

## International Detention Coalition

Human rights for detained refugees,  
asylum seekers and migrants

# International Delegation Highlights Alternatives to Immigration Detention in Zambia

**Implementation of effective screening in Zambia is already leading to positive outcomes but more can be done to increase cost savings.**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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**LUSAKA:** An international delegation will be visiting Lusaka, Zambia to discuss alternatives to immigration detention that are on average 80 per cent cheaper.

On Thursday, May 4, the delegation will provide a briefing on opportunities for Zambia to save costs and promote their international reputation. The event will be held in partnership with local organisations including the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Zambia.

As a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and a signatory to the 2016 New York Declaration, the Zambian government has committed to explore alternatives to immigration detention for vulnerable groups, including children.

The Zambian government has developed a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) that provides guidelines to identify vulnerable groups like refugees, victims of human trafficking and children, to ensure that they are not detained unnecessarily or for prolonged periods. As a member of the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA – a SADC forum), during the 2016 MIDSA meeting, Zambia officials further upgraded their commitments to develop more sustainable alternatives. Zambia is a “focus country” in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Beyond Detention Strategy, devised to tackle the important issue of migration.

The visiting delegation includes the Director of the International Detention Coalition (IDC), a civil society network, which has identified over 250 alternatives to detention worldwide. IDC Director Mr Grant Mitchell states, “we commend the government for developing a National Referral Mechanism that aims to remove vulnerable people from harmful immigration detention,” says Mr Mitchell.

In their latest research on Africa, the IDC mapped legislation, policies and practices related to immigration detention, including child detention, and alternatives that governments in Egypt, Kenya, Libya, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia are pursuing.

IDC's research in Zambia found that the country is one of the few in the region to realise the economic benefits of alternatives by giving migrants rights to start their own enterprises, that has aided regional development.

Another member of the international delegation is Junita Calder, IDC Africa and Middle East Regional Coordinator. "We are very excited to share regional insights to build on existing practice to implement more humane and cost-effective practices that can ultimately end detention," says Ms. Calder.

Leeanne Torpey, who coordinates the Global Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children, is also part of the international delegation visiting Lusaka. "Even short periods of detention can be incredibly harmful to children, we must do everything we can to ensure that children and their families are kept out of harmful immigration detention".

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Available for interview:

**Grant Mitchell**

A social anthropologist in international migration, Mr Mitchell is the Director of the International Detention Coalition (IDC), an international civil society network of members in 73 countries. Mr Mitchell has extensive experience in international asylum and immigration detention policy, including working with governments, UN bodies and civil society in Africa, Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East on the development and implementation of alternatives to immigration detention and case management models.

**Junita Calder**

With a strong background in International Law, Politics and Leadership and over seven years of experience in Advocacy, Ms Calder coordinates both the Africa Region and Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region for IDC. Ms Calder is extremely passionate about skills sharing and effective inter-cultural communication. She has extensive first-hand experience in visiting and advocating for improved programming in immigration detention centres in countries of first asylum, as well as facilitating the development of collaborative Alternatives to Detention.

**Leeanne Torpey**

A journalist by background, Ms.Torpey coordinates the Global Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children. She has over 10 years of experience working to create communications that make a difference, working for the Women and Children's Crisis Centre, Information and Cultural Exchange as well as the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

More information:

[www.idcoalition.org](http://www.idcoalition.org) / [www.endchilddetention.org](http://www.endchilddetention.org)