
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Human rights information and web links for health professionals

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-----RECENT AI STATEMENTS & REPORTS

Turkey: Kurdish girls raped and sexually abused in police custody. New evidence has emerged in the case of two Kurdish girls who were raped and sexually abused in police custody in March 1999: although the girls underwent to medical examinations by different doctors, none of the doctors reported signs of violence. However, a later report by the Turkish Medical Association describes symptoms consistent with the girls' testimonies of sexual torture [AI Index: EUR 44/001/99]. For AI news release see: <http://www.amnesty.org/news/1999/44400199.htm>

Death Penalty: Public Statement: Amnesty International voiced its disappointment at the UN General Assembly's failure to take action on the death penalty: the proposed resolution - co-sponsored by over 70 countries, including the European Union - calling for a world-wide moratorium on executions was not acted upon in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly in New York. It was decided not to take action at this session of the General Assembly after running into strong opposition by some states -- led by Egypt and Singapore -- who claimed that calls for the abolition of the death penalty world-wide violated the sovereignty of states [AI Index: IOR 40/03/99, 16 November 1999]. For an AI news release see

<http://www2.amnesty.se/isext99.nsf/d2c76a153cdf1ac4412566ee00476b41/1bb1695a385b8a31c125682b00629215?OpenDocument>

Iraq: Amnesty International exposes recent abuses: This report focuses on grave human rights violations in Iraq that are taking place systematically and with total impunity. These violations range from arbitrary arrest and detention, to torture, extrajudicial and judicial executions after unfair trials, "disappearances" and forcible expulsions on the basis of ethnic origin [AI Index: MDE 14/10/99].

Here is the link to the full report:

<http://www2.amnesty.se/isext99.nsf/b3ad7ab2f7211442412566ee00476b4e/3c29b9d3e06d6105c125682600440d28?OpenDocument>

-----AFRICA CHARTER ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of the Organization of African Unity will enter into force on 29 November 1999, 30 days after receipt of the fifteenth instrument of ratification. The following states have deposited instruments of ratification or accession: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The OAU website is at: <http://www.oau-oua.org/> [though information on the above charter is not available there.] For background on the Charter see AI document IOR 63/06/98: <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1998/IOR/I6300698.htm>

-----DEATH PENALTY NEWS

The Chicago Tribune claims in a new study it has conducted that "Capital punishment in Illinois is a system so riddled with faulty evidence, unscrupulous trial tactics and legal incompetence that justice has been forsaken". The five part report (14--18 November) is available at the Chicago Tribune web-site: <http://chicagotribune.com/news/metro/chicago/ws/0,1246,37842,00.html>

Thailand: One woman and two men were executed by machine-gun at Bang Khwaang Maximum Security Prison in Bangkok on 23 November 1999. This brings the number of people executed so far

this year in Thailand to 16, an unprecedented high number in recent years. At least 36 people face imminent execution, having exhausted all appeals against their death sentences. Officials are reported to have said that there are 40 people on death row. Amnesty International fears that more executions have been scheduled. The authorities do not give details of death sentences or scheduled executions. For more information see Amnesty International Urgent Action dated 24 November 1999 at <http://www2.amnesty.se/uaonnet.nsf/d1c4215f6be10b45c1256672003dd2be/4895a708e31a6c20c1256833004fc9af?OpenDocument>

Afghanistan: Una ejecucion como espectaculo [Execution as a show]: a woman, condemned for the killing of her husband, was executed in Kabul in front of 4,000 spectators.

For the full article see El Pais Digital [in Spanish] on:

http://www.elpais.es/cgi-bin/ELPAIS/vdkw_cgi@1121/xe9b56a5a-929/Search/2611060/1

Amnesty International recently issued several reports on human rights abuses in Afghanistan. Here is the link to view all the reports <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/countries/indx311.htm>

USA: Innocence: 84th person freed from death row: Alfred Rivera walked out from Forsyth County Jail in North Carolina, after being acquitted at his retrial on capital charges. Rivera is the 84th person freed from death row since 1973 after evidence of their innocence emerged. Here is the link to the Death Penalty Information Centre web site:

<http://www.essential.org/orgs/dpic/whatsnew.html>

USA: David Junior Brown executed by lethal injection: David Junior Brown (also known as Dawud Abdullah Mohammed), aged 5, was executed on 19 November by lethal injection in the Central Prison of Raleigh, North Carolina after almost 20 years in death row. Brown, an African American, was convicted by an all-white jury in 1980 of the killing of two white people. Successive appeal courts refused his appeals, while consistently acknowledging the faults in his trial. David Junior Brown becomes the 89th person put to death in the USA this year. "The Charlotte Observer" reports: <http://www.charlotte.com/observer/local/pub/execute1120.htm>

