
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

AI Bulletin Vol.12 No.9, 08 May 2009

AI Index: ACT 84/009/2009

Contents of external sites are not the responsibility of Amnesty International. Links are provided for the convenience of readers. Some sites may require registration or only be available to subscribers.

Contents:

Amnesty International Publications

Children

Death Penalty

Food Security

Health Services

Health Workers

HIV/AIDS

Malaria, TB and Other Diseases

Mental Health

Food Security & Poverty

Prisons

Refugees and Migrants

Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Torture

Violence against Women

Women Rights

Conferences/Seminars/Courses

Publications

Amnesty International reports & statements:

6 May: Zimbabwe: Fifteen of the 18 Zimbabwean human rights and political activists who were re-detained yesterday have now been released on bail, though three remain in custody.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/good-news/zimbabwean-human-rights-and-political-activists-released-20090506>

1 May: Colombia: Seven members of the Colombian army unit which is alleged to have killed the husband of an Indigenous leader have been detained, according to media reports.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/colombian-soldiers-detained-killing-indigenous-leader-20090501>

1 May: Iran: Iranian authorities executed Delara Darabi in Rasht Central Prison on Friday morning. She is the second person to be executed this year after being convicted of a crime she was alleged to have committed while still under 18.

<http://amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/delara-darabi-executed-iran-20090501>

30 April: Pakistan: At least 65,000 displaced people are now in need of assistance, having fled fighting between Pakistani Taliban and government forces in Lower Dir district of the North West Frontier Province.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/good-news/pakistan-displacement-crisis-worsens-fighting+spreads-20090430>

29 April: Sudan: A special court in Sudan sentenced a further 11 men to death. This sentencing brings the number of men condemned to death for the Khartoum attacks to 82.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/sudan-death-sentences-rise-82-20090429>

28 April: India: The year-long trial of Indian human rights activist Dr Binayak Sen suffered another delay on Monday, further prolonging the doctor's unjust stay in jail.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/unwell-indian-doctor-remains-jail-20090428>

(See more under Prisons)

27 April: Africa: Human rights defenders from across Africa say they remain deeply concerned by the threats, harassment, intimidation and physical violence they continue to face in carrying out their work.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/african-human-rights-defenders-acknowledge-gains-concerns-remain-deep%E2%80%A6-20090427>

27 April: Burundi: New legislation, promulgated last week in Burundi by President Nkurunziza, which abolishes the death penalty but outlaws homosexuality, is both a cause for celebration and disappointment.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/burundi-abolishes-death-penalty-bans-homosexuality-20090427>

24 April: Sri Lanka: The United Nations now estimates that more than 6,500 civilians have died and 13000 injured in the fighting in the north eastern region of Sri Lanka. Hundreds of civilian casualties were reported this week alone.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/civilian-casualties-continue-mount-sri-lanka-20090424>

Children:

Afghanistan: Five Afghan teachers and 40 of their pupils, most of them girls, have been admitted to hospital with severe headaches after a suspected airborne poison attack, the Public Health Ministry said. Reuters (27 April):

http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUKISL436837.CH_.2420

Democratic Republic of Congo: The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, known as MONUC, announced that it has freed nearly two dozen children from the ranks of the country's armed forces this week. *UN News Centre* (4 May):

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30694&Cr=monuc&Cr1=>

Democratic Republic of Congo: The United Nations envoy tasked with protecting the rights of children in armed conflict today warned of the dire security situation in some parts of strife-torn eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. *UN News Centre* (24 April):

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30592&Cr=coomaraswamy&Cr1=>

International: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on the Security Council to take firm action against countries which recruit children as soldiers and appealed to all States to ensure that the protection of children in armed conflict is placed above other considerations. *UN News Centre* (29 April):

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30639&Cr=children&Cr1=armed+conflict>

Iraq: The Iraqi government has earmarked US\$30 million for water and education projects designed to help children in impoverished parts of Iraq's southern marshland area, according to a senior aide. *IRIN* (6 May): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84257>

Sri Lanka: More than half the 170,000 civilians who have fled fighting in Sri Lanka's north to government-controlled areas could be children needing care, relief officials warn. *IRIN* (30 April): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84175>

UK: The children of failed asylum seekers should not be arrested and detained before deportation, the Children's Commissioner for England said. *Reuters* (27 April): <http://uk.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUKTRE53Q1BI20090427>

