
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Summary

AI reports & statements: China / Russian Federation / USA / Zimbabwe

Further news: further reports on the state of hospitals, Afghanistan / protests by Afghan asylum seekers, Australia / 'no extradition if death penalty is sought', Council of Europe / medical aid to Palestinians, Israel&OT / appeal against stoning sentence, Nigeria / provincial authority approves of anti-retroviral medicine, South Africa / search for hangman ends, Swaziland / doctors withdrawn from executions, Georgia USA / treatment of asylum-seekers, USA / treatment of Al Qaeda and Taleban prisoners

Conferences: XXVIIth International Congress on Law and Mental Health

Vacancies: country director Sierra Leone and Guinea, psychosocial mental health clinicians and trainers, CVT / Development Associate, Doctors of the World USA

Publications

Amnesty International reports & statements

China: Release of Tibetan prisoner of conscience welcome but authorities must do more. 21 January 2002 (AI index: ASA 17/005/2002). Ngawang Choephel, a Tibetan music scholar, was released on 20 January, reported on medical grounds, and has been flown to the USA for medical treatment. Members of Amnesty International's health professional network in various countries have campaigned on his behalf.
<http://web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/D1FF0200AE3DC17F80256B4800486F99>

Russian Federation: Summary of concerns on the human rights of women and girls. 24 January (AI index: EUR 46/007/2002). This summary has been prepared based on a briefing submitted by Amnesty International to the 26th Session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.
<http://web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/362191D2B4E27C5280256B44005DEA15>

USA. Amnesty International requests access to Guantanamo base. 22 January (AMR 51/015/2002). For the press release and further information click here:
<http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbrsep11crisis>

Zimbabwe: Baseless allegations against civil society are an open invitation to attack them. 21 January 2002 (AFR 46/003/2002). The state-controlled daily newspaper has alleged that Amani Trust has been "funding covert operations against ZANU-PF". Amani Trust is an organisation which has been working with victims of torture both from the liberation war before 1980 and victims of the present political violence.
<http://web.amnesty.org/web/news.nsf/WebAll/1BB12E9845BF5E3F80256B48003BC2CB>

This is a small selection of Amnesty International reports and statements. For a comprehensive overview, please check Amnesty International's website: <http://www.amnesty.org/>

Further news

Afghanistan - further reports on the state of hospitals. The *BBC* reported that most of the medicines and surgical materials at Jamhuriat Hospital in Kabul are bought by patients at the local bazaar. One of the health

staff to have left the profession is Nasir, an eye surgeon, who works as an administrator instead to be able to support his family (22 January).

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1775000/1775124.stm

The *New York Times* reported on the state of medical schools in Afghanistan (15 January):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/15/international/asia/15MEDI.html>

Australia - protests by Afghan asylum-seekers. Hungerstrikes by Afghan asylum seekers continue in Australian refugee camps. A number of asylum-seekers have been hospitalised, the *BBC* reported (23, 24 January).

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/asia-pacific/newsid_1776000/1776938.stm

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/asia-pacific/newsid_1779000/1779174.stm

Also see 'Refugees on hunger strike collapse at Australian camp', *Boston Globe*, 23 January:

http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/023/nation/Refugees_on_hunger_strike_collapse_at_Austrian_camp+.shtml

and 'Ruddock removes children', *The Age*, 24 January:

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/2002/01/24/FFXRS800SWC.html>

Council of Europe - no extradition if death penalty is sought. The Assembly of the Council of Europe has called on its members to refuse extradition of suspected terrorists if the death penalty is sought by the requesting government (24 January).

[http://assembly.coe.int/act/compress/CP02/042a\(02\).htm](http://assembly.coe.int/act/compress/CP02/042a(02).htm)

Israel/OT - medical aid to Palestinians. The *New York Times* reported on a PHR medical team visiting villages in the West Bank to provide medical care (20 January).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/20/international/middleeast/20WEST.html>

Nigeria - appeal against stoning sentence. The *Boston Globe* reported that Safiya Hussaini Tungar-Tudu, who was sentenced to be stoned, has started the appeal process (15 January).

http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/015/nation/Sentence_of_death_by_stoning_is_appealed+.shtml

South Africa - provincial authority approves of anti-retroviral medicine. Lionel Mtshali, premier of Kwazulu Natal province, has approved that nevirapine is given to pregnant women, *allAfrica.com* reported (23 January). <http://allafrica.com/stories/200201230009.html> Also see 'Publications' below on rape in South Africa.

Swaziland - search for hangman ends. Reuters reported that Swaziland has given up its search for a hangman and is thinking of switching to lethal injection for its death row inmates, the Minister of Justice said on 17 January. The ministry has advertised worldwide for a hangman since 1998, but claims not to have found a suitable candidate. "Injections do not need to be administered by a specialist but only by a qualified medical practitioner, and we will probably be introducing the system this year," Justice Minister Maweni Simelane was quoted as saying. Matsapha Maximum Security Prison, east of the Swazi capital Mbabane, currently holds 9 condemned prisoners. The last execution was in 1983 (Reuters, 17 January). (no link)

USA / Georgia - doctors withdrawn from executions. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports that the president of the Medical College of Georgia, which has in the past provided physicians to pronounce condemned prisoners dead, has notified the Georgia Department of Corrections that its doctors would no longer participate in any more lethal injections. (24 January). On the same day Ronald Keith Spivey, aged 62, was executed by lethal injection. He had spent 25 years on death row.

