

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Summary

AI reports & statements: report on torture in Brazil / head of Amnesty International Gambia arrested / health concern for six prisoners of conscience, Malaysia

Further news: death row as main source of organs for transplant, China / International Center for Transitional Justice / ICTY acquittals on appeal / PHR-Israel clinic in Jenin, PA / surgeon's work during conflict in Chechnya / HIV/AIDS & adult mortality, South Africa / call for humane treatment of asylum seekers, UK / Ohio bill to ban executions of mentally disabled, USA / interview with expert on psychosocial treatment of victims of mass disasters, USA

Conferences: International Human Rights Training Program, CHRF Quebec / post-doctoral fellowships, University of Berkeley USA

Vacancies: Medical Advocacy Program Coordinator, DOWUSA

Publications

Amnesty International reports & statements

Brazil: "They treat us like animals" - Torture and ill-treatment in Brazil. Dehumanization and impunity within the criminal justice system. 18 October [AI index: AMR 19/022/2001]. Amnesty International is launching this report at a time of intense debate on torture among those working in the criminal justice system, those working with victims of torture as well as the media.

Report: <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AMR190222001>

Press release: *Brazil: Firm action needed to stop torture.* 18 October [AI index: AMR 19/029/2001].

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/D1314E3327A340F080256AD90041A2EC>

Also see article in the *New York Times*, 19 October:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/19/international/americas/19BRAZ.html>

Gambia: Amnesty International demands the release of the head of its Gambian section. 25 October [AI index AFR 27/007/2001]. The head of Amnesty International's Gambia section Mohamed Lamine Sillah was detained on 22 October, apparently for comments he made in a BBC broadcast.

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/36A341F91ACD0BAF80256AF00049AAB0>

Latest news Mohamed Lamine Sillah was released on bail on 26 October and reportedly had not been ill-treated in detention.

Malaysia: Concerns for health of government critics detained without trial. 24 October [ASA 28/030/2001].

Amnesty International is again appealing for the release of six prisoner of conscience who have been held since April 2001 and whose health is deteriorating.

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/B7120A828E1A1DF780256AEF004E99F4>

For background information also see: *Malaysia: Human rights under threat -- the Internal Security Act (ISA) and other restrictive laws.* 24 October 2001 [AI index: ASA 28/031/2001].

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/CF4B5246E5413CF780256AEF005D6E15>

This is a small selection of Amnesty International reports and statements. For a comprehensive overview, please check Amnesty International's website: <http://www.amnesty.org/>

Further news

Afghanistan - articles in the BMJ and Lancet on the attacks in Afghanistan

Ahmad K. UN pleads for break in bombing in Afghanistan. *Lancet* 358; 9290 (20 October).

<http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9290/full/llan.358.9290.news.18056.1>

Ferriman A. Doctors divided in their attitude to military strikes on Afghanistan. *BMJ* 2001;323:884 (20 October).

<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7318/884>

China - death row as main source of organs for transplant. The *New York Times* reported that executed prisoners are the main source for kidneys, livers, lungs and other organs used in transplants in China (18 October).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/18/international/asia/18ORGA.html>

The International Center for Transitional Justice is a newly-established human rights organization based in New York City, USA. The ICTJ's primary aim is to promote accountability by helping countries develop effective responses to human rights abuse arising from repressive rule, mass atrocity or armed conflict. (From the Center's web-site: <http://www.ictj.org>)

The ICTJ will launch officially on 5 November 2001. For further information contact the Center at: 20 Exchange Place, 33rd Floor / New York, NY 10005 / USA. Tel: 1.917.438.9300 / Fax: 1.212.509.6036 / Email:

info@ictj.org

ICTY - acquittals on appeal. Three Croat men were acquitted of war crimes on appeal by the International Criminal Tribunal on Former Yugoslavia (23 October). The ICTY press release on the outcome of the appeal in the case, *Prosecutor v Zoran Kupreskic and others*, is available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/pressreal/p629-e.htm>

The judgement summary is available at: <http://www.un.org/icty/pressreal/kup-sum011023e.htm>

The text of the judgement is available here: <http://www.un.org/icty/kupreskic/appeal/judgement/index.htm>

See also the *Chicago Tribune* report (24 October):

<http://chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-0110240349oct24.story>

Israel / OT / PA - PHR Israel' clinic in Jenin, PA. *Ha'aretz* reported that roadblocks delayed doctors from PHR - Israel for several hours in a recent visit to Jenin, but eventually the internist, gynaecologist, paediatrician, two GPs, a nurse and assistants examined 130 patients in a day (26 October).

