



IJCSL NEWSLETTER

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ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

AUSTRALIA

See report under **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

GERMANY—PARLIAMENT DEBATES ANTI-TERRORISM MEASURES

The German Parliament is reported to have initiated debate on anti-terrorism measures, including plans to increase video surveillance in public areas and to create an anti-terror database accessible to police and intelligence agencies. According to a news article posted by [MY NEWS](#) on 30 August 2006, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has rejected the call from a parliamentary backbencher for armed train marshals but she has endorsed increased video surveillance and the database on potential terrorists. The proposal for an anti-terrorist database is likely to trigger hot debate.

JORDAN—PARLIAMENT ENDORSES ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

On 27 August 2006, the Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament passed tough anti-terrorism legislation. According to [REUTERS ALERTNET](#), the law allows security forces to put suspects under tight surveillance, detain them, and prevent them from leaving the country. The law is expected to go into effect within a month after it is approved by the Upper House of the Parliament. Jordan is the first country in the Middle East to endorse anti-terrorism legislation.

PHILIPPINES—GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS STRICT ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

The Philippine Congress is expected to pass a proposed anti-terrorism law soon. According to a news article published by [REUTERS ALERT NET](#) on 28 August 2006, the proposed law would impose stiffer penalties for terrorism activities, making them offences not subject to bail. It would also widen state powers to record telephone conversations, examine bank accounts, and detain suspects for up to 15 days without charge.

UNITED KINGDOM—CHARITY COMMISSION FREEZES ASSETS OF ISLAMIST CHARITY UNDER NEW ANTI-TERROR LEGISLATION

[In an article published on 24 August 2006](#), the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE (and the NEW YORK TIMES) reported that the Charity Commission is formally investigating the aid group Crescent Relief and has frozen its funds, following allegations that the charity has ties to a foiled terrorist plot to blow up planes from London. According to the IHT, the action “throws the spotlight on the 150-year-old Charity Commission, whose budget and staff have shrunk in recent years following government cutbacks, but whose role in Britain’s attempts to fight terrorism may be growing.” The article goes on further to state that “Britain’s Home Office is currently conducting a review of terrorist financing in charities, along with its Treasury Department, and plans to make recommendations for changes this fall.” The article also references the Home Office’s concerns about the use of charities for financing terrorism, quoting an official



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who suggested that “We are aware that existing safeguards against terrorist abuse in the charitable sector need to be strengthened.”

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

INDIA—GOVERNMENT DROPS PLANS FOR AMENDMENT OF RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) ACT

The government has dropped its efforts to amend the RTI Act during the session of Parliament that closed on 25 August 2006, according to a news article published by [FREEDOM.INFO](#). The proposed amendment had sought to block access to all file notations in administrative files and cabinet papers except those on social and development issues. The decision of the government to put RTI amendment on hold is being viewed as a victory of peoples’ right to information in the country.

PAKISTAN—GOVERNMENT OF SINDH PROMULGATES FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ORDINANCE

A Freedom of Information Ordinance has been promulgated in the Province of Sindh. According to a news article published by [DAWN](#) on 11 August 2006, the new law is aimed at extending the freedom of information to ensure that citizens of the province have improved access to public record. Its purpose is to make the provincial government more accountable to citizens. The [article](#) contains a detailed description of the Ordinance.

UNITED STATES—OMB WATCH REPORT SAYS FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION RULING REDUCES CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

According to an [OMB Watch Report published on 29 August 2006](#), “Democrats on the Federal Election Commission (FEC) blocked a proposed interim rule that would have exempted grassroots lobbying broadcasts from a federal rule banning ads that mention an incumbent before an election. While opinions differ on what should be done about genuine issue ads that have been swept up in the ban, the public deserves consideration of the merits of proposals to protect grassroots lobbying...The Democrats on the commission blocked such discussion. It was a loss for civic participation and grassroots involvement in democracy.”

FISCAL MATTERS

UNITED KINGDOM—HM TREASURY OPENS PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON FUTURE ROLE OF THIRD SECTOR IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION

Based on a set of six themes and questions, the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury have opened public consultation on the “Review of the Future Role of the Third Sector in Social and Economic Regeneration.” The deadline for responses is 30 September 2006. For further details on submitting the response visit the website of HM Treasury [Charity and Third Sector Finance Unit](#).



