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Amnesty International reports & statements:

21 October: South Korea: Many migrant workers in South Korea are beaten, trafficked for sexual exploitation and denied their wages for long periods despite the introduction of rules to protect their rights, said Amnesty International in a report issued today.

19 October: Uruguay: A law in Uruguay that has allowed the police and military to get away with torture and murder should be annulled, Amnesty International said today, as the country prepares to vote in a referendum on the future of the law.

16 October: Pakistan: The government of Pakistan must urgently prepare for a displacement crisis as civilians flee South Waziristan ahead of an expected military assault, Amnesty International said.
15 October: Uganda: The draft “Anti-Homosexuality Bill” introduced on October 14, 2009 in Uganda’s parliament would violate human rights and should be withdrawn immediately, a group of 17 local and international human rights organizations said today.

15 October: International: United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated Amnesty International on the launch of its Demand Dignity campaign to end the human rights violations that drive and deepen poverty.

15 October: International: In the run up to the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October, Amnesty International called on world leaders and policy makers to change the debate on poverty from economics to addressing the human rights problems that impoverish and keep people poor.

Children:

DRC: Minimal access to healthcare, clean water, and overall poor nutrition during pregnancy lead to common congenital disabilities in children such as spina-bifida and limb deformities, and young children predisposed to early childhood diseases such as meningitis and polio, explained Keyser. IRIN (23 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86710

Horn of Africa: UNICEF is deeply concerned about the increasing number of children affected by drought and hunger in the Horn of Africa. According to latest UNICEF estimates, almost five million children under the age of five are now suffering from the consequences of chronic food insecurity caused by prolonged drought and the impact of the continuing conflict in Somalia, which affects wider parts of the region. Since May 2009, the number of young children in need of emergency assistance in the Horn has increased by nearly one million. UNICEF (14 October):
http://www.unicef.org/media/media_51409.html

International: Diarrhoea claim more under-five children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined, yet remains a neglected disease, according to World Health Organization diarrhoea specialist Olivier Fontaine. IRIN (15 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86591

International: A record 106 million infants were vaccinated in 2008 - the highest rate of immunisation ever - according to a report released Wednesday in Washington, but NGOs are calling for an increase in funding to fill the gap affecting the world's poorest nations and communities. IPS (21 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48948

Jamaica: Minister of Health, the Hon Rudyard Spencer, has proposed several measures to increase immunisation of children, and improve the infant and maternal mortality figures, which have not changed significantly in over a decade. Jamaica Information Service (23 October):

Tajikistan: Nearly every Tajik child between the ages of one and 14 received vaccinations against measles and rubella during a two-week, United Nations-backed campaign this month to fight the
spread of the diseases in the mountainous Central Asian country. UN News Centre (21 October):

Uganda: Although Uganda is a signatory to the Maputo Protocol, a charter adopted by the African Union that guarantees the rights of women including the right to end female genital mutilation, it has not passed a law outlawing the practice. IPS (19 October):
http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48915

USA: Fewer young criminals may face life-without-parole sentences. Major limitations or outright bans on life sentences for youth offenders are also under consideration in Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court. Psychiatric News (16 October):
http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/44/20/16-a

Death Penalty:

Iran: The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said Tuesday she was deeply dismayed to hear that another juvenile offender was executed in the Islamic Republic of Iran on Sunday, and called for changes to Iranian law and practice “to end execution of juvenile offenders once and for all.” Human Rights Tribune (13 October):
http://www.humanrights-geneva.info/UN-human-rights-chief-criticizes6737

USA: The Louisiana Supreme Court on Tuesday unanimously rejected arguments that the convicted killer of a Baton Rouge police officer should be spared the death penalty because he is diagnosed as mildly mentally retarded. The Advocate (21 October):


Food Security and Poverty:

Brazil: Brazil has made substantial progress in ensuring all its citizens have access to food, but authorities in the South American nation should do more to help the most vulnerable groups, such as the landless and small farmers, a United Nations human rights expert said today. UN News Centre (16 October):

Ethiopia: The Ethiopian government has asked the international community for emergency food aid for 6.2 million people. BBC News (22 October):
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8319741.stm

International: Every day we wake up to headlines and images of devastating violence in hot spots around the globe. In Pakistan, for example, attacks over the last few weeks have killed scores and seriously injured many more. But beneath the headlines, there is another great challenge that is often the root cause of violence or its unintended consequences: increasing rates of hunger and an alarming lack of food. Los Angeles Times (16 October):

