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## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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### Amnesty International reports & statements

See the following recent AI news releases [dates given in day/month/year format].

These and other links to news and reports can be found at: <http://web.amnesty.org/news/engindex>

06/05/2004 [Amnesty International: the Romanian government fails to acknowledge the human tragedy unfolding in psychiatric hospitals](#) EUR 39/005/2004

06/05/2004 [Kosovo: Facts and figures on trafficking of women and girls for forced prostitution in Kosovo](#) EUR 70/013/2004 (see also the BBC report: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3686173.stm>)

06/05/2004 [Libya: Quash death sentences against foreign medical professionals](#) MDE 19/009/2004

06/05/2004 [Philippines: Human rights need to be respected as election campaign intensifies](#) ASA 35/007/2004

06/05/2004 [Trafficked women and girls have human rights](#) EUR 70/012/2004

05/05/2004 [Macedonia: Unlawful killings must be investigated](#) EUR 65/009/2004

05/05/2004 [Zimbabwe: Police place human rights under siege](#) AFR 46/013/2004

04/05/2004 [Azerbaijan: Political opposition leaders must receive fair trial](#) EUR 55/001/2004

04/05/2004 [Israel/Occupied Territories: AI condemns murder of woman and her four daughters by Palestinian gunmen](#) MDE 15/049/2004

04/05/2004 [Nepal: Amnesty International urges international community to press for human rights at Nepal Development Forum](#) ASA 31/114/2004

04/05/2004 [Romania: Urgent reforms needed in Romanian psychiatric hospitals ...](#) EUR 39/004/2004

03/05/2004 [Press freedom: Deliberately targeted for doing their jobs](#) POL 30/023/2004

01/05/2004 [Belarus: Stop harassing independent trade unions and their activists](#) EUR 49/012/2004

30/04/2004 [Colombia: A dangerous place for trade unionists](#) AMR 23/025/2004

30/04/2004 [Iraq: Torture not isolated -- independent investigations vital](#) MDE 14/017/2004

30/04/2004 [Sudan: Government must stop human rights and humanitarian disaster in Darfur](#) AFR 54/044/2004

29/04/2004 [Israel/OT: Open letter to President George W. Bush](#) MDE 15/048/2004

29/04/2004 [The last Europeans: Roma on the eve of enlargement](#) POL 30/022/2004  
29/04/2004 [Vietnam: Renewed concern for the Montagnard minority](#) ASA 41/006/2004  
28/04/2004 [Establishing the fate of Belarus' "disappeared"](#) EUR 49/010/2004

## Death penalty

**Afghanistan resumes executions.** Afghanistan has carried out its first execution since the fall of the Taliban more than two years ago reports the BBC (27 April). See: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/3662935.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3662935.stm)

**Iran.** A regional court in Iran has reimposed the death penalty on a prominent dissident, Hashem Aghajari. Mr Aghajari was sentenced to death in November 2002 for apostasy, after he called for a "religious renewal". *BBC* (3 May)  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/3681229.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3681229.stm)

**Kenya.** A man accused of stealing a wrist watch using violence was sentenced by a Mombasa court on 5 May to death by hanging. *Kenya Times* 6 May  
<http://www.kentimes.com/06may04/nwsstory/news9.html>

**Libya - death sentences.** A Libyan court has sentenced five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor to death by firing squad for deliberately infecting 400 children with HIV. *BBC* 6 May  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3689355.stm>; see also the *Washington Post* (7 May):  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A6839-2004May6.html>

**USA (NJ) - no death sentence.** A former nurse has pleaded guilty to murdering 13 patients and attempting to kill two others, under an agreement with prosecutors that spares him the death penalty. See *News12* (29 April) <http://www.news12.com/NJ/topstories/article?id=106318>

