

Evidence from Debra, a refused Zimbabwean asylum seeker. Right to Remain is submitting this evidence on Debra's behalf.

If the inquiry wishes to contact Debra, please contact Right to Remain and we will try to arrange this.

1. I come from Zimbabwe and I came to the U.K. For the first time in 2002. as soon as I arrived I applied for Asylum, unfortunately my application was refused and I was removed. The following year, in 2003, however, I came back to the U.K. With a false passport, under a fake identity from Malawi.
2. In 2007 I claimed asylum but, I was refused again.
3. After that the Home Office started attempting to remove me to Malawi. I have tried in many ways to persuade the Home office that I have no relations in Malawi, I even provided them with my official birth certificate and my ID passport and went to the Malawian Embassy to obtain a document stating that I am not Malawian, but they would not care.
4. My experience of living in immigration detention was miserable.
5. I have been detained twice: the first time was in 2011, when I spent two weeks in detention and the second was in 2014 and this time I spent two months in detention.
6. The last time I was detained, in February 2014 has been very hard for me.
7. In detention I suffered incredibly. I found the staff very rude and never willing to accommodate any of my requests.
8. I was very uncomfortable in my room and I asked for a duvet or some covers which they denied me. My friend from outside sent me a duvet and they kept it, despite my complains, and I was only able to retrieve it once I was released.
9. As a woman I felt constantly intimidated by the guards, who were mostly men and did not have any respect for my privacy. The officers would enter into my room without notice, and in some occasions they touched and physically threatened me.
10. I don't think they were appropriate mechanism to deal with my mental, physical or emotional feelings. For two months could not sleep at all, I always felt cold, and had pain in my stomach (probably due to the food), and lacked of fresh air. Even now, I still have problems sleeping. People around me have also been affected by my detention and my Mum passed away soon after my release.
11. When the attempted to remove me, I was woken up at 6am and was denied breakfast, despite my fragile condition guards were really violent with me. They shouted at me and they threatened to handcuff me.
12. Now I am out of detention but the experience I had inside still haunts me and I live in fear of being detained again. I don't think any human being should be treated like this,. Detention is against human rights.