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme

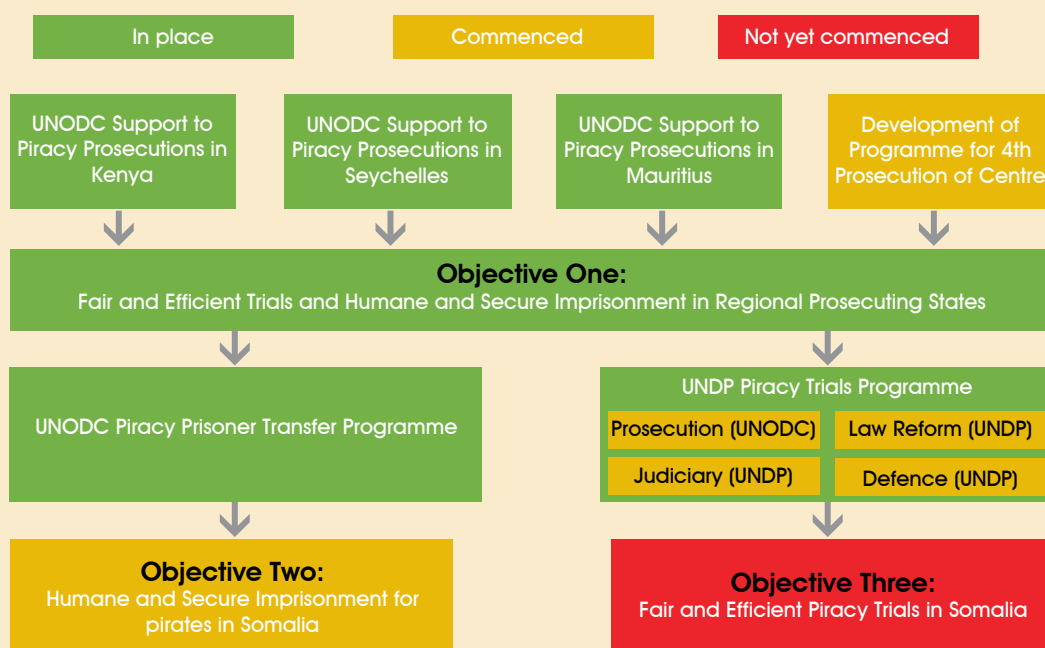
To deliver the first aim, UNODC provides support to the police, prosecutors, courts and prisons in those countries around the Indian Ocean that find themselves dealing with piracy cases. The bulk of UNODC's work is in Kenya, Seychelles and Mauritius as those are the three regional states that have agreed to accept piracy suspects for prosecution from the many international navies operating in the Indian Ocean. As you can see from the Strategic Plan below, those three prosecution centres are all currently on line and deliver fair and efficient piracy trials and secure and humane imprisonment for piracy suspects transferred to them by international navies. UNODC also provides support to other countries in the region which do not currently accept piracy suspects for prosecution from foreign navies but which have made arrests of Somali piracy suspects using their own law enforcement agencies.

The second aim is directly linked to the first. One of the principal limitations for regional states in accepting Somali pirates for prosecution is the impact on their prisons which are often overcrowded with domestic prisoners. Not only is there insufficient space for Somali piracy suspects but in the longer term the regional states consider, and UNODC agrees, that like all prisoners, convicted Somali pirates should serve their sentence in their own country with access to visits from their families and their own culture. However, Somalia's prison system suffers from many years of under-investment so the delivery of secure and humane imprisonment in Somalia through the Piracy Prisoner Transfer Programme is a challenging task for UNODC.

This, the Seventh Edition of the UNODC Counter Piracy Programme brochure, sets out the work that has been undertaken in the last four months in pursuit of both these aims. As well as accounts of our excellent working relationship with the Kenyan Police, our work with IMO training regional law enforcement officials in maritime law and the commencement of the programme in Mauritius, the brochure includes details of the new prison block which we have opened in Seychelles.

