



Human Rights Think Tank Watch

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Editor's Note

We would like to apologize to our readers for the delay in sending out this edition of the Human Rights Think Tank Watch, we have been experiencing minor technical difficulties over the past couple of days. We believe we have resolved the issues and can continue with our regular schedule of issues.

The May 19 issue will be dedicated to conflict. June 1st will bring a general issue, followed by a special issue on Business and Human Rights on June 16.

- HRI Team

Publications

Climate Change and Minorities

Organization: *Minority Rights Group*

Date: April 2008

From the Authors

In human rights law, the term "equity" is used to represent equality with fairness. This is synonymous with the notion of distributive justice, or fair distribution of good things within a society, whether they be material possessions, access to health care, or simply survival. There is nothing that highlights the inequity of our world more starkly than child mortality, and we believe that pneumonia is the cause of childhood death that most strongly reflects this inequity.

This paper will discuss issues related to pneumonia death and propose approaches to avoid increasing inequity as global efforts to control pneumonia mortality gather pace.

[View Source](#) [MinorityRights.org] [PDF]

Equity and Child-Survival Strategies

Authors: EK Mulholland, L Smith, I Carneiro, H Becher & D Lehmann

Organization: *World Health Organization*

Date: May 2008

From the Authors

In human rights law, the term "equity" is used to represent equality with fairness. This is synonymous with the notion of distributive justice, or fair distribution of good things within a society, whether they be material possessions, access to health care, or simply survival. There is nothing that highlights the inequity of our world more starkly than child mortality, and we believe that pneumonia is the cause of childhood death that most strongly reflects this inequity.

[View Source](#) [who.int]

Human Rights Impact Assessments for Foreign Investment Projects: Learning from Community Experiences in the Philippines, Tibet, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, and Peru

Organization: *Rights and Democracy*

Date: 2007

From the Authors

Through the five case studies that are described in this publication, the reader will have a chance to examine some of the consequences of investment through the lens of human rights. As Rights & Democracy intends this publication to be forward-looking, the execution of the five case studies will help us to develop and refine a methodology that can be used by community stakeholders to understand the impacts of projects in terms of human rights.

This understanding is also crucial for governments and businesses to improve the planning of future projects that will serve to maximize the positive impacts that investment can have for sustainable development and human rights. Finally, this publication is provided at a moment when there is a considerable discussion and debate in Canada and internationally about a broad range of issues related to corporate social responsibility and accountability. It is our firm belief that further collaboration, improved policies and decisive action involving all stakeholders is imperative if we are to succeed in ensuring investment respects human rights.

[View Source](#) [dd-rd.ca] [PDF]

The Establishment of the Human Rights Council - From the Book *Managing Change at the United Nations*

Authors: Nana Yeboab

Organization: *Center for UN Reform Education*

Date: April 2008

From the Author

At the 2005 World Summit, the Member States of the United Nations agreed to establish a Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights. In fact, the Commission was actually abolished before the negotiations on its successor had been completed. According to some sources, this unfortunately rushed the decision-making process that left some of the structural and political problems of the Commission inadequately addressed when establishing the Council. Others argue, however, that the Council is nonetheless an improvement, reflecting the best possible compromise at the time, and that the review processes in place will provide opportunities to remedy its weaknesses. This chapter identifies key issues that were under discussion in the transition from the Commission to the Council and provides observations assessing its early work. It should be noted that several independent experts, delegates to the UN in New York, and other sources officially affiliated with the ! Council were interviewed for this Chapter.

[View Source](#) [CenterForUNreform.org] [PDF]

Poverty and Corruption

Organization: *Transparency International*

Date: 2008

From the Authors

The year 2007 marked a milestone in the fight against poverty and corruption. It represented the midway point on the road to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the ambitious global pledge to end extreme poverty by 2015. It also signalled that ten years had passed since the anticorruption movement had signed the Lima Declaration, promising to address poverty as part of their efforts.

However, actual accomplishments have fallen short of expected progress. In practice, donors and governments still treat poverty and corruption as separate - rather than integral - components of the same strategy. The continued lack of policy integration has undermined efforts to fight both poverty and corruption. Poverty continues to plague more than a half of the world's citizens, with nearly three billion people living on less than two dollars-a-day.

Data on the MDGs show the current development trend not keeping pace with earlier projections. Bottlenecks have developed in certain regions and key countries, creating sizable challenges to meeting the 2015 timeline.

