CUHK Centre for Rights and Justice

Closed Roundtable Discussion

“My Children Have Been Poisoned -- China's Lead Poisoning Public Health Crisis”

by

Joseph Amon

Director of Human Rights Watch's Health and Human Rights Division

and

Jane Cohen

Researcher, Human Rights Watch

Tuesday 14 June 2011, 2:30-4 pm

CUHK Graduate Law Centre, Bank of America Tower 2/F, Admiralty, Hong Kong

Details of Seminar (from Human Rights Watch): In China today hundreds of thousands of children suffer from permanent mental and physical disabilities as a result of lead poisoning. While lead poisoning in China has been reported on in domestic and international media, what is missing from these reports is that nothing is being done for the medical needs of children suffering the biological and neurological effects lead poisoning, and who face permanent disability.

Our research found that authorities are instead covering up the scope of lead poisoning, denying health care to millions of children at risk, and harassing and detaining parents seeking essential medical information and treatment for their children.

Human Rights Watch’s new report “My Children Have Been Poisoned” is based on interviews in Henan, Yunnan, Shaanxi and Hunan provinces, and documents how local government authorities have turned away children from care, provided false or misleading information on the risks of lead exposure, and blocked domestic media coverage of the epidemic. Local governments are allowing factories to operate without environmental safeguards and in violation of Chinese environmental laws. The report provides a grassroots perspective of how China’s rapid economic development, coupled with weak enforcement of environmental regulations, has created a public health crisis.

RSVP: If you plan to attend please respond to karrieli@law.cuhk.edu.hk by Monday 13 June, 4 pm.