Alan Cole  
Programme Coordinator  
Counter-Piracy Programme

## Counter Piracy Strategic Plan



## Seychelles

### Where There's A Will...

Will Thurbin has 20 years experience working with prisoners in the UK – 10 as a British Prison Governor - Europe and East Africa. Will has a particular interest in seeing the standards of management and care of prisoners improve across the international community and thought of no better place to make his mark than in the UNODC.

His current mission is with the Counter Piracy Programme in the Seychelles, working with staff to raise standards within their prison service. He also sees engaging with prisoners and involving them in improvement work as vitally important.

"I am passionate about bringing positive improvements to the prison environments I work in, for prisoners, staff and visitors," Will said. "Working for the UNODC Counter Piracy Team has enabled me to continue that passion and wherever possible, make a personal difference in the lives of those I work with."

“ it was initially only going to be a temporary job until something better came along ”

- Will Thurbin

"You can tell a great deal about a society by the way it treats the least of its citizens. Prisoners often fill this role around the world and it is important that governments are mindful of this, working hard to meet international standards."

"Prisoners have a vested interest in improving their living environment and developing opportunities that will give them a brighter future. We must always remember that a prisoner often comes into prison with positive skills that can be utilized for the benefit of themselves and indeed others"

At the time of writing, the Seychelles has over 60 Somalis in custody.

"I have found working with the Somali prisoners a particularly rewarding experience. Whilst their reputation on the high seas is well known to all, once inside a prison their behaviour has proven to be positive. Most are good humored, hard working and forward focused to the day when they are repatriated to Somalia to continue their sentences in their own country".

Will also believes that as well as investing in the infrastructure of a prison system to manage security, capacity and control, the most important investment must be in the staff working on the front line.



Will Thurbin

"We must select good people to work in our prisons and provide them with excellent training and development opportunities to enable them to do their job effectively. It is these good people through pro social modeling who influence and encourage the prisoners in their charge towards living an honest and crime free life on release.

"I am really looking forward to delivering training at the next UNODC International Learning Exchange to be held in the Seychelles. It is events such as these that provide operational prison staff with excellent personal development opportunities. The skills they acquire here can be taken back and applied directly into their workplace, influencing change and affecting the lives of many in such a positive way."

When asked why he chose working in prisons as a career, he said, "Like many colleagues who find themselves developing a career in prisons it was initially only going to be a temporary job until something better came along!

"I have found my 20 years of working in prisons to be challenging and demanding and yet so totally rewarding at the same time. There are few environments where you can make such a positive personal difference by the things you do. It is a privilege to have had the opportunity to work in prisons, especially with prison staff. And working with UNODC has been a highlight.

"I think they are extraordinary people doing an extraordinary job and should be more recognised for what they contribute towards changing lives and protecting society"

## Going to The Dogs

As part of UNODC's continuing commitment to improving the Seychelles' capacity to fight piracy, six Seychellois police officers have been trained in dog handling skills in the United Kingdom. As part of a jointly funded UNODC/UK Government training programme in Surrey between March and June this year, the officers were trained in handling dogs used for general policing, drug detection and locating explosives.

Maryvonne Victor was the first-ever Seychellois policewoman to be trained as a dog handler. Whilst in Surrey she was teamed with purpose bred English Spaniel "Lisle" who was trained at the same time. Lisle has been trained as a drug detection dog. A total of seven dogs were trained.

The training programme was conducted to upgrade the existing Seychelles Police Force Dog Unit and build its capacity to deal with housebreaking and drug related incidents, and to search suspected pirate vessels for ammunition, explosives and narcotic contraband. The general purpose dogs can be deployed to track pirates who have come ashore on any of the islands. In recent years pirates have come within 100 nm of Mahe, the main island in Seychelles, and came ashore in 2010 in the Aldabra Islands, close to Mauritian waters.

All the dogs are now operational. The general purpose dogs have had success in tracking suspects from house breaking crime scenes back to the suspects' houses. They have also been used in security patrols in the woods around Montagne Posee prison where Somali pirates are



Training took place in Sussex, England

detained and for area security during the Global Maritime Piracy Conference held in early September 2011.

