



# Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

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## **Information Pack for British Nationals detained or imprisoned in Malawi**

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## Chapter 1: Key Points

### Overview

If you are a British national, and are arrested or detained in another country, consular staff will do what they can to help you, but they cannot interfere with the local justice system, get you out of jail, or pay for services such as a lawyer. Information about who we can help, including the circumstances in which we can assist dual nationals, is available at: [Support for British nationals abroad](#).

This detention information pack is designed to give you, and your family and friends, information about the local system in Malawi and who can help. A printed copy is provided to those in prison or in custody, and an online version is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malawi-prisoner-pack>.

We welcome feedback to help us improve the information we can provide to others.

### Contacting us

If you are arrested or detained in another country:

- **The authorities should ask whether you want them to contact the British Consulate (and must do so if you want them to).**
- **Even if they do not ask, you can make the request yourself, and should do so, particularly if you are charged with a serious offence or need any kind of assistance.**
- **Friends or family can also contact the British High Commission in Lilongwe on or the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) in London on +44 (0)20 7008 5000.**

In some countries, the authorities might notify the British High Commission even if you don't want anyone to know that you have been arrested. This is because there may be an agreement in place with the British Government which requires a mandatory notification to be made.

### Who we are

Consular staff work in the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office in London, and in British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates overseas. This pack was produced by:

The British High Commission in Malawi

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Lilongwe

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Please note that we cannot accommodate visitors to our consular section without an appointment. If you need consular assistance, or someone has been arrested, please telephone us on +265 1772 400 and follow the prompts for consular assistance. You'll reach someone who can assist you 24/7.

You can also contact us by phone 24/7 for help or advice from anywhere in the world by calling the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office on 020 7008 5000.

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/world/malawi](http://www.gov.uk/government/world/malawi)

### What we can do

The FCDO can offer you impartial and non-judgemental help. Once notified of your arrest or detention, consular staff will aim to contact you as soon as possible so that we can assess how we can help you. We then aim to provide assistance according to your individual circumstances and local conditions: our priority is to provide assistance to those British nationals overseas that need our help the most.

In Malawi, notification by the authorities to the Consulate normally does not happen automatically. It is your right to insist that the British High Commission is notified. You can also take ask relatives or friend to contact our consular staff at British High Commission.

Once we are notified, we aim to contact you *as soon as possible*. How quickly we can contact you will depend upon where you are detained, and how quickly we can get permission from the Malawian authorities to speak with you.

We can also:

- > Provide general information about the country, detention conditions, and the local legal system: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malawi-list-of-lawyers>.
- > Provide general information about the local prison or remand system, including visiting arrangements, mail and censorship, privileges, and welfare services.
- > Keep in regular contact with you, either by visiting or by telephone. The frequency of contact will depend on local conditions and your personal circumstances.
- > Tell the police or prison doctor, with your permission, about any medical or dental problems including medication.
- > Put you, or your family, in touch with a prisoners' welfare charity called [Prisoners Abroad](#).

- > In some circumstances we may be able to help take up complaints with the police or prison authorities on ill treatment, personal safety, or discrimination, if you are not treated in line with internationally recognised standards.
- > Help to transfer money to you from your friends or family. In places where phone or postal services aren't available, we can also pass on messages and deliver letters to the prison (but generally we cannot arrange for delivery directly to you – see page [15]).
- > In some circumstances we may be able to help you apply for a transfer to a prison in the UK.

### **What we can't do**

- > get you out of prison or detention
- > help you get special treatment
- > offer legal advice, start legal proceedings or investigate a crime
- > pay for any costs as a result of being arrested
- > forward you packages sent by friends or family
- > prevent authorities from deporting you after release

## **First Steps**

### **Can you / will you tell my family?**

If you want us to, we can tell your family or friends that you have been detained and can provide them with information about how to contact you in prison or detention. With your consent, we can also keep them updated on your well-being.

If you are not sure about informing your family, we can help you consider the impact that not doing so might have. For example, it may cause them distress if they do not know where you are, or cannot contact you. It can also be a disadvantage to you if you need someone to send you money or act on your behalf while you are detained.

### **Will the UK Police be informed?**

If you are accused of certain serious offences, such as sexual assault or drugs trafficking, we are obliged to share information about your arrest with UK police. It is therefore possible that information about this may appear if a Criminal Records Bureau check were carried out by a prospective employer. There may be other circumstances in which information about you may need to be shared by ourselves or authorities in Malawi.