**USA (MA).** Gov. Mitt Romney has announced a plan to reintroduce the death penalty in Massachusetts. See the report on which his plan is based: *Governor's Council on Capital Punishment Final Report* <http://www.mass.gov/Agov2/docs/5-3-04%20MassDPRReportFinal.pdf> -- and his press release accepting the report:  
[http://www.mass.gov/portal/govPR.jsp?gov\\_pr=gov\\_pr\\_040503\\_death\\_penalty.xml](http://www.mass.gov/portal/govPR.jsp?gov_pr=gov_pr_040503_death_penalty.xml)  
See also the *NPR* report (3 May); <http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wflid=1869216>. The governor's plan is not without its critics. See *Boston Globe* (4 May )  
[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2004/05/04/das\\_rap\\_governors\\_death\\_penalty\\_plandeadth\\_penalty\\_plan/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2004/05/04/das_rap_governors_death_penalty_plandeadth_penalty_plan/)

## Female genital mutilation

**Netherlands.** The Dutch government is taking measures to crack down on female genital mutilation (FGM) because of the practice's severe physical and psychological effects reports the *Lancet* (8 May). 'Dutch government cracks down on female circumcision'  
<http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9420/full/lan.363.9420.news.29537.1>

## HIV/AIDS

**China.** Central China's Henan Province, which reported the biggest number of HIV/AIDS patients in China, will launch a new campaign next month to fight against these afflictions with traditional Chinese medicines. *China Daily* 4 May  
[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/04/content\\_328143.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/04/content_328143.htm)

**Nigeria.** Nigeria has one of the world's highest numbers of people living with the Aids virus, the health minister has said. *BBC* 30 April  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3674565.stm>

**Philippines.** The Philippines is courting an HIV/AIDS explosion by pandering to religious objections to condom use, Human Rights Watch said in a new report ( 5 May), See <http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2004/04/30/philip8520.htm> and the report <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/philippines0504/>

**Russia's** burgeoning AIDS epidemic is fuelled by government policies that deny HIV-prevention services to those most at risk and also allow discrimination against people with AIDS to flourish, *Human Rights Watch* says in a new report: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/russia0404/>

## Human Rights

**Bangladesh** Eight suspected extortionists have been beaten to death in a village in the central district of Faridpur. Hundreds of public lynchings have been carried out in Bangladesh over the last few years. BBC 26 April, 2004  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/3659043.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3659043.stm)

**China / Canada.** Canada's parliament launched a wide-ranging probe into China's human rights record, with damning evidence of the treatment meted out to Tibetans by Beijing. *MediaCorp News* 6 May  
[http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp\\_asiapacific/view/83444/1/.html](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/83444/1/.html)

**Indonesia.** The Indonesian Military (TNI) acknowledged on Wednesday that troops in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam were guilty of hundreds of violations, including rape and selling ammunition to rebels in the province. *Jakarta Post* (6 May)  
<http://www.thejakartapost.com/national.asp> (click 'past editions' on left side and look for 6 May issue)

**Israel/Occupied Territories.** The *Observer Magazine* (date) published a portrait of a female 'suicide bomber'. See:  
<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/magazine/story/0,11913,1200794,00.html>

**Tunisia.** Tunisian human rights activists have accused France and the US of turning a blind eye to repression, torture and unfair trials in their country. *BBC* (30 April) See  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3674751.stm>

**UN.** Sudan has been given a seat on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, outraging human rights groups and exasperating UN officials reports the *Financial Times* (5 May).

## Iraq

**Iraq - ICRC reaction to prison conditions.** The ICRC is reported as having told the US authorities a year ago of its concerns about Iraqi prisoners. See *Scotsman* (7 March)  
<http://news.scotsman.com/latest.cfm?id=2893118>; *Washington Post* (7 March):  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7718-2004May7.html>

**Iraq - abuse of prisoners.** The abuse of detainees in Iraq was predictable argues Len Rubenstein, Executive Director of Physicians for Human Rights in the *Washington Post* (4 May). It was "a product of the circumstances of detention and the administration's resistance to independent monitoring and accountability". See: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A64322-2004May3.html> [Registration required].

