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NEWS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Publications

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/>

17 July: Venezuela: Political will and resources needed to make new law on violence against women a reality

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/venezuela-political-will-and-resources-needed-make-law-reality-20080716>

14 July: UK: The UK Ministry of Defence agrees to compensate Iraqi torture victims

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/good-news/uk-ministry-defence-agrees-compensate-iraqi-torture-victims-20080714>

10 July: Ukraine: Racial discrimination is on the rise

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/racism-on-the-rise-in-ukraine-20080710>

9 July: China: With one month until the Beijing Olympics, Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan writes a five-point appeal to Hu Jintao

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/open-letter-to-president-peoples-republic-of-China-20080709>

8 July: Iran: Spare four youths from execution, immediately enforce international prohibition on death penalty for juvenile offenders

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/iran-spare-four-youths-execution-immediately-enforce-international-prohi>

Children:

Brazil: Malnutrition among children below the age of 5 dropped dramatically in Brazil between 1996 and 2006 according to a release from the National Demography and Health Studies on women and children. *MercoPress* (7 July):

<http://www.mercopress.com/vernoticia.do?id=13902&formato=HTML>

Democratic Republic of Congo: A new UN official cites that dozens of children are languishing in adult prisons in the DRC's Northeastern Ituri district despite a legal prohibition. *IRIN* (14 July):

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79240>

Niger: Dubai Cares, a charitable organization that aims to provide primary education to one million children in developing countries, has provided UNICEF with nearly 1.2 million dollars to fund educational programmes in Niger. *UNICEF* (16 July):

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_44783.html

North Korea: Trucks bearing food and medicine from the United Nations Children's Fund http://www.unicef.org/media/media_44748.html have begun a difficult four-day journey over mountain roads to deliver supplies to children in the isolated provinces in the north-east of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. *UN News Centre* (11 July):

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=27350&Cr=DPRK&Cr1=>

Philippines: Rising prices of basic food commodities have forced the Philippine government to scale down efforts to address malnutrition among children, putting the under sixes at nutritional risk. *IRIN* (16 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79274>

UK: Innocent children are being held in detention centers across the UK. These children are not there because they have broken the law. They are in detention because adults have forced them to leave their country of origin. *The Guardian* (8 July):

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jul/08/children.immigration>

Climate Change

International: A dollar more for climate change adaptation would mean a dollar less for health and education in developing countries. *IRIN* (9 July):

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79164>

Death Penalty:

Iran: A new law has been passed by the Iranian parliament extending use of the death penalty to online crimes. *Jerusalem Post* (8

July): <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1215330897449&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Palestinian military court on Tuesday sentenced two Palestinians to death by firing squad for collaborating with Israel. *Reuters* (15 July): <http://africa.reuters.com/world/news/usnL15463040.html>

Taiwan: A recent visit to Taiwan by a joint World Coalition-ADPAN delegation left the impression that the Asian island was on course to "join a global trend towards abolition of the death penalty". *World Coalition* (9 July): <http://www.worldcoalition.org/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=290>

USA: In the first four months since the U.S. Supreme Court signaled executions may continue on the country's 3,200-strong death row, at least two inmates will have jumped the queue after convincing judges that they were competent to drop their appeals and seek speedy executions. *IPS* (14 July): <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43178>

USA: A former Oregon man accused of killing his four children and attacking his wife in Louisville nearly two years ago shows signs of schizophrenia and is delusional, a psychologist said Monday. *AOL News* (14 July): http://news.aol.com/story/_a/psychologist-accused-killer-may-be/n20080714231509990012

Health Services:

Belize: Taiwan and Belize are to further strengthen their health care cooperation. *Caribbean Press Releases* (9 July): <http://www.caribbeanpressreleases.com/articles/3625/1/Taiwan-and-Belize-Strengthen-Health-Care-Cooperation/A-follow-up-visit.html>

Cote d'Ivoire: The high price of medicines in Cote d'Ivoire has been leading people to purchase counterfeit medicines. *IRIN* (7 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79126>