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UNITED STATES—

• **NEW FEDERAL CHARITY PROVISIONS SIGNED INTO LAW**

A bill containing a series of provisions designed to encourage charitable giving and prevent abuses of charity tax laws by donors and not-for-profit organizations was signed by President George W. Bush on 17 August 2006. According to a news article published by [THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY](#), the charity provisions are part of a broader law, the [Pension Protection Act of 2006](#), a package of rules revamping the private pension system. The new law allows taxpayers to avoid taxes when making a direct distribution from an IRA, either traditional or Roth, to a qualified charity. The amount of the distribution is limited to \$100,000 per year per taxpayer. Charitable contributions have also been tightened up. Under the new law, taxpayers must keep records of all cash donations. Individuals must show a receipt from the charity, a canceled check, or a credit card statement to prove their donation. No tax deduction will be allowed if the taxpayer cannot provide any supporting documentation. The new law also toughens the rules for non-cash donations. Donated items, such as clothing and household goods, must be in “good condition.” If the items are not in “good condition,” no deduction is allowed. The term “good condition,” however, is not defined in the law. A [detailed summary](#) and [technical explanation](#) of the provisions for charities and donors in the new law is available on the web site of Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation and the web site of House Committee on Ways and Means.

• **IRS DECIDES NOT TO PURSUE CLAIM OF ELECTIONEERING AGAINST NAACP**

In a 31 August 2006 [press release on its website](#), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has announced that the Internal Revenue has informed the Association that it has concluded its examination of NAACP activities and determined that the Association did not violate conditions of its tax exempt status. “We have determined that you continue to qualify as an organization described in IRC section 501(c) (3),” the IRS wrote in a letter to the NAACP dated 9 August. IRS official Marsha A. Ramirez said that a review of video footage of the speech of NAACP President Julian Bond and other information indicated “that political intervention did not occur.”

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

IRAN—HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP BANNED

Government authorities have banned a human rights group according to a news article published by [RFE/RL](#) on 7 August 2006. The Center of Human Rights Defenders, led by country's 2003 Nobel Peace Laureate, Shirin Ebadi, is alleged to have operated without an official permit. The center was founded in 2002 and has been a strong supporter of human and minority rights in Iran since its inception.



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MALDIVES—CRACKDOWN ON PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION RESULTS IN INJURIES, ARRESTS

A report published in minivannews.com states that an opposition party MDP activist in Feydhoo (Addu) was arrested on 28 August 2006 in a police raid that left two women hospitalized by pepper spray. The activist, Abdullah Waseem (Faseeh), participated in a demonstration held on 17 August 2006 to commemorate the arrest of nineteen opposition activists in 2005. Following the demonstration, the government had issued summonses to various activists, and it seems likely they will be charged with breaching the government's new regulations on freedom of assembly. Faseeh's failure to respond to his summons led to the raid on his house. Female relatives of his were injured in the raid.

SOMALIA—CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS BANNED IN MOGADISHU

The existence of civil society groups and NGOs is no longer recognized in Mogadishu. The Union of Islamic Courts has for the first time announced that they do not give a credit to the existence of any "civil society" organizations in Mogadishu, according to a news article published by [SHABELLE MEDIA NETWORK](http://shabellemedia.com) on 27 August 2006. The UIC administrator for social affairs, Sheik Fanah, pointed out that NGOs under any name could not hold any meeting or a news conference without the Islamists' knowledge.

SYRIA—NEW HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP DENIED WORKING PERMIT

In a series of its periodic crackdowns on dissidents aimed at stifling human rights, the Ministry of Social Affairs denied an operating permit to The National Organization for Human Rights. The group comprises around 60 people, mostly lawyers and engineers, and includes representatives of various religions and ethnic groups in Syria. According to a news article published by [MIDDLE EAST TIMES](http://middleeasttimes.com) on 4 September 2006, the authorities have not given any reason for the refusing the permit.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

AUSTRALIA—REPORT OF MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT AND ARTS ALLIANCE (MEAA) ATTACKS CURRENT LACK OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The MEAA report of 31 August 2006 is [published on the IFEX website](http://ifex.org); it says that the situation regarding freedom of expression in Australia has declined dramatically this year. It goes on to assert that "attacks on the media are becoming less subtle as governments, courts, police, gangs of thugs and large corporations openly contravene rights of free expression to manipulate, hide and block the release of information into the public domain. In a serious step back, new sedition clauses were pushed hastily through Parliament as part of the Anti-Terrorism (No 2) Act. This act also restricted coverage of security operations with threat of jail and widened the ability to chase down confidential sources. This year, the parliament expanded wire-tapping powers which, again, place journalists' sources under threat."