### **Do I need a lawyer? / How can I find a lawyer?**

Although we cannot give legal advice, start legal proceedings, or investigate a crime, we can offer basic information about the local legal system, including whether a legal aid scheme is available. You will want to consider the benefits of local legal representation and to discuss all the costs beforehand with the legal representative. In no circumstances can we pay your legal.

### **Can you get me out?**

We cannot get you out of prison or detention, nor can we get special treatment for you because you are British. However, if you are not treated in line with internationally accepted standards, we will consider whether to approach local authorities. This may include if your trial does not follow internationally recognised standards for fair trial or is unreasonably delayed compared to local cases.

### **Who else can help me?**

We can put you, or your family, in touch with Prisoners Abroad, a UK charity which supports British citizens detained overseas and their families:  
[www.prisonersabroad.org.uk](http://www.prisonersabroad.org.uk)

## **Chapter 2: Detention conditions in Malawi**

### **Visits – friends and family**

#### **Can my family and friends visit me? How can I arrange a visit?**

Officially visitors are permitted between 0900 and 1130 and 1400 and 1500. However, at Maula prison in Lilongwe we have witnessed visits occurring at other times.

Prior to any visit, consular staff will give family and friends as much information as they can about:

what to expect on arrival in Malawi

what happens when they reach the prison

the “dos and don’ts” of visiting

Please bear in mind that all prisons vary and therefore it is essential that you check visiting regulations with the prison or a consular officer prior to arranging any visits for friends or family. Visiting regulations are subject to change by the authorities at any time.

#### **What can visitors expect?**

Visitors are officially allowed once a month. However, this is rarely adhered to and family are often allowed to visit once a day. This will vary between prisons and you should check this with prison staff prior to any visits taking place. Our consular team can help you establish visiting hours.

There is often not a specific visiting area or room and visits take place across fences outside. There is generally a gap between the two fences so you cannot pass items between the visitor. Prison officials may listen in to conversations between visitors and detainees.

#### **What can visitors bring?**

Family can usually bring food when visiting as well as essential toiletries e.g. tooth paste, soap, toilet paper.

Again, this can vary and you should check with prison staff about what is permitted to be brought by visitors. If you need assistance with this, then a consular officer can contact the prison on your behalf.

### **Visits – Consular staff**

Consular staff are permitted to visit British detainees when they need to. Normally we will try to visit you as soon as we can after your arrest. After that, we will agree a schedule of visits depending on your circumstances.

### **Emergency trips outside of prison**

Requests for such trips would be decided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the prison authorities. However, the consular team at the High Commission is not aware that permission for such a visit has been given in recent memory.



## **Police custody and initial arrival at prison**

### **Arrival at the police station & basic rights**

After being arrested you will be taken to a police station; it is possible that you will spend one night or more in a holding cell.

At the moment of your arrest, you should be made aware of your rights, which include the following:

- (i) the right to be given means and opportunity to communicate with, and to be visited by, family members, a religious counsellor and a medical practitioner of your choice;
- (ii) the right to be informed of the reason for your detention in a language that you understand (normally this will be English);
- (iii) the right to consult confidentially with a legal practitioner of your choice.

These rights also apply to a sentenced prisoner.

A statement will be taken from you. You have the right to remain silent or to refuse to give a statement until you have a lawyer present. You should not sign anything unless it is in a language that you understand.

We have included more information about the Malawian legal system further down in this pack.

### **Prison: conditions and daily life**

Prison conditions in Malawi can be very challenging in comparison to those in the UK. Overcrowding and poor sanitation are a major problem in all prisons and detention centres.

#### **Accommodation**

Malawi's prisons are not designed like prisons in the UK which house prisoners in individual or two-man cells. Cells are large rooms, originally designed to house 60 prisoners, however, years of under-funding has meant that cells are now very overcrowded and it is common for 150 prisoners to sleep in one cell. Facilities are extremely basic. You are likely to be provided with blankets and expected to sleep on the floor.

#### **Food and Diet**

The prison diet is very limited and not suited to western tastes. Rations consist of nsima (maize meal) and beans. There is virtually no variety. Bottled drinking water

is normally only available by purchasing it from the prison shop. Tap water is usually available. Prisoners with friends or relatives in the area may arrange to have food brought in. Before this is done, however, you should check with the officer-in-charge whether this will be permitted and whether it will result in the withdrawal of all prison rations.

## **Hygiene**

Hygiene levels within Malawi prisons can be challenging and not to UK standards. Communal showers are normally available daily to prisoners.