International: Humanitarian groups say the ending of United Nations aid flights in Myanmar next month could slow a relief effort that has already come under fire for leaving many of the 2.4 million survivors without adequate food and water. *Seattle Press* (18 July): http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/national/1104ap_myanmar_aid_flights.html

Nicaragua: Cuban and Nicaraguan doctors are taking their medical service to the farthest points of Nicaragua. *Prensa Latina* (15 July): <http://www.prensa-latinaenglish.com/article.asp?ID={504C87F3-1627-4D84-8C94-D4A3FE61C533}&language=EN>

Kenya: Quality healthcare is a luxury beyond the reach of many who live in the slums of Kenya's capital, Nairobi. *IRIN* (11 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79204>

Health Workers:

Ethiopia: Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland (MSF-Swiss) has withdrawn from Fiiq, Somali region, saying repeated administrative hurdles and intimidation had prevented it from providing medical care to vulnerable populations. *IRIN* (10 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79181>

Iraq: The United Nations World Health Organization said today that it has restored a permanent international staff presence in Baghdad for the first time since a suicide bomb attack on the world body's Iraq headquarters in 2003 left 22 dead and 150 wounded. *UN News Centre* (17 July): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=27401&Cr=Iraq&Cr1=>

South Africa: With more South African doctors now working abroad than in the country's ailing public health sector, the government needs to start aggressively recruiting health workers from

other countries, according to a non-profit recruitment organisation. *IR/N* (14 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79243>

HIV/AIDS:

Africa: A new discovery marks the first genetic risk factor for HIV found only in people of African descent, and sheds light on the differences in genetic makeup that play a crucial role in susceptibility to HIV and AIDS. *Science Daily* (17 July): <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080716121355.htm>

Jamaica: Jamaica has seen a 35 percent decline in HIV/AIDS deaths between 2004 and 2006. *Caribbean Press Releases* (14 July): <http://www.caribbeanpressreleases.com/articles/3643/1/Jamaica-Sees-35-Decline-in-HIVAIDS-Deaths-Between-2004--2006/Mother-to-child-transmission-rate-declines.html>

Mexico: Human rights activists say the Mexican government is falling short on efforts to address HIV- related human rights abuses. *UPI* (16 July): http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2008/07/16/Activists_target_HIV-related_human_rights/UPI-55201216181054/

USA: The Senate may soon lift a two-decade old ban on HIV-positive people from visiting or immigrating to this country. *ABC News* (16 July): <http://blogs.abcnews.com/politicalradar/2008/07/congress-consid.html>

Malaria, TB and Other Diseases:

South Africa: The challenge South Africa is facing with MDR- and XDR-Tb are due to the health system failure to manage tuberculosis, said the Director of the Aids law project. *Health 24* (17 July): http://www.health24.com/medical/Condition_centres/777-792-3990-4013,47089.asp

Madagascar: An outbreak of rift valley fever in Madagascar has caused 20 human deaths as well as affecting livestock, two UN agencies have stepped in to help treat and control the disease. *UN News Centre* (14 July) <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=27369&Cr=Rift+Valley&Cr1=>

Mental Health:

UK: Electroconvulsive therapy – ECT – has a chequered past and remains one of the most controversial elements of modern psychiatry. Contrary to public opinion, it is still in widespread use today in Wales. *Wales Online* (13 July): <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health-news/2008/07/14/shock-therapy-s-still-being-used-in-wales-91466-21333670/>

Refugee and Migrants Rights:

International: The United Nations has developed a new policy on the needs and rights of migrant workers regarding HIV/AIDS, irrespective of their legal status, given their special risks and vulnerabilities to the disease. *UN News Centre* (16 July): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=27394&Cr=HIV&Cr1=>

South Africa: South Africa has become a destination for people from across the continent and beyond. But in spite of migrants having a legal right to free antiretroviral treatment for HIV, they

are being turned away from government clinics. *IPS* (15 July): <http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=43191>

Right to Water:

Bangladesh: Millions of people in Bangladesh continue to drink water from arsenic-contaminated tube wells, the most common source of drinking water in the country, according to health specialists. *IRIN* (9 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79160>