International: The United Nations today marked the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declaring that the fight against a scourge that afflicts

**International**: Scientists and development experts across the globe are racing to increase food production by 50 percent over the next two decades to feed the world’s growing population, yet many doubt their chances despite a broad consensus that enough land, water and expertise exist. *New York Times* (21 October): [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/22/world/22food.html?_r=3&ref=world](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/22/world/22food.html?_r=3&ref=world)

**Nepal**: The United Nations said Thursday it had been forced to cut food rations to 90,000 Bhutanese refugees living in camps in Nepal due to a severe funding shortage. *AFP* (15 October): [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iLnyNylZGKvOh8X82xv0DVTjTwbw](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iLnyNylZGKvOh8X82xv0DVTjTwbw)


**Health Services**:

**EU**: The European Union is intercepting big shipments of medicines on their way to poorer countries, according to a new report published Tuesday. *IPS* (20 October): [http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48935](http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48935)


**Health Workers**:

**International**: Healthcare is a particular case in which migration poses serious problems for the developing world. Unless recognised and addressed, the migration of health workers will continue to impede the ability of countries already facing severe health workforce shortages to provide basic health services to their populations. *European Voice* (22 October): [http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/a-healthy-approach-to-migration/66205.aspx](http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/a-healthy-approach-to-migration/66205.aspx)

**Malawi**: Over the past few years, health workers in Malawi have noticed an unforeseen consequence of the availability of free antiretrovirals: more rape victims are showing up in hospitals. *CMAJ* (22 October): [http://www.cmaj.ca/earlyreleases/22oct09_malawi.shtml](http://www.cmaj.ca/earlyreleases/22oct09_malawi.shtml)
Nepal: Medical services at the BP Koirala Institute of Health Science came to a standstill today, following a protest by health workers. The Himalayan Times (20 October): http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Yet+another+strikes+bring+health+services+at+BPKIHS+to+a+halt&NewsID=40479

Saudi Arabia: Over 6,000 health workers, including doctors, nurses and paramedics, have been recruited from Great Britain, Ireland, Nigeria, Azerbaijan and South Africa to work in the Ministry of Health (MoH). Arab News (12 October): http://www.arabnews.com/?page=1&section=0&article=119168&d=12&m=10&y=2009&pix=kingdom.jpg&category=Kingdom

HIV and AIDS:


International: Nearly 35 participants from UNFPA country offices in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab States, Asia and Europe, along with partners from governments and the civil society, met here this week to reflect on the most appropriate and efficient strategies to fully engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and in the prevention of HIV. UNFPA (15 October): http://www.unfpa.org/public/News/pid/4037

Kenya: In the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya's main port, which has the country's highest concentration of substance abusers, Masudi Omar of Reachout Centre Trust, a drug addiction treatment centre, says it's vital that AIDS prevention programmes reach this demographic. IPS (21 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48949

Mali: Parents are supposed to outlive their children, or so thought the grandmothers sitting in the children's playroom at Gabriel Touré hospital in Bamako, capital of Mali. They had all lost their children to AIDS-related illnesses, and met each other when they brought their HIV-positive grandchildren on hospital visits. IRIN (14 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86570

Taiwan: People with haemophilia in Taiwan are appealing a decision by the US courts that says they cannot sue a multinational drugs firm in the United States over allegations that they contracted HIV from contaminated blood products that the company knowingly dumped in Asia. Guardian (11 October): http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/oct/11/haemophiliacs-hiv-sue-tainted-drug

Uganda: Money from the Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is funding organisations in Uganda that actively promote homophobia, a leading human rights charity has warned. Aidsmap News (19 October): http://aidsmap.com/en/news/B990E508-29C7-4F00-A995-9DA9AB58385FC.asp

Ukraine: Winnipeg's International Centre for Infections Diseases is helping to develop a model HIV/AIDS prevention program in Ukraine, which has one of the world's fastest growing epidemics of the disease. The Gazette (Montreal) (23 October): http://www.montrealgazette.com/health/AIDS+prevention+program+being+developed+in+Ukraine/1790119/story.html

Malaria, TB and Other Diseases:
Africa: Malaria Consortium, the world’s leading non-profit organisation dedicated to the control and prevention of malaria, has been appointed to help implement a new USAID net distribution project worth up to $110 million across Africa. Leadership Nigeria (21 October): http://leadershipnigeria.com/index.php/news/headlines/7525-africa-gets-110m-to-fight-malaria