## **Work and Study**

You should check working and studying regulations with the prison as the opportunities will vary. Some prisons offer limited training opportunities e.g. carpentry, arts and crafts.

If you have the funds to pay for learning material, consular staff will try to provide them. There is also the possibility of funding for education courses through Prisoners Abroad. If you are interested, you should write to them for further information. You should note that it is unlikely that you will have access to IT.

You may want to consider learning Chichewa or another local language. Knowing the local language will help you to understand what is happening around you, communicate your needs and also ease the boredom of prison life

## **Contact and Languages**

Chichewa is the main language used across the prison system but, as with much of Malawi, some English is generally spoken. Mixing between prisoners is common during the day and language difficulties do not tend to be a problem.

Prisoners are allowed to watch communally some programmes on television and listen to the radio. Books and magazines are allowed with prisons but are subject to approval by authorities.

There is the possibility to request local language materials through the post from Prisoners Abroad (including language textbooks and dictionaries).

## **Exercise**

Most prisons organise outdoor games that prisoners are encouraged to participate in. The local weather conditions allow the majority of daytime activities to take place outdoors.

## **Climate**

Climate very different to that of the UK and would normally be described as 'tropical' with temperatures and levels of humidity much higher than the UK. Winters may be

chilly, particularly in the evenings. There is a rainy season from December to March. Convicted prisoners will be supplied with a prison uniform. No other clothing is supplied by the authorities.

### **Religion**

Prisoners are allowed to take part in religious services of their choice. Prisoners have the right to receive visits from a priest or minister of their faith.

### **Rules and regulations (including drugs)**

New prisoners are made aware of rules and regulations on, or shortly after, their arrival.

If you are caught with any kind of illegal drugs, you will be punished accordingly. Drugs/medicines are not allowed unless prescribed by a medical doctor and approved for use by the prison medical staff. They will be administered by authorised personnel.

In most prisons drug abuse is rife. If you inject drugs, you run the risk of contracting serious blood-borne infections, such as AIDS and hepatitis. Punishments for possession or use of drugs can be severe.

You are not allowed to have a mobile phone. If you are caught trying to use a mobile phone inside the prison you will be punished according to the prison's regulations. However, phone calls are allowed under special supervision. You should ask the officer-in-charge if you wish to make a phone call.

## **Prison: access to help and services**

### **How can I receive money?**

A small amount of money may be deposited with the reception officer at the prison. This may be used for daily needs such as cigarettes. Arrangements can usually be made with the prison officers or visitors for small items to be purchased on your behalf. There is a great deal of theft within the prison and it is unwise to leave anything of personal value unattended.

There are two ways in which you may be able to receive financial assistance while in prison.

- Private Funds: Deposited to you by your family or friends. See Annex B for instructions on how to send funds.
- Prisoners Abroad: Depending on where you are detained, if your family can't support you financially, Prisoners Abroad may be able to send you a small grant every quarter for essentials (enough for one hot meal a day).

**The British Government does not provide financial assistance to prisoners.**

### **Private funds**

While the FCDO does not provide financial assistance to prisoners, we may be able, within certain limits, to send you money from your family.

The Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) operates a "Prison Comfort" system for money transfers to prisoners. Please ask your family to get in touch with the FCDO in order to arrange this.

We are unable to receive payment by credit or debit card, or by cash.

### **Prisoners Abroad**

In addition, Prisoners Abroad, a UK charity, may be able to assist you with funding for prison essentials and some medical care if you are not in receipt of any regular donations from other sources.

### **Can I receive medical and dental treatment?**

Standards of healthcare in Malawi prisons are poor in comparison to the United Kingdom. Poor sanitation, a diet low in nutrition and people sleeping in close proximity to each other – often shoulder to shoulder, can allow the spread of infections.

There is generally a health clinic on site and you can see a health professional if you have a medical issue. More specialised treatment will likely take place at a nearby

government hospital. Stocks of drugs are limited and prisoners may need to rely on friends or relatives to purchase prescribed medication.

With your permission, we can make sure that any medical or dental problems you might have been brought to the attention of any police or prison doctor. We can also liaise with your GP in the UK, if the police or prison doctor requests previous medical records and you give us your consent.

### **Mail/Parcels**

Sending and receiving mail is permitted. Prison authorities are likely to read all incoming and outgoing mail. Writing paper, envelopes and stamps must be provided by the prisoner wardens.

Please note that the British High Commission does not accept parcels on behalf of British nationals in prison in Malawi.