Death Penalty:

Japan: On the occasion of the EU-Japan Summit held in Brussels on 4 May 2009, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Center for Prisoners' Rights (CPR), FIDH's partner organisation in Japan, called on the European Union to put the issue of the death penalty in Japan at the top of the agenda. *Human Rights Education Associates* (30 April): http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=2&language_id=1&headline_id=9121

Iran: Human rights groups have renewed attacks on Iran's policy of executing juvenile offenders after a woman painter was hanged for a murder allegedly committed when she was 17. *The Guardian* (2 May): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/02/iran-artist-darabi-execution-juvenile>

Iraq: Iraq should institute an immediate moratorium on the death penalty in the aftermath of a large number of executions on 3 May 2009. *Human Rights Watch* (6 May): <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/05/06/iraq-stop-executing-prisoners>

Laos: Concern for a pregnant British woman facing a possible death penalty in Laos grew despite claims that the country's law forbids the execution of pregnant prisoners. *The Guardian* (5 May): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/may/05/pregnant-woman-heroin-death-penalty>

Food Security & Poverty:

Africa: Pointing to Africa as the epicentre of the global food crisis, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General called for an African Green Revolution, urging the international community to double food yields across the continent through sustainable agriculture. *UN News Centre* (4 May): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30692&Cr=food+crisis&Cr1=>

International: The number of hungry people in the world could soon hit a record 1 billion, despite a recent drop in food prices, the food aid organisation said. *Health 24* (7 May): http://www.health24.com/news/DietFood_News_Feed/1-3420,50729.asp

International: Global finance and aid ministers called on rich donor nations to deliver aid to poor countries, warning that world poverty will rise sharply as more nations fall victim to the financial crisis. *Reuters* (26 April): http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUKN26496148.CH_.2420

Sri Lanka: The United Nations and Government of Sri Lanka have announced the launch of a \$50 million appeal to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of the rising number of desperate civilians fleeing the fighting in the north between the army and Tamil separatist rebels. *UN News Centre* (5 May): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30695&Cr=Sri+lanka&Cr1=>

Health Services:

Australia: A number of GPs spoke out in support of plans by the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission to pursue new payment systems in preference to the fee-for-service Medicare systems, under which doctors are paid irrespective of whether the treatment provided was appropriate or successful. *The Australian* (7 May):

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25440875-23289,00.html>

Brazil: The mayor of the Brazilian town of Foz do Iguacu has provoked complaints after he installed cameras in a health centre to monitor the quality of service to the public. *BBC News* (4 May): <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8032271.stm>

UK: A major plan has been published to improve health services in rural Wales. The Rural Health Plan aims to ensure that people living in some of the most sparsely populated areas of Wales have access to appropriate healthcare. *Wales Online* (4 May): <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/2009/05/04/improving-rural-health-services-91466-23533175/>

HIV and AIDS:

International: The negative impact of HIV is felt on education systems and schools, learners and teachers around the world -- from children dropping out of school to care for sick parents to the loss of teachers in their most productive years. UNAIDS (4 May):

http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Resources/FeatureStories/archive/2009/20090504_UNESCO.asp

International: After months of speculation about how the global economic downturn might affect HIV/AIDS programmes, a new World Bank report details the projected aftermath of the crisis and how it could place the treatment of more than 1.7 million at risk by year's end. *IRIN Plus News* (29 April): <http://www.plusnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84171>

Burundi: Burundian AIDS activists and international human rights groups have condemned a new criminal code that criminalises homosexuality in the central African country. *IRIN Plus News* (28 April): <http://www.plusnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84149>
(See also Amnesty International statement above)

Swaziland: Carlos Cordero, a 46-year-old Puerto Rican Aids activist who has been living with HIV for the past 17 years, has travelled to Swaziland to pass a message of hope to those infected and affected by the virus. Cordero has been on anti-retroviral treatment (ART) for the past 13 years, and by far, he is still growing strong. *The Swazi Observer* (5 May): <http://www.observer.org.sz/index.php?news=3806>

Influenza A (H1 N1)

Resources:

New England Journal of Medicine influenza page: <http://h1n1.nejm.org/>

WHO: Influenza A (H1N1) guidance documents:

<http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/swineflu/en/>

Pandemic Influenza: A Guide to Recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) Studies and Workshops