International: A new report finds 2.5 billion people, more than a third of the world's population, do not have access to good sanitation facilities and nearly one billion people do not have access to clean drinking water. *Voa News* (17 July): <http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-07-17-voa48.cfm>

Madagascar: Safe drinking water is a scarce resource in Madagascar. Considerable financial investment is needed to improve sanitation and water treatment and distribution for the population of this large island. *IPS* (17 July): <http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=43221>

Sexual and Reproductive Health:

Afghanistan: High food prices, drought, unemployment and lack of socio-economic opportunities are pushing some women and young girls in northern Afghanistan into commercial sex work. *IRIN* (16 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79278> <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79278>

Africa: Experts say progress is uneven as African countries try to improve health care for mothers and infants. *Voa News* (17 July): <http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2008-07-17-voa40.cfm>

Nigeria: Health workers in northern Nigeria say a lack of information and awareness has led to poor family planning practices in the region. *Voa News* (15 July): <http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2008-07-15-voa29.cfm>

Pakistan: World Population Day was a bleak reminder for Pakistani health practitioners of the precarious state of maternal, neonatal and child health. *IRIN* (15 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79254>

Sudan: Aid flowing to South Sudan following a 2005 peace deal is beginning to improve maternal health care for women. *IPS* (10 July): <http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=43142>

Timor Leste: Family planning is vital to the overall development of Timor-Leste and to reducing poverty in the tiny nation, United Nations officials said today. *UN News Centre* (10 July): <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=27331&Cr=Timor&Cr1=>

Torture:

China: A Chinese court has sentenced a former anti-graft prosecutor for life after torturing a suspect to death. *Reuters* (9 July): <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSPEK68096>

USA: Former U.S. Attorney General tells Congress that waterboarding is not torture. *Voa News* (17 July): <http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-07-17-voa54.cfm>

Zimbabwe: A new report shows that political violence and torture still continue in Zimbabwe. *IRIN* (10 July): <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79159>

Violence against Women

Democratic Republic of Congo: The ceasefire in the Congo brings little relief for women who are subjected to sexual violence. *CMAJ* (15 July): <http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/179/2/133>

Saudi Arabia: A new human rights watchdog report shows that migrant women domestic workers in Saudi Arabia face routine human rights abuses that in some cases amount to slavery. *The Guardian* (9 July): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jul/09/saudi-arabia-human-rights>

UK: The assistant commissioner of the London Metropolitan police has renewed his calls for the police to take rape cases seriously as he urged forces to set up specialist units to investigate rape allegations. *The Guardian* (9 July): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/jul/09/ukcrime1>

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Birnberg Peirce & Partners, Medical Justice and the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns, "Outsourcing abuse: The use and misuse of state-sanctioned force during the detention and removal of asylum seekers". July 2008. Available at: <http://www.medicaljustice.org.uk/>

CHRGJ, PIH, RFK, Zanmi Lasante, "Wòch nan Soley: The denial of the right to water in Haiti", 2008. Available at: http://www.rfkmemorial.org/human_rights/Woch_nan_Soley.pdf

Chronic Poverty Research Centre, "The Chronic Poverty Report 2008-2009: Escaping Poverty Traps", July 2008. Available at: http://www.chronicpoverty.org/pubfiles/CPR2_whole_report.pdf

Dr. Yuval Livnat, "Physicians speak about low-income patients: An analysis of Physicians' testimonies about patients who cannot afford prescribed medicines and treatments". Physicians for Human Rights - Israel, May 2008. Available at: http://www.phr.org.il/phr/files/articlefile_1216212002781.pdf

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, "World Disasters Report 2008 - The Challenge of HIV and AIDS". Available at: <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/disasters/wdr2008/WDR2008-full.pdf>

Lancet editorial. "Making chronic poverty history". *The Lancet*, 2008. Available at: <http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140673608610454/fulltext> (subscription required).

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Ma S, Sood N, "A Comparison of the Health Systems in China and India". Center for Asia Pacific Policy - The RAND Corporation, 2008. Available at: http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2008/RAND_OP212.pdf

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