### **Can I make telephone calls?**

Prisoners are allowed to make and receive telephone calls. However, in practice, the situation will need to be determined at each individual prison. For example, if the telephones are out of order a prisoner should speak to a member of the prison wardens and ask for their advice/assistance. Mobile phones are not allowed.

### **How can I make a complaint about mistreatment?**

There is no official complaint procedure in place for mistreatment cases in Malawi. If you experience serious harassment, threats or violence you should report it to consular staff as soon as possible. It is our responsibility to take up any allegations of mistreatment with the authorities on your behalf, but we will only do so with your permission. Even the suggestion that you will be reporting mistreatment to the High Commission can have a positive impact upon how you are treated.

## Chapter 3: The Malawi judicial system

### Overview and first steps

#### Is the system the same as the UK?

The Malawian legal system has similarities with English Common Law. Accused persons are presumed innocent until proved guilty by a court.

The Malawian Constitution requires that an accused person be given a fair hearing within a reasonable time, and that any person charged with a criminal offence should be informed as soon as reasonably practicable of the nature of the charge to enable him to prepare his defence. However, the judicial process in Malawi can be very slow. This is partly due to a lack of resources within the judiciary and prison service, and has been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Criminal cases in Malawi are dealt with by both the Subordinate (Magistrates) Court and High Court of Malawi. The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) office has the constitutional responsibilities to prosecute offenders. However, in practice most of the prosecutions in the Subordinate Court are conducted by the Malawi Police Service. The DPP's office and other Investigation Agencies such as the Immigration Department, Anti-Corruption Bureau handle a number of criminal cases. Private prosecution (e.g. a civil claim or lawsuit) is also done by private lawyers upon getting prior consent from the DPP.

The cost of having your case heard varies depending on the case/offense and whether you employ a lawyer.

- **The FCDO cannot interfere with the judicial system. We cannot ask for your case to be judged more quickly just because you are British, or ask the authorities to waive any penalties.**

#### What should happen when I am arrested?

You will be taken to a police station; it is possible that you will spend one night or more in a holding cell or police station.

At the moment of your arrest, you should be made aware of your rights, which include the following:

- (iv) the right to be given means and opportunity to communicate with, and to be visited by, family members, a religious counsellor and a medical practitioner of your choice;

- (v) the right to be informed of the reason for your detention in a language that you understand (normally this will be English);
- (vi) the right to consult confidentially with a legal practitioner of your choice.

These rights also apply to a sentenced prisoner.

A statement will then be taken from you. However, you have the right to remain silent or to refuse to give a statement until you have a lawyer present. You should not sign anything unless it is in a language that you understand.

**Should you have any questions concerning the legal aspects of your arrest, contact your lawyer. A list of local English-speaking lawyers is provided at the end of this pack.**

### **For how long can I be remanded in custody?**

Arrested persons should be brought before the court as soon as it is reasonably possible, but not later than 48 hours after the arrest. During this first court appearance you will either be charged or informed of the reason for further detention. If the period of 48 hours expires outside ordinary court hours or on a day which is not a court day, you should be brought on the first court day after the expiry of the 48 hours.

All accused persons are entitled to bail but in cases where bail has been denied, you will remain remanded in prison until and during your trial.

Arrested persons are either held in a police cell or remanded in prison.

### **What happens when I am charged?**

Once formal charges have been laid, a detained person is expected to enter plea. The Court ordinarily arranges translation if the charges are in a language that the detainee does not understand.

### **What provision is there for bail?**

Arrested persons may be granted bail depending on their circumstances. In general, all offences in Malawi are bailable. Bail may be decided by the police officer in charge of the case or by the courts. Bail can be applied for by an accused person whether they are represented or not.

If your application for bail is successful, you may find that the court keeps your passport or requires you to report at a police station at specified times. You are usually free to travel within Malawi during this period.

Bail conditions laid down by the police or court, such as residence or police reporting, must be strictly adhered to. Failure to adhere to bail conditions, or failure to attend a scheduled court hearing, could result in a new warrant being issued for your arrest and the bail money being forfeited. Similarly, any attempt to leave Malawi could result in re-arrest or the revocation and forfeiture of bail.

**The FCDO is not able to facilitate the transfer of bail funds.**



## **Trial and legal assistance**

### **What kind of legal assistance is available?**

If you wish to hire a private lawyer, a list of English-speaking lawyers is alongside this pack. Prisoners abroad can also supply information on legal aid, court proceedings and can advise on appointing a lawyer.