IOM May 2009 Available online at: <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/66214.aspx>

Blumenshine P, Reingold A, Egarter S, Mockenhaupt R, Braveman P, Marks J. Pandemic influenza planning in the United States from a health disparities perspective. *Emerg Infect Dis.* 2008 May;. Available from <http://www.cdc.gov/EID/content/14/5/709.htm>

Mensua A, Mounier-Jack S and Coker R. Pandemic influenza preparedness in Latin America: analysis of national strategic plans. *Health Policy and Planning* 2009;1–8

doi:10.1093/heapol/czp019. Available online at: <http://bit.ly/AsZJI>

Lancet editorial and related articles: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(09\)60862-X/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(09)60862-X/fulltext)

Malaria, TB and Other Diseases:

International: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the international community to redouble its efforts to ensure that every person at risk of catching malaria has access to a mosquito net by 2010, in a message marking World Malaria Day. *UN News Centre* (25 April): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30596&Cr=malaria&Cr1=>

Mental Health:

Canada: The number of Canadians reporting stress has increased by 30 per cent since last year, The economy is down, jobs are being lost, floodwaters are up in Manitoba and New Brunswick and swine flu has many concerned the Canadian Mental Health Association reported at the start of its 58th annual national mental health week. *CBS News* (4 May): <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/manitoba/story/2009/05/04/mb-mental-health.html>

Egypt: Lawmakers in Egypt have passed the country's first new mental health legislation in more than 60 years. *BBC News* (6 May): http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/8034504.stm

South Africa: The Mental Health and Poverty Project (MHaPP) at the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at the University of Cape Town, aims to evaluate the link between poverty and mental ill-health to ensure the poorest communities have access to mental health care. *Health 24* (5 May): http://www.health24.com/news/Health_care/1-918,50697.asp

Prisons:

Europe: European countries should help the Obama administration close the Guantanamo Bay prison by offering to resettle some detainees who face torture at home. *Human Rights Watch* (29 April): <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/04/28/eu-should-help-close-guantanamo-resettling-detainees>

India: An Indian doctor whose achievements in community health have been recognised by the international medical world and whose personal sacrifices have been cited by academics in medical schools across India will complete two years in prison on 14 May this year. *BMJ* (8 May): http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/338/may05_2/b1864
(See also the item on Dr Binayak Sen in the AI statements section above)

Switzerland: The ICT upheld a 20-year prison sentence for former Yugoslav army officer Mile Mrksic for the 1991 execution of 194 prisoners of war in the Croatian town of Vukovar in an appeals ruling. *Reuters* (5 May): <http://uk.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUKL5712849>

Turkmenistan: A Turkmen political prisoner, Mukhametkuli Aymuradov, was freed on 2 May 2009 after serving 14 years in prison on trumped-up charges. *Human Rights Watch* (6 May): <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/05/06/turkmenistan-political-prisoner-free-after-14-years>

Zimbabwe: A Zimbabwe court has ordered 18 opposition activists to trial next month in a move that will spark fresh tensions in a new unity government. *Reuters* (5 May): <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL5636551>

Refugees and Migrants:

Chad: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today warned against any attempts to destabilize eastern Chad, where United Nations aid agencies say growing insecurity could threaten the delivery of aid to over 400,000 refugees and internally displaced persons. *UN News Centre* (6 May): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30716&Cr=chad&Cr1=sudan>

International: The number living as internally displaced persons fleeing conflict, generalized violence and human rights violations stood at 26 million last year, unchanged from 2007, according to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). *UNHCR* (4 May): <http://www.unhcr.org/news/NEWS/49ff02442.html>

Pakistan: The United Nations announced that its agencies are escalating their humanitarian relief efforts in Pakistan as tens of thousands of people continue to flee armed clashes between the army and insurgents in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). *UN News Centre* (4 May): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30681&Cr=pakistan&Cr1=>

South Africa: The South African government should immediately halt detaining and deporting Zimbabweans from South Africa in violation of the government's recently announced moratorium, Human Rights Watch said. *Human Rights Watch* (30 April): <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/04/30/south-africa-stop-deporting-zimbabweans>

Sexual and Reproductive Rights:

Burkina Faso: More than five million people in Burkina Faso, mostly women and children, are expected to receive free birth certificates as part of a one-year, US\$5-million government programme. *IRIN* (4 May): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84224>