International: Yellow fever is a “ticking time bomb”, while measles has been eliminated three years ahead of schedule in parts of Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. These are among the highlights of the most recent World Health Organization (WHO) report, State of the World’s Vaccines and Immunization. IRIN (21 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86679

Saudi Arabia: A major operation to destroy mosquitoes carrying the dangerous dengue fever virus in municipal districts has been underway for the last four weeks, according to a report. Arab News (22 October): http://www.arabnews.com/?page=1&section=0&article=127655&d=22&m=10&y=2009

Zimbabwe: Workers trudge through foul-smelling mud in a trench seeping with clean drinking water and raw sewage in one of the Harare neighbourhoods hardest hit by last year’s cholera epidemic. The repair work is a race against time to patch the city’s sewage system before the rainy season begins in November, when health workers fear the water-borne disease could erupt again. AFP (18 October): http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jYSHZd6izNi2w5Q4N8JZBk05Bag

Maternal Mortality:

Cambodia: For most of this decade Cambodia has been trying to cut the number of deaths of women, who are the human face behind the country’s stubbornly high maternal mortality rate. The figure has been running at around 461 per 100,000 live births for 10 years, and is one of nine development objectives the country is trying to improve as part of its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). IPS (12 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48810

Sudan: Aweil East county commissioner, Diing Aher Ngong, Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, today acknowledged increased maternal mortality rate in the area. Sudan Tribune (21 October): http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article32864

Uganda: In Uganda, most women have many children at short birth intervals, and tend to be young at their first birth; health facilities are often too far away or too costly and antenatal care visits are low. The quality of maternal healthcare is also poor. New Vision (21 October): http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/20/698541

Mental Health:

Afghanistan: At least one in 10 of the over 700 street beggars arrested in Kabul in the past 10 months have mental disorders of some kind, according to officials in the government’s anti-begging commission. IRIN (18 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86599

UK: Children forcibly held in a British immigration detention centre have experienced serious psychological and physical health problems, a medical report claims today. Medical Justice (13 October): http://www.medicaljustice.org.uk/content/view/867/69/

Refugees and Migrants:
Angola: More than 30,000 Angolans are stranded in transit camps after being abruptly deported from the Democratic Republic of Congo and there are growing fears of a cholera outbreak as the rainy season begins. IPS (20 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48933

Bulgaria: Hasun Albaadzh, an asylum-seeker from Syria, died Oct. 6 at the Busmantsi detention centre on the outskirts of Bulgarian capital Sofia. He had been held at Busmantsi for 34 months - considerably more than the maximum legal period of detention - and had been denied proper medical care. IPS (17 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48903

USA: As lawmakers continue to shape a health care overhaul bill to increase the number of Americans with insurance while driving down costs, one group is being deliberately barred from receiving any government benefits associated with the effort: undocumented immigrants. Kaiser Health News (23 October): http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Stories/2009/October/23/illegal-immigrants-health-explainer.aspx

Sexual and Reproductive Rights:

Africa: Africa has the highest percentage of maternal deaths due to unsafe abortion in the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 4.7 million abortions occur each year, and of these, about 98 percent are performed either by persons lacking the minimal skills, or in an environment lacking the minimal medical standards, or both. RH Reality Check (21 October): http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/10/21/unsafe-abortion-why-money-might-matter

Colombia: Colombia's Constitutional Court has ordered a national campaign to promote the sexual and reproductive rights of women, including the right to abortion in certain cases. Colombia Reports (20 October): http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/6473-constitutional-court-orders-widespread-campaign-for-womens-sexual-rights.html

Asia Pacific: The effort to ensure that all Asians can access reproductive health services is falling short, despite global agreement that this is essential to meeting other development goals. That was the consensus at a regional forum here involving a wide range of experts, activists and practitioners in the field. UNFPA (20 October): http://www.unfpa.org/public/News/pid/4056

International: Unsafe abortions kill about 70,000 women a year, says a report by the U.S.-based Guttmacher Institute. An additional five million women are treated annually for complications arising from unsafe abortion, adds the report, based on a global survey. IPS (14 October): http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48851

International: Fifteen years after a United Nations conference on population vowed to put gender equality and reproductive rights at the centre of development, the number of maternal deaths from childbirth – “a staggering toll of more than half a million women each year” – has not changed, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned today. UN News Centre (12 October): http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32506&Cr=women&Cr1=

