



Internal AIUSA Use Only:
Not for External Distribution

April 20, 2007

Dear Volunteer Leaders,

Amnesty International's International Executive Committee (IEC) has adopted a new position on Sexual and Reproductive Rights that includes support for abortion in very particular circumstances, in the context of our work to stop grave human rights abuses against women and girls. This new policy, which grew out of our campaigning to stop violence against women and the tragic circumstances in which women all too often find themselves, will enable the organization to:

- Support women who seek a safe, early medical termination of pregnancy in cases of rape, incest or when a woman's life or health is at grave risk.
- Urge governments to make medical care available to women who suffer complications from unsafe abortions;
- Oppose imprisonment and other criminal penalties for abortion against women and their providers.

It is very important to be aware of the following:

- **This policy will not be made public at this time.** As the IEC has written to all sections, "There is to be no proactive external publication of the policy position or of the fact of its adoption issued. This means no section or structure is to issue a press release or public statement or external communication of any kind on the policy decision."
- A central reason for this is that there will be no campaigning on these issues until at least later this year, and we will await further guidance on this matter from the IS and IEC.

Because we recognize that word about this decision may enter the public domain, the SRR Working Group has prepared some guidance and materials for you to respond to inquiries and to potential criticism in your communities. The documents include:

- Letter from the Executive Director: This can be sent to those who express concern about our new policy. This is, therefore, an external document that can be used for-response to inquiries.
- Two-page overview: This explains the context for this decision and the consultation process. This is an external document that can be used for-response to inquiries.
- Letter to the Editor: This is an external document, but one that should be used **only** to respond to critical editorials or letters to the editor in local newspapers.
- FAQ: This is an internal document that can be used to respond to inquiries, but not distributed to the public.
- Talking points: This is an internal document that is to be used for answering verbal inquiries about our policy.

A word about press inquiries:

Please do not respond to any inquiries from the news media. Any press inquiries should be sent to Gwen Fitzgerald (fitzgerald@aiusa.org) or Suzanne Trimel (strimel@aiusa.org) in the Communications Department's media office.

We are also establishing an email burst for inquiries from members and the public: srrinfo@aiusa.org. Any questions should be directed there or to your regional office. Thank you.

Best,
Karen Schneider
Chair, SRR Working Group