<http://www.accessatlanta.com/ajc/metro/0102/0124spivey.html>

USA - treatment of asylum-seekers. Reuters reported on the treatment meted out by US immigration officials. Jean Pierre Kamra, who was beaten and raped while imprisoned in Cameroon, was handcuffed, shackled and imprisoned for five months after arriving in the US (24 January).

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/nm/20020124/ts/life_torture_dc_1.html

USA/Guantanamo/Afghanistan - treatment of Al Qaeda and Taleban prisoners. Various newspapers reported on the treatment of Afghan prisoners of war, both those held outside as well as inside Afghanistan. See for example:

'US handling of war captives draws fire', *Boston Globe* (23 January):

http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/023/nation/US_handling_of_war_captives_draws_fire+.shtml

'The forgotten suspects - inside an Afghan prison', *Christian Science Monitor* (24 January):

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0124/p01s01-wosc.html>

Aryeh Neier examines the US proposal for military commissions to try suspected al-Qaeda members or supporters. (*New York Review of Books*, 14 February cover date): <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/15122>

Conferences

The **XXVIIIth International Congress on Law and Mental Health** will be held in Amsterdam, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports of The Netherlands, from July 8-12, 2002. The call for abstracts is downloadable in pdf format from this link <http://www.ialmh.org/Amsterdam2002/CallForAbstracts.pdf>. If you would like to see it in web-format, copy the link into the form at http://access.adobe.com/simple_form.html to convert it. For further information contact Dr Thomas Wenzel, conference organiser, in Vienna at: <mailto:drthomaswenzel@web.de>, by phone: +43 1 489 32 06; or fax: +43 6766267871.

Vacancies

The **Center for Victims of Torture** is seeking a **Country Director** to oversee the psychosocial mental health project in Guinea and Sierra Leone for refugees or internally displaced persons who have suffered torture and war trauma. The Center is also looking for **psychosocial mental health clinicians and trainers** for work in refugee camps in Guinea and Sierra Leone. For further details contact: Melinda Czaia, Director of Training Services, The Center for Victims of Torture, 717 East River Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA. Fax: +1.612.627.4144. [Mailto:mzcaia@cvt.org](mailto:mzcaia@cvt.org)

Doctors of the World seeks a **Development Associate** whose responsibilities would include fundraising and public relations initiatives. For further information contact: <mailto:humanresources@dowusa.org>; fax: +1.212.226.7026; address: Doctors of the World USA, 375 West Broadway, NY, NY 10012, USA. <http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org/Volunteer/Opportunities.html>

Publications

The BMJ has a special focus this issue on AIDS/HIV: see the following editorial <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7331/181> (*BMJ* 2002; 324:181 - 182, 26 January) and other articles at: <http://bmj.com/current.shtml> (26 January)

Amowitz L et al. Prevalence of War-Related Sexual Violence and Other Human Rights Abuses Among Internally Displaced Persons in Sierra Leone. *JAMA* 2002;287:513-521 (23-30 January). For an abstract, click here: <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/current/abs/jlf10035.html>

Hanscom KL. Treating survivors of war trauma and torture. *Am Psychol* 2001 Nov;56(11):1032 - 9. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=11785150&dopt=Abstract

Hodes M and Goldberg D. The treatment of refugees: service provision reflects Britain's ambivalence. *Psychiatr Bull* 26: 1-2 (January 2002).

Human Rights Watch *World Report 2002* is available online at: <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k2/>

Jewkes R, Levin J, Mbananga N, Bradshaw D. Rape of girls in South Africa. *Lancet* 2002;359: 319-20 http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol359/iss9303/full/llan.359.9303.original_research.19268.1 See also a commentary on this paper: http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol359/iss9303/full/llan.359.9303.editorial_and_review.19262.1

Ibrahim Murad and Harvey Gordon. Psychiatry and the Palestinian population. *Psychiatr Bull* 26: 28-30 (January 2002).

Ian Palmer. Psychosocial costs of war in Rwanda. *Adv Psychiatr Treat* 2002 8: 17-25. <http://apt.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/abstract/8/1/17>

Prisons in Mozambique. Second visit [of the Special Rapporteur] - April 4-14, 2001. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Prisons and Conditions of Detention in Africa of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, Paris: Penal Reform International, 2001 (no link to report. For Penal Reform International see: <http://www.penalreform.org/>). (The Special Rapporteur, Dr Vera Chirwa, was herself a political prisoner for 12 years.)

Reichman LB, Hopkins Tanne J, McGraw-Hill. *Timebomb: The Global Epidemic of Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis.* (ISBN 0 07 135924 9). For a book review see *BMJ* 2002; 324:181 - 182, 26 January: <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7331/245/a>

Silove D, Steel Z, McGorry P, Miles V, Drobny J. The impact of torture on post-traumatic stress symptoms in war-affected Tamil refugees and immigrants. *Compr Psychiatry* 2002 Jan-Feb;43. For an abstract see PubMed: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=11788919&dopt=Abstract

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