The drug detection dogs perform regular searches of parcels coming into the prison and are used at the Seychelles Supreme Court, where the public come into contact with prisoners. The explosive detection dogs have been used for clearing buildings scheduled to be used by senior dignitaries and in the searches of the vessels of piracy suspects to determine whether they had weapons on board before throwing them into the sea prior to arrest.



Seychellois policewoman dog-handler Maryvonne Victor in action



Maryvonne Victor with Lisle going through a practice run

## Somaliland & Puntland

### Paying Lip Service

Being paid to talk might seem like a trivial job but without these men doing just that the UNODC Counter Piracy Programme's efforts in some areas would grind to a stop. Liaising with Somali Government ministers, officials, pirates and others across Puntland and Somaliland would be impossible without the assistance of the interpreters employed or contracted by UNODC.

Mohamoud Hassan Abokor, known simply as Abokor, is one of five Somalis or Kenyan Somalis employed as interpreters for UNODC in Somaliland, Puntland, Seychelles and Mauritius.

While three interpreters have always lived in Kenya or Somalia, Abokor and fellow UNODC employee in Somaliland Ahmed Koshin have both returned to the land of their birth from Canada, where they've lived for many years.

Abokor says he returned to Somaliland for family reasons but, like many Somalis, he also returned because he wants to help his country and countrymen. "I have seen life in the first world and I understand what

life is like in Canada, the US and in India, where I went to university. But my heart belongs to Somaliland and I love it here with my family and friends. I want to help out as much as I can."

“ People used to say that I was a pirate because I was always on TV! ”

- Abdullahi Salat

The benefits of having people like Abokor in Somaliland, and Abdirizak Mohamed Jama, in Puntland, is that they have personal as well as professional relationships with politicians, police, prosecutors, judges, and prison staff. They can also provide information on local events that would be missed by outsiders.

"I joined UNODC because I love the type of work we do and I find it very exciting and challenging. And I'm very



Abokor and Ahmed Koshin (front) with a visiting Norwegian delegation in Somaliland

## Puntland & Somaliland

happy that we at UNODC are spending more time in Somalia now; I feel very blessed to have this job”.

Abdullahi Salat, a Kenyan Somali now working for UNODC in the Seychelles because nobody outside the prison speaks Somali, regularly performs perhaps the most important of tasks, namely interpreting in piracy trials. Abdullahi has gained some fame from being on the TV news regularly when reports of the latest piracy trials are broadcast.

“Sometimes people used to say that I was a pirate because I was always on TV! But now, even though they might laugh about that, they then say ‘sorry’ and we are friends,” he says.