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BOTSWANA—NEW BROADCASTING POLICY INTRODUCED

The Minister of Communications, Science and Technology, Pelsonomi Venson-Moitoi, has presented a new broadcasting policy to the Parliament. According to a news article published by the [DAILY NEWS](#) on 18 August 2006, the policy aims to provide a framework to underpin laws and regulations. The government, however, vows that the policy would promote freedom of expression and public participation as well as “reflect, safeguard, enrich, and strengthen the identity, culture and character of Botswana.”

EGYPT—HUMAN RIGHTS BODY ISSUES REPORT ON JOURNALISTIC FREEDOM

The [Egyptian Organization For Human Rights](#) (EOHR) has issued its report on press freedom entitled “[Journalism In Egypt: Caught Between Laws And The Government](#).” According to an EOHR [press release](#) on 12 July 2006, the report discusses EOHR's vision about the government proposed draft Law which calls for amendments in the articles dealing with publication crimes in the penal code. The report is divided into four parts: the first part discusses the legislative and legal restrictions to freedom of journalism in Egypt; the second contains the differences between the draft law presented by the Government to the Parliament, and the one presented by Journalists’ Syndicate; the third contains follow-ups to the cases where journalists are being tried, during the last two years; the fourth contains EOHR’s recommendations.

FIJI—BROADCAST LICENSING BILL 2006 APPROVED

The [Broadcast Licensing Bill 2006](#), seeking to establish a Broadcast Licensing Authority to regulate Fiji’s broadcasting industry in both radio and television, has been approved by the cabinet, according to a news article published by the [FIJI GOVERNMENT ONLINE PORTAL](#) on 1 August 2006. The bill will set up a licensing authority whose chairman and five members will all be appointed by the Minister for Information. The Information Minister will also have the authority to formulate policy and give policy directions without consultation with his own ministry. The Authority will have the power to approve and withdraw broadcast licenses. The bill will replace the Fiji Media Council, which currently regulates the media in the country. The bill will soon be tabled in the House of Representatives. [Critics](#) claim the bill will give wide powers to the government that will have a significant harmful effect on media freedom in the country.

HONG KONG—INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND SURVEILLANCE BILL PASSED

Hong Kong’s legislature has passed the interception of communications and surveillance bill, giving police and other law enforcement agencies broad authority to conduct covert surveillance activities like phone tapping, bugging homes and offices and monitoring emails, according to a news article published by [WVLI](#) on 7 August 2006. Critics condemned the bill, alleging it will empower the police to intercept



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conversations between reporters and sources, lawyers and clients and also eavesdrop on political opponents.

SERBIA—AUTHORITIES URGED TO WITHDRAW RECENTLY ADOPTED BROADCASTING LAW AMENDMENTS

Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad, Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, has called on Serbian authorities to withdraw recently adopted Broadcasting Law Amendments, saying that some of them violate media freedom rights protected by both the Serbian Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights. An OSCE [press release](#) on 11 August 2006, concludes that the Broadcasting Agency has failed to hold necessary consultations with domestic stakeholders and international institutions as the amendments were created. Among other issues, the amendments relate to the scope of activity of the Republican Broadcasting Agency and the manner in which its decisions are implemented.

SOUTH AFRICA—CABINET APPROVES FILM AND PUBLICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL 2006

The Film and Publications Amendment Bill 2006 has received the approval of the South African Cabinet, according to a news article published by the [MAIL & GUARDIAN](#) on 25 August 2006. The Film and Publications Act regulates films and publications activities in the country. According to [ALLAFRICA](#), the proposed amendment also brings news media under the act, meaning both print and broadcast media would fall under the regulations and guidelines of the Film and Publications Board. The Bill, which is a proposed amendment to the Film and Publications Act [Act No. 65 of 1996], will be forwarded to Parliament for discussion soon.

