

1. I do not want my name to be used in the inquiry, but I want to say what happened to me. I am a Burundian national who arrived in the UK in 2003 to claim asylum. My claim was refused and the appeal dismissed. I became ARE on 8th November 2004 and ended up in Plymouth staying with friends.
2. I was detained in a police station on 20/04/09 and was transferred to Colnbrook IRC on 22nd April 09.
3. On 10/06/09 I was taken back to the police station and charged with non-compliance under section 35 of the asylum and immigration act.
4. I was brought before Plymouth magistrates court where I pleaded not guilty. The court granted bail under the condition that I reported to the police and stayed at a friend's address given to the court. I was not released but taken back to HMP Exeter. I have never understood why this was. I went on to spend a further 10 and a half months in HMP Exeter, followed by 7 months in different IRC's before being released without an explanation.
5. I appeared before Immigration tribunal courts in Newport and Taylor house and was refused bail each time and eventually, after my release and at a hearing at Plymouth Crown court the CPS dropped the charges.
6. During the 17 and a half months of detention I never understood why I was there. 10 and a half months I was in prison where I was the sole witness to a horrible assault where a black prisoner had a mixture of sugar and boiling water poured over him. This made his flesh peel open. I will never get that sight out of my head. I cooperated with the prison authorities and the attackers were prosecuted as a result. I was labelled as a snitch.
7. Before and after this event I regularly was racially abused and after I got into a fight with one of my tormentors I was made a social inclusion ward so that other black prisoners could report to me and then I could report it to the governor.
8. Although I was detained under the immigration act I was living and working alongside other criminal prisoners. I was made to share a cell with a convicted murderer for over two months. We were friends. In the cell we shared coffee and tobacco and talked. I only found out the day he went to court and it was his picture on the South West TV news and that he was sentenced to for 15 years for murder. That was a shock to me. I thought of every way that it was a mistake or someone was trying to trick me before I could believe it. I became very paranoid around that time, but you cannot show weakness in prison. It was a very hard time for me.
9. During my prison induction I told them about being tortured in my home country and the fear I feel every day as a result, but I was not seen by a doctor about this for all the time I was there.
10. All the time I was in the prison estate a rule 35 report was not completed for me until 29th April 2010. while I was at HMP Exeter I did not have proper access to a lawyer or have it explained to me why I was still in prison after the magistrate had granted me bail. I was made to feel that I had committed a crime although I had not. I was kept with criminals and

treated like a criminal. I began to feel like a criminal. Now people in Plymouth assume I am a criminal because they know I spent time in prison. I cannot convince people, the truth is too long and difficult to explain. People inside and out assume that I was guilty of a crime. This reputation follows me every day and I know that even if people don't say it to my face I see it in the way people treat me every day.

11. When I was finally sent to Brook House IRC I was attacked by two detainees with improvised plastic blades, beat me and stamped on my head. Because I helped the police with investigations into my assault, which ended up with one of my attackers being convicted, I was again labelled as a snitch. The treatment from other detainees made me scared for my life. I was scared to sleep. I am still often scared to fall asleep and I dream of the smell of prison and the fear of being attacked. When you are asleep and when you are on the toilet is when you are most vulnerable. I imagine that I am being watched when I am on the toilet. This is possibly the worst thing that is still with me every day since my release.

12. I have had a difficult life but some things in my head were not there before I was in the prison estate and the IRC's.

- I have become very suspicious of friends. I don't have many left now and I know that some don't trust me, but some I lost because I cannot trust them.
- I hate people walking behind me down the street and I know it makes me look mad and people sometimes fear me, but I have to stop to let people pass before I can walk again. I know that I would probably be frightened of me too acting in that way.
- The sight of cooking meat sickens me after seeing what happened with the boiling water and sugar. I used to love meat and laugh at vegetarians. I am not a vegetarian if I cannot see the meat but I don't tell people that I cannot eat meat
- I no longer enjoy action movies. The loud explosions frighten me sometimes and movies make me remember fear, but now I have been living with the reputation of a hard man criminal so I avoid sitting with people to watch movies. They would laugh at me getting scared just watching action movies.
- I sleep very badly and wake up ready to fight off attackers. I dream the smell of prison and I see the face of the murderer I shared a cell with.

I cannot go to the toilet or sleep peacefully, lost my friends and sometimes act like a crazy man, but I committed no crime. I helped the authorities twice during my 17.5 months of detention but only suffered as a result and I still live with fear in bed in the toilet and on the streets every day.

I was not given much time to write this letter and there is much more I can tell you. I can give oral evidence and answer questions, but I want to remain anonymous.