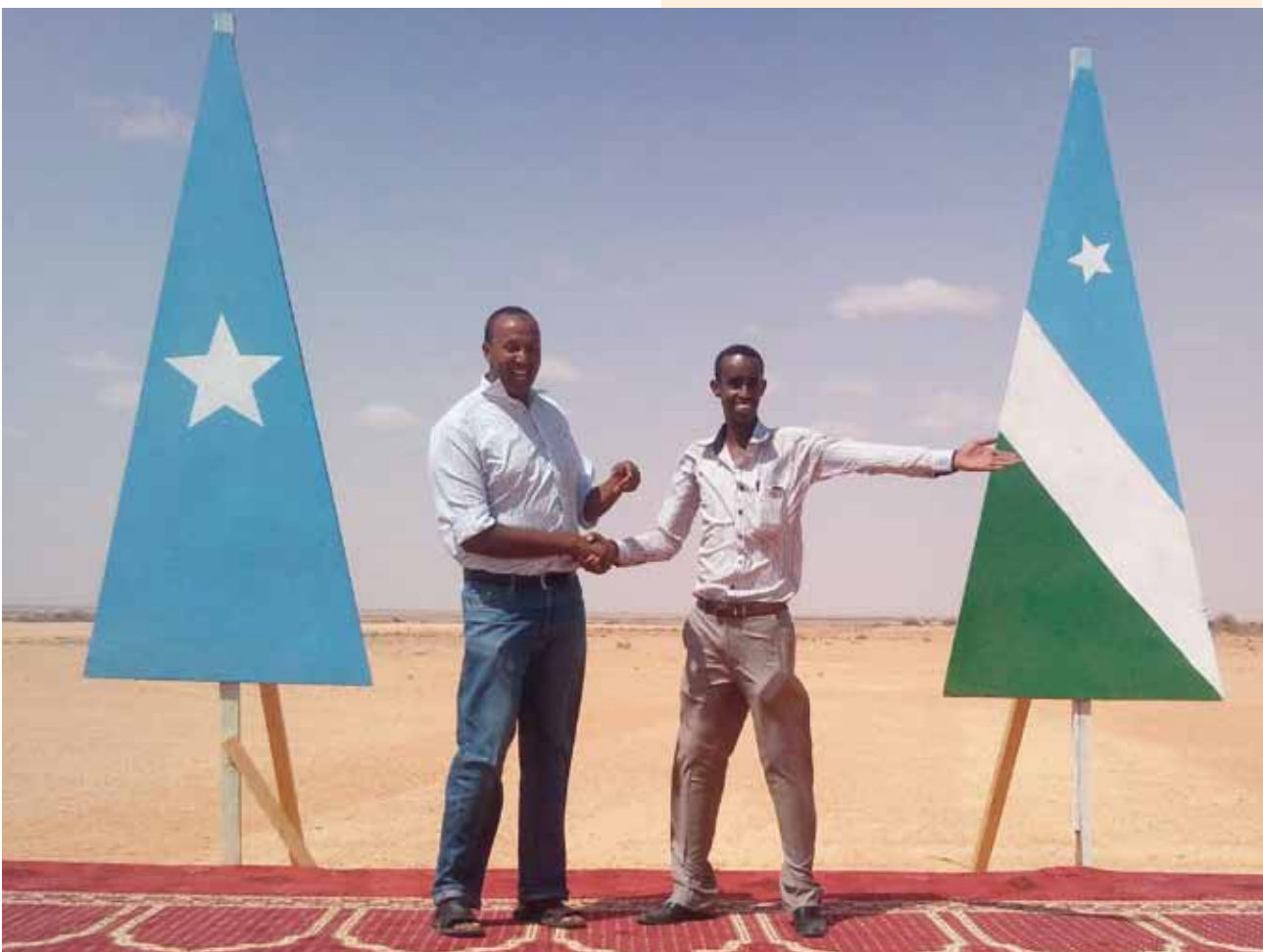
Abdullahi’s work revolves around interpreting for police, prison officers, court officials and lawyers. He is a frequent visitor to Seychelles’ Montagne Posee prison where he talks to the Somali pirates in custody and teaches them English so they can communicate with the guards.

“My work is very exciting, I’m an international interpreter and it has furthered my career. “It is also the first time I have lived in another country - it is very exciting to be here.”



Above: Abokor and latest UNODC recruit Said Abdirahman

Below: Puntland’s Abdirizak Jama meets Abokor at Garowe International Airport on the day TFG Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali flew to Puntland to meet with President Abdirahman Mohamed Mohamud (Farole)



## Seychelles

### Seychelles Prison Opening

The small island nation of Seychelles has played a leading role in the prosecution of piracy suspects and UNODC has been with them every step of the way. Early on in the discussions between the Government of Seychelles and UNODC the need for additional prison accommodation was identified as a key issue. UNODC, which has long standing expertise in prison matters, worked with the government to design and deliver a prison block which is appropriate for the climate, the prisoner profile and the needs of Seychelles.

The result is a modern facility which provides secure and humane imprisonment facilities for Seychelles and the additional capacity to cope with the 64 pirates/piracy suspects currently held in Seychelles. UNODC has also provided a mentor (see page 4) to the prison to ensure that it is properly brought into operation and additional educational, medical and training support to the prisons.

