

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Dear Friends,

As some of you may recall, last year we had intended to stop producing this monthly bulletin following restructuring of organizational work priorities around health and detentions. Many of you kindly wrote and expressed how useful you found the newsletter; on the basis of that feedback we decided to try to continue, but with a focus on our team's new remit -- health and detention. However, following a further review of the resource implications, we will unfortunately be stopping production, and our last issue will be produced in October 2011.

Amnesty International remains committed to work on the right to health but has reorganized the work and resources to enable the most effective delivery of the strategic priorities of the movement and our partner organizations. If you would like to receive related actions and material on maternal health and sexual and reproductive rights produced by our Demand Dignity Campaign, please contact Rada Tzaneva at rada.tzaneva@amnesty.org

Amnesty International produces additional health-related actions through our Urgent Action network. Please contact your local Amnesty International section or structure or the Health and Detention Team directly at the new email address healthdetention@amnesty.org if you are interested in receiving these actions. Please note the health@amnesty.org address will no longer be active after October 2011.

We would like to thank you all for your support and engagement with this work and hope you can continue to engage in Amnesty International's work on health-related issues and receive information through sections and structures, and through the forums and actions of our Demand Dignity campaign.

You may also find these links useful:

1. External health bulletins.

Harvard World Health News: <http://www.worldhealthnews.harvard.edu/>

Medical News Today: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/>

2. Other health and human rights links:

World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/hhr/en/>

IFHHRO: <http://www.ifhhro.org/>

Physicians for Human Rights: <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/>

Human Rights Watch health work: <http://www.hrw.org/en/health>

Health and human rights journal: <http://www.hhrjournal.org/index.php/hhr>

With best wishes,

The Health and Detention Team

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Contents of external sites are not the responsibility of Amnesty International. Links are provided for the convenience of readers. Some sites may require registration or only be available to subscribers. Please also note that we have revised our newsletter format to hyperlink titles of articles with the web address. If you have trouble linking to the web page please do let us know.

Amnesty International Reports & Statements

3 August: Bahrain: [Imprisoned activists on hunger strike](#). Two Bahraini women activists detained for their involvement in pro-reform protests have begun a hunger strike to demand their freedom. Roula al-Saffar, head of the Bahrain Nursing Society, and Jalila al-Salman, vice-president of the Bahrain Teacher's Association (BTA), have been held for several months near the capital Manama. Both women allege they were tortured in detention.

1 August: Iran: [Iran must drop 'eye for an eye' retribution after acid blinding pardon](#). The case of an Iranian man who escaped judicial blinding by acid due to a last-minute pardon on 31 July underlines the need for Iran to drop 'eye for an eye' retribution punishments.

26 July: Vietnam: [Ailing dissident priest jailed again](#). Amnesty International has urged the Vietnamese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release a Catholic priest who was returned to prison yesterday while on parole to treat serious health problems.

21 July: Iran: [New Iran public execution video highlights 'brutal' death penalty](#). Graphic new video footage of a public hanging in Iran highlights the brutalisation of both the condemned and those who watch executions. "Not only those executed, but all those who watch public executions, including, children, are brutalised and degraded by the experience. These public displays of killing perpetuate a culture of acceptance of violence and bloodlust, rather than a belief in justice," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

20 July: Somalia: [In the line of fire: Somalia's children under attack](#). Amnesty International's report calls on the warring parties to end their assaults on children and for accountability for war crimes and other grave human rights abuses in Somalia.

18 July: Syria: [Torture fears for dozens arrested in Damascus suburb](#). Dozens of men are being held incommunicado at unknown locations and are at risk of torture after the Syrian security forces conducted mass arrests in a Damascus suburb over the weekend.

15 July: Somalia: [Somali refugee crisis: Kenya's opening of camp extension only a first step](#). Amnesty International urges Kenya and the international community to take further steps to address the needs of Somali refugees, as Kenyan authorities agree to extend a refugee camp in the north-eastern town of Dadaab. Some 1,300 refugees are crossing into Kenya daily from Somalia, fleeing conflict and the region's worst drought in 60 years. "While Kenya's decision to open the camp extension will temporarily ease overcrowding in the Dadaab camps, it needs to be followed up with a swift agreement on opening another camp", said Benedicte Goderiaux, Amnesty International's Somalia researcher.

11 July: Malaysia: [Police use brutal tactics against peaceful protesters](#). The UK government must press Malaysia's Prime Minister on freedom of assembly in his visit this week, after peaceful protesters in Kuala Lumpur were met with police violence and 1,667 arrests at the weekend. Police arrested peaceful demonstrators, fired teargas canisters directly at protesters, and tear-gassed a hospital compound on 9 July, in attempts to stop the electoral reform rally known as Bersih 2.0 from gathering in a stadium. One protester, 56-year-old Baharuddin Ahmad, collapsed near the landmark Petronas Towers while fleeing teargas, and was pronounced dead later in hospital.