International: The number of midwives worldwide would have to more than double to meet Millennium Development Goals of reducing maternal and infant deaths by 2015, according to the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and World Health Organization on International Day of the Midwife. *IRIN* (5 May): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84241>

Italy: An "anti-rape" emergency decree increasing penalties against sexual offenders has been passed by the Italian Senate. *United Press International* (22 April): http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/04/22/Italy-passes-harsher-rape-penalties/UPI-41471240436284/

Benin: Construction has begun of West Africa's first clinic on surgery for victims of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). *IRIN* (6 May): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84256>

Torture:

International: Amnesty International UK has launched a hard-hitting online film about torture, showing activists intervening to prevent a torture victim being further abused. *Amnesty International UK* (6 May): www.amnesty.org.uk/defythem,

Spain: A Spanish judge moved closer to investigating former Bush administration officials over torture at Guantanamo Bay, *Reuters* (5 May): <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE5443X020090505>

Violence against women:

Maldives: An action plan between the government and the UN to tackle gender-based violence (GBV) launched in the Maldives. The two-year programme will focus on prevention, protection and access to justice with a multi-sectoral approach to ensure the cooperation and accountability of all stakeholders. *MINIVAN News* (5 May): http://www.minivannews.com/news_detail.php?id=6461

Women's Rights:

Kuwait: Women in the conservative Gulf state of Kuwait are seeking to contest seats in parliament after two failed attempts in previous legislative elections. *AFP* (6 May):
<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ivmEUxSf9WC2mBXk09AFrZ3K01YA>

Publications:

Brodin H, Hodge S. A Guide to Quantitative Methods in Health Impact Assessment. Available online at:
http://www.fhi.se/PageFiles/4375/R200841_Health_Impact_200812.pdf?epslanguage=en

McCoy D, Kembavh G, Patel J, Luintel A. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's grant-making programme for global health. *Lancet*, 373: 1645 - 1653, 9 May 2009.
[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(09\)60571-7/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(09)60571-7/fulltext)

Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021: For women in Australia, sexual assault and domestic and family violence are the most pervasive human rights violations. Available online at:
http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/women/pubs/violence/np_time_for_action/national_plan/Pages/default.asp

Assessment of Compulsory Treatment of People Who Use Drugs in Cambodia, China, Malaysia and Viet Nam: Application of Selected Human Rights Principles. WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific 2009, Available online at:
http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB_9789290614173.htm

Das Gupta M, Gostin L. How can donors help build global public goods in health? Policy Research working paper; WPS 4907 The World Bank, Development Research Group Human Development and Public Services Team, April 2009; Available online at:
http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2009/04/20/000158349_20090420112159/Rendered/PDF/WPS4907.pdf

Maya Sabatello. Children's Bioethics: The International Biopolitical Discourse on Harmful Traditional Practices and the Right of the Child to Cultural Identity. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009. Available online at: <http://www.brill.nl/default.aspx?partid=210&pid=31417>

Mathews S, Abrahams N, Jewkes R, Martin LJ, Lombard C. J Alcohol use and its role in female homicides in the Western Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 2009; 70(3): 321-7. Available online at:
http://www.jsad.com/jsad/article/Alcohol_Use_and_Its_Role_in_Female_Homicides_in_the_Western_Cape_South_Afr/4317.html

Rappleyea DL, Harris SM, Dersch CA. Therapist Response to Intimate Partner Violence: A Qualitative Content Analysis. *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy*; 8(1): 34-51. 2009: Available online at:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a908387351~db=all~order=page>

Danner M. The Red Cross Torture Report: What It Means. *New York Review of Books*, 30 April 2009. Available at:
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/22614>. (The article has a link to the ICRC report.)

Peirce G. 'Make sure you say that you were treated properly' - Torture, Secrecy and the British State. *London Review of Books*, cover date: 14 May.
<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n09/peir01.html>

This newsletter may be freely distributed. For a free subscription or to unsubscribe please write to:
Health@amnesty.org

Health and Human Rights Team

Amnesty International - International Secretariat

Tel: +44 20 7413 5522

Fax: +44 20 7956 1157

AI web-site: <http://www.amnesty.org/>

AI Health Professional web-site: <http://www.amnesty.org/health>