Such was the excitement at the opening of a new prison facility in the Seychelles last month that the prisoners made a spectacular cake in the shape of the new building. Scores of international and local guests attended the much-anticipated ceremony.

UNODC Counter Piracy Programme coordinator Alan Cole was on hand at the Montagne Posee Prison for

the opening of the 60-bed, state-of-the-art prison block on September 9. Members of the Seychelles, Dutch and German governments, Interpol, Europol and representatives from Somalia's South Central and Puntland regions, and Somaliland also attended.

Seychelles Minister for Home Affairs, Joël Morgan, thanked UNODC for facilitating the building of the prison.

"UNODC has been a valuable and consistent partner in the implementation of our ongoing Prison Reform Programme. The completion of the new facility follows the recent appointment of a (mentor) to assist with the management of the prison . . . initially funded by the UNODC," Minister Morgan said. He also thanked the German and Dutch governments for their financial and international support.

Minister Morgan said there was a need for the new facility at the prison, where prisoners deemed unsuitable for the main block can be held. Seychelles has experienced a big increase in prison numbers, mainly due to the high number of Somali pirates captured and brought ashore. Somali pirates now account for almost 20 percent of Seychelles' prison population.

Minister Morgan urged the international community to support Seychelles in its efforts to improve the facilities and standards of the prison.



Counter-Piracy Programme Coordinator Alan Cole addresses guests at the official Opening Ceremony

**Seychelles**



Chris Holtby, (centre, white shirt) chairman of Working Group I with Thomas Winkler, chairman of Working Group II (partially obscured), inside the new Seychelles prison facility



The front view of the new 60-bed prison facility at Montagne Posee Prison

Photographs courtesy of The Nation, Seychelles



## Kenya

### Teaming up to Fight Pirates

Corporal Millicent Uoko and her colleagues know only too well how Somali piracy has been affecting Kenya and its waters for years. Corporal Uoko was one of the first police officers in the world to arrest and charge pirates in the 21st century. Having now investigated 17 separate piracy attacks since 2006, Corporal Uoko, like many of her colleagues in the vibrant coastal port town, has become an authority on how best to investigate piracy on the high seas.

In 2009 UNODC’s Counter Piracy Programme conducted its first specialist training course for the Kenyan detectives at Mombasa. Since then, UNODC has continually provided support, equipment and other resources to ensure that every prosecution is carried out with maximum efficiency.

Like his predecessors, UNODC’s newest police advisor Australian Federal Police agent Scott Girling regularly travels to Mombasa from Nairobi to assist as much as possible. Agent Girling has teamed up with EUNAVFOR’s liaison officer Keith Wileman, whose job is to assist with prosecutions for court, organize witnesses for court and pass information on to Operation ATALANTA.

Scott Girling acts as a mentor for the CID officers and ensures they have the investigative capacity for piracy offences and where that is sometimes lacking, ensure that they are assisted as much as possible. This has



Millicent with Hollywood actor Nicolas Cage

included conducting Regional Learning Exchanges, and providing office and forensic equipment such as filing cabinets, digital cameras and printers. The cameras are used to take photographs when the pirates are first brought to shore by the naval forces, and those pictures are used as evidence in court. “Mombasa CID has a great relationship with UNODC and together we have achieved a great deal in a short period of time,” Scott Girling said.

“ I have been to UNODC Learning Exchanges before and I have learned a lot ”

- Cpl Millicent Uoko



Corporal Millicent Uoko with AFP Agent Scott Girling

UNODC has organized a police learning exchange in Seychelles for later this year and Corporal Uoko will be going to share her expert knowledge with colleagues from other nations in the region.

“I have really enjoyed working with UNODC and I can’t wait to go to Seychelles,” Corporal Uoko said. “I have been to UNODC learning exchanges before and I have learned a lot; they are very useful and very helpful for all of us. I am sure it has made me a better investigator and I would like to be able to use my knowledge more throughout this region.”

