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NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Amnesty International reports & statements:

See the following selected recent AI reports and press statements. These and other press releases and reports are accessible at the following link under 'News and Updates':

<http://www.amnesty.org/>

14 March 2008: A former detainee reveals the details of a secret CIA program

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/feature-stories/former-detainee-reveals-details-secret-cia-program-20080314>

13 March 2008: The Georgian government is being urged to end police abuse

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/georgian-government-urged-introduce-police-id-20080313>

7 March 2008: The Ukrainian government forcibly returned 11 ethnic Tamil asylum-seekers to Sri Lanka this week

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/ukraine-forcibly-returns-11-tamil-asylum-seekers-20080307>

6 March 2008: Three members of the so-called Bali Nine under sentence of death for drug offences have had their sentences reduced to life imprisonment following a judicial review by the Supreme Court

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/good-news/three-australians-spared-death-penalty-bali-20080306>

Children:

South Africa. Suicide rates among pupils due to the psychological effects of violence in schools have increased in South Africa. *I Africa.com* (12 March): <http://iafrica.com/news/sa/238015.htm>

Zimbabwe: Sexual violence against children in Zimbabwe has increased by more than 40 % in the last three years, according to figures released by UNICEF. *AllAfrica* (12 March): <http://allafrica.com/stories/200803121025.html>

USA: Juvenile detention centres in the United States have recorded approximately 13,000 claims of abuse in a period of 4 years. *Houston Chronicle* (02 March): <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/nation/5585632.html>

Torture:

Turkey: European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). "Report to the Turkish Government on the visit to Turkey". *CPT* (06 March): <http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/tur/2008-13-inf-eng.htm> ; Press release (and links to government response): <http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/tur/2008-03-06-eng.htm>

Health Services:

Afghanistan: In the context of a situation where on average 24,000 Afghan women die every year while giving birth, it has been suggested that the biggest challenge that Afghan women face is maternal health and high maternal mortality. *UN News Centre* (04 March): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25826&Cr=afghan&Cr1>

Canada: The Human Rights Commission in Ontario will be appealing to the Human Rights Tribunal against the province's decision to reduce the number of medically ill persons who are eligible for a "special diet allowance". *The Star* (06 March): <http://www.thestar.com/News/GTA/article/309918>

China: Sixty percent of Chinese medical staff polled in a recent survey said that they have witnessed their colleagues being regularly abused by patients or their relatives. *China Daily* (26 February): http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-02/26/content_6484003.htm

International. The WHO estimates that more than four million health care workers are needed in the 57 countries it defines as grossly understaffed (fewer than 2.3 doctors, nurses and midwives per 100,000 people). Thirty-six of the 57 worst-hit countries are in Africa. See *World Politics Review*: <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/article.aspx?id=1784>

Thailand: Thailand's new government has decided to increase access to cancer treatments by overriding international patents on three drugs. *Reuters* (10 March): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/feedarticle?id=7372278>

USA: Despite being statistically more likely to report disabilities than the general population, disabled American Indian students tend to receive proportionately less care from reservation schools according to a new study. *The Daily Times* (10 March): http://origin.daily-times.com/news/ci_8516855

Elderly:

USA: Brown University's Centre for Gerontology & Health Care Research has received a \$209,000 grant from the National Institute on Aging to study the problem of elder abuse. *Rhode Island News* (04 March):

http://www.projo.com/news/content/BROWN_GRANT_03-04-08_E9981MS_v15.349a6a4.html

USA: Law enforcement agencies in Colorado Springs have joined join forces to tackle the issue of elderly abuse. *The Gazette* (02 March):

http://www.gazette.com/articles/police_33781_article.html/elderly_abuse.html

Mental Health:

USA: Both the U.S. House and the Senate have passed bills which now allow for equivalence, or parity, in the coverage of mental and physical ailments. *New York Times* (06 March):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/06/washington/06health.html>

HIV/AIDS:

Africa: Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) draws attention to the dire need for human-rights protections to be afforded to female HIV patients in Sub-Saharan Africa. *All Africa* (06 March):

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200803061090.html> See also *All Africa* (06 March):
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200803061090.html>

India: People for Better Treatment (PBT), one of India's largest patients' rights bodies, has written to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeking justice for people who contracted HIV from contaminated blood transfusion owing to circulation of dud testing kits across the country.

News Post India (07 March): <http://newspostindia.com/report-41098>

International: The World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Elizabeth Glaser Paediatric AIDS Foundation have all highlighted the need for countries to increase the protection available to mothers and children from HIV and AIDS. *All Africa* (05 March): <http://allafrica.com/stories/200803051120.html>

Pakistan: Several organisations, including the Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) have stressed the importance of women's awareness in preventing HIV and AIDS. *The Daily Times* (04 March):

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C03%5C04%5Cstory_4-3-2008_pg11_1

UN: The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has set up an international task force to work toward the elimination of travel restrictions on people affected by HIV, which are in place in 104 countries. *UN News Centre* (05 March):

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25860&Cr=hiv&Cr1=unaids>

Prisoners:

Japan: A claim of abuse by 22 prisoners has prompted urgent calls for reforms to the country's penitentiary system. *IPS* (07 March): <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=41492>

USA: The Harris County Jail is under investigation by the Department of Justice's civil rights division after it was reported that more than 100 inmates died in the jail between January 2001 and December 2006. *Houston Chronicle* (08 March):

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/headline/metro/5602104.html>

Refugee and Migrants' Rights:

Kenya: A large number of internally displaced people (IDPs) face disease and hunger in the camps which were set up to shelter them. *All Africa* (02 March): <http://allafrica.com/stories/200803030822.html>

Kenya: A combination of unsafe sexual practices and rape threatens the health of young women living in Kenyan displacement camps. *Reuters* (03 March): <http://www.alertnet.org/db/blogs/40464/2008/02/3-133837-1.htm>

Violence against Women:

UN: The Human Rights Council has held an interactive dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights defenders, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and the Independent Expert on the effect of economic reform policies and foreign debt. *ReliefWeb* (12 March): [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/EGUA-7CNPR2/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/EGUA-7CNPR2/$File/full_report.pdf)

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Brazier M., "Exploitation and enrichment: the paradox of medical experimentation", *Journal of Medical Ethics* 2008; 34: 180-183 <http://jme.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/34/3/180>

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http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6VJX-4RKMCM5-5&_user=10&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&_view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=9fb1f2955e7629ecc4e2322b06a026f6

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Clark C. et al, "Witnessing Community Violence in Residential Neighborhoods: A Mental Health Hazard for Urban Women" *Journal of Urban Health*, Volume 85, Number 1, January 2008, 22-38

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/832xq331337j138x/>

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<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1471-8847.2007.00222.x>

Hunt P., "Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights- Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health", Human Rights Council, 31 January 2008 http://www2.essex.ac.uk/human_rights_centre/rth/docs/A-HRC-7-11.doc

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London L. et al, "Even if you're positive, you still have rights because you are a person": Human rights and the reproductive choice of HIV-positive persons", *Developing World Bioethics*, Volume 8, Issue 1, April 2008, 11-22

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