**Press reaction to torture photos.** *New York Times* Iraq reports:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/worldspecial/index.html>; *Los Angeles Times* reports:  
<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/iraq/>; the London *Guardian* reports:  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/0,2759,423009,00.html>,

**Army investigation into torture.** The Taguba report on the 800th Military Police Brigade's detention and internment operations in Iraq is available here:  
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2004/800-mp-bde.htm>

**Iraq - role of private sector.** *Le Monde* (7 March) discusses the role of private companies in security and intelligence work in Iraq. See: <http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3222,36-363943,0.html> [in French]

**UK - allegations of abuse.** The Mirror report allegations from three soldiers that British troops were involved in the torture of Iraqi prisoners: See

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/allnews/page.cfm?objectid=14217558&method=full&siteid=50143>

**UN reaction.** UN experts have called for investigations into recent events in Iraq. Paul Hunt, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health, strongly recommended to the Coalition Provisional Authority that it "establish an independent and impartial enquiry into the health situation of the civilian population of Falluja, in the light of the military operations conducted by the Coalition Forces since the beginning of April". see

<http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/3D0396AD61D1C68CC1256E8900520F72> (3

May); the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Theo van Boven, has called for countries with troops in Iraq "to investigate, prosecute and impose appropriate sanctions on any persons guilty of the alleged violations". See <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/hr4740.doc.htm>. The

Chairperson/rapporteur of the Working Group on arbitrary detention, Leila Zerrougui, said she was "seriously disturbed by the fact that [Iraqi prisoners] have not been granted access to a court to be able to challenge the lawfulness of their detention"

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/hr4742.doc.htm> (5 May)

## Organ trade

**Russia.** Four Moscow doctors have been arrested for plotting to murder a patient so that they could use his organs for transplantation in an illegal trade which Russians fear is rife but which is seldom brought to court. *Guardian* (29 April) <http://www.guardian.co.uk/russia/article/0,2763,1205618,00.html>; see also the *BMJ* (8 May) <http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/328/7448/1092-a>

## Refugees

**Australia** The federal government will not immediately force five children released from an immigration facility back into detention, despite the High Court today ruling it has the power to do so reported the *Sydney Morning Herald* (29 April)

<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/04/29/1083103597618.html>

## Trafficking

**Africa - children.** Child trafficking has gained increasing visibility as a major violation of children's rights and it is a priority concern for the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. Trafficking of human beings affects every country in Africa for which data is available, either as countries of origin or destination. A new report, *Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Woman and Children, in Africa*, examining this phenomenon, can be downloaded at <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/insight8e.pdf>. See also *BMJ* (1 May)

<http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/328/7447/1036-b>

**Kosovo - women.** Amnesty International published this week a report into the trafficking of women in and out of Kosovo, attributing responsibility in part to the presence of UN forces. The report is available at: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR700102004>. See also the BBC report:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3686173.stm>, and the *Guardian* (7 May)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Kosovo/Story/0,2763,1211248,00.html>. The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has criticised the report.

[http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav\\_category=&nav\\_id=28307](http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=28307)

**Tajikistan - meeting on trafficking.** A two day national meeting on human trafficking opened in the Tajik capital Dushanbe on 4 May reports IRIN news. See:

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=40881>

## Torture

**Committee Against Torture.** This UN body will meet between 3 and 21 May in Geneva. The provisional agenda is available here: [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CAT.C.82.En](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CAT.C.82.En); the papers for the meeting can be downloaded here: <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/cat/cats30.htm#32nd>

**Egypt / Sweden.** The Egyptian military court conviction of accused terrorism suspect Ahmed Agiza, who was convicted on 27 April, violated fair trial standards and failed to address his allegations that he was tortured, says Human Rights Watch (5 May). Sweden had expelled Agiza in 2001 on the basis of Egyptian assurances of fair treatment. See <http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2004/05/05/egypt8530.htm>

**Iran** The head of the Iranian judiciary issued an order yesterday banning the use of torture and other abuses: an unprecedented acknowledgement of the regime's record of repression *Guardian* Thursday April 29, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/iran/story/0,12858,1205446,00.html>

**Kenya.** A diplomatic row is brewing between Kenya and Britain following the former's seizure of passports from three UK immigration officials alleged to have tortured a deported Kenyan reports *The Nation* (6 May). Police want the three to answer complaints by Ms Bernice Wairimu Kamau that they tortured her while she was being flown under guard from London to Nairobi. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200405060028.html>