VIET NAM—NEW REPORT ON GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP OF INTERNET RELEASED

OpenNet Initiative (ONI) has released a new report entitled “[Internet Filtering in Vietnam: 2005-2006](#).” The report documents the degree and extent of the governmental controls over the information environment including websites, blogs, email, and online discussion forums. The ONI [press release](#) of 8 August 2006, says that the report finds the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is actively censoring the Internet, focusing its filtering on sites considered threatening to its one-party system.

ZIMBABWE—INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS BILL UNDER CONSIDERATION

Zimbabwe is proposing to add another law to its existing media legislation that will cause the further deterioration of freedom of expression in the country. According to a news article published by [IRIN](#) on 30 August 2006, the parliamentary communications portfolio committee began hearing oral submissions on the Interception of Communications Bill. If passed, the bill will allow the military, intelligence services, police, and the Office of the President to monitor e-mail correspondence, eavesdrop on telephone conversations and censor internet access. The proposed legislation also forces internet service providers to buy surveillance equipment at a cost of US\$1 million per provider, a stipulation that could force many service providers to shut down



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FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

INDIA—

- **LAW BANNING THE PREACHING OF NON-HINDU FAITHS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ANDHRA PRADESH STATE GOVERNMENT**

The local government of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh is debating a law banning non-Hindus from praying in the temple town of Tirupati. The move is the result of pressure exerted by Hindu fundamentalists who are against the presence of Christian missionaries. According to a news article published by [OPEN DOORS](#) on 24 August 2006, the Christians view the legislation as unconstitutional and fear abuse.

- **STATE GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH PASSES ANTI-CONVERSION LAW**

The State legislature of Chhattisgarh has passed a controversial anti-conversion law banning religious conversions by force or allurement, according to a news article published by [REUTERS](#) on 4 August 2006. Chhattisgarh is the sixth state in India that passed such law. The law provides a three-year jail term and a 20,000 rupees (US\$ 431) fine for those found guilty of forced religious conversions. The bill has to be formally signed by the state governor.

KYRGYZSTAN—PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS UNDER CONSIDERATION

The government is considering a proposal to introduce religious education into the secondary school curriculum. According to a news article published by [IWPR](#) on 4 August 2006, the proposal will spark controversy in several quarters. The plans are, nonetheless, at an early stage, but the government hopes the religious classes in schools will deter young people from joining “dubious religious organizations.” Kyrgyzstan is a secular state and religion is currently banned from the schools.

MALAYSIA—FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DIRECTS FOUR STATES ADOPT LAW ON RELIGION

Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, has directed four states -- Sarawak, Sabah, Federal Territory, and Penang -- to amend their respective constitutions to pave the way for implementation of the provisions of the Federal Constitution pertaining to religion. A news article published by [BERNAMA](#) on 24 August 2006, cites to the Federal Constitution, which forbids spreading of religions other than Islam to Muslims. Religion is a state matter which is within the purview of the respective state governments. The enforcement of the Federal Constitution on religion requires all the state governments to amend their constitutions and adopt laws consistent with the Federal Constitution.

NIGERIA—BILL TO UPHOLD RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE TO BE INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT

The Christian Lawyers Fellowship of Nigeria (CLASFON), in conjunction with Afri Foundation will sponsor a bill to National Assembly ensuring religious tolerance in



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the country, according to a news article published by allafrica.com on 21 August 2006. With the support of Open Society Initiative for West Africa, CLASFON and Afri Foundation plan to hold a series of conference across Nigeria to broaden support for such a law.

NORTH KOREA—FIRST RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OPENED

North Korea's first ever Russian Orthodox Church conducted its inaugural mass on 13 August 2006 in North Korea's capital Pyongyang, according to a news article published by BOSTON.COM. There was no sign, however, that the Communist regime has eased its tight controls on religion. In theory the North Koreans enjoy the freedom of religion; however, that right is severely restricted in practice. In addition to the new Russian Orthodox Church, Pyongyang has one Catholic and two Protestant churches.

TURKEY—MEPs REPORT TOP REACH CONCLUSIONS UNFAVORABLE TO TURKEY'S CANDIDACY FOR EU MEMBERSHIP

Almost a year after Turkey officially opened EU membership talks with Brussels, MEPs are preparing a report strongly critical of the country's progress on human rights issues. The 11-page draft report, discussed in a 30 August 2006 story on EUobserver.com, was drawn up by Dutch centre-right MEP Camiel Eurlings. It says that the European Parliament "deplores the fact that only limited progress has been reported over the last year as regards fundamental rights and freedoms" and "deplores the absence of progress in the area of freedom of religion since parliament's last report." It notes in the preamble that "freedom of expression is far from satisfactory" and that "corruption remains a serious problem."