8 July: Indonesia: [Continued failure to investigate torture of political activists in Maluku.](#) The Indonesian government must immediately initiate an independent and impartial investigation into the allegations of torture and other ill-treatment of political activists during August 2010 in Maluku province.

7 July: Spain: Amnesty International concerned by reports of excessive use of force by police against demonstrators. Video footage of the police operation in Catalonia square, widely available on the internet, shows police repeatedly hitting apparently peaceful demonstrators with batons, and shooting rubber bullets and blanks. In the same footage, some demonstrators appear to be injured and to have blood on their hands and heads. According to official figures, 84 demonstrators and 37 police officers resulted injured. A lawyer assisting the affected demonstrators told Amnesty International that a total of 180 persons have reported injuries, of which around 50 have received medical reports documenting those injuries.

7 July: Tajikistan: [Tajikistan urged to release journalist amid torture allegations.](#) The Tajikistani authorities must immediately release a BBC journalist, apparently held solely for his writing work, who is alleged to have been tortured or ill-treated while held in pre-trial detention in the northern city of Khujand. A BBC colleague who was allowed to visit him has said that he appeared "frail mentally and psychologically".

6 July: Syria: [Report reveals crimes against humanity in Syrian town.](#) The brutal methods used in a devastating Syrian security operation in the western town of Tell Kalakh may constitute crimes against humanity. [Crackdown in Syria: Terror in Tell Kalakh](#) documents deaths in custody, torture and arbitrary detention that took place in May when Syrian army and security forces mounted a broad security sweep, lasting less than a week, against residents of the town near the Lebanese border.

5 July: India: [Indian minister's homosexuality remarks a setback for gay rights.](#) The Indian authorities must ensure that the rights of gay men are protected after India's health minister described homosexuality as a "disease". Addressing a conference about HIV/AIDS on Monday 4 July, Ghulam Nabi Azad said sex between two men is "completely unnatural and shouldn't happen". "These outrageous remarks linking consensual sexual activity to a disease simply encourage discrimination against men who have sex with men. The Health Minister must retract his comments, and the Indian Government must reaffirm its commitment to protect the rights of all of its citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or consensual sexual behaviour," said Emily Gray, Amnesty International's researcher on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

1 July: USA: [Reflections on the death penalty, 35 years after Gregg v. Georgia, as states scramble for lethal injection drugs.](#) Thirty-five years after the US Supreme Court gave the green light for executions to resume in the USA after nearly a decade without them, officials there are clearly failing to lead their country away from the death penalty as expected of them under international standards. Amnesty International's new report [An embarrassment of hitches](#) is set against the backdrop of continuing litigation surrounding the lethal injection method of execution and offers some reflections on the USA's death penalty.

1 July: USA: [US must reconsider closure of CIA torture cases.](#) The US Attorney General must immediately reconsider his decision to close inquiries into some 100 cases of alleged torture of detainees held in CIA custody.

29 June: Greece: [Tear gas fired as Greek police clash with Athens protesters.](#) Greek riot police must not use excessive force in their handling of violence during protests in Athens, Amnesty International said amid reports protesters were hospitalized as police fired massive amounts of tear gas.

27 June: Egypt: [Military pledges to stop forced 'virginity tests'.](#) The head of Egypt's military intelligence has promised Amnesty International that the army will no longer carry out forced

'virginity tests' after defending their use, during a meeting with the organisation in Cairo on Sunday.

24 June: Sudan: [Insecurity persists for the displaced in Southern Kordofan](#). The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement underline that Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have the right to seek safety in any part of the country and in particular the right not to be forcibly returned to or resettled in any place where life, safety, liberty and/or health would be at risk.

23 June: AFRICA: [African Union must prioritize the protection of civilians in conflict situations](#). As the African Union (AU) meets for its 17th Ordinary Heads of State and Government Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, Amnesty International calls upon the AU to prioritize the plight of civilians in the armed conflicts in Libya, Somalia and Sudan.

23 June: Côte d'Ivoire: [ICC investigation must not exclude serious crimes](#). "It's a positive step for the ICC to focus on serious human rights abuses in Côte d'Ivoire, but limiting it to the recent post-election violence would deny justice to hundreds of women who suffered rape and other sexual violence since 2002," said Erwin van der Borgh, Amnesty International's Africa Programme Director.

