

Global Report on the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

26 June
2012



Global Report

**Rehabilitation works and is
a torture survivor's right.**

2012 Global Report on the
UN International Day in Support
of Victims of Torture

The International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) is an independent, international health-based human rights organisation, which promotes and supports the rehabilitation of torture victims, promotes access to justice and works for the prevention of torture worldwide. The vision of the IRCT is a world without torture.

The views expressed in this report can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the below institutions. The country activities portrayed in this report are based on the submission of reports received from campaign participants.

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26 June - A global campaign

Torture is a global problem of the worst kind. Its effects are found in virtually every country in the world and visible beyond the physical and psychological wounds left on those who survive it, impacting the victims' families and communities.

Once a year, on 26 June, hundreds of organisations and groups all over the world gather to send a message of support and hope to survivors of torture. One day a year thousands of people join this campaign to call out perpetrators for their crimes, and remind governments of their responsibilities.

That special day the world sees the growing strength and reach of the global movement against torture. Next year, join the global movement against torture, help us reach further, and contribute to a world without torture.

Join us next year!

And help us make the 2013 campaign even bigger.

Participating organisations



■ Countries where activities were known to have taken place

EUROPE:

ARCT, Albania
FAVL, Armenia
Vive Žene CTR, Bosnia
Herzegovina
RCT Zagreb, Croatia
CTSF, Finland
ACAT, France*
RCT/Empathy, Georgia
GCRT, Georgia
MFH, Germany
BZFO, Germany
Cordelia, Hungary
SPIRASI, Ireland
PCATI, Israel*

KRCT, Kosovo
RCTV Memoria, Moldova
CAT, Russia
IAN CRTV, Serbia
CPDT, Spain*
Red Cross Stockholm, Sweden
Red Cross Malmö, Sweden
OMCT, Switzerland*
TOHAV, Turkey
SOHRAM-CASRA, Turkey
LGC, UK*
HR Forum ZIM, UK*
RCT, UK

ASIA:

CRTS, Bangladesh
BCHRD, Bangladesh*
BHRC, Bangladesh*
TPO, Cambodia
AHRC, Hong Kong*
CCTV, India
CORE/H2H, India
SICHREM, India*
TTSP, India
ALDP, Indonesia
SIKAP, Indonesia*
RATA, Indonesia
GOLOS SVOBODY, Kyrgyzstan
CVICT, Nepal
HDO, Pakistan*
SACH, Pakistan
AMSA, Philippines*
Balay, Philippines
MAG, Philippines
HRO Kandy, Sri Lanka*
FRC, Sri Lanka
SA, Sri Lanka

MIDDLE EAST AND
NORTH AFRICA:

El Nadeem, Egypt
ODVV, Iran
BFRCT, Iraq
KRC, Lebanon
AMRVT, Morocco
TRC, Palestinian Territories

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:

SAP/GL, Burundi
TCC, Cameroon
AJPNV/CRUT, Chad
OASIS, DR Congo
CODHO, DR Congo*
GIPROCOME, DR Congo*
REMAK, DR Congo*
SOS JED/PREVIT, DR Congo*
SOPROP, DR Congo
SAVE, DR Congo
AVVDH, DR Congo*
IMLU, Kenya
MATESO, Kenya
CVT, Kenya*
CAT-Eldoret, Kenya*
IRC, Kenya*
LAPS, Liberia
PEACE, Namibia
YEHRRCR, Nigeria*
PRAWA, Nigeria
VIVRE/CAPREC, Senegal
CSV, South Africa
TCSVT, South Africa
CACIT, Togo*
ACTV, Uganda

*Non-members of the IRCT

Foreword by the Secretary-General and the President



Each year, on 26 June, we pause to commemorate and honour the victims of torture, both historic and present. The day has been marked since 1988, which was the first anniversary of the United Nations Convention Against Torture, signed on 26th June 1987.

Yet today, despite its absolute prohibition, torture continues to be a global phenomenon: both physical and psychological torture is prevalent in over half the world's countries. This is a disgrace in the twenty-first century.

Its victims are men, women – often targeted by rape and other sexual torture, and also, children. Torture victims are disproportionately from marginalised groups, in particular the poor, but also minority groups, such as ethnic, religious and sexual minorities.

The day gives us a time to pause and remember those who have suffered, and stand with those who continue to suffer, for, the effects of torture continue long after the actual act has happened.

Due to such long-lasting effects, rehabilitation is crucial – for the individual torture survivor, their family, their community and society at

large. Rebuilding the life of someone whose dignity has been destroyed takes time and as a result long-term medical, psychological, material and social support is needed.

Rehabilitation, in which the survivor becomes an agent of his or her own change, empowers the torture survivor to resume as full a life as possible. Within this report you will read, in the sections devoted to activities around the world, words about and from torture survivors who are a testament to the benefits of rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation not only works, but it is also a right, as per Article 14 of the United Nations Convention Against Torture. Article 14 of the Convention expressly provides that States have a duty to provide compensation, as an enforceable right, including the means for as full rehabilitation as possible.

The right to rehabilitation is something the membership of the IRCT continue to remind States about to this day.

Thus *Rehabilitation works, and is a torture survivors right* was the theme of this year's 26 June campaign.

The day gives us a time to pause and remember those who have suffered, and stand with those who continue to suffer, for, the effects of torture continue long after the actual act has happened.

It's a message that resonated around the world, among the IRCT's membership of rehabilitation centres and others who took part in the campaign (see p 2).

One hundred organisations took part in marking this 26 June, this was up from 73 in 2011, continuing the growing trend. They organised a staggering range of cultural, educational, political and other activities (see p 8).

On top of this thousands of individuals all over the world took part in online commemorations through our social media campaign *World Without Torture* (see p 54).

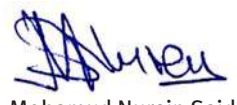
This 26 June we grasped the opportunity to remind the world that rehabilitation works. We reminded the world that rehabilitation is a right

But we don't stop on 26 June. Each year over 100,000 survivors of torture receive treatment

from IRCT members all over the world. But there are many more who go without the rehabilitation that is their right. We will continue to work to increase our reach in order to bring healing to the greater numbers who suffer, without knowing their rights. It is work that we will continue, towards a world without torture. And it is work for which we count on your continuing support.



Joost Martens
Secretary-General



Mohamud Nurein Said
President



The main 26 June poster was available in seven languages: Arabic, Armenian, English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish.

Campaign tools

Every year, a wide range of campaign tools are available at www.irct.org/26june. The list includes posters, logos, a campaign kit, a fact sheet collection, a statement for a global reading, sample letters and press releases, videos and a game. We strive to offer these tools in as many languages as possible. **This year's highlights are:**

Campaign kit and fact sheets

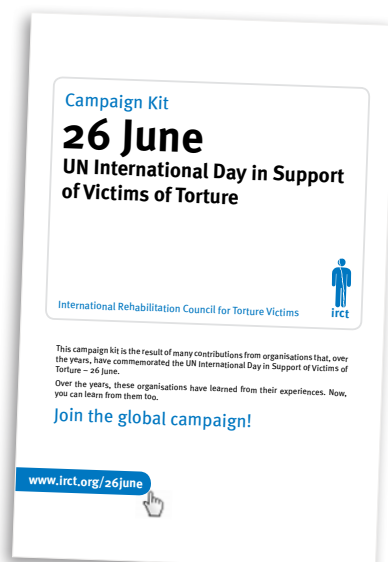
The IRCT campaign kit is the result of many contributions from organisations that, over the years, have commemorated the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June. This year the kit was downloaded nearly 2,000 times.

The fact sheets can help increase the understanding and visibility of the problem of torture and were used by organisations around the world as handouts and/or in response to inquiries.

Print materials

This year a great number of printable materials were available. Besides last year's posters with the "WWT" and "T" logos, we had a new poster on the theme of rehabilitation with the message: "Rehabilitation works and is a torture survivor's right." This poster was available in seven languages: Arabic, Armenian, English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish, which was made possible through the help of centres around the world.

The thousands of posters and logos downloaded were used for local printing, printing in T-shirts, badges or stickers or simply used in documents or online initiatives.



Find more examples of activities in the 26 June Campaign Kit. Also available in Spanish and French at www.irct.org/26june

Types of activities

Informational/Educational Activities

Conferences and seminars are still among the most popular 26 June campaign activities. Either for the purposes of raising awareness about torture, to present and discuss local means of prevention or to present the activities undertaken for the rehabilitation of victims of torture, workshops and lectures are an effective way to educate and share knowledge. Other informational/educational activities organised for 26 June include distribution of informational materials, testimonies by torture survivors, radio quizzes, film screenings and open houses.



“TPO joined six other human rights organisations to mark 26 June in Phnom Penh under the theme ‘Rehabilitation’ (...) three torture victims were invited to come and speak about their experiences and the lasting effect of torture on their lives.”
Transcultural Psychosocial Organization, Cambodia

Cultural Activities

Many organisations around the world chose to celebrate 26 June with cultural performances. In general, cultural performances attract great interest from the general public giving more visibility to the message being conveyed.



“The Vive Žene Centre marked 26 June in Tuzla with a community event (...) The event featured music and dance performances at the plaza in Tuzla, the mayor of which opened the event. An art and photography exhibition was also publicly featured.”
Vive Žene CTR, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Political Activities

Some of the political activities organised include “human chains” in front of public buildings and petition or letter-writing campaigns.

Activities for Children

Many schools, youth clubs or children’s camps held essay or art exhibitions of works done by their students to encourage them to understand the problem of torture and its impact.