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

BAHRAIN—NEW TRUST LAW ENACTED

A new law to govern trustees and trust administration has been enacted in Bahrain, according to the news article published by TRADE ARABIA on 15 August 2006. The new law provides comprehensive guidance and lays down rules related to the creation and administration of all kinds of trusts. In many common law jurisdictions, the trust is the most usual legal form of charity.

CANADA—NEW RE-REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR CANADIAN CHARITIES COMES INTO EFFECT

As of 1 September 2006, the Charities Directorate has implemented a new process with regard to organizations applying for re-registration as a Canadian charity, according to a news article published by VOLUNTARY GATEWAY on 1 September 2006. Under the new process, organizations re-applying for registration as Canadian charities may be subject to a penalty depending upon their taxation year and when they receive their Notice of Intention to Revoke.



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NEW ZEALAND—CHARITIES GUIDE PUBLISHED IN SEVERAL LANGUAGES

The August 2006 Update from the Charities Commission reveals that *A Guide to the Charities Act* is now available in Māori and Korean. To view or download a copy, visit the Commission's [publications](#) page. The Guide has also been translated from English into Samoan, Tongan and traditional Chinese.

NORTHERN IRELAND—UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION PRODUCES BRIEFING PAPER ON DRAFT CHARITIES LEGISLATION

Northern Ireland umbrella body NICVA has produced a [briefing paper](#) on the draft charities legislation issued by the Department for Social Development, according to the news article published by [NICVA](#) on 14 August 2006. The paper provides a brief overview of the [DSD consultation](#) document on “The Charities (Northern Ireland) Order 2006,” its provisions and the potential implications for charities. The comments within this briefing paper have been discussed and developed both in response to the provisions laid out in the draft Order and last year’s consultation paper on the Review of Charities Administration and Legislation in Northern Ireland in 2005.

PAKISTAN—DRAFT BILL FOR REGISTRATION AND EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF NGOS SAID TO BE READY FOR CONSIDERATION

The government has almost finished the drafting of a bill dealing with the registration and effective monitoring of NGOs, according to a news article published [THE PENINSULA](#). The bill is expected to be tabled in the National Assembly soon. Currently there are number of Acts and Ordinances under which an NGO can be registered with the federal or provincial governments. After securing registration, NGOs largely operate on their own under numerous acts available for the purposes. The draft bill is expected to take concrete steps to streamline the working of NGOs.

POLAND—PROPOSAL TO AMEND FOUNDATIONS ACT APPROVED

Reliable and knowledgeable sources in Poland report that the Polish government has recently approved a proposal to amend the Foundations Act. Under the new legislation a minister of a competent oversight ministry will have the power to suspend the governing bodies of any foundation and replace them with a government commissioner, should he find that any breach of legislation or the foundation's charter has taken place, though this will have to be approved by the courts. The proposals are being contested by foundations in Poland, under the leadership of the Stefan Batory Foundation. Critics argue the proposal will give wide powers to the government to interfere in the running of foundations.

SCOTLAND—OSCR PUBLISHES NEW GUIDANCE FOR CHARITY TRUSTEES

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) has published new guidance for charity trustees, outlining their duties under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. According to OSCR [press release](#) on 21 August 2006, the publication entitled “Guidance for Charity Trustees - acting with care and diligence” explains general duties, such as: acting in the interests of the charity; operating in a manner consistent with the charity’s purposes; acting with care and diligence;



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collective or corporate responsibility; reporting to OSCR; financial records and reporting; and providing information to the public.

