
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Summary

AI reports & statements: Guatemala / Nepal / Nigeria

Further news: Afghanistan - women / Canada-Syria-USA - detained deportee / China - UN to visit / Iran - anti-torture law / Israel - HR lawyers / Kenya - FGM / Mexico - torture / Slovenia - CPT report / UN - anti-torture protocol adopted; child soldiers / USA - immigrants; smallpox, 1978 killings in Argentina; executions

Conferences / Courses / Lectures: Oxford Amnesty lectures; American University course in HR

Vacancies: CVT positions in West Africa

Publications

Amnesty International reports & statements

Guatemala 2002: the human rights toll. The human rights situation in Guatemala has deteriorated alarmingly over 2002, Amnesty International said today (20 December). See: <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AMR340872002>

Nepal - human rights abuses reach unprecedented levels (Press release: AI Index: ASA 31/076/2002 : <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/ASA310762002>. The report (*Nepal: a deepening human rights crisis*, AI Index: ASA 31/072/2002) is available at: <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/ASA310722002>.

See also the report in the London *Independent* (20 December): http://news.independent.co.uk/world/asia_china/story.jsp?story=363113

Nigeria: policing gravely undermines human rights. Press release: AFR 44/026/2002 <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR440262002>; Report: *Nigeria: Security Forces: Serving to protect and respect human rights?* <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR440232002>

UK: Internment one year on -- no hope in sight. On the eve of the first anniversary in detention of those arrested under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA) on 19 December last year, Amnesty International is renewing its call on the UK authorities to immediately release all persons detained under the ATCSA unless they are charged with a recognizably criminal offence and tried by an independent and impartial court in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness. See: <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/EUR450252002!Open>

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 - women's rights. New Human Rights Watch Report: "We Want to Live as Humans". See the press release: <http://www.hrw.org/press/2002/12/herat1217.htm> and the report: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/afghnwmn1202/>

See also: 'Women forced to have chastity tests'. *Guardian* (17 December)
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/afghanistan/story/0,1284,861398,00.html>. A Canadian woman physician's impressions of western Afghanistan are available in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 10 December; 167 (12): 1371:
<http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/167/12/1371> or download PDF at
<http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/reprint/167/12/1371.pdf> (579Kb)

Canada/Syria/USA - Canadian national remains in custody. A Canadian national of Syrian origin -- deported by US authorities after he was arrested while in transit to Ottawa -- remains in prison in Syria. Maher Arar was deported more than two months ago, prompting the Canadian authorities to issue a travel advisory on travel by Canadian citizens to the USA. See CBC report (18 December)
http://ottawa.cbc.ca/template/servlet/View?filename=ot_arar20021217. (For background see: AI Bulletin 5(21), 1 November: <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/ACT840212002>).

China - UN to visit. China has agreed to allow UN human rights monitors into the country reports the *Los Angeles Times* and *Sydney Morning Herald* (18 December):
<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-rights18dec18,0,2607959.story?>
(registration required); <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/12/18/1040174297857.html>.

Iran - new torture law. Iran's reformist-dominated parliament has adopted a revised anti-torture bill banning the use of physical or psychological pressure to extract confessions from prisoners, reported AFP citing the agency IRNA. See 'Iran's parliament adopts revised anti-torture bill' (16 December):
<http://www.iranmania.com/news/ArticleView/Default.asp?NewsCode=13418&NewsKind=CurrentAffairs>

Israel - human rights lawyers. A body of Israeli attorneys specializing in human rights has emerged reports the *Los Angeles Times* (16 December). Many clients are Palestinians, and they rarely win in court. See 'Justice without borders':
<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-lawyer16dec16001439,0,4433512.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dworld> (registration required)

Kenya - FGM. The *Daily Nation* reports on an initiative to include men in the struggle against FGM. See: Enlisting men in the fight against FGM (20 December):
<http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/Supplements/weekend/current/story201210.htm>

Mexico - torture. Acts of torture continue to prevail among the capital's security forces, Mexico City's human right's ombudsman, Emilio Alvarez Icaza said according to [thenewsmexico.com](http://www.thenewsmexico.com). See: <http://www.thenewsmexico.com/noticia.asp?id=42236>

Slovenia - CPT report. The Committee for the Prevention of Torture has published its report on the findings of its 2001 visit to Slovenia (18 December). See the press release:
<http://www.cpt.coe.int/en/press/20021218en.htm> and the report
<http://www.cpt.coe.int/en/reports/inf2002-36en.htm>

UN - anti-torture Protocol adopted. On 18 December, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture -- which permits inspection of places of detention as a measure to prevent torture -- was adopted by the UN General Assembly but with four countries voting against it: the USA, Nigeria, Palau and the Marshall Islands. The adoption was welcomed by Amnesty International and 10 other NGOs
(<http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/IOR400422002>) and by other organizations: (e.g. ICRC: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/566695>).