-----DOCTORS ARRESTED IN TURKEY

The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey has protested about the fate of two doctors recently detained and allegedly beaten by police. Both doctors have worked for the Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre run in Izmir by the foundation. Gynaecologist Dr Zeki Azun was detained in a raid on his private clinic in Izmir on 19 October and held in detention for six days without reason. In an earlier incident, Dr Alp Ayan, who is a psychiatrist, was detained with a group of more than 70 people who had attempted to enter the village of Helvacı to attend the funeral of one of the victims of the massacre at Ankara Central Prison in September. The full article from the British Medical Journal is available at: <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/319/7221/1323/b>

-----OXFAM CALLS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON CONGO BRAZZAVILLE

Oxfam called on the international community, Thursday 25 November to act urgently to end a "human catastrophe" in the Republic of Congo where, they say, thousands of refugee children are starving to death and women are routinely raped by soldiers. Oxfam's website is: <http://www.oxfam.org/> [the above appeal is not posted there as of today]. For AI's last report on the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville) (March 1999) see: <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1999/AFR/12200199.htm>

-----ANOTHER MASS GRAVE FOUND IN EAST TIMOR

The Jakarta Post reported on 25 November the finding of more buried bodies in East Timor by an Indonesian forensic team -- some 25 bodies were found including the remains of 3 priests. A member of the Commission for the Investigation of Human Rights Abuses in East Timor told the paper that the remains were recovered from Oeluli beach, Kobalima district, 3 km from the East Timor border. See http://www.thejakartapost.com:8890/iscp_render?menu_name=hitlist_details&id=640123; see also http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/asia-pacific/newsid_537000/537451.stm. A earlier finding of a

mass grave containing more than 20 bodies was reported on 19 October 1999. See:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/asia-pacific/newsid_478000/478996.stm

-----10TH ANNIVERSARY OF CPT

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture marked its tenth anniversary last week with a conference in Strasbourg (19 November). For details see the press release issued before the conference with video clips of support from Cornelio Sommaruga, Alvaro Gil-Robles, Sir Nigel Rodley, and Mary Robinson at <http://www.cpt.coe.fr/en/press/991115en.htm>

----- WMA CALLS FOR MEDICAL ETHICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS TEACHING

At its Annual Assembly which took place in Tel Aviv, Israel on 13-17 October 1999, the World Medical Association passed a resolution calling for the inclusion of medical ethics and human rights to be included in the curriculum of medical schools world-wide. For the full text visit:
http://www.wma.net/e/policy/20-4-99_e.html

-----MARY ROBINSON VISITS MEXICO

"... I do believe there is a serious problem with the implementation and administration of justice [in Mexico]" Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said on Wednesday 24 November, on the second day of her five day visit to Mexico. "I raised with [President Zedillo] the number of complaints of violation and the lack of a sense of equality before the law, that one set of armed groups acts with impunity in the Chiapas region," she said. Robinson's schedule included meeting in Chiapas with survivors of the Dec. 22, 1997, massacre of 45 indigenous people, mainly women and children, at the hamlet of Acteal. The killings were carried out by a paramilitary group with close links to the security forces [New York Times, 25 November 1999]

-----MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

World Congress of the Millennium on Forensic Medicine. Hosted by the Department of Forensic Kasturba Medical College, MAHE of Manipal, Karnataka, India.
Fees for overseas delegates is US\$ 100.00 for registrations before December 1999 and US\$ 150.00 until February. For further information please see
<http://www.angelfire.com/md2/forensicmedicon2000/Frame.html>
or send an e - mail to:forensicmedicon2000@usa.net. or Fax: + 91-08252-70500, 70062, 70061

Announcement/Call for Abstracts for the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) 9th International Congress in Beijing, 2-6 September 2000: the deadline for the submission of abstracts is 15 February 2000. The congress aims to discuss issues related to public health and to contribute to the promotion, develop and exchange of information in this field. For more information please contact: APHA 8001 Street, NW - Washington, DC 20001-3710 USA - Tel (202) 777 2486/Fax (202) 777 2534 or e - mail to:allen.jones@apha.org. For more information see the American Public Health Association web site: <http://www.apha.org/wfpha/IntConf9.htm>

World Citizenship: Affirming Human Rights in Science, Medicine and Public Health. Sponsored by Global Lawyers and Physicians and Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center Ethics Program. Speakers will include: George J. Annas, Michael A. Grodin, Leonard Rubenstein, Evelyne Shuster and Victor Sidel.