Other Activities

Many other activities were organised in commemoration of 26 June, such as sporting events, matches, races, sponsored walks, mobile clinics, moments of silence, religious or prayer ceremonies, tree planting, releasing pigeons/doves, visits to prisons, auctions of donated items, among others.



“Around 650 individuals from civil society, government agencies and communities in metro Manila gathered and ran the Basta! Run Against Torture (BRAT). BRAT, an annual event, is a public demonstration where individuals from civil society and communities express their want for a torture-free Philippines.”
Balay Rehabilitation Center, Philippines

Commemorations around the world

 The reports marked with this symbol
are from IRCT member organisations.



Asia



Europe



Latin America and the Caribbean



Middle East and North Africa



North America and Pacific



Sub-Saharan Africa

Asia

CRTS – Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Survivors

BANGLADESH

CRTS, based in Dhaka, organised an art competition for children with a prize-giving ceremony, a rally around the city and a discussion meeting on torture and the significance of the day against torture.

BCHRD – Bangladesh Centre for Human Rights and Development

BANGLADESH

BCHRD coordinated an exchange meeting called “Together Against Torture on Indigenous People”. Several civil society leaders were joined by local community leaders and officials to discuss the problem of torture in Bangladesh with the ultimate goal of sensitising these key individuals to the scope of the problem and address the issue of perpetrator impunity.

TPO - Transcultural Psychosocial Organization

CAMBODIA

TPO Cambodia joined six other human rights organisations in Phnom Penh under the theme ‘Rehabilitation’. The organisations addressed the current Cambodian government on the widespread usage of torture; three torture victims were invited to come and speak about their experiences and the lasting effect of torture on their lives. Torture in Cambodia often occurs in detention and in police custody, especially as the first 24 hours after arrest, detainees do not see a lawyer. The organisations called on the Cambodian government to live up to their obligations as described in the UN Convention against Torture.



In Cambodia, torture victims took the stage to speak about their experiences.

BHRC – Bangladesh Human Rights Commission

BANGLADESH

BHRC held a human chain and discussion meeting in front of the National Press Club in Dhaka. The discussion, which featured dozens of prominent community leaders and the leadership of BHRC, focused on the local issues in Bangladesh that impede the fight against torture; this, in particular, was corruption. The discussion also noted the increase in torture against women and children in the country and the need to fight impunity.

AHRC - Asian Human Rights Commission

HONG KONG

The Asian Human Rights Commission and the Centre for Comparative and Public Law at the University of Hong Kong jointly organised a series of public events to raise awareness about torture and support victims of state-sanctioned violence. The first event was a public lecture by Indian psychologist Dr Rajat Mitra. He shared his knowledge of behavioural science evidence, drawing from over 20 years of work that he has done in support of victims of torture. On June 25, there was a media briefing and discussion with local and international journalists. The discussion focused on the importance of the prevention of torture to promote freedom of expression and public opinion in Asia.

CCTV - Centre for Care of Torture Victims

INDIA

CCTV organised events at the central office in the city of Kolkata as well as in its three sub-centres. In Kolkata, the organisation held an awareness programme and a seminar at schools and colleges. Posters were distributed to several organisations and public institutions. In Taki, there was a live discussion on social services, particularly on the issue of torture, the obligations of the state, rehabilitation for torture victims and the significance of 26 June. The event was aired on a local channel. In Midnapore Sadar, there was a seminar on torture, focusing on the significance of the day against torture and on rehabilitation. The organisation members met the District Magistrate and other officials as well as the local media. In Baharampur, CCTV distributed posters and leaflets with one of the daily newspapers.

CORE - Centre for Organisation, Research and Education Human to Humane Transcultural Centre for Trauma & Torture (H2H)

INDIA

CORE and H2H in collaboration with Human Rights Alert and the Department of Clinical Psychology of the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences concluded a four-day training workshop for practitioners “Road to Psychological Support and Rehabilitation in Conflict Situations”. “Rehabilitation works and is a torture survivor’s right” was the theme of this year’s 26 June activities. CORE and H2H in collaboration with other human right organisations have been carrying out a campaign against torture while advocating and actively supporting the rehabilitation process of torture victims for many years. Together, the organisations called on India to not only investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of torture, but provide holistic rehabilitation services to the victims.

SICHREM - South India Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring

INDIA

SICHREM, together with the National Alliance on Testimonial Therapy (NATT) and other organisations, prepared a four-day programme for the 26 June commemorations. The programme included an awareness walk by students and a signature campaign to demand the ratification of CAT, the enactment of domestic legislation and a rehabilitation policy for victims and survivors of torture. The event continued inside the students campus with meetings, flash mobs, documentary screenings, as well as collage and poster making. The commemorations took to the streets with a “walk against torture” through the main thoroughfares of Bangalore to end at the town hall. Finally, there was a candlelight vigil in solidarity with survivors of torture.

TTSP - Tibetan Torture Survivors’ Program

INDIA

The Tibetan Torture Survivors’ Program commemorated the day in collaboration with an association of former political prisoners, the GuchuSum Movement. Following the reading of public statements, TTSP opened a photo exhibition depicting torture victims and the weapons used by Chinese police during interrogation of Tibetan torture victims. The commemoration continued with a theatre performance and ended with a candlelight vigil. TTSP used the opportunity to distribute information on torture in several languages.

ALDP - Alliance of Democracy for Papua

INDONESIA

Aliansi Demokrasi untuk Papua (Alliance of Democracy for Papua) advocated for the rights of political prisoners with a focus on two prisoners in special need of medical treatment. ALDP’s efforts reached the local government and journalists were invited to discuss torture and its effects.

SIKAP - Alliance of Civil Society for Anti Torture

INDONESIA

By taking the momentum of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, this year, SIKAP, in collaboration with the Pusham Unimed, organised a series of campaigns and activities supporting victims of torture in Indonesia, particularly in North Sumatra. The campaign theme was “Stop Torture and Rehabilitate Victims of Torture.” The purposes of this activity are: (1) encourage the government and Parliament to take immediate measures to ratify OPCAT; (2) encourage the pursuit of cases of torture and reject all forms of impunity; (3) encourage society to report cases of torture; and (4) conduct a campaign in local and national levels to provide maximum support to the victims of torture. A public discussion carrying the theme, “Reject impunity; ratify the OPCAT and encourage the pursuit and completion of torture cases in North Sumatra,” was held. The organisation also conducted radio interviews and coordinated a public march.

RATA - Rehabilitation Action for Torture Victims in Aceh

INDONESIA

RATA in Aceh, together with other NGOs, organised a public discussion at the campus of the University of Al-Muslim. In the town of Bireuen, RATA campaigned in the form of public speeches and distributing leaflets. In the evening, drama performances and poetry readings marked 26 June.

GOLOS SVOBODY Public Foundation

KYRGYZSTAN

GOLOS SVOBODY organised a concert to excite youth about the prospect of eradicating the practice of torture in Kyrgyzstan. Golos Svobody has previously been involved in conducting informational campaigns among young people. The concert took place at the playground of the cinema “Russiya”.

CVICT – Centre for Victims of Torture, Nepal

NEPAL

CVICT joined several other human rights organisations to recognise the day in Nepal. National Human Rights Commission Chairman Kedar Nath Upadhyaya led the interactive programme with home minister Mr Bijay Kumar Gaccheddar as the chief guest. The event was organised by the NHRC and co-organised by Nepal police and human rights organisations. CVICT program director, Ms Jamuna Poudyal, expressed the importance and the need of rehabilitation of torture survivors in Nepal. She also raised the issue of inhumane and degrading treatment in prisons and detention. The event was a huge success in raising awareness on the issue of torture in Nepal with CVICT’s special effort to raise the important and urgent issue of rehabilitating torture survivors. CVICT will continue to put pressure on the government to pass the torture act, in line with international standards. At this event, CVICT distributed booklets on tortured children in Nepal and on how rehabilitation works.

HDO – Human Development Organisation

PAKISTAN

HDO, like previous years, celebrated with great zeal and arranged a seminar. The participants, including parliamentarians, lawyers, journalists, members of academia, human rights activists and former torture victims, on this occasion adopted a joint declaration asking the government of Pakistan to criminalise torture by honouring its international commitment that it made while ratifying UNCAT on 23 June 2010. The participants also demanded ratification of OPCAT and setting up human rights committees at district level, adoption of scientific methods of investigation, incorporation of anti-torture material in the training of health, legal and police authorities. A theatrical performance was also presented by the artists of HDO, depicting “impacts of torture on individuals, society and the importance of rehabilitation”. A walk was also arranged at the end of function. The seminar was featured in Pakistani media, The Express Tribune.

SACH – Struggle for Change

PAKISTAN

SACH, in coordination with Oxfam GB, hosted a seminar which was extremely well-attended by more than 200 parliamentarians, lawyers, representatives from international organisations, prison officials, health professionals and members of the media, among others. During the seminar, distinguished guests and speakers spoke on the various aspects of the issue of torture, including rehabilitation, prevention and international human rights law.



Speakers pointed to the rehabilitation services of SACH. Another spoke about the lack of domestic law in Pakistan criminalising torture, as obligated by their ratification two years ago of the UN Convention against Torture. Police training and a focus on investigation processes can help prevent torture, another speaker said. During breaks in the seminar, participants had the opportunity to visit an exhibition of torture victims' collages.

The seminar participants were encouraged to write messages of support.