Arrested persons are constitutionally entitled to legal representation from the time of their arrest and allowed access to their legal representation whilst in custody. Arrested persons that cannot afford to hire private legal representation can apply for legal aid from the Malawi Legal Aid bureau. Once legal aid is granted by the Malawi Legal Aid Bureau, the arrested persons may be required to pay a contribution which varies depending on the circumstances of each arrested person.

Normally, if you hire a private lawyer, they will ask for a cash advance for their estimated legal fees before they will take your case on.

### **What happens at the trial?**

The police or the courts will inform you, your lawyer/public defender and the prison authorities of the charges against you. A judge or Magistrate will be appointed and a trial date will be agreed. The date agreed could be a considerable way into the future.

The trial may be heard by a subordinate court or the High Court depending on the charges. Subordinate courts are presided over by Resident Magistrates and Graded Magistrates with differing powers of imprisonment depending on the seniority of the magistrate. The criminal jurisdiction of subordinate sorts is limited to their local jurisdiction. The High Court of Malawi has unlimited jurisdiction throughout Malawi and is presided over by High Court Judges.

The subordinate court magistrates and High Court judges normally sit alone. There is no jury system in Malawi.

## **Sentences**

Sentences can vary greatly depending on the seriousness of the offence of which you have been convicted. The Court may pass sentences for varying length of imprisonment, community service orders or fines. Certain offences can incur substantial prison sentences including life or even death sentences. Your lawyer will be able to assist you further with information relating to sentencing.

### **How can appeals be made?**

The High Court of Malawi hears appeals from decisions made by the Subordinate Courts. Appeals against decisions in the High Court can be made to the Supreme Court of Appeal.

Appeals are subject to time limits and your lawyer/public defender will be best placed to advise you on the processes.

### **Reaching the end of your sentence**

#### **What provision is there for reduction of sentence (remission) e.g. for good behaviour?**

Generally, within the Malawian prison system, there is some provision for reduction in sentence. If you are convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for a period of more than one month, other than where the imprisonment is for life, you may earn remission of one third of your sentence on the basis of satisfactory industry and good conduct.

Remission of a sentence may also be granted to a prisoner should they have a medical need, including mental health.

#### **What provision is there for early release e.g. on parole?**

Generally, where a custodial sentence is imposed, there is a possibility of early release. This may result from a presidential pardon, reduction or remission of sentence.

#### **What provision is there for clemency or pardon?**

Generally, the President may pardon convicted offenders, grant stays of execution of sentence, reduce sentences or remit sentences. This also applies to death sentences.

Your lawyer/public defender will be best placed to advise you in detail on any provisions for clemency or pardon.

#### **What about any financial penalties?**

Financial penalties can be used during sentencing instead of or as well as imprisonment.

Your lawyer/public defender will be best placed to advise you on any financial penalties depending on the offence of which you have been convicted and your sentence

#### **Is transfer to another prison within Malawi possible?**

The Commissioner of Prisons may authorise prison transfers within Malawi. The power to authorise such transfer is discretionary, but in practice, the safety and the health condition of the prisoner, have been found to be valid grounds for authorising the transfer of prisoners between prisons.

A sentenced prisoner may, by warrant signed by the Minister, be removed to any country in which he was born or where he normally resided before his entry into Malawi, in order that such person may be detained in any prison in such country until the expiration of his sentence or release according to law.

### **Is transfer to the UK a possibility?**

Malawi are signature to the Commonwealth Scheme for the Transfer of Convicted Offender

To transfer, you must:

- be a British citizen or have close family ties with the UK (normally through permanent residence in the UK)
- not be awaiting trial
- have exhausted all appeals against your conviction and/or the length of your sentence; or have waived your right to an appeal
- have at least 6 months of your sentence left to serve when you apply for transfer
- have no outstanding fines or other non-custodial penalties

The offence you were convicted for must also be a criminal offence in the part of the UK you wish to be transferred to: England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

The authorities in the sentencing country may refuse your request. For Malawi, the power to authorise such transfer rests with the Minister responsible for prisons. However, there are no known cases where this power has been exercised. You should be aware that even if the sentencing state agrees to your transfer, then the UK authorities may also refuse your request. Reasons for this might include if you have not lived in the UK for a number of years and you have no close family residents there.

### **To find out more about transfers to the UK:**

[In prison abroad: transfer to a UK prison](#)

### **What are the procedures for release and deportation?**

Unless the imprisonment order includes an order for deportation after the convicted person has served his/her sentence, any prisoner who has successfully served his prison sentence will be released back to the society, provided that the released prisoner still has a valid residency permit.