**US** U.S. military police stacked naked Iraqi prisoners in a human pyramid, and attached wires to one detainee to convince him he might be electrocuted, according to photographs obtained by CBS News which led to criminal charges against six American soldiers. *Billing Gazettes* April 29 <http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?id=1&display=rednews/2004/04/29/build/nation/45-torture-photos.inc>

**Zimbabwe.** A Zimbabwean judge has ordered investigations into allegations of torture by some of the 67 suspected mercenaries held in Harare. Their lawyers have asked for their release because, they say, the state has failed to raise charges against them. Regional magistrate Mishrod Guvamombe yesterday also ordered a medical examination of all those who claimed they had been tortured. *The Star* 28 April <http://www.thestar.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=132&fArticleId=417584>

## **Violence against women**

**Russia** A newspaper report and a crusading student in hospital with rubber bullet wounds to the head have prompted Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev to order an investigation into allegations of harassment and rape by Moscow metro police. *The Moscow Times* 15 April <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2004/04/15/012.html>

**Turkey** - Turkish police have arrested a man and a dozen of his relatives on suspicion of murdering his 14-year-old daughter, a rape victim, to salvage the family's "honour", according to newspaper reports. *swissinfo SRI* 28 April <http://www.swissinfo.org/sen/Swissinfo.html?siteSect=143&sid=4900221>

## **Awards**

**Awards for Action on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights - Call for nominations**  
Nomination Deadline: 14 May 2004

Established by the [Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#), the **Awards for Action on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights** highlight outstanding contributions that decrease vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and protect the rights and dignity of those infected and affected. An award is presented annually to one Canadian and one international recipient. Nominations are accepted for any individual or non-profit organization, from Canada or another country, whose work has directly contributed to addressing HIV/AIDS and human rights issues. Anyone may submit a nomination. For more information about the Awards and for more details on how to submit a nomination, visit: <http://www.aidslaw.ca/Maincontent/awards.htm>

## Courses

**United Kingdom. Human rights.** London School of Economics is offering a short 20 lecture evening course on human rights on Monday evenings from October to December 2004. For further information contact Ms Joy Whyte, Centre for the Study of Human Rights, LSE, Houghton Street, London, WC2A 2AE, UK or visit the LSE Human Rights Program web site at: [http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/human-rights/Teaching/Short\\_course.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/human-rights/Teaching/Short_course.htm).

### **South Africa. Eighth Leadership Course on Gender and Reproductive Health, Johannesburg, SA, 11-29 October 2004**

This three week course will examine the impact of social and economic inequality on health, the concept of rights, the concept of reproductive and sexual health, research strategies and policy. For further information contact [womenhp@sn.apc.org](mailto:womenhp@sn.apc.org) (subject Leadership course) or write to Leadership course, Women's Health Project, PO Box 1038 Johannesburg 2000 South Africa.

## Publications

Cohn JR, Romirowsky A, Marcus JM. Abuse of health-care workers' neutral status [letter]. *Lancet* 2004; 363,

<http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9419/full/llan.363.9419.correspondence.29466.1>

Durojaye E. Nigeria launches new AIDS policy. *Can HIV AIDS Policy Law Rev.* 2003 Dec;8(3):41-2. [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=pubmed&dopt=Abstract&list\\_uids=15108652](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=pubmed&dopt=Abstract&list_uids=15108652)

Kristin L Dunkle et al. Gender-based violence, relationship power, and risk of HIV infection in women attending antenatal clinics in South Africa *Lancet* 2004; 363: 1415-21.

[http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9419/full/llan.363.9419.original\\_research.29458.1](http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9419/full/llan.363.9419.original_research.29458.1)

Martin SL, Curtis S. Gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS: recognising links and acting on evidence *Lancet* 2004; 363: 1410.

[http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9419/full/llan.363.9419.editorial\\_and\\_review.29488.1](http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol363/iss9419/full/llan.363.9419.editorial_and_review.29488.1)

Patterson D. UNGASS review: reports show little progress on human rights. *Can HIV AIDS Policy Law Rev.* 2003 Dec;8(3):34-8.

[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=pubmed&dopt=Abstract&list\\_uids=15108649](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=pubmed&dopt=Abstract&list_uids=15108649)

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