AMSA-Philippines – Asian Medical Students Association

PHILIPPINES

The Asian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) Philippines, a nonprofit organisation, participated in their first campaign by launching a social media awareness activity mainly through Facebook. Seven member organisations (tantamount to seven medical schools) and six candidate member organisations participated. Members and friends through their networks adopted the logo as their profile picture. In addition, AMSA Philippines made an official solidarity statement that was published in the organisation's website and was relayed to its mother organization — the IFMSA. This is the very first time that AMSA Philippines, not to mentioned Philippine medical students, took part in this activity, with the hope that this initial endeavour will help increase awareness, especially among medical students.

Balay Rehabilitation Center

PHILIPPINES

Around 650 individuals from the civil society, government agencies and communities in metro Manila gathered and ran the Basta! Run Against Torture (BRAT). BRAT, an annual event, is a public demonstration where individuals from civil society and communities express their want for a torture-free Philippines. Moreover, BRAT is a showcase of partnership and solidarity between civil society organisations and the government sector in the realisation of that vision. BRAT was led by the United Against Torture Coalition (UATC), which is comprised of several civil society organisations including



Balay Rehabilitation Center, Taskforce Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), Medical Action Group (MAG), Amnesty International Philippines (AiPh), Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearances (FIND) and Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), among others. The civil society contingent was joined by participants from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Philippine Human Rights Commission (PHRC). Participants from Barangay Bagong Silang (Barangay 176) were also present at the event.

This year around 650 people joined Basta! Run Against Torture.

MAG – Medical Action Group

PHILIPPINES

MAG joined the United Against Torture Coalition (UATC) Philippines in its sixth annual Basta! Run against Torture to stage its strong stand against torture on 26 June. The UATC Philippines was able to marshal a huge number of the members of the security forces, the military and the national police. Around 300 officers and enlisted personnel took part in this significant day and ran alongside hundreds of human rights advocates on the streets and highways of Quezon City, Philippines. With the theme, “ZERO TOLERANCE, ZERO TORTURE!” this year’s Basta! Run aimed to bridge the gap between the policies and the commitments of the security sector and also urged the concerned government agencies to ensure that no one is subjected to torture, that torture can never be justified. The group assembled at the Department of Interior and Local Government, which leads all agencies in Convention against Torture (CAT) campaign, and marched to the headquarters of jail management, the national police and the armed forces, where a short programme was conducted. Around 100 employees from the Commission of Human Rights of the Philippines also joined.

Human Rights Office – Kandy

SRI LANKA

A silent protest was organised by the Kandy Human Rights Office in collaboration with families and the victims of torture and other grave human rights violations. More than 250 people gathered in front of the park at the heart of Kandy city with posters; leaflets were distributed to the people who passed by. Having made a silent protest for an hour, the protestors marched to the parish hall of St Anthony's Cathedral where reverends explained the historical background and the relevance of the gathering and of the main focus of 2012 international torture day. The Human Rights Office along with the victims of torture called on the government not to extend the time limit of detention of suspects from 24 to 48 hours. The extension of detention time limit would further allow the police officers to torture the suspects although the media spokesmen of the police recently denied the practice of torture in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, Kandy requested that the government release the suspects who are detained without trial for many years in remand prisons and in various detention centres. In May 2012 the Minister of Justice promised to release the names of all the detainees and expedite their trials by instituting special courts for this purpose. However, so far the detainees haven't been brought to trial.



The silent protest in Kandy counted with the participation of more than 250 people.

FRC – The Family Rehabilitation Centre

SRI LANKA

FRC centres successfully conducted eight additional office-based and field-based medical clinics and provided additional medical and physiotherapy consultations for FRC clients. One hundred-sixty torture survivors received this additional benefit via 32 team members of our medical team. FRC also participated at the event organised by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka. More than 150 active representatives of leading organisations including higher ranking police and prison officers participated in this event. The event included speeches on the international standards and best practices to ensure torture survivors' rights, social responsibility to prevent torture in society, and a panel discussion on mechanisms to ensure the appropriate rehabilitation process to victims of torture in general. Executive director of the FRC was invited and took a leading role in the panel. This event was covered by many local print media and as well as mass media units and the event was broadcast via TV.

SA – Survivors Associated

SRI LANKA

The Sri Lankan centre celebrated in each of its three regional offices with a day of activities with centre staff, local human rights officials, human rights activists and victims of torture. Each centre sought to educate and make aware among torture victims, their families, communities, government officers and humanitarian organisations on the importance of treatment and rehabilitation of people who have been tortured and suffering from physical, psychological and social consequences; to make them aware of the importance of identifying those suffering in silence and referring them for



appropriate treatment and assistance; to make them aware of the importance of getting together against such torture; and to make aware and educate participants and community as well as political leaders that rehabilitation is the right of torture victims.

Survivors Associated organised a full day of lectures, informational sessions on the laws of Sri Lanka and drama and theatre performances with the participation from torture survivors.

THE CASE OF AMITA (KATHMANDU, NEPAL)

“At the time, I was 50 years old. Around 100 soldiers came to my house at around 7 am from the district headquarters. They said to me, ‘You have given food and shelter to the combatant, haven’t you?’

“One of the soldiers slapped me across the face three times. My face swelled, and I screamed with pain.

“Ten days later, the soldiers came to my house again at 7 am and again abused me. ‘You have given food and shelter to the Maoists, haven’t you?’ At that time, my younger son was in the next home. They pulled him from the house, and a soldier put a gun to his forehead and shot him. My son died on the spot.

“At the same time, they arrested my elder son and took him to jail in the headquarters. He was physically and mentally tortured many times in jail. They kept him there for three months. We appealed to the politicians, and they in turn told the armies. After that, they

released him. He was swelling. I shouted. We took my elder son to the hospital for treatment.

“Nowadays, my elder son cannot work. I have stomach problems and swelling. I have lost my younger son. I am an illiterate housewife, and thus, my economic

Psychosocial counsellors met with Amita and provided much-needed emotional support. After a few sessions, Amita expressed a great improvement in her outlook and self-confidence. This case is still ongoing.

condition is very poor. I have in total four sons and one daughter, but I need both legal and economic support.”

Amita was referred to TPO Nepal for much-needed psychosocial support. During her counselling sessions, it was discovered that she had been suffering greatly from feelings of irritation and anxiety about day-to-day life – irritation in her daily work, problems with self-care, discussions with other members of the family, crisis in thinking about the future and confusion over everyday decisions.

Psychosocial counsellors met with Amita and provided much-needed emotional support. After a few sessions, Amita expressed a great improvement in her outlook and self-confidence. This case is still ongoing.

*Testimony submitted by Transcultural
Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Nepal*



Europe

ARCT – Albanian Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma and Torture

ALBANIA

ARCT hosted a conference at the European University of Tirana. They payed tribute to those who had suffered the horrors of torture and reiterated their shared commitment to ending torture once and for all and supporting survivors whoever and wherever they might be. On this day, torture survivors, NGOs and concerned citizens joined forces in an anti-torture campaign, raising their voice in solidarity in a resounding NO! to torture. Those attending received an essential update on these areas from key speakers, as well as the opportunity for discussions among human rights experts, NGOs, researchers and representatives from national and international organisations.

FAVL – Foundation against Violations of Law

ARMENIA

FAVL, in cooperation with the Civil Society Institute and the Chamber of Advocates organised a joint conference entitled “World Without Torture - 2012” dedicated to the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The aim of the conference was once more to raise the issue of torture in Armenia and in the world, to speak about impunity of the perpetrators and injustice, as well as to stress the importance of the role of the civil society in rehabilitation process of torture victims. The event was attended by 73 participants, including representatives from Human Rights Defender/Ombudsman office of Armenia; Deputies of the National Assembly/Parliament of Armenia; representatives from the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, police, and places of detention; the heads of the various medical institutions; heads and representatives of human rights NGOs; and the media, staff of FAVL, volunteers and students. The event was covered by four TV stations, three radio stations and nine online and print newspapers. The conference started with one minute of silence to honour torture victims and survivors. Leadership of FAVL opened the conference with several speeches and the Global Reading; the film “After Life - 4 Stories of Torture” was also played. During the conference, participants discussed torture in Armenia, specifically that despite more prompt responses to torture in recent years, the problem continues.



The event in Armenia attracted wide media interest.

CTR - Vive Žene Centre for Therapy and Rehabilitation

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Vive Žene Centre marked the day in Tuzla with a community event under the theme “Rehabilitation is a right; rehabilitation works” to note both the success and obligation to rehabilitate the victims of torture. The community event featured music and dance performances at the plaza in Tu-



zla, the mayor of which opened the event. An art and photography exhibition was also publically featured. Around 200 participants joined the event to remind the community of this war-torn region of the importance of the rehabilitation of torture victims.

Young people enjoyed face-painting and drawing in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

RCT Zagreb – Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma

CROATIA

This year, RCT Zagreb organised three public lectures: for students of psychology and students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences; students of social work and the Faculty of Law; and police cadets at the Police College in Zagreb. Focusing on torture rehabilitation, RCT Zagreb president introduced the different disciplines in rehabilitation of torture victims. Furthermore, the lecture looked at the consequences of untreated torture, especially in context of torture in Croatia’s armed conflict in the 1990s. An additional focus was the prevention of secondary traumatisation through caregivers. Approximately 70 students attended. Furthermore, to mark 26 June day, RCT Zagreb joined Documenta for a public discussion on support to victims of torture, attended by representatives from more than 20 civil society organisations.



RCT Zagreb staff used the opportunity to disseminate information materials on torture

CTSF - Centre for Survivors of Torture in Finland

FINLAND

The CTSF hosted an 'open house' and media day. Members of the media were invited to come and visit the centre in Helsinki, enjoy a tour of the facility and hear from staff about the work they conduct with adults and children.