23 June: DRC: [New mass rapes DRC are result of horrific failure of justice](#). New reports have emerged that fighters of a former armed group integrated into the Congolese army deserted from an army training camp and raped possibly up to 100 women, in an attack on the village of Nyakiele near Fizi town in the east of the country, on the night of 11 June. "The inability of the Democratic Republic of Congo to bring to justice members of its own army and armed groups for crimes under international law, has fostered a culture of impunity, leading to attack after attack against civilians," said Erwin van der Borgh, Amnesty International's Director for Africa.

23 June: Indonesia. [Government regulations on female circumcision must be repealed](#). Joint statement by Amnesty International and Indonesian civil society organizations. Indonesian authorities must immediately repeal the newly issued government regulation permitting female circumcision ('sunat perempuan'), and instead enact specific legislation with appropriate penalties prohibiting all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM).

22 June: Côte d'Ivoire: [Dozens of Gbagbo supporters detained without charge](#). Authorities in Côte d'Ivoire are holding at least 50 people without charge, including several high-profile Ivorian politicians, following the arrest of former President Laurent Gbagbo two months ago. Amnesty International is particularly worried about the plight of 23 members of the police and military held in the northern town of Korhogo in conditions that may be life-threatening.

22 June: Venezuela: [Deadly clashes highlight need for reform in Venezuela](#). The Venezuelan government must not commit human rights abuses in quelling violent prison riots after 19 prisoners died in clashes between armed inmates and National Guard troops. Amnesty International called on Venezuela to urgently reform its prison system to solve the country's prison crisis, which sees many inmates in deplorable conditions and has led to numerous deaths.

17 June: Morocco: [Investigate torture allegations](#). Amnesty International urges the Moroccan authorities to immediately investigate allegations that Mohamed Hajib was tortured and threatened with rape while in Toulal Prison in Meknes between 17 and 28 May 2011.

17 June: Sri Lanka: [Sri Lanka must not torture rejected asylum seekers](#). The Sri Lankan authorities must refrain from any ill-treatment of a group of rejected asylum seekers who arrived in Colombo on Friday after being forcibly returned from the UK, Amnesty International said. The 26 Sri Lankans, most of them Tamil, were reportedly taken for questioning on their arrival in the capital. Amnesty International believes that some of the returnees are at risk of torture.

16 June: UK: [Tamils set for deportation following suicide attempt.](#) Amnesty International calls for the UK Authorities not to deport Sri Lankans at risk of torture, ahead of a planned deportation from Gatwick Airport in London to Colombo this afternoon. Amnesty International understands that at least one of the rejected asylum seekers due to be deported tried to commit suicide last night at an airport detention facility, following threats he reportedly received on the telephone to kill him once he returned to Sri Lanka. The death threat followed an interview given to the media.

14 June: USA: [Clemency urged as Alabama execution looms.](#) Amnesty International called on the Governor of the southern US state of Alabama to commute the death sentence of Eddie Duval Powell, a 41-year-old African-American with a mental disability ("mild mental retardation"). Despite this, his execution was carried out on 16 June. Amnesty International unconditionally opposes the death penalty in all cases worldwide.

7 June: Bahrain: [Bahrain faces fresh torture claims over health workers' trial.](#) The Bahraini authorities must independently investigate fresh claims that dozens of doctors and nurses on trial before a military court were tortured in detention and made to sign false confessions.

6 June: USA: [USA urged to end inmates' 40-year-long solitary confinement.](#) "The treatment to which Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace have been subjected for the past four decades is cruel and inhumane and a violation of the US's obligations under international law," said Guadalupe Marengo, Americas Deputy Director at Amnesty International. "We are not aware of any other case in the USA where individuals have been subjected to such restricted human contact for such a prolonged period of time."

Actions for Health Professionals

Please click on the link and take action by writing appeals to the addresses listed.

GOOD NEWS STORY

29 June: Russian Federation: [Shamkhan Aziev must have urgent surgical treatment in Russia.](#)
19 July (update): [Shamkhan Aziev receives medical care.](#)

Many thanks to all who sent appeals!

Other actions

2 August: Iran: [Appeal for action re: Iranian prisoners in need of medical care.](#) At least nine Iranian prisoners with serious health problems are being held in prison in Iran. Amnesty International is calling on the Iranian authorities to ensure adequate healthcare is provided to Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, Isa Saharkhiz, Ayatollah Boroujerdi, Zahra Jabbari, Kourosh Kohkan, Hossein Ronaghi-Maleki, Ahmad Zeidabadi, Sa'id Metinpour and Heshmatollah Tabarzadi.