## Talking About Rules of Engagement

The Counter-Piracy Programme recently brought officials from the regional participating states to develop a deeper understanding of the issues that arise when engaging pirates at sea.

The UNODC Counter-Piracy Programme's wide mandate includes, at its heart, the goal of developing the criminal justice systems of the countries in East Africa which are combating piracy off the coast of Somalia. Practically speaking, this translates into highly diverse projects, from legal reform to prison construction. Each one, though, builds on the other, strengthening the capacity of the prison system, court system, prosecutors and police forces of participating nations.

Included in this is the ability to engage pirates effectively at sea within the framework of international law. With this in mind, the Counter Piracy Programme, in conjunction with the International Maritime Organization, hosted a Rules of Engagement legal training workshop for East African national officials in Nairobi from 20-22 September, 2011.

The course covered a wide range of international maritime law, from fundamentals such as maritime zones and right of safe passage, to more focused topics like use of force in specific situations. IMO Officer Gisela Vieira de Araujo, co-organizer of the workshop, reinforced this

last point, noting that "the international community views piracy as a maritime policing mission and not an armed forces exercise, which determines how naval forces may engage pirates."

Shamus Mangan, the Prosecutions Advisor for UNODC CPP, noted that "officials from a range of departments, such as prosecutions, coast guard and marine transport authorities, were invited. Not only did this give the workshop a range of perspectives, but also allowed officials from various departments to interact with officials they may not normally."

"Broadening the understanding of rules of engagement will allow the criminal justice system in our regional national partners to more effectively prosecute pirates," Mangan, explained. "This helps increase the deterrent effect of UNODC's counter-piracy efforts while providing a long-lasting benefit to our regional partners."

UNODC CPP will continue to host similar workshops. In December 2011, the CPP will host a prosecutors' learning exchange to facilitate discussion on piracy trials, the transfer of prisoners and the role of naval forces in fighting maritime piracy.

- by Will Van Der Veen



The course participants and facilitators at Safari Park Hotel

## Puntland

### This is The Road to Eyl

Heeding the international call for more action in Somalia, UNODC has begun an awareness campaign in Puntland, the region in Somalia where piracy allegedly started. UNODC has travelled throughout Puntland over many months, discussing the campaign with President Farole, traditional and clan elders, clerics, pirates and former pirates and men and women in the street and on the land.

UNODC learned that President Farole started a similar campaign in late 2010 which saw Mr Farole and a former prominent pirate addressing large gatherings and going on radio, warning people that piracy was harming Somalia's culture and reputation round the world.

The campaign had some spectacular successes but it faltered due to the lack of resources, funding and international support.

One notable success was in the coastal town of Eyl, the place where modern day piracy is said to have started in the 1990s. After a caravan of clerics, elders and former pirates visited the town, the villagers turned on pirates who had invaded them and forced them to leave. UNODC recently travelled to Eyl under heavy escort and interviewed the mayor and elders of Eyl, along with the fishermen and women, to determine just how they rid themselves of criminal gangs. Building on this firsthand knowledge, UNODC has devised

a programme where messages about piracy will be broadcast across Somalia. The messages are:

- Piracy is haram ie against Islamic practices. This means money gained from piracy cannot be used;
- Piracy is destroying Somali culture and traditions, with excessive use of alcohol and the introduction of prostitutes affecting day to day life;
- Piracy has severely damaged Somalia's reputation round the world; and
- With approximately 30 percent of all would-be pirates dying at sea, and arrest and conviction rates high, crime ultimately doesn't pay.

UNODC will use radio, TV and caravans of elders, clerics and community groups visiting remote locations, to broadcast these messages. Talkback radio is one medium that will be used heavily, as all Somalis have an opinion on piracy! (Current anecdotal evidence from talkback radio stations indicates about 70 percent of callers are against piracy). The programme aims to ensure that news of pirate arrests and convictions are reported widely into Somalia, and that good news stories where Somalis turn on pirates is reported out to the international community. Having seen a major success in Eyl with limited resources, UNODC hopes it can replicate this into more dramatic changes across the region.