ACAT - Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture

FRANCE

ACAT promoted several night vigils around the world. On the night of 23 to 24 June, 400 local groups invited all Christians to gather to pray for victims of torture. Through an interactive website, participants could find a nearby vigil, find words to pray and support victims of torture.

GCRT - Georgian Centre for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims

GEORGIA

As it has become a tradition, GCRT and Human Rights House member organisations gathered in Vere Park in Tbilisi to show support to the victims of torture. They were joined by around 150 people and several media representatives. The commemorations continued at the office of the Open Society Georgia Foundation, where GCRT showed a short film on torture and held a discussion with the media and the civil society. To close the commemorations, GCRT held an award ceremony aimed at revealing the top journalistic work in the area of human rights and torture. A cash prize was awarded to the authors of the best television/video story, the best radio segment, the best journalistic investigation, the best newspaper article and the best blog. The day wasn't

over before launching sky lanterns by the penitentiary establishment no. 8, a place known for being one of the less transparent and most violent institutions in Georgia.



GCRT and other organisations gathered in Vere Park in Tbilisi to show support to the victims of torture.

RCT/EMPATHY – Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture

GEORGIA

RCT/EMPATHY organised, together with Public Defender of Georgia, the VIII Conference “World Without Torture” on 27 June 2012.

MFH Bochum - Medical Care Service for Refugees

GERMANY

MFH Bochum first organised an information desk at the primary public square in the city. In the evening there was a lecture about psychotherapy with torture survivors and traumatised refugees as a rehabilitation measure at the MFH-Bochum and, furthermore, the right of torture survivors to rehabilitation. In the evening the organisation carried out an event to discuss the topic and to explain the basics of psychotherapy with torture survivors. The aim was first to explain why there exists an International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Several local media covered the event.



During the day, staff distributed information materials about torture and the work of the centre.

BZFO – Berlin Treatment Center for Torture Victim

GERMANY

BZFO focused their activities on rehabilitation and, specifically, switching from language of “integration” to “inclusion” with German society. The treatment centre received a visit from two top German officials from the Berlin Senate for Work, Integration and Women. German media was contacted through a press release, and the organisation gave an interview with a local radio station. A previously recorded interview with the head of their Iraq centres also was broadcast on various radio stations.

Cordelia Foundation

HUNGARY

The Cordelia Foundation participated in the joint celebration of the International Refugee Day (20 June) and the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June) at the Bicske Reception Centre for Refugees. As part of the program, the non-verbal therapist of the Cordelia Foundation — with the help of volunteers and other colleagues — organised arts-and-crafts activities for the torture victim clients and their families. During the event, several representatives gave speeches in support of refugees. Staff of the Cordelia Foundation spoke about rehabilitation of torture victims and read the annual Global Reading of the IRCT in Hungarian and English. The Cordelia Foundation ended their speech with a performance in the name of the survivors: a young refugee rolled out a long list created by the clients, who painted their names on the paper as a sign of testimony, trust and survival. Following the event several journalists and TV reporters interviewed representatives of the Cordelia Foundation and showed further interest in the Foundation’s activities. Approximately 120 people attended the event.



A young refugee rolls out a long list created by clients, who painted their names on the paper as a sign of testimony, trust and survival.

SPIRASI - The Spiritan Asylum Services Initiative

IRELAND

SPIRASI hosted an event with speeches, music and dance in Dublin, held in Kilmainham Jail, a building of great importance in Irish history, and now a museum. This year's theme 'Rehabilitation Works' was of particular significance to SPIRASI as the only specialised centre for the rehabilitation of survivors of torture and severe trauma in Ireland. The event sought to acknowledge the suffering experienced by victims of torture but also to celebrate their recovery and examine what can be done in Ireland to best aid this rehabilitation. This event was opened by long-standing advocate for human rights and current President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.



He addressed an audience of about 150 people, which consisted of survivors of torture, politicians, stakeholders in the asylum process, SPIRASI staff and NGO partners. The audience then heard speeches from survivors of torture; Franky Nyekturu focused on his experience in Zimbabwe, and Miriam Omoro spoke about her current experience of the asylum system in Ireland. A band founded by an ex-client played, and an interpretive dance group performed a piece called "Fall & Recover". The group's choreography emerged from a number of dance workshops with SPIRASI clients. Three choral pieces were also performed. A lengthy article on the event was featured in a major newspaper, and interviews and excerpts from the speeches were used in a radio broadcast.

Ireland's President Michael D. Higgins (at the centre) joined SPIRASI's event.

PCATI – Public Committee Against Torture in Israel

ISRAEL

PCATI coordinated with other activists and supporters a performative action, where performers were bound and gagged in public streets around Jerusalem to mark 26 June. These performances were spread out along the street, designed to remind passersby that many people are still subjected to torture and other forms of abuse by state authorities. Later in the week, PCATI organised a film viewing of the 1986 Argentine film "Night of the Pencils", followed by a public discussion.

KRCT - Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims

KOSOVO

KRCT, together with other human rights NGOs, arranged a series of events focused particularly on the theme of rape as a tool of war — advocating for human rights of rape victims. A parade of women victims and human rights activists organised in the capital city of Kosovo, finalised with a symbolic act showing the need for the recognition of the human rights of this particular group of victims. KRCT advocated for the inclusions of rape victims as beneficiaries in the civil victims law of war.

RCTV Memoria – Medical Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims ‘Memoria’

MOLDOVA

RCTV Memoria held an open house to their rehabilitation centre for guests and supporters of the organisation. Diplomatic representatives, UN representatives, lawyers, media and direct beneficiaries attended, totaling more than 40 people. In the event, guests had the opportunity to find out more about the activity of RCTV Memoria, to take part in discussions about different aspects of torture, to express their views about the prevention of torture, the need of rehabilitation of torture victims, combating impunity and how to communicate directly with beneficiaries. In addition, there was an exhibition of hand works on display for sale created by a group of refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan. In the afternoon of the same day was a mini-concert, where some of the talented young beneficiaries held a recital with songs and dances. On the day of 26 June, RCTV Memoria also held a press event with two dozen members of the media. At the proposal of RCTV Memoria, National TV organised a talk show dedicated to 26 June and the most acute issues from Moldova related to torture: impunity; medical documentation of cases of torture; access to justice; and respecting of victims’ rights to rehabilitation, etc. A full version can be viewed at <http://www.trm.md/ro/moldova-in-direct/moldova-in-direct-din-26-iunie-2012>

CAT – Interregional Committee Against Torture

RUSSIA

CAT organised events in five Russian regions. In Ufa (Bashkortostan), a rally was led by motorcade through the city centre, which over 20 people participated in. In Grozni (Chechnya), a peaceful demonstration took place, organised by lawyers from the Joint Mobile Group together with human rights activists from NGO’s Memorial and Mother’s Anxiety. In Nizhnij Novgorod, a peaceful demonstration also took place. About 30 people participated in this activity; among them were rights activists, torture victims and other civil activists. CAT had prepared visual materials, including posters with victims’ photos and description of their cases, flags and banners with anti-torture slogans, T-shirts



with anti-torture symbols and other materials. The actions induced interest by passerby. In Joshkar-Ola (Mari-El), CAT specialists organised an exhibition “Torture in modern history” in GULAG-museum. Objects that police officers use as instruments of torture (gas masks, rubber truncheons, handcuffs) were presented to visitors of the exhibition. Many of the events were covered by regional and local print and online media.

CAT staff showing posters with victims’ photos and description of their cases

IAN CRTV – International Aid Network Center for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims

SERBIA

IAN Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims commemorated this year's 26 June through three events. A press conference was held on 26 June. The first part of the conference entitled "Torture victims – (lack of) state's care" addressed the cases of torture and inhuman treatment committed by public officials, victims' right to rehabilitation and the importance of treatment in order to recover from severe and long-term physical and mental consequences that torture inflicts. Efforts of IAN CRTV were presented as well as work of the National Prevention Mechanism (NPM), including the

monitoring visits to police stations and psychiatric institutions that are performed jointly with the representatives of relevant civil society organisations. Media representatives were introduced to the current actions and results of the NPM in preventing and documenting torture. Campaign activities included also two theatrical workshops where the performers were victims of torture or persons who are members of social groups at risk of torture.



IAN CRTV's staff addressing the media.

CPDT - Coordinadora para la Prevención y denuncia de la Tortura

SPAIN

CPDT, a coalition of anti-torture organisations, together with the Free Association of Lawyers, held a workshop in Madrid on denouncing violence and torture.

Red Cross – Stockholm

SWEDEN

Red Cross Stockholm held a demonstration on the big square, where the centre is also situated. Red Cross placed posters explaining the issue of torture and what treatments are offered by the centre. The centre also screened a film on torture and rehabilitation.

Swedish Red Cross Centre for Victims of Torture and War in Malmö

SWEDEN

Red Cross - Malmö gave a special seminar in the city on the topic of secondary trauma and young people. The seminar focused in particular on the children of survivors of torture who are inheriting their parents' trauma and lose orientation in life and society if not given adequate help, thus a need for rehabilitation.

OMCT - World Organisation Against Torture

SWITZERLAND

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) co-presented the film “After Life – 4 Stories of Torture” followed by a debate on torture during a film festival and international forum on human rights in Geneva.

TOHAV - Foundation for Society and Legal Studies

TURKEY

TOHAV invited media professionals, NGO representatives as well as human rights activists, public authorities and academics to participate. Also the victims of torture and their families that received some medical and legal support by the Foundation during the 18 years of its activity were invited to the commemorations. A speech was given by the chairman of TOHAV and consequently a press declaration was made. Later, a documentary film sponsored by the Foundation was screened. In the film, 13 torture survivors are portrayed. The program ended with a cocktail gathering.