Kenya: Ministry of Health statistics put the number of Kenyan girls and women who have abortions every year at 300,000; abortion remains illegal so many of these take place in back-street clinics. Plus News (19 October): http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86641

Torture:

International: The U.N.'s top investigator on torture and punishment called Tuesday for a new U.N. convention to protect the rights of detainees, saying many are held for years and sometimes for a lifetime in inhuman and degrading conditions. *Associated Press* (20 October): [http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ghAthEx5tYGv_m1WCIDUnFFE8EbQD9BF98OG0](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ghAthEx5tYGv_m1WCIDUnFFE8EbQD9BF98OG0)

Peru: A British mining corporation is facing a multimillion-pound claim for damages after protesters were detained and allegedly tortured at an open-cast copper plant that the firm is seeking to develop in the mountains of northern Peru. *Guardian* (18 October): [http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/18/peru-monterrico-metals-mining-protest](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/18/peru-monterrico-metals-mining-protest)


**Violence against Women:**


Colombia: Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war in Colombia by all parties in the country’s longstanding armed conflict, and its main victims are women and girls, states a report recently released by Intermón Oxfam, backing up claims made repeatedly by national and international human rights groups. *IPS* (21 October): [http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48942](http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48942)

Democratic Republic of Congo: Night-time attacks on civilians and rape by armed men remain widespread in a strife-torn region of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where nearly 5,400 cases of rape were reported in the first six months of the year, United Nations officials said here on Monday. *Xinhua* (21 October): [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/20/content_12271119.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/20/content_12271119.htm)

Fiji: Fiji will benefit from Australia's provision of 9.2 million Fiji dollars (4.9 million U.S. dollars) over the next six years as part of its continued support to the work of the Fiji Women's Crisis Center (FWCC) as more women experience violence in their homes. *Xinhua* (20 October): [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/20/content_12279834.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/20/content_12279834.htm)


Pacific: Women in the Pacific face some of the highest rates of physical and sexual violence in the world, but regional organisations are working hard to improve the situation. *Pacific Scoop* (23

USA: Immigrant women suffering from domestic abuse face particularly high hurdles in finding protective services. In the Boston area, some are finding their way to safety. Women’s eNews (13 October): http://www.womensenews.org/story/domestic-violence/091009/immigrant-survivors-abuse-seek-freedom

Water and Sanitation:

India: While addressing a round table conference organised on evolving strategies for rural drinking water supply programme and sanitation by the department of rural drinking water supply in New Delhi, union rural development and panchayati raj minister Dr CP Joshi underlined the need for adopting a holistic approach to address the issues of drinking water supply and sanitation in the rural areas of the country. Fnbnews (23 October): http://www.fnbnews.com/article/detnews.asp?articleid=26316&sectionid=1

Iraq: The collapse of ancient underground aqueducts, triggering severe water shortages, has driven over 100,000 people in northern Iraq from their homes in recent years, according to a new study by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UN News Centre (14 October): http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32537&Cr=drought&Cr1=

Nigeria: The Benue State Government has re-launched a strategic water supply and sanitation policy. The need for the policy stemmed from the fact that over the years, the state has remained without a well articulated programme on water supply and sanitation. It was either that too many projects were lined up for execution within a period that was too short or that there was no money for such projects. AllAfrica (22 October): http://allAfrica.com/stories/200910220139.html

Solomon Islands: The people of Tearoku on the Guadalcanal Plains have welcomed the handover on Thursday of new water and sanitation facilities that have provided Tearoku's first clean running water and will improve health standards across the community. Solomon Times (19 October): http://www.solomontimes.com/news.aspx?nwID=4567

Somalia/Somaliland: In Somaliland's drought-stricken Togdheer region, Medair is delivering emergency truckloads of water to dozens of remote communities to save the lives of the most vulnerable. Relief Web (20 October): http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/AMMF-7X2KXP?OpenDocument

Conferences/Courses:

Course: Ipact presents Monitoring and Evaluation of Maternal and Neonatal Health
6-17 December 2009 Bangladesh
A short course designed for ‘country groups’ to strengthen capacity in developing countries for programme monitoring and evaluation in the context of global reproductive health goals. This course will train programme managers in the theory and practice of monitoring and evaluation of maternal and neonatal health programmes, enabling them to examine, evaluate and enhance current practice in monitoring, to design and implement evaluations and to use results to advocate for improved maternal and neonatal health. For further information visit: http://www.ipact-int.com/documents/Bangladesh_001.pdf

Publications:


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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/