UN - children. The UN Secretary-General's third Report on Children and Armed Conflict contains a list of 23 parties, including both governments and insurgents, in five conflict situations -- Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Somalia --

that recruit or use children. See the press release (16 December): <http://157.150.184.6/OSRSGCAAC/East.cfm>. The Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict S/2002/1299 (26 November) is available in Word format at: <http://157.150.184.6/OSRSGCAAC/VirtualLibrary/S-2002-1299e.doc>. Other language versions are available at <http://www.un.org/special-rep/children-armed-conflict/>. See also the BBC report: 'UN names sides using child soldiers' (17 December). <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/2582095.stm>

USA - arrests of immigrants. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported (19 December) that hundreds of men and boys from Middle Eastern and African countries were arrested by federal immigration officials in Southern California when they complied with orders to appear at Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) offices for a special registration program. See: 'INS pulls a fast one'. <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2002/12/19/MN33452.DTL>. Also: 'California orders mass arrests of Muslim foreigners' *Independent* (20 December) <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/americas/story.jsp?story=363109>.

USA - smallpox. The *New England Journal of Medicine* published online (19 December) several papers on smallpox in the context of bioterrorism with scheduled publication date 30 January 2003. The articles can be downloaded here: <http://nejm.org/earlyrelease/early.asp> (registration may be required). See articles are discussed in the *New York Times* (20 December): 'Scientists Favoring Cautious Approach to Smallpox Shots' : <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/20/health/20SMAL.html>. See reports indicating concern within the health sector about the vaccination program: the *San Francisco Examiner* (16 December): 'Big tussle over smallpox': <http://www.examiner.com/news/default.jsp?story=n.smallpox.1216w>; *New York Times* (18 December): 'Two Hospitals Refuse to Join Bush's Plan for Smallpox': <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/19/health/19HOSP.htm>; [*New York Times* requires registration].

USA - silence on 1978 murders in Argentina. US authorities knew who perpetrated political killings in Argentina in 1978 but remained silent, reports Associated Press. See: <http://www.newsday.com/news/politics/wire/sns-ap-us-argentine-junta1216dec15,0,3012596.story?coll=sns-ap-politics-headlines>. The declassified material on which this story is based is available at the UN National Security Archive at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB77/>

USA - executions. Two men were executed on Human Rights Day (10 December) and a further four executed on the two following days. The men were Jerry Lynn McCracken (Oklahoma), Desmond Carter (North Carolina), Jessie Derrell Williams (Mississippi), James Collier (Texas), Anthony Keith Johnson (Alabama), Jay Wesley Neill (Oklahoma). The flurry of end-of-year executions (4 further executions were carried out in December and three executions were stayed) meant that 2002 was a year in which the number of executions was 10% up on 2001 but lower than in 1999 and 2000 (1999: 98 executions / 2000: 85 / 2001: 66 / 2002: 71 [as at 18 December]). Source: Death Penalty Information Center: <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org>.

Also: 40 exonerated death row inmates taking part in a national gathering at Northwestern University urged the Illinois governor George Ryan to end the death penalty in that state. See: <http://www.suntimes.com/output/news/cst-nws-death16.html>. On 5 December the Illinois legislature, against the will of Gov. Ryan, expanded the death penalty to include "terrorist crimes". See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uslatest/story/0,1282,-2222810,00.html>.

Conferences / Courses / Lectures

Oxford Amnesty lectures: The 2003 Oxford Amnesty Lectures on the theme of "Divided Cities" will take place in Oxford, England in January and February 2003. For details of speakers, time, costs and location visit: <http://www.oxford-amnesty-lectures.org/>.