SOHRAM-CASRA - Centre of Social Action, Rehabilitation and Readjustment

TURKEY

More than 1,500 participants attended the annual picnic hosted by SOHRAM-CASRA in Turkey. Torture victims, their families, staff of the centre and the general public attended to show support and solidarity with the victims of torture. The participants enjoyed music performances by a range of groups, competitions and games and folk dances. In the afternoon, all were invited to a public discussion about the day and its meaning, particularly within the context of Turkey. On the day itself, SOHRAM-CASRA held a seminar on therapies and psychology, focusing on women and children’s rights. That evening, the organisation held their annual cocktail gathering with victims, their families and their supporters, which was attended by 34 people.



Children get their faces painted during the annual picnic in Turkey.

London Guantánamo Campaign

UNITED KINGDOM

The London Guantánamo Campaign held a vigil in Trafalgar Square. Around 50 people attended and held up placards in different languages with one simple message: “No to Torture”. The vigil attracted attention from passers-by and the LGC was joined by different organisations and campaigns. With its display of one simple message in over 30 languages, including Arabic, Persian, Indonesian, Swahili, Finnish, Greek, Russian, Hebrew and others, the action was a hit with tourists and passers-by who engaged with its simple message and stopped to check if their own language was included and to see how many they read and/or identify. Lots of people stopped to talk to the activists and expressed their support. The purpose of this quiet and dignified vigil was to mark this date and anniversary and show solidarity with victims of torture the world over, most of who suffer terribly in

silence, long after the immediate physical and psychological terror has ended.



The London Guantánamo Campaign focused on one simple message: “No to Torture”.

RTC – Refugee Therapy Centre

UNITED KINGDOM

RTC held their Annual Open Day, which consists of two important elements. One is the opportunity to speak to the work and learning taking place within the Centre throughout the past year in a spirit of acknowledgement and reflection. A second part of this focus is a conscious effort to connect the issues motivating the work of the Centre into larger national and international contexts. Another equally important aspect of the day is coming together as community through sharing food, music, intellectual dialogue and experience. Staff, students and trustees gave brief presentations about their work throughout the year. They welcomed an audience that included professionals from the National Health Service, students, community workers, general practitioners and others within the sector.



Once a year, the Refugee Therapy Centre welcomes the community to enjoy food, music, and share experiences.

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and REDRESS

UNITED KINGDOM

The Forum and REDRESS, a UK human rights organisation, held a joint round-table discussion in London centred on what Zimbabwe needs to do in order to domesticate the UN Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol. The discussion, which drew on participants from both Zimbabwe and UK-based non-governmental organisations, was a step towards ensuring that Zimbabwe's law reform in the wake of its acceptance to domesticate CAT and criminalise torture, is informed by comparative international experiences. Key recommendations emerged from the discussing, focusing on the need for reforms in law and in practice, ratification in the broader justice discourse, and the need for both broad-based consensus and detailed analysis of the legislation drawing from international examples.

THE CASE OF MR T.K., PEJA REGION, KOSOVO

This is the painful story of Mr T.K., who survived and witnessed the massacre of 47 people, 12 of which were close family members and other relatives.

In 14 May 1999, the Çyshk village (Peja region, Kosovo) was surrounded by Serbian police forces with camouflaged uniforms. They gathered civilians in the centre of village and ordered them to empty their pockets and put gold, money and personal documents in front of them. Men were then separated from women and children and divided into three groups. The three groups were ushered into three houses of the G. family estate.

Police officers first tortured them physically and psychologically by insulting and beating them with hard devices. They then shot them inside the house. After that they threw in an incendiary device that set the house on fire.

Mr T.K. managed to escape through the bullets and fires by jumping from a window of the house and hiding. After killing 47 men, the women and children who had gathered in the centre of the village were ordered to form a convoy and were directed to the Albanian border. When the "people from horror movies", as Mr T.K. called them, left the village, he and three other survivors removed the dead bodies from the burned houses and hid them; they did so because they were afraid that the police forces might return and take the bodies away in an attempt to cover up the crime.

A few days later, the witnesses and his neighbours buried the bodies of the men who had been shot and burned, including eight in a

single large grave.

Experiencing this traumatic situation and killing of loved one caused Mr T.K. several psychological distresses. He felt detached from others, withdrawn from social activities and unable to re-establish family relationships. Psychological and social wounds of war plagued him for a decade and have interfered with his ability to live a normal life.

He sought psychosocial treatment at KRCT in 2010 and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. After

"I will never forget what I experienced," he says, "But I'm trying to rebuild my destroyed life."

the treatments provided by psychologists and psychiatrists at the centre, his psychological state improved; he started to accept the traumatic experience and to return to his future life with other family members. The frequency of flashbacks of the traumatic events and feelings of anxiety and fear has reduced. He has started to involve himself again in daily activities.

As his psychosomatic complains reduced, he has decreased the level of medications. Concentration thus improved, and he started to read the daily newspapers – a common activity, but one that he could not do for more than a decade.

"I will never forget what I experienced," he says, "But I'm trying to rebuild my destroyed life."

Testimony submitted by Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT)

Latin America and the Caribbean

EATIP - Equipo Argentino de Trabajo e Investigación Psicosocial

ARGENTINA

EATIP organised a clinical seminar on “Subjectivity and subjectification” with the Chapter of Mental Health and Human Rights of the Argentine Association of Psychiatrists. The public event focused on psychoanalytical theories and treatment within the current rehabilitation efforts for torture victims.



EATIP also co-developed a radio segment that was broadcast on over 90 community radio stations. Furthermore, a psychiatrist at the organisation was interviewed on the current situation of human rights in Argentina.

ITEI - Instituto de Terapia e Investigación sobre las secuelas de la Tortura y de la Violencia Estatal

BOLIVIA

ITEI, based in La Paz, held a series of events throughout the day to honour the victims of torture. In the morning, in coordination with four other local organisations, they honoured those who had given their lives in the struggle for democracy in Bolivia. In the afternoon ITEI planned, with graffiti and hip-hop artists, to create murals on several buildings in a major thorough-fare in the city. Several victims of torture provided testimonies in the evening during a presentation of the book, “Testimonios de Tortura”. In Cochabamba, the second office of ITEI had an information fair in the main square on 26 June. Participants shared information on the state of torture in Bolivia, especially focusing on the victims of torture from the dictatorship and the status of the investigation, recognition and reparations. Victims of torture were invited to share their testimonies and experiences. In the evening, ITEI-Cochabamba hosted a film and debate night, featuring “Archaeology of Memory: Villa Grimaldi”; this was in coordination with the Bolivian-German Cultural Centre.

GTNM/RJ – Grupo Tortura Nunca Mais / Rio de Janeiro

BRAZIL

This year, due to the People’s Summit – a movement to raise people’s voices counter to the Rio +20 Conference – taking place in Rio during June, GTNM/RJ did something different to mark 26 June, the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The organisation, which focuses on the human rights violations of the dictatorship in Brazil, participated in the Global Mobilization March that led 80,000 to the streets of Rio de Janeiro on 20 June. GTNM/RJ mobilised its supporters to this march, bringing materials to expose the issues of human rights from the dictatorship to present.

CAPS – Corporación Centro de Atención Psicosocial

COLOMBIA

CAPS, a member of the Colombian Coalition Against Torture, participated in the organisation of a panel discussion on the human rights situation in Colombia, specifically focusing on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The coalition’s large public campaign underlined that torture exists in Colombia and has many names.



“Arbitrary detention, forced displacement, abuse, extrajudicial execution, sexual violence, forced disappearance, threat. In Colombia torture exists and it has many names.”

ASST - Salvadoran Association of Torture Survivors

EL SALVADOR

ASST held a theatre performance showing how torture affects prisoners and their families, with the participation of torture survivors and academia. There was also music and poetry. Students and the general public came together in working sessions with a psychologist who explained the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on torture survivors and the significance of 26 June. All activities took place at the Universidad Nacional on 25 June (San Miguel), 26 June (San Salvador) and 28 June (Santa Ana).

CCTI - Colectivo Contra la Tortura y la Impunidad

MEXICO

CCTI hosted an interregional conference with six other human rights and anti-torture organisations that focused on torture in the ‘democracies’ of Latin America, such as Mexico, Bolivia and Argentina. The conference began with a press event with three other organisations, where a press statement on the current situation of torture in Mexico was read. It continued with a panel discussion on the theme “Torture in the ‘democracies’ of Latin America”. That day ended with a cultural event, which included: the theatre group Los Zurdos with the work “Images Hipnagónicas”; La Orquesta Camboyana de Sullivan presented “The Circus of Justice”; and an exhibition of Sergio Naranjo, the painter, Chilean exile and torture survivor, entitled “Fractions, Torture and Time”. The second day was group work with the theme of “torture in the Mexican democracy”. In addition, torture survivors gave testimonies, focusing on the contribution that rehabilitation has brought to their lives. The conference closed with a discussion on the challenges, obstacles and achievements in the fight against torture. This conference was attended by 98 people in two days and was broadcast live.



“Torture in the ‘democracies’ of Latin America” was the theme of the interregional conference organised by CCTI.

Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz

VENEZUELA

Red de Apoyo organised a series of activities throughout the month of June. Among the activities, the centre worked with the media to disseminate information on the topic of torture and the need for an anti-torture law in Venezuela. On 12 June, there was a street parade in front of the National Assembly to demand the approval of a law on torture, which is currently being discussed in the country. The most recent reports of torture received by the centre reached the press on 21 June. On 26 June, the organisation launched a book portraying the experiences of three victims of torture. Parallel to these activities, Red de Apoyo held an online campaign on Twitter, encouraging all to show their support by uploading a picture together with the hashtag #yoapoyounmundosintortura.

