

VERDICT ON A VIRUS

PUBLIC HEALTH, HUMAN RIGHTS AND CRIMINAL LAW



The criminal law is a blunt instrument for HIV prevention. It raises serious human rights concerns and risks undermining our hard won gains in the global response to HIV.

Join us for the launch of a new campaign and publication – ‘*Verdict on a Virus: Public Health, Human Rights and the Criminal Law*’ – which spotlights the human rights implications of criminalisation and advocates for alternatives.

13 November 2008,
10am – 12pm

Foreign Press Association,
11 Carlton House Terrace,
London SW1Y 5AJ

“Today one of the most pressing issues in the AIDS epidemic is the use of criminal statutes and criminal prosecutions against HIV transmission. Such laws are increasingly wide in their application and frightening in their effects. HIV is a virus, not a crime. That fact is elementary, and all-important. Too often law-makers and prosecutors overlook it.”

Edwin Cameron, Justice of the Supreme Court, South Africa

Many countries are using laws to criminalise HIV transmission or exposure that are often justified on the grounds of promoting public health. Yet these laws and policies foster stigma which can limit access to health services and the uptake of testing, and poses a critical barrier to achieving universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support.

Verdict on a Virus provides a starting point for a wide range of readers – from ordinary members of the public to human rights and HIV activists – to reflect on how criminalization laws are affecting decades of progress in the global response to HIV. The event includes leading health and human rights panellists speaking out about their first-hand experiences on these issues.

Speakers include:

- Gill Greer, Director General, International Planned Parenthood Federation
- Widney Brown, Senior Director, International Law, Policy and Campaigns, Amnesty International
- Lisa Power, Corporate Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Terrence Higgins Trust
- Angelina Namiba, Programme Lead on the National African HIV Prevention Programme, African HIV Policy Network
- Julian Hows, Researcher, Global Network of People Living with HIV
- Neil Gerrard, MP, British Labour Party

The launch event for *Verdict on a Virus* is hosted by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) and the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW).



International Community of
Women living with HIV/AIDS (ICW)

