

# THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### *Introduction*

#### **I. The right to health, a recognized right**

##### **A. Definition and substance**

##### **B. Pertinent texts**

1. At the international level
2. At the regional level
3. At the national level

#### **II. The right to health, an indissociable and interdependent right**

##### **A. The right to health and its relation to other human rights**

1. Health and food
2. Health and housing
3. Health and education
4. Health and information
5. Health and work
6. Health and intellectual property

##### **B. Health and environment**

1. Pollution
2. Industrial activities and toxic waste
3. The nuclear industry
4. Arms and armed conflicts
5. Natural disasters
6. Measures taken (or governments' positions)

#### **III. The implementation of the right to health**

##### **A. Monitoring mechanisms**

1. At the regional level
2. At the international level

##### **B. Implementation of the right to health at the national level: some examples**

1. The United States
2. Cuba
3. Finland

##### **C. International obligations of various stake holders**

1. Governments
2. International organizations and institutions
3. The private (business) sector
4. Civil society

### **Conclusion**

#### **IV. Annexes**

1. General Observation No. 14 on the right to health
2. Extracts from the General Observation No. 17 on human rights and intellectual property
3. The Alma-Ata Declaration
4. Main web sites for reference regarding the instances to which one may appeal

A fundamental human right affirmed by the United Nations and recognized in regional treaties and numerous national constitutions

Part of a series of the Human Rights Programme of the Europe - Third World Centre (CETIM)



## **Acknowledgement**

This brochure received support from the state (canton) of Geneva. It is part of the CETIM's Human Rights Program, itself supported by (July 2006) the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (DDC), the city of Geneva and the city of Lancy, the Municipalities of Thônex and Plan-les-Ouates, Caritas/Switzerland.

Moreover, Mr. François Ndagijimana et Ms. Sanna Boman also contributed to the research.

## **Copyright**

The brochure is available in French, English and Spanish. Its reproduction and/or translation into other languages is authorized and encouraged, provided the original edition is mentioned and the CETIM is informed.

## **The Right to Health**

© Europe-Third World Centre (CETIM)

ISBN: 2-88053-048-2

Geneva, May 2006

Cover design: Régis Golay

## **CETIM**

Rue Amat 6, CH - 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel. +41 (0)22 731 59 63

Fax +41 (0)22 731 91 52

Email: [cetim@bluewin.ch](mailto:cetim@bluewin.ch)

Website: [www.cetim.ch](http://www.cetim.ch)

Printing: Imprimerie du Lion, Genève

## **Already published in the Series**

- The Right to food (2005)
- Transnational Corporations and Human Rights (2005)
- The Case for a Protocol to the ICESCR! (2005)

## **Coming Brochures in the Series**

- The Right to Development (2006)
- Displaced Persons (2006)
- The Right to Adequate Housing (2007)
- The External Debt of the Southern Countries and its Effect on the Enjoyment of Human Rights (2007)
- The Effect of the War on Terror on the Enjoyment of Human Rights (2007)

*The **Human Rights Program** of the CETIM is dedicated to the defence and promotion of all human rights, a commitment based on the principle that human rights are totally inseparable and indivisible. Within that commitment, however, the CETIM has a particular focus on economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, still much neglected in our times when not denied outright. Its objective includes combating the impunity accompanying the numerous violations of these rights and helping the communities, social groups and movements victimized by these violations to be heard and to obtain redress.*

*Through this **series** of informational brochures, the CETIM hopes to provide a better knowledge of the documents (conventions, treaties, declarations etc.) and existing official instruments to all those engaged in the struggle for the advancement of human rights.*

## **CETIM Publications on Related Topics**

- Les médicaments et le tiers monde (1981)
- Pesticides sans frontières (1982)
- L'aide alimentaire: un marché de dupes (1982)
- La civilisation du sucre (1985)
- Alcool et pouvoir des transnationales (1986)
- Marchands de sang: un commerce dangereux (1986)
- La biotechnologie & l'agriculture du tiers monde: espoir ou illusion (1988)
- Nos déchets toxiques: l'Afrique a faim, « v'là nos poubelles! » (1989)
- La sève de la colère: forêts en péril, du constat aux résistances (1990)
- La nature sous licence ou le processus d'un pillage (1994)

*To be published at the end of 2006 : Luttres pour la santé pour tous (proposed title)*