THE CASE OF ITALIA MÉNDEZ (ATENCO, MÉXICO)

Six years ago, on 4 May 2006, I was arrested and tortured physically and sexually by agents working for the State and Federal Police in San Salvador, Atenco, Mexico. This left a brutal mark on my life. I recognised the horror that engulfed me with feelings of fear and depression. I felt violated and I was unable to find a reason for what had happened to me. I could understand the feelings of repression conceptually, but I was unable to control my emotions and the physical effects suffered as a result of the torture.

The sexual nature of the torture which I suffered aggravated in many respects my status as a victim — the stigma was something that affected me deeply. It filled me with indignation and anger that as victims we were

Inevitably I will never be the same woman as before, however, I have managed to regain my ability to make decisions, I am more in control of my emotions and I am capable of dealing with fear, without it paralyzing me.

In my experience, there have been two fundamental axes that have helped me to continue with my life. On the one hand, at the individual level, having a safe and secure place for psychotherapy, which allowed me to unravel the traumatic events and make significant progress in relation to identifying the damage to my body and mind in order to rebuild myself. On the other hand, at the collective level, having a space in which my testimony is heard attentively, and with empathy, not only in order to publicly denounce the repressive acts

“This world is not the horrible place that those perpetrators showed me.”

referred to in the media as “The rape victims of Atenco” and that the authorities called us “liars”. I remember that my capacity to make decisions was completely lost, to distinguish between things I should or shouldn’t do – it made me feel that I wasn’t doing enough, or the right thing. It made no difference the nature of the decision, guilt washed over me.

Now, after six years of intensive work to recover from the torture, I can say that I feel better.

I suffered, but also as a space in which I can let go of the stigma attached and reaffirm my status as a woman activist and continue to be politically involved.

Fortunately, the biggest achievement I have accomplished is to overcome the hopelessness. I survived the torture; although they broke me down, they could not take away my yearning for freedom. This world is not the horrible place that those perpetrators showed me.

Testimony submitted by Colectivo Contra la Tortura y la Impunidad (CCTI), Mexico

Middle East and North Africa

أوقفوا التعذيب

26 June

rehabilitation work
and is a torture survivor's right

El Nadeem Center for Psychological Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence

EGYPT

Once again, El Nadeem Center for Psychological Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence organised its annual conference on 26 June. Besides presenting the organisation's activities, the programme included live testimonies and video presentations. Other topics such as sexual harassment of female protesters, the new military legislation and the situation in Syria were debated.

ODVV – Organization for Defending Victims of Violence

IRAN

During their commemoration, ODVV unveiled the digital Farsi copy of the Istanbul Protocol, translated by the organisation in coordination with IRCT. The event began with a public reading of the

UN Secretary-General's message for the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Also in this ceremony, clinical psychologist Mohammad Jaafar Safaee spoke about the psychotherapy of victims of torture and replied to participants' questions.



Clinical psychologist Mohammad Jaafar Safaee addresses the audience on a lecture organised to mark 26 June.

BFRCT - Bahjat Al-Fuad Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims

IRAQ

BFRCT celebrated in collaboration with the prisoners and martyrs associations in Basra. The events took place on the street and were shown on a large screen. The day opened with a reading of the Quran, followed by a group of children singing about peace and the refusal of violence and torture. There were speeches by BFRCT and invited organisations, as well as survivors' testimonies. The day ended with the reading of the 26 June global message.

KRC - Kham Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture

LEBANON

KRC's day against torture started with an event in solidarity with the mothers of victims of enforced disappearances. In solidarity with the prisoners in Lebanon, KRC, together with the committee of the families of detainees in Lebanese prisons, organised a sit-in in front of Baalbek prison and urged the government to speed up trials and to improve the health and social conditions in the prisons. KRC also visited the Baabda prison for women to carry out a vocational workshop with the prisoners and to provide sessions with a psychologist. The day was also marked with a medical day for victims of detention and torture in Derseryan; this event included a speech on prison conditions and torture in Lebanon by KRC's Secretary-General, Mr Mohammed Safa. Finally, KRC organised a sit-in in front of the Ministry of Justice to call for, among other issues, the establishment of an independent national preventive mechanism and the criminalisation of torture.

AMRVT - Association Medicale de Rehabilitation des Victimes de la Torture

MOROCCO

The AMRVT organised, in coordination with the Committee of Families of the Disappeared and Victims of Disappearance, a meeting attended by victims of grave violations of human rights, families of disappeared persons, human rights NGOs, the Alumni Association Tazmamart Missing, the Association of the 20 June 1981 Uprising, the group Ahermoumou and survivors of Bagnes Agdz Tagounite and Dar Mokri from Corbis and Kelaat Mgouna, Temara and other detention centers. There were several speeches from representatives of these various organisations. In addition, participants viewed a screening of a documentary video of the AMRVT. Furthermore, there was a slideshow on the activities of the Association, particularly those relating to the caravan organised by the medical centre AMRVT in Tinghir had from 8 to 10 June 2011 for victims of grave violations of human rights in the region and a visit to the secret detention of Kellaat Mgouna. The evening ended with a reception in honour of the victims in solidarity and friendship.



TRC – Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

TRC organised a conference in Ramallah followed by several other activities around the country, in Jenin, Nablus and Hebron.

THE CASE OF YASMINE

Yasmine was born in 1970. She is single and lives alone, which she has since her mother died two years ago (her father died 15 years ago and her brothers are all married).

She worked different jobs depending on the seasons, for example, on the olive farms with the people of the town.

She was arrested on 5 December 1988 in her home by the militias of Israel, and was released on 30 December of that year. During the period of detention, she spent 10 days in the interrogation room and in the hands of interrogators and torturers.

They struck her with a whip over her entire body and deliberately hit her on the head and back; she was tortured with electricity by placing a wire on her wrists. The torturers threw cold water on her in the middle of winter; she was emotionally harassed and called bad words and terms, insults that were sexually degrading to her dignity. They threatened to attack and arrest one of her brothers, and forced her to kneel for long hours in the bathroom.

When she was released, she suffered from pain in her back, head and stomach and suffered from depression and psychological problems.

She received treatment through the medical, psychological and psychosocial staff at Kham Rehabilitation Center in Lebanon; she received support there from all levels. First, Yasmine received psychological support through several sessions of psychotherapy and rehabilitation. The sessions instilled a sense of confidence again, and Yasmine was able to think about her life and starting over again.

Although she was making great strides through her counselling sessions, she faced a personal setback. She wanted to build a family and wanted children, but she suffered a health crisis and was forced to have surgery that impinged in her ability to have children; this negatively impacted her psychological situation.

The medical team and social group of Kham visited with her often, and these visits improved her health status; the

psychological and social assistance was also very important for her.

Yasmine eventually became a volunteer with the Khiam Rehabilitation Center to work in the region and with other victims

Yasmine overcame the symptoms and effects of detention and torture. She came back to life again.

of torture. Later, she became responsible for a Khiam centre in the south of Lebanon.

With the services provided, especially psychological and social support and later her involvement in the activities and the work at the center, Yasmine overcame the symptoms and effects of detention and torture. She came back to life again and increasingly self-sufficient and confident, both in terms of securing her income needs. Yasmine's life became full of confidence through the sessions and working with new people.

*Testimony submitted by Khiam
Rehabilitation Center in Lebanon*

A black and white photograph of a man and a woman. The man is on the left, looking towards the camera. The woman is on the right, looking down. They are holding a sign that says 'NO TORTURE' with a diagonal line through a circle over the word 'TORTURE'.

North America and Pacific

Phoenix Centre

AUSTRALIA

Phoenix Centre invited the public to their event to mark 26 June. Postcards on the theme “rehabilitation” were on display and participants had the opportunity to contribute by creating their own postcard at the event. The event took place at the Tasmanian Hockey Centre.

STARTTS – Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

AUSTRALIA

STARTTS, in collaboration with Amnesty International Australia, coordinated a discussion forum in Sydney entitled, “What Should We Do About Torture?”, that approached this question from three different angles: prevention, law and rehabilitation. Associate Professor Danielle Celermayer, Director of the University of Sydney’s Human Rights Program, and Aloysia Brooks, Researcher for the Torture Prevention Project at Sydney University covered prevention. Law was dealt with by Katie Wood, Governance Coordinator at Amnesty International Australia. Rehabilitation was covered by Jorge Aroche, clinical psychologist and CEO of STARTTS. The evening was hosted by prominent legal journalist Richard Ackland. Approximately 70 people attended this well-received and engaging event.

STARS – Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service

AUSTRALIA

STARS in South Australia arranged two events: an awareness-raising campaign used a photo of hundreds of tea light candles, each representing a survivor who has been supported in STARS service in the past year, and a shared meal on in solidarity with a torture and trauma service in another country with the hopes of developing enduring links between workers.

CCIJ – Canadian Centre for International Justice

CANADA

The Canadian Centre for International Justice decided to bring community members together to share experiences, advocate for human rights and promote international justice. Speakers shared perspectives as survivors of torture and other human rights abuses and discussed the role of international justice in protecting and promoting human rights. Among the speakers were Marie Ange Umutesi, a genocide survivor, who shared her experience and perspective on international justice with a focus on Rwanda; Deborah Kitumaini, who spoke about her family's experience in Congo; and Bill Skidmore, a professor of Human Rights at Carleton University, who spoke about access to justice and human rights.

