

## Human Rights Day 2009: International Centre on Human Rights and Drug Policy launched

*'Individuals who use drugs do not forfeit their human rights...Too often, drug users suffer discrimination, are forced to accept treatment, marginalized and often harmed by approaches which over-emphasize criminalization and punishment while under-emphasizing harm reduction and respect for human rights.'*

Navanethem Pillay  
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, March 2009

(10 December 2009) Today, Human Rights Day, is the occasion for the launch of the **International Centre on Human Rights and Drug Policy**. The Centre is dedicated to developing and promoting innovative and high quality legal and human rights scholarship on issues related to drug laws, policy and enforcement. It pursues this mandate by publishing original, peer reviewed research on drug issues as they relate to international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international criminal law and public international law, and fostering research on drug policy issues among postgraduate law and human rights students at universities and colleges around the world.

The Centre's work is supported by a prestigious International Advisory Committee as well as two Institutional Partners. At present, the Centre has established two ongoing projects:

- The **International Yearbook on Human Rights and Drug Policy** is the first and only international peer reviewed law journal focusing exclusively on human rights and drug policy. We are now accepting submissions to the first edition of the Yearbook to be published in late 2010.
- The **Human Rights and Drug Policy Project** is a joint initiative with the Irish Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway. This Project will establish a Doctoral Studentship in Human Rights and Drug Policy, as well as a programme of activities designed to promote research on drug policy issues among other university human rights programmes. Applications for the Doctoral Studentship are being accepted until 18 December.

For more information,  
please visit [www.humanrightsanddrugs.org](http://www.humanrightsanddrugs.org) or email [info@humanrightsanddrugs.org](mailto:info@humanrightsanddrugs.org)

**Project Directors:** Rick Lines & Damon Barrett

**International Advisory Committee:** Dr Massimo Barra (founder, Villa Maraini Foundation, IT); Dr David Bewley-Taylor (Swansea University, UK); Prof Neil Boister (University of Canterbury, NZ); Richard Elliott (Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network); Anand Grover (UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health); Prof Paul Hunt (University of Essex, UK); Dr Ursula Kilkelly (University College Cork, IRE), Prof Manfred Nowak (UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment); Rebecca Schleifer (Human Rights Watch); Prof William A Schabas (Irish Centre for Human Rights); Baroness Vivien Stern (International Centre for Prison Studies, UK); Prof Gerry Stimson (International Harm Reduction Association)

**Institutional Partners:** International Harm Reduction Association; Irish Centre for Human Rights