23 July: Angola (3rd update): [Health of political prisoners deteriorating in Angola.](#) Five political prisoners and two detainees held at Kakanda prison in Lunda Norte province, Angola, are suffering from deteriorating health after finishing a 13-day-long hunger strike in protest against their continued detention. The conditions in which they are held have not improved, and they continue to be denied access to medical treatment, clean water, and adequate food supplies.

8 July: Bahrain (update): [Health professionals referred to an ordinary civilian court in Bahrain.](#) The trial of 48 health professionals, all possible prisoners of conscience, accused of felonies and misdemeanours has been transferred to an ordinary civilian court in Bahrain. Many have been released on bail. [*This updates earlier actions including:* **14 June: Bahrain (update):**

[Trial of health professionals continues in Bahrain](#) and **8 June: Bahrain: [Medical workers on trial in Bahrain allege torture while held incommunicado.](#)**

Events, Conferences and Courses

[IFHHRO Global Training of Trainers: Developing Human Rights Training Courses for health Workers . Utrecht, the Netherlands, 21-25 November 2011.](#) **Early Registration Deadline: 26 September**

[Physicians for Human Rights: Online Petition.](#) 19 July marked a Global Day of Action during which health professionals, scientists, and concerned citizens from around the world appeal to the Iranian authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr Arash Alaei. In 2009, Arash and his brother Kamiar were wrongfully convicted by Iran on charges of communicating with an enemy government. Kamiar Alaei was recently released, but Arash Alaei remains in prison: Please sign the online petition to help free Arash.

[Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum 2011: Moving the Agenda Forward. Cape Town, South Africa, 10-13 October 2011.](#) Key conference themes: primary prevention (including community-based interventions); models of care for responding to sexual violence, and conflict and crisis. **General Registration Deadline: 31st August**

The SVRI Forum 2011 will be hosting [pre-conference workshops](#) on Monday, 10 October 2011. **Registration for pre-conference workshops: now open**

Publications

UKBA Guidance Manual: [Handling of complaints in detention and during escort.](#) Medical Justice, June 2011.

WHO News Release: [Scaling-up HIV services for men who have sex with men and transgender people.](#) World Health Organisation, 21 June 2011.

WHO Report: [World Report on Disability.](#) On 9 June 2011, WHO and the World Bank officially launched the first-ever *World report on disability*. This landmark report reveals that more than one billion people in the world experience some form of disability.

[Beyond welfare reform: Reframing undocumented immigrants' entitlement to health care in the United States, a critical review.](#) *Soc Sci Med.* June 2011.

[China's organ transplant system in transition.](#) *The Lancet*, June 2011, 377:9781:1905-1906

[Comparison of British national newspaper coverage of homicide committed by perpetrators with and without mental illness.](#) *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, July 2011, 45:7:539-548

[Fanm ayisyen pap kase: Respecting the right to health of Haitian women and girls.](#) *Health and Human Rights*, 2011, 13:1

[Global Protection and the Health Impact of Migrant Interception.](#) *PLoS Medicine*, June 2011, 8:6

[Health and Human Rights of Women imprisoned in Zambia.](#) *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, June 2011, 11:8

[Human trafficking: the shameful face of migration.](#) *PLoS Medicine*, June 2011, 8:6

[Identification of human trafficking victims in health care settings.](#) *Health and Human Rights*, 2011, 13:1

[Infectious diseases in the Ugandan prison system](#). *The Lancet*, August 2011, 11:8:589-590

[Kamiar and Alesh Alaei: Championing HIV/AIDS initiatives in Iran](#). *The Lancet*, July 2011, 378:9787:218

[PRI Project: Improving Women's Health in Prison in Kazakhstan](#). Overview and short film. Penal Reform International, July 2011.

[Risk Assessment in Intellectually Disabled Offenders: Validation of the Suggested ID Supplement to the HCR-20](#). *International Journal of Forensic Mental Health*, June 2011, 10:2

[Russia's punitive drug laws](#). *The Lancet*, June 2011, 377:9783:2056

[South Sudan faces grim health and humanitarian situation](#). *The Lancet*, June 2011, 377:9784:2167-2168

[The Cumulative Impact of Sexual Revictimization on Emotion Regulation Difficulties: An Examination of Female Inmates](#). *Violence Against Women*, July 4, 2011

[The dynamics of health and return migration](#). *PLoS Medicine*, June 2011, 8:6

[The health of prisoners](#). *The Lancet*, June 2011, 377:9782:2001

[The Legacy of D. A. Andrews in the Field of Criminal Justice: How Theory and Research Can Change Policy and Practice](#). *International Journal of Forensic Mental Health*, June 2011, 10:2

This newsletter may be freely distributed.

Health and Detention
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