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Heywood on Politics and Health

TAC is serialising articles by Mark Heywood that look at issues of global health, politics, human rights and the law. The aim of the articles is to set in motion a discussion among TAC activists and supporters about the broader political and social context to campaign work on HIV. The articles are still in draft form and Mark invites responses that either support or contradict the arguments made in the articles, as well as advice about missing information that supports or undermines the arguments. He can be contacted directly at heywoodm@alp.org.za.

PDF version of first three chapters

There are two or three more chapters to follow.

Chapter Three: South Africa´s Treatment Action Campaign (TAC): An example of a successful human rights campaign for health

26 March, 2008 - 16:19 ? Mark Heywood

In earlier chapters of this article I have argued that a Framework Convention on Global Health (FCGH) must be located in a human rights framework, and that the impetus for it needs to come first and foremost from communities and people that are being denied health care. I also argued that a push for the prioritization of health in national politics would be assisted if there was an international framework that set out global standards and national duties in relation to health. However, these two assertions beg the question as to whether there are successful examples of campaigns for better health that have been driven by human rights and taken advantage of legal systems. If there are, are there contextual prerequisites that will either facilitate or frustrate the use of human rights? What are the ingredients that are required for the successful utilization of human rights demands for health by a social movement?

In this chapter, to try to answer these questions, I examine the experience of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) in South Africa and attempt to draw out the approaches behind and factors influencing its activity. A study of comparable movements for health in countries such as Thailand and Brazil would be helpful but is not undertaken here.

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Chapter Two: Health and the Inequality of Poverty: Towards a Right-based Convention on Global Health

29 February, 2008 - 16:19 ? Mark Heywood

This article continues the argument that there is a political reason for deteriorating public health. However, whilst

declining health can be partly attributed to political neglect it is not its direct cause. Rather, it is the growth of socio-economic inequalities that are coming about as a result of changed patterns of production and economic growth, combined with human insecurity, that is putting millions of people at risk of ill health and disease. Tackling this requires (a) that health strategies do more to examine inequality and (b) that advocacy for health begins to include robust political advocacy against inequality.

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Chapter One: Politics and the Global Public Health Crisis

29 February, 2008 - 16:15 ? Mark Heywood
Despite remarkable advances in modern medicine the health of millions of people throughout the world is declining. Problems of malnutrition, maternal mortality and other causes of illness, disability and death persist on a huge scale. Underdeveloped and developing countries have become reservoirs for old and new pathogens, where communicable and largely preventable diseases, cause millions of deaths per annum.

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Introduction: Politics, Human Rights and Poor Global Health

29 February, 2008 - 16:12 ? Mark Heywood
Can Campaigns to Prevent and Treat HIV and AIDS Revive and Strengthen Campaigns for the Right to Health, Access to Legal Services and Social Justice?

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