

COURAGE IN THE FACE OF CRISIS: HIV/AIDS, HARM REDUCTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN RUSSIA

A panel presentation sponsored by the Open Society Institute,
Human Rights Watch, the New York Young Advocates, and Asia Society

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2005
OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

400 West 59th Street, 3rd Floor (between 9th and 10th Ave.)
New York, NY
Refreshments at 6:30 p.m.
Program at 7:00 p.m.

Featuring:

ALEKSANDR TSEKHANOVICH

Founder of Russia's first needle exchange program and director, Humanitarian Action, Saint Petersburg

KASIA MALINOWSKA-SEMPRUCH

International Harm Reduction Development Program, Open Society Institute

RACHEL DENBER

Europe and Central Asia Division, Human Rights Watch

Though Russia faces one of the world's fastest-growing HIV epidemics, the government has been slow to respond and hostile to effective HIV prevention. Violations of the rights of injection drug users, little political or financial support for needle exchange, human rights abuses against HIV-positive women and their children, and stigma and misinformation about HIV characterize the national response. For countries elsewhere in Eastern Europe and Asia with large or emerging injection-driven HIV epidemics – including Ukraine, China, Indonesia, Viet Nam and elsewhere – the Russian experience offers important lessons. The continuing expansion of Russia's epidemic, meanwhile, puts further strain on its demographic and security situations, and directly threatens countries along drug trafficking routes from Central Asia to Europe.

This event pays tribute to the work of Russian organizations working at the front-line of HIV prevention and situates their work in a political context. The event is open to the public, and all those with an interest in global HIV/AIDS policy and/or issues in the former Soviet Union are encouraged to attend.

To RSVP or for further information, please contact Magda Sklarski at 212-548-0111, mklarski@sorosny.org.