Welcome to the first issue of the International Detention Monitor, which following IDC member requests includes a section on International Detention News divided into regions, Useful Resources, Member Updates and a Calendar with detention relevant events, including the UN Special Procedures visits to various countries. Let us know what you think and if you have ideas for content or format. Thanks to Sarah Leslie for her work on the newsletter and who will be working with us until February.

**IDC News**
The International Coalition on the Detention of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants has been developing significantly over the past few months, including developing our organizational structure, member survey consultation, the finalisation of our strategic plan and the introduction of this, our first newsletter. The IDC has also been a part of a number of exciting initiatives over the past month, including undertaking a detention monitoring workshop at the Asia Pacific Consultations on Refugee Rights in Kuala Lumpur with the Association on the Prevention of Torture (APT), and a detention advocacy session aimed at seeing the development of a regional working group on detention. We have also been involved in detention monitoring training in Indonesia with the APT, as well as the Global Forum on Migration and Development in the Philippines attended by civil society and governments from around the world- see details below. We have made a submission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and released a media statement on the Universal Children’s Day, November 21st, and a joint press release with Sin Fronteras which received press coverage in Mexico- see news section below.

**Global Forum on Migration and Development, Philippines**
The IDC attended the GFMD as part of the civil society days as a formal delegate. While there was criticism regarding the structure of the GFMD, lack of effective interaction between civil society and governments and the need for it to be put under a UN mandate, the IDC had the opportunity to raise the issue of detention of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, with a statement made and supported by a number of delegates, particularly on children in detention. The final civil society statement to the 163 UN-member states who attended included 3 of our 8 point recommendations for States. This included:

"All governments are asked to avoid detention of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, to consider and pursue alternatives to detention and never place certain groups such as pregnant or lactating women, children, survivors of torture, abuse and trauma, elderly, disabled of persons with serious


health conditions, in detention.” (Section 3.2) http://www.gfmd2008.org/civil-society-dialogue/civil-society-dialogue/civil-society-days-report-to-the-government-meeting-29-october-2008.html Our the recommendations and statement are listed now on the IDC website. The Forum was also an important opportunity to meet a number of IDC members, to gain new information and contacts on regional detention gaps, including in South Korea, Bahrain and groups from South America.

**Detention concerns in the Asia Pacific Region**

The Asia Pacific Consultations on Refugee Rights were held in Kuala Lumpur between November 19-22 and was the first civil society refugee conference in the region, which had more than 100 participants from 14 countries and was a great success. The IDC was actively involved the development and seeking funding for the conference and ran workshops on detention advocacy and monitoring with the APT. Congratulations to IDC Regional Representative Alice Nah and Forum Asia for their hard work in organising the conference.

Migration-related detention was a key area of concern noted across the region, particularly the detention of children and separation of families, the lack of release options, overarching concerns on conditions, services and rights for detainees and lack of access. Regional concerns included:

- **East Asia**- Detention of asylum seekers and migrants raised as concerns in South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong, with Korea having a provision of indefinite detention, for example asylum seekers detained for more than 2 years.
- **South Asia**- The mass detention and deportation in India of people from Bangladesh and the emergence of detention of asylum seekers in Sri Lanka, for e.g from Burma.
- **South East Asia** – Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand included the arrest and detention of irregular migrants and refugees including refoulement of those registered by UNHCR. Also noted was the criminalisation and caning of detainees, detention of pregnant women and deportation of detainees with communicable diseases in Malaysia and the warehousing concerns raised in Thailand particularly the impact of protracted lack of freedom of movement and denial of the right to work. It was noted that asylum seekers in the Philippines not detained if claim at border, but if located or claim later, they are detained with few avenues for release. It was noted that asylum seeker, refugee and migrant children are however not detained in the Philippines.

**Asia Pacific Detention Working Group Initiated**

An outcome of the conference was the development of an Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, and a number of geographical and thematic sub-groups, including the decision to establish a regional detention work which the IDC will chair, together with 2 other steering committee members. The Immigration Detention Working Group will aim to assist groups at the local level through sharing information, experiences, best practice and advocacy strategies to develop a web-page with the IDC’s assistance, and aim to hold a regional training on detention concerns before the next consultation. And on the regional level to develop a core position of concern on detention in the region and best practice examples, particularly on children and release options, which could be used for community education and to raise this statement directly with relevant bodies at the international level and at the regional level. A draft terms of reference is being developed, and any IDC members interested in joining the working group please forward your details to: info@idcoalition.org

**Member Updates**

- *The Association for the Prevention of Torture* is conducting an online survey looking at reprisals against those who monitor places of detention. For more information visit [http://www.apt.ch/content/view/195/103/lang.en/](http://www.apt.ch/content/view/195/103/lang.en/)
• Human Rights First - Bill introduced which addresses standards of immigration detention [http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/asylum/asylum_03.htm]
• Take a look at ECRE's new website [http://www.ecre.org/]

**Southern Refugee Legal Aid Network**
The Southern Refugee Legal Aid Network (SLRAN) is a new Fahamu global refugee programme directed by Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond. SLRAN is seeking contributors for its series of reviews of domestic refugee law in countries of the 'global south', which aims to highlight gaps in and shortcomings of domestic laws in order to promote law reform. More detail and a list of southern states with domestic refugee legislation can be found in the project’s terms of reference, which can be accessed here: [www.fahamu.org/srlan](http://www.fahamu.org/srlan). If you are interested in being a volunteer contributor, please e-mail your CV to marina.sharpe@asylumaccess.org, or for more details on SLRAN contact Barbara: behbond@aucegypt.edu

