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## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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### Summary

**AI reports & statements:** Mexico / USA

**Further news:** AIDS/HIV - HRW reports; research ethics / Arms trade / China - AIDS / DRC - health workers held / Guantanamo - children; suicide attempt / India - DP / Indigenous health / Israel - forensic; prison / Kenya - rape / Rwanda - war crimes/ USA - prison health / Venezuela - Cuban doctors / Zimbabwe - attack on HR body

**Meeting**

**Publications**

### Amnesty International reports & statements

*Mexico: Ten years of intolerable crimes against women in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua must end now:* <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR410332003>

*USA The threat of a bad example.* Report on US reaction post-11-September : <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR511142003>

Other AI news is available at: <http://news.amnesty.org/>

### Other news

**AIDS/HIV.** Human Rights Watch has published new reports on the link between violence and HIV/AIDS. See: *Just Die Quietly: Domestic Violence and Women's Vulnerability to HIV in Uganda.* <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/uganda0803/> and *Ravaging the Vulnerable: Abuses Against Persons at High Risk of HIV Infection in Bangladesh,* New York, August. Press release: <http://www.hrw.org/press/2003/08/bdesh082003.htm>; report can be downloaded at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/bangladesh0803/>

**Research ethics.** Draft guidelines on ethical participatory research with HIV positive women, July 2003. A consultation document still in draft form (draft 5) is open for consultation. Please send comments to the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS at [info@icw.org](mailto:info@icw.org) by 1st October 2003. [http://www.icw.org/tiki-read\\_article.php?articleId=29](http://www.icw.org/tiki-read_article.php?articleId=29)

**Arms trade.** The *New York Times* (17 August) profiles "the world's largest arms trafficker". See 'Arms and the man'. *NYT Magazine* 17 August <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/17/magazine/17BOUT.html>

**China - AIDS.** HIV, which the United Nations estimates has infected as many as 1.5 million people in China, poses a far greater problem for the Chinese government than SARS, says the *Washington Post* (18 August). See 'China meets AIDS crisis with force'. *Washington Post* <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7067-2003Aug17.html>

Kaisernetwork.org reports that Chinese officials recently arrested Ma Shiwen, deputy director of the Henan Centre for Disease Control, for allegedly leaking documents about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Henan province to an HIV/AIDS advocacy group. See: [http://www.kaisernetwork.org/daily\\_reports/rep\\_index.cfm?DR\\_ID=19450](http://www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/rep_index.cfm?DR_ID=19450)

**Democratic Republic of Congo - vaccinators detained.** 25 polio vaccinators have been held since late July in DRC by Mayi Mayi militia members: see the IRIN report (13 August) [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=35921&SelectRegion=Great\\_Lakes](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=35921&SelectRegion=Great_Lakes)

**Guantanamo - child detainees.** The BBC reports (22 August) that the commander of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp has said that the US military is "very close to making a recommendation" on the transfer of children held in Guantanamo "back to their home countries". The children are aged 13-15. See: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3172617.stm>.

Another inmate of the US detention centre in Guantanamo Bay has tried to kill himself, the second such attempt in a fortnight, reports Associated Press (21 August): [http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm\\_811449.html?menu=](http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_811449.html?menu=).

**India - death penalty.** The *BMJ* reports (23 August) that India is planning to introduce the death penalty for those making and selling fake medicines. <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/414-b>. See also Yahoo news: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/030820/80/e6iko.html>

**Indigenous health.** The *BMJ* this week (23 August) contains several articles relating to the health of indigenous peoples. See the following editorials and related links. <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/0-f> ; <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/403> ; <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/404> ; <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/406> ; <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/407> ; <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/327/7412/408>

**Israel -- forensic controversy.** A second autopsy on a deceased Israeli soldier was performed on July 29 at Soroka Medical Center in Be'er Sheva by Danish forensic pathologist Prof. Joergen Thomsen. Prof. Thomsen's report confirmed the cause of death as suicide but maintained that the body had not been properly sewn up afterward and that internal organs and three ribs were missing from it. The report caused a stir. See *Ha'aretz* (15 August) <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=329184>

- **secret prison.** *Ha'aretz* (22 August) reports on camp 1391, a prison where detainees "are blindfolded and kept in blackened cells, never told where they are, brutally interrogated and allowed no visitors of any kind". <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=331637>