Each of the papers following sections builds on understanding this cause-and-effect relationship between poverty and corruption and outlines the processes that serve to reinforce - as well as undo - their connection

[View Source](#) [transparency.org]

Report of the High-Level Task Force on the Implementation of the Right to Development - 4th Session

Authors: Stephen Marks, Chairperson-Rapporteur

Organization: *United Nations Working Group on the Right to Development*

Date: January 2008

From the Author

This report contains the summary of the proceedings, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the high-level task force on the implementation of the right to development for the consideration of the Working Group on the Right to Development.

[View Source](#) [ohchr.org] [PDF]

Walking on Thin Ice: Control, Intimidation and Harassment of Lawyers in China

Organization: *Human Rights Watch*

Date: April 2008

From the Authors

This 142-page report details consistent patterns of abuses against legal practitioners. These include intimidation, harassment, suspension of professional licenses, disbarment, physical assaults, and even arrest and prosecution when lawyers take politically sensitive cases, seek redress for abuses of power and wrongdoings by party or government agents, or challenge local power-holders.

[View Source](#) [hrw.org]

Journal References

'Even if You're Positive, You Still Have Rights Because You Are A Person': Human Rights and the Reproductive Choice of HIV-Positive Persons

Authors: Leslie London, Phyllis J. Orner & Landon Myer, University of Cape Town

Journal: *Developing World Bio-Ethics*

Date: April 2008

From the Authors

Global debates in approaches to HIV/AIDS control have recently moved away from a uniformly strong human rights-based focus. Public health utilitarianism has become increasingly important in shaping national and international policies. However, potentially contradictory imperatives may require reconciliation of individual reproductive and other human rights with public health objectives. Current reproductive health guidelines remain largely nonprescriptive on the advisability of pregnancy amongst HIV-positive couples, mainly relying on effective counselling to enable autonomous decision-making by clients. Yet, health care provider values and attitudes may substantially impact on the effectiveness of nonprescriptive guidelines, particularly where social norms and stereotypes regarding childbearing are powerful, and where providers are subjected to dual loyalty pressures, with potentially adverse impacts on rights of service users. Data from a study of user experiences and perceptions of reproductive and HIV/AIDS services are used to illustrate a rights analysis of how reproductive health policy should integrate a rights perspective into the way services engage with HIV-positive persons and their reproductive choices. The analysis draws on recognised tools developed to evaluate health policies for their human rights impacts and on a model developed for health equity research in South Africa to argue for greater recognition of agency on the part of persons affected by HIV/AIDS in the development and content of policies on reproductive choices. We conclude by proposing strategies that are based upon a synergy between human rights and public health approaches to policy on reproductive health choices for persons with HIV/AIDS.

[View Source](#) [blackwell-synergy.com] [Available for purchase from Blackwell-Synergy]

Blogs

HR2 - Harm Reduction and Human Rights

Brief Description

Established in 2007, HR2 is the International Harm Reduction Association's (IHRA) Harm Reduction and Human Rights Monitoring and Policy Analysis Programme. HR2 leads IHRA's programme of research and advocacy on the development of harm reduction programmes and human rights protections for people who use drugs in all regions of the world.

The International Harm Reduction Association (IHRA) is one of the leading international non-governmental organisations promoting policies and practices that reduce the harms from all psychoactive substances, harms which include not only the increased vulnerability to HIV and hepatitis C infection among people who use drugs, but also the negative social, health, economic and criminal impacts of illicit drugs, alcohol and tobacco on individuals, communities and society.

[View Source](#) [ihrablog.net]

Multimedia & Tools

Dan Rather Reports - Bombs Left Behind

Organization: *Human Rights Watch*

Date: February 2008

Brief Description

Long after a cease fire in the Israeli-Lebanese conflict, thousands of unexploded bombs--cluster munitions--still cover the battlefields and are wounding many unintended victims--civilians. Dan Rather reports on this problem as part of Human Rights Watch's campaign to ban cluster munitions.

[View Source](#) [hrw.org]

Every Human Has Rights - A Project by The Elders

Brief Description

This project, supported by [The Elders](#), is dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its central tenets. It has links to information on freedom of expression, children's right to health, women's rights, and the Responsibility to Protect. The campaign also has a [blog](#) that is updated frequently.

[View Source](#) [EveryHumanHasRights.org]

Sources: Center for UN Reform Education, Developing World Bio-Ethics, Human Rights Watch, IHRA, Minority Rights Group, Rights and Democracy, TheElders.org, Transparency International, UN OHCHR, World Health Organization.

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