RTR – Refugee Trauma Recovery

NEW ZEALAND

For 26 June, Refugee Trauma Recovery, formerly Wellington Refugees as Survivors Trust, worked together with other human rights NGOs to highlight the specialist services provided for the treatment of torture victims who have come to New Zealand as refugees through the UNHCR programme. RTR held an art project for children, where those with a refugee background were invited to a school with great facilities to create art works that will later on be displayed in a public gallery.

The Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture

UNITED STATES

The Bellevue/NYU Program joined a national coalition of religious and human rights groups, including the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), in a National Week of Action Against Torture, Guantanamo and the NDAA. A DC March was held on 24 June, and on 26 June, day vigils were organised across the USA.

CST – Center for Survivors of Torture, Dallas

UNITED STATES

The Texas-based CST invited the community to an Afternoon Open House on 22 June at their Dallas office. They had leaders from all over the Dallas/Fort Worth community to join in an afternoon to pay respects to all of the clients and brave fellow citizens who had survived torture. Around 100 people were expected to attend, including community members, leaders, media, CST clients and volunteers. On 26 June, the offices held a much smaller, more intimate celebration for clients and staff, where they honoured them for what they had endured with cake and refreshments.

CST – Center for Survivors of Torture of the Asian Americans for Community Involvement

UNITED STATES

The San Jose-based Center for Survivors of Torture organised their 6th Annual Picnic at the Park event. The event was held on 20 June at a local rose garden. The event facilitated the building of social skills, interaction, communication and trust among CST's clients and the community. The picnic was very well attended by survivors and other community partners, with an approximate attendance of 100 people. CST also participated in a digital media campaign in recognition of International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, in coordination with other regional anti-torture and human rights organisations. CST staff participated by posting pictures and CST clients showed their support by participating in an arts and crafts activity during the Picnic at the Park event. Clients created dove cut outs in the shape of their hands that CST has put on display.

CSTWT – Center for Survivors of Torture and War Trauma

UNITED STATES

This year, the CSTWT in St. Louis, Missouri organised training in trauma recovery with torture survivors for mental health providers at the Holocaust Museum of St. Louis. CSTWT partnered with another organisation, Places for People, who provide case management and legal services to survivors. Part of the training included mental health approaches, medical care with survivors of torture and cultural competency education with survivors.

FCST – The Florida Center for Survivors of Torture of the Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services

UNITED STATES

FCST partnered with the Florida International University (FIU) Department of Theatre and the Center for the Humanities in an Urban Environment to present a performance of "Death and the Maiden". The event was preceded by a reception and a presentation by the guest speaker Dr Miriam Potocky-Tripodi, Associate Professor of Social Work and author of "Best Practices for Social Work with Refugee and Immigrants". FCST presented the Human Spirit Award for Leadership to Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, the Human Spirit Award for Service to Inge Sengelmann and the Award for Achievement to Mohammad Dramme. The four-hour event was attended by director of the refugee services for both FCST and the Department of Children and Family along with 100 guests. The event was followed by a "talk back" panel discussing the theme of the play.

NRCAT – National Religious Coalition Against Torture

UNITED STATES

Through a collaboration of anti-torture organisations, NRCAT planned several activities in honour of torture victims. On 24 June NRCAT joined others on a march in Washington, D.C. against torture, Guantanamo Bay and the recently-passed legislation, the National Defense Authorization Act, which in 2012 included a provision to allow for indefinite detention. On 26 June, NRCAT coordinated and promoted local religious vigils in support of victims of torture. They also advocated for supporters to 'Tweet-in' to Congress and the White House in support of torture victims.

PSST/NVFS - Program for Survivors of Torture and Severe Trauma at the Center for Multicultural Human Services (a program of Northern Virginia Family Services)

UNITED STATES

PSST, in collaboration with the National Catholic University School of Social Service and the George Washington University Psychiatry Department, hosted a one-day conference on 19 June as part of the annual International Survivor's Week. The theme of the conference was "Rebuilding a Life after Torture". As such, the focus of the conference was on redefining identity, re-establishing social connections and re-engaging in meaningful activity. The conference offered workshops targeting different areas of service delivery including case management, psychopharmacology and psychotherapy. Conference attendees had the opportunity to learn trauma-informed interventions essential for serving the torture and trauma survivor population. Attendees also had an opportunity to network with other providers in the D.C. Metro area and to exchange resources and expertise.

CVT – Center for Victims of Torture

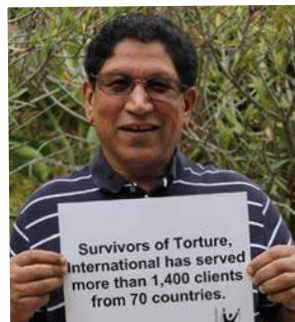
UNITED STATES

Guests met CVT's new executive director, Curt Goering, and gathered with staff, volunteers and community members to recognise 26 June. There were refreshments, music and activities to show support for survivors of torture in the local community and worldwide. This year, CVT asked guests to bring small personal and household items for torture survivors at the St. Paul Healing Center. On 28 June, CVT hosted a reception and award ceremony in Washington, D.C. The UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture received CVT's annual Eclipse Award in recognition of their work to protect and rehabilitate torture survivors. The UN Fund supports healing for torture survivors worldwide to rebuild lives after torture. CVT also held events in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Jordan to honour and recognise 26 June.

Survivors of Torture, International

UNITED STATES

Survivors of Torture, International and members of the California Consortium of Torture Treatment Centers raised awareness throughout the month of June through an online social media campaign on Facebook and Twitter, encouraging fans and followers to post pictures of themselves with signs showing support for torture victims and against torture. The organisation was featured in local San Diego TV and radio stations.



The victims of torture are, more often than not, ordinary people who belong to already vulnerable sectors of society. Perhaps most shockingly of all, even children are not spared.



In the past 25 years, we have made many gains in the fight against torture, and against impunity for torture. Torture is increasingly criminalised in the law books of states and police training curricula frequently incorporate the

provisions of the Convention. Yet much remains to be done. The use of torture is far from over.

– Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

On this International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, we express our solidarity with, and support for, the hundreds of thousands of victims of torture and their family members throughout the world who endure such suffering.

We also note the obligation of States not only to prevent torture but to provide all torture victims with effective and prompt redress, compensation and appropriate social, psychological, medical and other forms of rehabilitation.



– Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General

The EU takes this opportunity to commend the persistent efforts by the many NGOs and individuals working tirelessly for the prevention of torture and to alleviate the suffering of victims, as well as mobilising public opinion on this important day in the UN calendar. We must all stand together to make the world free from torture.



This day is an occasion to speak up against this abhorrent violation of human rights and human dignity. Torture is not only a tragedy for the victims, it is also degrading and injuring those who perpetrate it and to societies which tolerate such outrage.

– Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy



Sub-Saharan Africa

SAP/GL - Solidarité d'Actions pour la Paix/Grands Lacs

BURUNDI

SAP/GL organised a day of education and entertainment followed by a cultural evening with the students from the University of Burundi and the pupils of public schools. SAP-Gl expected to reach 1,500 students. SAP/GL also organised a peaceful march in Mutimbuzi, in the outskirts of Bujumbura, where the centre has ongoing support to hundreds of families. Over 500 people were expected to attend the march under the slogan “For when the end of torture?”

TCC – Trauma Center Cameroon

CAMEROON

Following the theme “Rehabilitation works and is a torture survivor’s right”, Trauma Center Cameroon organised a week of activities. From psychotherapy activities to a therapeutic arts dance aimed at bringing together survivors from different cultures, and educational talks, the centre mobilised around 200 people to participate. The main event took place in central Yaoundé on 26 June, where hundreds of people gathered to commemorate the day against torture. Speeches and presentations were made by representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the National Commission of Human Rights and Freedoms, the UN Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, among others. The event attracted great media interest with 15 media outlets present to cover the event. Two traditional dance groups from Rwanda and Chad as well as two choral groups graced the event.



Over 200 people participated in TCC's 26 June commemorations, which ended with musical performances.

AJPNV /CRVT - Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non Violence/ Centre de Réhabilitation des Victimes de la torture

CHAD

AJPNV/CRVT held a week of activities and press conferences focusing on the successes of rehabilitation and the rights of torture victims. Despite heavy rains on the day itself, students, police officers, victims of torture, other civil society organisations, traditional chiefs, journalists, civil and military administrators attended to hear the Global Reading and testimonies of victims of torture. The event concluded with an interview with AJPNV/CRVT president.



From students to journalists, the week of activities organised by AJPNV/CRVT was well attended.

OASIS - Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Trauma

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

OASIS organised a theatre performance with messages referring to the causes and consequences of torture. During this presentation, the centre's director spoke and publicly presented a case story showing the consequences of torture. OASIS also organised a workshop, where the community had the opportunity to exchange stories, discuss the problem of torture and share differing medical, legal and psychosocial perspectives of the rehabilitation process. Participants were encouraged to present the various methods used locally and their limitations with the goal of deciding how to move forward in terms of rehabilitation. A bicycle race was also organised to commemorate the day. In the afternoon there was a panel discussion on the theme of rehabilitation, led by the director of OASIS with the members of the Network of Associations of Human Rights in South Kivu and UN representatives.

CODHO - Committee of Observers of Human Rights

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

CODHO offered a workshop with key civil society organisations in Kinshasa on the extension and application of a new law against torture in DR Congo, which the organisation has successfully initiated and submitted to Parliament.

GIPROCOME

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

GIPROCOME held a conference on the theme of rehabilitation of torture victims, with 200 expected to attend. Their activities continued beyond 26 June, with theatre and football events organised for 30 June. GIPROCOME met with several national institutions with the goal of promoting the special needs of torture victims. The campaign ended on 26 July with a discussion on the relation between torture and gender-based violence.