**Kenya - women urge rape inquiry:** A Kenyan delegation has presented a petition on behalf of hundreds of alleged victims of rape by British soldiers reports the BBC (14 August) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3149427.stm>

**Rwanda - war crimes.** Victoria Brittain reports on Rwanda's response to the 1994 genocide. "The United Nations Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has completed only 15 cases, and ... will be unable to complete the trials of the 49 suspects now under arrest before it ends in 2008. ... In Rwanda around 120,000 men, women and some children packed the jails beginning soon after the genocide ... ". See *Nation* (1 September): <http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20030901&s=brittain>

**USA - prison health.** The US policy of mass incarceration has led to a steep increase in the number of prisoners with communicable diseases, reports Megan Comfort in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (August). 'United States: Sentenced to sickness' <http://mondediplo.com/2003/08/10comfort>

**Venezuela - conflict over Cuban doctors.** The row between the Venezuelan medical association, opposition parties and the government over the presence of Cuban doctors in predominantly poor areas of Venezuela continues. See: *Venezuela Electronic News* (29 July) <http://www.vheadline.com/readnews.asp?id=9909>; *Miami Herald* (14 August) <http://www.cubanet.org/CNews/y03/ago03/14e2.htm>; *BBC* (21 August) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3167225.stm>; *Reuters Alertnet* (21 August) reporting that a Venezuelan court has barred 400 Cuban doctors from working in Caracas slums: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N21340967.htm>

**Zimbabwe - attack on human rights.** A Zimbabwean newspaper has again attacked the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights accusing the association of trying to bring politics into medicine. See: *Sunday Mail* (17 August). <http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/index.php?id=5714&pubdate=2003-08-17>. (Very slow link). In a letter to the paper, the ZADHR reiterated its position that "the primary objective of the Association is to uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which the Government of Zimbabwe is a signatory. ZADHR will respond to human rights violations, including organised violence perpetrated by any group, political or not, in power or in opposition. ZADHR is also concerned with issues of equity and rights to health care, including in relation to HIV/AIDS."

## Meetings

First Prison Medicine Congress  
Council of Europe  
13-14 November 2003, Strasbourg  
The program is available at: <http://www.congres-ucsa.com/eng/index.htm>  
For more information contact:  
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## Publications

*Lancet* health and human rights page.  
The *Lancet* (16 August) publishes three articles under the health and human rights rubric; by Singh on military tribunals in Guantanamo (link below), by van Ommeren and colleagues on psychiatric patient care in emergencies and Lawrie and van Damme on refugees in Guinea. See:  
[http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol362/iss9383/full/Ilan.362.9383.talking\\_points.26874.2](http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol362/iss9383/full/Ilan.362.9383.talking_points.26874.2)  
[Singh J. Military tribunals at Guantanamo Bay: dual loyalty conflicts. [http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol362/iss9383/full/Ilan.362.9383.health\\_and\\_human\\_rights.26848.1](http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol362/iss9383/full/Ilan.362.9383.health_and_human_rights.26848.1)]

Albertyn R, Bickler SW, Van As AB, Millar AJW, Rode H. The effects of war on children in Africa. *Pediatric Surgery International* 2003, 19(4):227-232.  
e mail: [hrode@ich.uct.ac.za](mailto:hrode@ich.uct.ac.za).

Bonati M. The embargo as violation of human rights. *Giornale Italiano di Farmacia Clinica*, 2002, 16(4):210-215. Contact: [mother\\_child@marionegri.it](mailto:mother_child@marionegri.it)

Braveman P, Gruskin S. Poverty, equity, human rights and health. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 2003 (July); 81:439-45.  
<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/81/7/en/Braveman0703.pdf>

*Issues in Medical Ethics* (Jul-Sept 2003) is available online at:  
<http://www.issuesinmedicalethics.org/issue113.html>

Ray AK. Human rights movement in India. A historical perspective. *Economic and Political Weekly* (9 August) <http://www.epw.org.in/showArticles.php?root=2003&leaf=08&filename=6137&filetype=html>

Book review. Margaret M. Chaplin reviews *Machinery of Death: The Reality of America's Death Penalty Regime* by Dow, Dow and Hitchens.  
*Psychiatric Services* 2003 54: 1171.

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