Friday, December 10, 1999 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Philadelphia Ethical Society, 1906 South Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA. See conference details at <http://209.238.83.20/WorldCitizenConf.htm> and the GLP web page at <http://www.glphr.org/>

Third World Conference for the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies: The Long-Term Outcomes of Trauma in Individuals and Society, 16-19 March 2000, Melbourne, Australia. For further information contact: Conference Organizer, Box 214, Brunswick East 3057, Victoria, Australia, e -

mailto:conorg@ozemail.com.au , fax: +61-3-9380-2722, or visit the conference web-site:
<http://www.istss.org/3rdworld/3rdworld.htm> or <http://www.astss.org.au/wc2000.html>

-----FELLOWSHIPS/ACADEMIC POSTS

WITNESS is seeking a dynamic individual with vision and experience working with grass roots organizations, either domestically or internationally, to apply jointly for funds to support a two year full-time fellowship. For further information or to submit an application contact Witness at: Fellowship Applicants, Witness, 333 Seventh Ave., 13th floor, New York, NY 10001- 5004, or by fax: +1 212 845 5299 or e - mailto:witness@lchr.org . The Witness web-site is: <http://www.witness.org/>

The University of Chicago Human Rights program is inviting applications for their human rights fellowship program. Applicants should submit a resume, up to two published pieces, two references, and a two-page letter of reasons for applying by 15 December 1999 to:
The Human Rights Program, University of Chicago, 5828 S. University Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. For further information call the Human Rights Program at +1.773.702.7721 or visit the Program website at <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/cis/hr>

Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, USA , is seeking a professor in health and human rights in the College's International Human Rights Program. See <http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/humanrights/LuceApplication.htm> . For further information contact Debra Sombric, Human Rights Program, Trinity College, 300 Summit Street, Hartford, CT 06106, USA. Tel: +1 860 297 2029, Fax: +1 860 297 5108, e - mailto:debra.sombric@trincoll.edu . For background see Trinity press release <http://www.trincoll.edu/news/qpweb/scripts/qpview.cgi?MESSAGE=930928809>

-----RECENT PAPERS/ARTICLES/BOOKS

The October 1999 edition of the American Journal of Public Health contains a number of human rights articles. The table of contents is available at:
<http://www.apha.org/news/publications/journal/tococt99.htm>

Actuaciones psicosociales en guerra y violencia politicas, [Psycho-social conduct in war and political violence] by various authors coordinated by Pau Perez Sales, ExLibris Ediciones, Madrid, 1999 (270 pp.). The book explores individual and collective psychosocial consequences of political violence. Muerte y desaparicion forzada en la Araucania: Una aproximacion etnica [Death and forced disappearances in Araucania: an ethnic approach], by the Universidad Catolica de Temuco, Chile, 1999 (317 pp.) Through conversations with relatives of disappeared people, the book tries to review the causal logic of repression from an ethnic point of view. Both publications can be available from the Grupo de Accion Comunitaria (GAC) - c/o Santa Isabel 16 3ro B - Madrid 28012 - Spain. E - mailto:Gac.org@arrakis.es

UNAIDS published on 24 November 1999 a Handbook for Legislators on HIV/AIDS, Law and Human Rights. The report can be found in the UNAIDS publications site:
<http://www.unaids.org/publications/documents/human/index.html#ethics>
The December 1999 global and national reports on AIDS can be found at:
<http://www.unaids.org/hivaidsinfo/documents.html>

A review of the book Humanitarian Crises: The Medical and Public Health Response (ed. Jennifer Leaning, Susan M. Briggs, and Lincoln C. Chen) 379 pp. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999. \$45. ISBN 0-674-15515-7 appears in the New England Journal of Medicine (Vol. 341, No. 22, 25 November) - <http://www.nejm.org/content/1999/0341/0022/1706.asp>

-----BULLET POINTS

o The death sentence on Abdullah Ocalan has been confirmed the Turkish Court of Appeal. See <http://www.iht.com/IHT/TODAY/FRI/FPAGE/turkey.2.html>

o Court testimony of Mordechai Vanunu, given at his trial more than a decade ago, has been published in the Israeli newspaper Yediot Ahronot. See:
http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/329/nation/Atomic_debate_gives_jailed_Israeli_his_wish+.shtml

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