TURKEY—BILL ON FOUNDATIONS TO BE DEBATED IN THE PARLIAMENT SOON

A bill on foundations, which was submitted to the Parliament's Speaker's Office in June 2005 but has yet to be passed, is expected to be brought up for debate by Parliament at an extraordinary session mid-September, according to a news article published by [THE NEW ANATOLIAN](#) on 14 August 2006. Certain amendments have recently been made to the bill. The amendments require founders and administrators of foundations to be Turkish citizens but foreigners will be able to be on the administrative boards of foundations set up in Turkey. Foundations which haven't had administrators or administrative bodies for 10 years will be administered and represented by the Foundations Directorate after a court ruling. Foundations will be able to receive donations from abroad through banks in cash or in kind.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

AFGHANISTAN—RELIGIOUS MINISTRY TO RE-ESTABLISH "VICE AND VIRTUE" UNIT

The Deputy Religious Affairs Minister, Sulaiman Hamid, has announced the reestablishment of the "vice and virtue" unit. According to [YAHOO NEWS](#) on 20 July 2006, the new department will be responsible to promote Islamic values in the country. The Deputy Minister ruled out the return of the Taliban version of the "vice squad" that used religious police to patrol the streets and enforce the extremists' strict moral code through brute force. The new unit will not be authorized to use force; instead it would encourage virtues such as prayer, charity, and respect of elders and parents. And it would speak against "sins," such as adultery, murder, theft, and using alcohol -- which is banned for Afghans although available to foreign nationals. The establishment of the unit has been approved by the cabinet and the Parliament is expected to endorse it soon.

SYRIA—ARAB HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER SIGNED

Syria has signed the [Arab Charter on Human Rights](#), adopted by the Arab League in Tunis in 2004. The signing took place in Cairo on 17 August 2006. According to a news article published by the [GULF TIMES](#), Syria's signing of the Arab charter would be the first step toward allowing different political parties and the ending of the emergency law.



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UZBEKISTAN—ANOTHER FOREIGN NGO SHUT DOWN

Tashkent court has passed an order to shut down Crosslink Development International -- another U.S.-based non-governmental organization. According to a news article published by [RUSSIAN NEWS & INFORMATION AGENCY](#) on 23 August 2006, the Ministry of Justice had initiated a motion in the Tashkent court to ban Crosslink Development International because its activities were allegedly inconsistent with its charter following numerous legal violations. The organization is alleged to have not reported on programs it implemented, carried out unlicensed educational activities and granted loans in cash without the involvement of banking institutions. The NGO can appeal the judgment within 20 days until the decision comes into effect.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTERN EUROPE—ARTICLE 19 PUBLISHES NEW SURVEY OF DEFAMATION LAWS

Article 19 has published a new report entitled “[Defamation Law and Practice in Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine](#).” The report evaluates defamation laws of the countries against international standards and treaties on freedom of expression. The memorandum also provides recommendations for changes to laws and practices in the three countries to reduce abuse of defamation laws and to better promote freedom of expression.

GERMANY – MAECENATA INSTITUT HOLDS COLLOQUIUM TO DISCUSS VARIOUS LEGAL FRAMEWORK REFORMS

On 4 September 2006, the [Maecenata Institut](#) of the Humboldt University in Berlin released a report of a Colloquium it had held on 19 April 2006 to discuss various issues with regard to the reform of the legal framework for CSOs in Germany. The topics discussed included the following: State and Civil Society; Transparency; Individual as Public Benefit Provider; Deductions; and Capacity Building Centers. The report is available in [Maecenata Aktuell number 57](#).

NEW PUBLICATIONS—

- **NGOS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

A forthcoming publication of [Kumarian press](#) entitled “[NGOs in International Politics](#)” provides an overview of the varieties of interaction between NGOs and states, international organizations and in international politics. The book is expected to be published in December 2006.

TAJIKISTAN—OSCE HOLDS MEETING ON CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

To discuss civil society issues and suggest ways to ensure broader co-operation between public organizations and state institutions, nearly seventy representatives of Tajikistan’s state authorities, political parties, NGOs, international organizations and academic institutions met in Dushanbe on 11 August 2006, according to an [OSCE press release](#). The participants underscored the importance of closer cooperation



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between the two sectors and emphasized the public organizations can support the state in countering the problems in society.

RESOURCES

[HUMAN RIGHTS TOOLS](#) – a website primarily aimed at human rights activists is a one-stop access to news, links and resources on human rights. It provides daily headlines gathered from top sources, country reports, job notices, and links to human rights law resources.

CHINA—CHINA DEVELOPMENT BRIEF SPECIAL REPORT ON NGO ADVOCACY IN CHINA PUBLISHED

This is available to all paid subscribers to [China Development Brief](#) and is an excellent summary of the ways in which NGOs engage in advocacy in China.

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