**International Detention News**

**Europe**
• Italy: UN Experts Call on Italy to Uphold Human Rights in its response to immigration and in fighting mafia crimes and terrorism [http://www.unhchr.ch/huricane/huricane.nsf/view01/BD8D204D07A1E588C125750100691187?opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/huricane/huricane.nsf/view01/BD8D204D07A1E588C125750100691187?opendocument)
• UK: Detention units 'fail on health' [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7739849.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7739849.stm)
• UK: Bid to stop detention of children [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/glasgow_and_west/7685764.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/glasgow_and_west/7685764.stm)
• Malta: Article on migration in Malta [http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2008/10/19/interview.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2008/10/19/interview.html)

**North America**
• US: Legal Orientation Program provides for more efficient immigration court system [link]
• US: Detention of migrant women faulted by UA researcher [link]
• US: Panel Explores Psychological Effects of Torture [link]
• US: Obama commits to reviewing family detention centers upon entering office. [link]

Asia Pacific
• Malaysia: Tsunami Refugees Ordered Out of Malaysia; Thousands of Migrants Already Deported and More Being Held for Deportation [link]
• Malaysia: Irene Fernandez: The Best or Worst of Malaysia? [link]
• Australia: Afghan asylum seekers sent home by Australia ‘killed by Taliban’ [link]
• Malaysia: Malaysia high court acquits migrant rights activist [link]
• Thailand: The lost children of Laos: Advocating for liberation of detained Hmong youth [link]

Africa
• Equitorial Guinea: UN Special Rapporteur on torture concludes mission to Equatorial Guinea [link]
• South Africa: Refugees go hungry after camp closes [link]

Central and South America
• Mexico - Piden a México mayor protección a menores migrantes [link]
• Mexico - México no cumple con los tratados, dicen organismos [link]

IDC Media
• Mexico isn’t complying with International Treaties, say organisations
The International Detention Coalition and Sin Fronteras call upon the authorities to stop the detention of children and utilise the appropriate processes.

For more news on international detention issues go to: www.idcoalition.org
Useful Resources:

- **Interactive US Detention Centre** an online game which shows what it’s like being in immigration detention in the US http://www.homelandgitmo.com/
- **MSF** A refugee camp in the heart of the city video http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/education/refugeecamp/movie.cfm
- **Refugees United**: An organisation which assists in locating missing family members www.refunite.org  (Also note the ICRC’s Restoring Family Links program- http://www.icrc.org/eng/family_links)

Upcoming Training:

**Human Rights Advocates Program**
Applications for the annual Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP) at Columbia University is now open until December 19. HRAP is designed to prepare proven human rights leaders from the Global South and marginalized communities in the U.S. to participate in national and international policy debates on globalization by building their skills, knowledge, and contacts. The Program features a four-month residency at Columbia University in New York City with a structured curriculum of advocacy, networking, skills-building, and academic coursework. For more details: www.hr.columbia.org  cshr@columbia.edu

**Advanced Geneva Training Course on International Law and Advocacy**
The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) is opening the call for applications for the Advanced Geneva Training Course on International Law and Advocacy to be held in Geneva from 16 to 27 March 2009.
For information visit the website at www.ishr.ch.

Volunteer with the IDC

The IDC is looking for a number of volunteers to assist us in our work. Volunteers can work whenever they have time, from anywhere, as long as they have access to the internet. Let us know if this sounds of interest: gmitchell@idcoalition.org

1. Language Volunteers
   The IDC is seeking volunteers to translate documents on an occasional basis via email. Primary languages: French, Spanish and Arabic.

2. IDC Research Volunteer
   Research member websites for news updates, latest research etc for our website and newsletter
   Collate latest news and information on detention news globally, including URL links, e-lists, newsletters, newspapers, journals etc
   Summarise articles, documents etc for our newsletter and website.
   Be able to commit at least 2 hours per week on web-based research, and liaise at least once a fortnight with the Director

**International Detention Calendar**

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<th>1st</th>
<th>World Aids Day</th>
<th>Global</th>
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<tr>
<td>1-12th Dec</td>
<td>3rd session of Universal Periodic Review Committee</td>
<td><strong>BOTSWANA, BAHAMAS, BURUNDI, LUXEMBOUR,</strong></td>
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BARBADOS, MONTENEGRO, UAE, ISRAEL, LIECHTENSTIEN, SERBIA, TURKMENISTAN, BURKINO FASO, CAPE VERDE, COLOMBIA, UZBEKISTAN, TUVALU

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10th Dec</td>
<td>International Human Rights Day</td>
<td>Global</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Country visit by Sub Committee on Prevention of Torture</td>
<td>PARAGUAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th Dec</td>
<td>Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly</td>
<td>Las Palmas, SPAIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th Dec</td>
<td>Global Day of Action for the Migrant Workers Convention/ International Migrant’s Day</td>
<td>Global – initiated by Migrant Rights International</td>
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**JANUARY 2009**

| Jan      | Country visit of Working Group on Arbitrary Detention                 | MALTA                  |
| 12 – 30th| Committee on Rights of the Child Session                             | DPRK, DRC, MALAWI, REP. MOLDOVA, NETHERLANDS, REPUBLIC OF CHAD |

**FEBRUARY**

| Feb      | Country visit of Working Group on Arbitrary Detention                 | USA                    |
| 2 - 13th | 4th session of Universal Periodic Review Committee                    | GERMANY, DJIBOUTI, CANADA, BANGLADESH, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AZERBAIJAN, CAMEROON, CUBA, SAUDI ARABIA, SENEGAL, CHINA, NIGERIA, MEXICO, MAURITIUS, JORDAN, MALAYSIA |

*If you have any news items or resources to add, please email: info@idcoalition.org*