If a released prisoner wishes to travel back to the UK or is earmarked for deportation but does not have valid travel documents, the British High Commission may assist the released prisoner to obtain emergency travel documents at a required fee. You, your family or friends will need to fund your return ticket to the UK.

Sometimes people find that they face difficulty adjusting to life in the UK once they have left prison. You may find yourself ready for life on the outside but not prepared for living in the UK. Possibly you have never lived in the UK and have no connections there, or perhaps you have lost touch with friends and family. You may simply want to

talk to another person who understands what you have been through, to help you consider what to do next.

If you are registered with Prisoners Abroad you can visit Prisoners Abroad when you first arrive back in UK for advice, to take a shower, use their temporary luggage store, make essential phone calls or use a computer. If you have no belongings Prisoners Abroad may be able to help with basic toiletries and finding suitable clothing. If you know your release date in advance it is best to write and tell your caseworker when you are likely to arrive and what help you think you might need. If you have no money and nowhere to go, Prisoners Abroad's Aftercare Service can help with:

- advice on finding emergency accommodation in the London area
- claiming welfare benefits, including emergency benefit payments if you are destitute
- making appointments with doctors and dentists
- putting you in touch with local agencies if you are not returning to the London area.

Later on, you may want advice on housing, looking for work, applying for training or getting counselling. Prisoners Abroad can refer you to the right agency.

Other sources of practical help back in the UK are The Salvation Army – UK Helpline 020 7367 4888, Monday to Friday 8 AM to 4 PM, or contact your local Salvation Army branch – and The Prison Fellowship, UK Helpline 020 7799 2500, Monday to Friday 9 AM to 5 PM.

### **Would I have a criminal record in the UK?**

We will not normally pass on information about your case to a third party without your consent. However, if you're arrested for certain serious offences, such as child sex abuse or drugs crimes, our staff must tell other relevant UK authorities. It is therefore possible that information about this may appear if a Criminal Records Bureau check were carried out by a prospective employer.

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## Chapter 4: Additional Information

### Additional Information

If you are in financial difficulties and unable to pay for a lawyer Prisoners Abroad can sometimes assist with legal expenses and can also supply information on legal aid, court proceedings and advise on appointing a lawyer.

Clifford W. Msiska (National Director Paralegal Advisory Service Institute)

ADL House

P.O. Box 30311

Lilongwe

Malawi

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## Prisoners Abroad

Since 1978 the charity Prisoners Abroad has offered practical support and advice to British citizens imprisoned overseas. It is the only UK charity providing this service and it is available to all, whether guilty or innocent, convicted or awaiting charge or trial. Prisoners Abroad is concerned with your health and welfare, both during your imprisonment and also on your return to the UK, through their resettlement service (if you have registered whilst in prison). They can also provide support and advice to your family during your imprisonment. In order to access any services, prisoners must first register with Prisoners Abroad by signing and returning their authorisation form.

Once you seek help from Prisoners Abroad, the Prisoner & Family Support Service will be your point of contact for advice and information. The type of assistance they can offer will vary from country to country, but generally they can provide you with information, in English, on:

- your rights as a prisoner and issues that may affect you such as health or transfer to the UK
- obtaining magazines, newspapers, books and the regular Prisoners Abroad newsletter
- learning the language of your country of imprisonment
- translation of documents
- grants for food if you are in a developing country and don't have funds from other sources
- grants for essential medicines and toiletries if you don't have funds from other sources
- preparing for release
- help for your loved ones, including information, family support groups and, in a few cases, assistance with the cost of visiting

Prisoners Abroad  
89 – 93 Fonthill Road  
London N4 3JH  
UK

**Telephone:** 00 44 (0)20 7561 6820  
or, for your relatives in the UK, Freephone: 0808 172 0098

(Mondays and Tuesdays 9.30 am to 6pm, and Wednesdays to Fridays 9.30 am to 4.30 pm, UK time)

**Email:** [info@prisonersabroad.org.uk](mailto:info@prisonersabroad.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.prisonersabroad.org.uk](http://www.prisonersabroad.org.uk)

## **Glossary of Terms**

### Useful legal terms

*Please include a list of useful legal terms here*

### Key phrases – English into Malawi

*Please include a list of key phrases here*



## **Annex**

FCDO leaflet: Support for British Nationals Abroad: Summary  
*[<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-summary>]*

FCDO leaflet: In Prison Abroad: Transfer to a UK Prison  
*[<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/in-prison-abroad/in-prison-abroad-transfer-to-a-uk-prison>]*