<http://www.haaretzdaily.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=84552>

Also from *Ha'aretz* the following article gives a glimpse of the problems in providing health care to those wounded in the current upsurge of conflict. See:

<http://www.haaretz.co.il/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=86789>

Russian Federation - Surgeon's work during conflict in Chechnya. Surgeon Dr Khassan Baiev has been treating both Russian soldiers and Chechens during the war in Chechnya, resulting in both parties objecting to his work, the *Independent* reported. <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/russia/story.jsp?story=100081>

South Africa - HIV/AIDS & adult mortality. The Medical Research Council of South Africa has released a report entitled 'The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Adult Mortality in South Africa' identifying AIDS as the leading cause of death in the country. The MRC has estimated that approximately 40 per cent of men and women between 15 and 49 years of age die of AIDS-related illnesses. The report can be accessed here:

<http://www.mrc.ac.za/bod/index.htm>

For *Washington Post* and *Guardian* (UK) press release on the report see:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A18262-2001Oct18.html> (19 October)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/aids/story/0,7369,575363,00.html> (17 October)

Also see articles in the *Lancet* and *BMJ*:

Ramsay S. "Shocking" AIDS data released in South Africa. *Lancet* 358; 9290 (20 October 2001)

<http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9290/full/llan.358.9290.news.18043.1>

Sidley P. HIV/AIDS responsible for 25% of death in South Africa, report says. *BMJ* 2001;323:890

<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7318/890/a>

UK - call for humane treatment of asylum seekers. The British Medical Association and the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture issued an appeal for better treatment of asylum seekers in the UK (24 October). The dossier is available online at:

<http://www.bma.org.uk/public/webdocs.nsf/webdocsvw/asylumseekers>. The BMA's position paper on access to medical care for asylum seekers (January 2001) is available at:

<http://www.bma.org.uk/public/ethics.nsf/39f32339ff78cd6b802566a6003f3311/2a69ce77491261bb802569e400337f59>. The Medical Foundation web-site is: <http://www.torturecare.org.uk/>. The BMJ report on the BMA/MF initiative can be found here: <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7319/952/b>

USA - Ohio bill to ban executions of mentally disabled. A bill sponsored by a member of the Ohio legislature would prohibit executions of mentally disabled killers, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* reported (15 October, 'Executions of retarded questioned'). Of the 38 states with capital punishment, 18 have banned executions of mentally disabled. http://enquirer.com/editions/2001/10/15/loc_executions_of.html

USA - interview with expert on psychological treatment of victims of mass disasters. *Ha'aretz* magazine gives a portrait of psychologist and trauma specialist, Dr Yael Danieli, an Israeli born doctor living in New York. Presently she is working with relatives of victims of the September 11 attacks (26 October). <http://www.haaretzdaily.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=86574>

USA - new death chamber, Kansas. The Kansas Secretary of Corrections said he toured execution facilities in Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Colorado to help him develop the department's official plan for a new execution chamber. The results have now been shown to the media. See: 'State corrections officials lead tour of new Lansing execution chamber', *Topeka Capital Journal* (25 October). http://www.cjonline.com/stories/102601/kan_lansingexecution.shtml

World Health Report 2001- Mental health: new understanding, new hope. WHO (October 2001). "One in four people in the world will be affected by mental or neurological disorders at some point in their lives. Around 450 million people currently suffer from such conditions, placing mental disorders among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide". For the rest of this press release click here: <http://www.who.int/inf-pr-2001/en/pr2001-42.html> (English)
<http://www.who.int/inf-pr-2001/fr/cp2001-42.html> (French)
Report: <http://www.who.int/whr/>

Also see: Larkin M. WHO report on mental and neurological disorders. *Lancet* 358;9291 (27 October). http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9291/full/lan.358.9291.dissecting_room.18092.1

Conferences & fellowships

The **Canadian Human Rights Foundation** will be holding its 23rd **International Human Rights Training Program** in Quebec from 9 - 28 June 2002. The training program aims to strengthen the capacity of organisations to undertake human rights education. For further information contact Mr. Frederic Hareau, <mailto:ihrtp@chrf.ca> or visit: <http://www.chrf.ca/>

Applications are invited from the social sciences, humanities, and legal, health, and human rights fields for **post-doctoral fellowships** to the **University of California, Berkeley** USA. Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, this post-doctoral fellowship is offered by the Institute of International Studies, the Human Rights Center, and the Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities. The 3-year project intends to explore facets of community in its social, political, and cultural expressions at the beginning of the 21st century. Each year of the project supports two post-doctoral fellowships (one year in duration). For further information see: <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/RockyCommun/postdoc02.html> or contact: Professor Michael Watts, Community in Contention, Institute of International Studies, 215 Moses Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-2308, USA.