Heavily armed police provide support for the four hour drive to Eyl on Puntland's east coast



## Mauritius/Seychelles

### Captive Audiences

UNODC prison experts recently conducted Prison Learning Exchanges in Mauritius and Seychelles. Professor Glenn Ross from Australia's Edith Cowan University and Eliud Opilo, a Chief Officer in the Kenya Prisons Service on secondment to the UNODC Counter Piracy Programme, led last month's exchange.

Seychelles has become adept at handling Somali pirates in custody but it has also suffered from a sharp increase in prison numbers. This in turn has led to a number of issues that the Learning Exchange dealt with. Mauritius has no Somali pirates in its prison system and discussions on issues that arise from having them in custody were also dealt with. Lessons learned in the Seychelles are well received in Mauritius.

Two key exercises were to design a template for the conduct of prison security audits, using the Women's Prison in a practical exercise to field-test and fine-tune the concept, and to develop a "risk assessment" classification tool for detainees which will help management make more objective, informed decisions as to whether detainees should be placed in a minimum, medium, or high security facilities.

Other topics covered included how to maintain maximum security at all times, effective custody, risk assessment and how to be proactive rather than reactive prison officers. Extensive examination of cases such as Baghdad's now-infamous Abu Ghraib prison encouraged lively discussion and were an excellent way to highlight human rights issues. All 23 course participants in Mauritius also did a



Kenyan Prisons Chief Officer Eliud Opilo, with friend Maria D'havlove

practical exercise, which involved carrying out a security audit at the women's prison.

Mauritian Commissioner of Prisons Jean Bruneau thanked Prof Ross and Chief Officer Opilo for the exchange and said that he and his officers had benefited greatly from the experience.

Chief Officer Opilo said, "I would describe the results from the two missions as relevant, incisive and highly informative in relation to effective management of Correctional Facilities." Prof Ross said he was deeply impressed by the professionalism and attentiveness of the participants. "It is clear that both countries have prison officers that they can be very proud of," he said.

### UNODC Gets Down to Business in Mauritius

Following the signing of an agreement between the Government of Mauritius and EUNAVFOR to allow for the trial of piracy suspects in the nation's courts, UNODC has launched its third regional prosecution programme. As in Kenya and Seychelles, the Programme is run jointly with the European Union and aims to provide support for



Inside the court room in Mauritius Intermediate Court

the police, prosecutors, court and prison staff with the processing of piracy cases. UNODC has already identified immediate needs that need to be met to ensure Mauritius is ready to take cases in the current piracy season. UNODC Logistics Manager, Geraint Roberts, has examined the facilities at the Intermediate Court and Beau Bassin Prison to identify immediate improvements that can be made to infrastructure.

He said: "The facilities in Mauritius are to a very high standard and the attitude of the court and prison staff is excellent but there are a number of lessons we have learnt from supporting piracy prosecutions in Seychelles and Kenya that will allow us to ensure Mauritius is fully prepared".

UNODC has arranged for a Somali/English interpreter to be ready to deploy to Mauritius at immediate notice and provided support with necessary amendments to the law. UNODC Programme Manager in Mauritius, Jullien Woirin has worked in the criminal justice sector in Mauritius for some time and is looking forward to ensuring the programme is responsive and effective.



# UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## CONTACTS

If you would like to know more about the work that UNODC is doing in support of piracy prosecutions, please see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/piracy/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/piracy/index.html)

Programme Coordinator: [alan.cole@unodc.org](mailto:alan.cole@unodc.org)

Media enquiries: [wayne.miller@unodc.org](mailto:wayne.miller@unodc.org)

UNODC Regional Office in Eastern Africa

United Nations Avenue

Block A-208

P.O. Box 30218-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 7621890

Fax: +254 20 762367

Front Cover: One of a group of alleged Somali pirates is brought ashore in Seychelles in 2011.

Photo below courtesy of EUNAVFOR

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