Three week intensive human rights course: Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, American University Washington College of Law: Intensive Three-Week Summer Program, 27 May -- 13 June 2003. Applications will be accepted until 12 May 2003. For inquiries and requests for applications, please contact: American University Washington College of Law, Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (Prof. Claudia Martin and Prof. Diego Rodriguez-Pinzon, Co-Directors): 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20016-8181, USA, Tel: +1 202 274 4295/4070. Fax: +1 202 274-4198, Email: hrcacademy@wcl.american.edu or visit: <http://www.wcl.american.edu/humright/hrcacademy>

Vacancies

Mental Health Professionals/Trainers, Guinea and Sierra Leone

The Center for Victims of Torture, Minnesota, USA, is seeking psychosocial mental health clinicians and trainers for work in refugee camps in Guinea and Sierra Leone for refugees who have suffered torture and war trauma. Positions will be for at least one year. For further information visit

<http://www.cvt.org/main.php/InsideCVT/ProfessionalOpportunities/MentalHealthProfessionals,WestAfrica> or contact Edie Lewison (elewison@cvt.org) at The Center for Victims of Torture, 717 East River Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA. fax: +1 612 436 2600.

Publications

Annas G. J. Moral progress, mental retardation, and the death penalty. *N Engl J Med* 2002; 347:1814-1818 (28 November). Available to subscribers at: <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/347/22/1814>

Ethics in Clinical Practice by Judith C. Ahronhein et al., 2nd ed, 508 pp, ISBN 0-8342-1075-4, Gaithersburg, Md, Aspen Publishers, 2000. Reviewed by *Paul W. Franks*. <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/current/ffull/jbk1218-2.html>

Lancet Supplement: Medicine and Conflict:

<http://www.thelancet.com/journal/supplement/vol360/iss1/contents> -- numerous articles on aspects of medicine and conflict.

The *Psychiatric Bulletin* (UK) published in the December issue three articles about psychiatry in China. See:

van Voren R. The WPA World Congress in Yokohama and the issue of political abuse of psychiatry in China. *Psychiatr Bull* 2002; 26: 441-442.

<http://pb.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/26/12/441> [available to subscribers only]

Lyons D, O'Malley A. The labelling of dissent — politics and psychiatry behind the Great Wall. *Psychiatr Bull* 2002; 26: 443-444. <http://pb.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/26/12/443>.

Deahl M. Commentary: the alleged abuses of human rights in Chinese psychiatry.

Psychiatr Bull 26: 445-446. <http://pb.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/26/12/445>

On 10 December, the Essex University Human Rights Centre published *Reporting Killings as Human Rights Violations* by Kate Thompson and Camille Giffard. For further information visit <http://www.essex.ac.uk/reportingkillingshandbook> or contact the Centre:

Human Rights Centre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ, UK
Tel: +44 1206 872558; Fax: +44 1206 873627; Email: hrc@essex.ac.uk

Parker D. Street children and child labour around the world. *Lancet* 2002; 360:2067-71
http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol360/iss9350/full/llan.360.9350.editorial_and_review.23734.1

Siringi S. Kenyan health professionals participate in female circumcision. *Lancet* 2002, 360:2057 <http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol360/iss9350/full/llan.360.9350.news.23803.2>

Smith D, Gibson J. Can a prison practise good public health? *Australian Journal of Primary Health* 2002; 8(3): 81-6. Abstract available at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/aipc/ajph/vol8302.htm>

Southall D, O'Hare BAM. Empty arms: the effect of the arms trade on mothers and children *BMJ* 2002;325:1457-1461 (21 December)
<http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/325/7378/1457>

Spiegel P et al. Health programmes and policies associated with decreased mortality in displaced people in postemergency phase camps: a retrospective study. *Lancet* 2002; 360: 1927-34.
http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol360/iss9349/full/llan.360.9349.original_research.23592.1

Susan Hirsch's husband was killed in the bombing of the US Embassy in Dar es Salam in 1998. She writes in detail on issues arising around victim impact statements in the context of capital trials. See "Victims for the prosecution" *Boston Review*, Oct/Nov 2002:
<http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR27.5/hirsch.html>

Tribe, Rachel; Raval, Hitesh (eds). *Working with Interpreters in Mental Health*. London: Brunner-Routledge, December 2002. For details see:
<https://ecommerce.tandf.co.uk/catalogue/DetailedDisplay.asp?ISBN=0415188792&ResourceCentre=BRUNROUT>

**Best wishes for the holiday season and for a safe start to 2003.
The next newsletter will be issued on 10 January 2003.**

Jim Welsh / Ria Boerema / Tom Emerson

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