Vacancies

Doctors of the World USA seeks an experienced **Medical Advocacy Program Coordinator**. The appointed person will lead a new project that will coordinate the work of physicians, who provide medical expertise to US based health and human rights advocacy efforts aimed at underserved populations. For further information

contact DOW USA by fax to +1.212.226.7026, or e-mail to duganm@dowusa.org, or by regular mail to Doctors of the World USA, 375 West Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Tel: +1.212.226.9890. Last day to apply: March 10, 2002. <http://doctorsoftheworld.org>

Publications

Bioterrorism

Ala'Aldeen D. Risk of deliberately induced anthrax outbreak. *Lancet* 358;9291 (27 October 2001) http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9291/full/llan.358.9291.editorial_and_review.18176.1

Bioterrorism: safeguarding the public's health. *Lancet* 358: 9290 (20 October 2001) http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9290/full/llan.358.9290.editorial_and_review.18002.1

Lightfoot N, Wale M, Spencer R, Nicoll A. Appropriate responses to bioterrorist threats. *BMJ* 2001;323:877-878 (20 October). <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7318/877>

Wessely S, Hyams K C, Bartholomew R. Psychological implications of chemical and biological weapons. *BMJ* 2001;323:878-879 (20 October). <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7318/878>

Further publications

At the Side of Torture Survivors: Treating a Terrible Assault on Human Dignity, *New England Journal of Medicine*, 25 October 2001. See book review: <http://intl-content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/345/17/1284-a> [Paid subscription necessary]

Baicker K. The Budgetary Repercussions of Capital Convictions. NBER Working Paper No. W8382, July 2001. Abstract available at: <http://papers.nber.org/papers/W8382>

Fatal imbalance. Medecins Sans Frontieres (9 October 2001).
Press release: <http://www.msf.org/content/page.cfm?articleid=D58A538D-879C-4569-9307BB7D86F91357>
Report: <http://www.msf.org/content/page.cfm?articleid=032387D3-7D09-49E3-99FC231DBE03F7B7>

Forster HP, Emanuel E, Grady C. The 2000 revision of the Declaration of Helsinki: a step forward or more confusion? *Lancet* 2001; 358: 1449-53 (27 October). Available to registered readers at: http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol358/iss9291/full/llan.358.9291.editorial_and_review.18063.1

Henigsberg N, Folnegovic-Smalc V, Moro L. Stressor characteristics and post-traumatic stress disorder symptom dimensions in war victims. *Croat Med J* 2001 Oct;42(5):543-50. For an abstract see PubMed: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=11596171&dopt=Abstract

Marshall T, Simpson S, Stevens A. Health care assessment in prisons: a toolkit. *J Public Health Med* 2001 Sep;23(3): 198 - 204. For an abstract see PubMed: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=11585192&dopt=Abstract

Murray I. More Executions, Fewer Deaths? *American Outlook*, July/August 2001. Paper examining the thesis that executions reduce the overall number of homicides. http://www.hudson.org/american_outlook/articles_fa01/murray.htm
(This article responds to a paper by Dezhbakhsh, Rubin and Shepherd. Does Capital Punishment Have a Deterrent Effect? New Evidence from Post-moratorium Panel Data, February 2001, Emory University Economics Working Paper No. 01-01. The paper by Dezhbakhsh et al suggests that "each execution results, on average, in 18 fewer murders". For the abstract see: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=259538; the paper itself can be downloaded at this site in PDF format.)

Stephenson J. Swift action needed to prevent explosive HIV/AIDS epidemics in Asia. *JAMA* 286; 16: October 24/31 2001. <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/current/ffull/jmn1024-2.html>

Women's Health and Human Rights in Afghanistan. PHR-USA (2001).

http://www.phrusa.org/campaigns/afghanistan/Afghan_report.html

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