1.4 The West Kingston/Tivoli Gardens Incursion in Kingston, Jamaica
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On May 24, 2010, 800 soldiers and 370 police officers stormed into Tivoli Gardens, an impoverished district in the capital of Jamaica. Their aim was to restore state authority in this part of Kingston and to arrest Christopher “Dudus” Coke, who was wanted for extradition to the United States on drug and arms trafficking charges. The incursion was the culmination of nine months of national political turmoil. The first aim was achieved, but the second was not, and only at great cost. Around 70 civilians and three members of the security forces were killed. The authors constituted a small group of international forensic pathologists who, at the request of the Public Defender and over a four-week period from mid-June, observed the autopsies of the civilians. This paper describes some of the outcomes of this work, set within the evaluation of the incursion by the Commission of Enquiry. The Enquiry concluded there was evidence of at least 15 extrajudicial killings and was highly critical of many other aspects of the operation and its aftermath.