REMAK - Regroupement des Mamans de Kamituga

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

REMAK, based in South Kivu, marked the day with a conference debate, community radio programme and visit to administer psychosocial treatment to detainees in the areas of Kamituga, Kitutu, Sugulu and Kibe. The organisation also delivered some basic necessities for the detainees, such as food, blankets and mats. REMAK spent the month leading up to 26 June focusing on a public campaign on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.



SOS JED - SOS Jeunesse et Enfance en Detresse

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

SOS JED provided a range of activities for detainees in prisons near their Baraka, Mboko and Fizi Centres. The organisation, based in South Kivu, designed posters and banners to inform prisoners of their human rights and the definition of torture, explain how to fight against it and the available assistance if they have been tortured. The prisoners also received supplies, such as soap and toothbrushes. They also viewed a documentary on torture. At the end, the organisation hosted a dinner with participants, prison officials, police, local authorities and other NGOs on human rights and the rights of prisoners.

CPMRVT/SOPROP - Centre Psycho Médical pour la Réhabilitation des Victimes de la Torture/Solidarite Pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

SOPROP organised a theatre performance about violence during arrests and torture in detention centres. Following the theatre performance, participants had the opportunity to hear survivors of torture tell about their experiences. There were speeches by the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, the Minister of Gender, Women and Children and the Mayor of the city, as well as by SOPROP's General-Director. SOPROP also inaugurated a new centre in the heavily populated area of Masina (CMARVT/Masina), in Western Kinshasa. A brass band animated the events.

SAVE CONGO

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

SAVE CONGO organised a series of events in the prison of Kipushi situated 30 kilometres from Lubumbashi city. SAVE CONGO prepared a poster campaign and flyers that sought to inform prisoners and other participants on what constitutes torture, its consequences, ways and means to fight it and legal procedures to follow in order to receive appropriate assistance after torture. SAVE CONGO distributed soaps, toothbrushes, toothpastes, T-shirts and pullovers to 1,200 prisoners. There was an opportunity to watch a documentary drama on torture (Rights of Prisoners) to spread information on the Convention against Torture. A common lunch was organised including open discussions on rights of prison with 100 prison staff, police, local authorities and NGOs.

AVVDH - Amis des Victimes des Violations des Droits Humains

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

AVVDH trained state actors and humanitarian workers on the observation of the Convention against Torture. There was also a conference-debate on the legal framework of torture in the national and international level. In the days building up, there were radio broadcasts and displays of banners.

IMLU – Independent Medico-Legal Unit

KENYA

IMLU, in collaboration with other civil society organisations, held a national symposium in Nairobi. Under the theme of rehabilitation, the symposium successfully brought together both state and non-state actors to strategise on how best to address torture in Kenya. The intention was to link rehabilitation with accountability for torture with the aim of promoting the enactment of national legislation against torture, fast-tracking police reforms in the country and renewing links among stakeholders. There was general consensus that though Kenya has made tremendous progress in constitutional, legal and institutional reforms over the last nine years, there still remains much to be done. Among those who addressed the symposium were representatives from the human rights



advisor to the UN, the judiciary, the police service, the Independent Policing Oversight Commission and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution. Additionally, torture survivors gave moving accounts of their ordeal and expressed optimism that justice shall prevail. The event featured prominently in national television and radio media. More than 150 people attended the event.

The national symposium on rehabilitation featured in national television and radio.

MATESO - Mwatikho Torture Survivors Organization

KENYA

Around 500 people attended the event in Western Kenya, coordinated by MATESO in collaboration with other local civil society and human rights organisations. Moving from MATESO's office, participants marched through the city to Bungoma county council. Internally-displaced persons (IDPs) from Chwele, near the conflict-ridden Mt Elgon, joined participants to march to the Chwele dam. After some speeches, attendees joined IDPs to plant trees together to initiate the Garden of Memories, a garden of trees to commemorate those lost to torture and other human rights violations. Several television, radio and newspaper media organisations covered the event.



IDPs had the opportunity to plant trees symbolising the lives lost to torture and other human rights violation.

CVT-Kenya – Center for Victims of Torture

KENYA

CVT-Kenya organised an event with songs, dramas and keynote messages from CVT and the UN Secretary-General's message read by the head of UN offices in Dadaab, Kenya. The event was embraced by a cross-section of Kenyan government officials led by Mr Duncan Okello, chief of staff in the office of Chief Justice Dr Willy Mutunga. Keynote messages were delivered by the UN Rights Office in Nairobi, civil society organisations, police commandants, victims and embassies. The Mau Mau Vibrations, a local musical group that advocates for victims of torture, performed at the event.

CAT – Centre Against Torture

KENYA

CAT, based in Eldoret in Western Kenya, is a human rights lobby group and rehabilitation centre serving the rural areas of the country. The organisation hosted a series of activities between 20 and 26 June. They travelled within the region, shooting documentary footage and testimonials from torture victims who have been rehabilitated. In the footage, they also included a special 26 June forum, which included CAT and victims and their families. They will have the video clips easily downloadable and available on their website to ensure torture victims hear the message that rehabilitation works and is their right.

IRC- Hagadera – International Rescue Committee at Hagadera Refugee Camp

KENYA

The Mental Health Department of IRC at Hagadera, one of three refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya, organised a programme and event around the theme of rehabilitation of torture survivors. Opening with remarks from the mental health officer at the camp, participants viewed dance presentations, speeches from clients, representatives of the health department, drama performances and music. A representative from the UN Refugee Agency ended the presentation with closing remarks. Dabaab, located near the Somali border, is home to three refugee camps; officials there say that it is home to many people who have experienced war trauma.



LAPS - Liberia Association of Psychosocial Services

LIBERIA

LAPS used the IRCT short clip “World Without Torture” to initiate a discussion on torture. Participants of the discussion also shared personal stories of how they experienced, survived, escaped and/or, witnessed torture. At the end of the day all participants were better informed about the perverse effects of torture on individuals, their families and communities in general. Among the participants there were representatives of the UN mission in Liberia, the Liberia National Police, the Bassa Women Development Organization, Rescue Alternatives Liberia, as well as tribal governors and traditional leaders.

PEACE - People’s Education Assistance and Counselling for Empowerment

NAMIBIA

PEACE Centre organised a film screening on torture related themes and a discussion afterwards. PEACE also planned to send the message against torture across through a three-hour musical performance by a band of ex-detainees and a refugee.

YEHRRCR - Youth Education on Human Rights & Civil Responsibility

NIGERIA

YEHRRCR, a Nigerian civil society organisation based in Enugu, held a forum/seminar. Discussions were centred on torture in Nigeria and particularly rehabilitation as a fundamental right of torture survivors. Fifteen participants representing other NGOs, faith-based organisations, human rights activists and youth organisations/activists, among others, attended the forum. Participants came up with several recommendations for the state (to provide torture rehabilitation centres and improve police procedures to prevent torture), civil society (to further advocate and raise awareness of torture in Nigerian society), Nigerian lawyers (to live up to their obligations to victims of torture in legal proceedings), and the Nigerian Medical Association (to provide free treatment to victims). Furthermore, the YEHRRCR executive director was interviewed by local radio on 26 June.

PRAWA – Prisoners Rehabilitation And Welfare Action

NIGERIA

Joining the global day against torture, PRAWA centres in both Lagos and Enugu organised 26 June activities. In Enugu, centre staff and other health experts held a media event on “Rehabilitation works and is the right of victims/survivors of torture” that was broadcast on local stations. Students from a Enugu secondary school also participated in a march through the city. In Lagos, two representatives from PRAWA

were interviewed on national television. The interview focused on rehabilitation of torture survivors and pushing for establishing the right to rehabilitation in Nigeria.



Students say no to torture in a march through Enugu, Nigeria.

VIVRE/CAPREC - Victimes de Violences Réhabilitées, le Centre de Soins du CAPREC

SENEGAL

More than two dozen people attended the VIVRE/CAPREC event in Senegal this year. They included victims of torture, their families and supporters, psychiatrists, lawyers and local leaders. During the day, participants discussed the importance of the UN Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the importance of medical rehabilitation, the psychological impact of torture and the available resources for social assistance at the VIVRE centre. Participants had the opportunity to hear testimonies from the victims themselves. A panel followed during which participants discussed the definition of torture, international instruments (such as the Robben Island guidelines and the Istanbul Protocol), rehabilitation efforts and resources available.



The more than two dozen participants in the events had the opportunity to hear testimonies from torture survivors.

CSVV – Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation TCSVT – Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence & Torture

SOUTH AFRICA

The seminar “Against Impunity: Discussion of the South African draft Anti-Torture Bill” was co-hosted by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation and the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence & Torture as members of the South African No Torture Consortium (SANToC). The seminar addressed the urgency of criminalising torture in South Africa, in a moment when the relevant legislation is currently before Parliament.

CACIT - Collective of Associations Against Impunity in Togo

TOGO

CACIT, an association of nearly 20 Togo organisations, held a conference with around 30 participants. The discussions included topics such as Togo’s current national measures for the prevention of torture and the role of the public and civil society in the fight against torture. This was followed by a debate on the “culture” of torture and the Togolese Army; and the funding of the national measures for the prevention of torture. The conference was followed by an exhibition of photographs documenting victims of torture, as well as some of the instruments used. There were also some witness statements included in this exhibition. Blank pieces of paper were fixed around the rooms, and the audience were encouraged to leave their own messages of support for the victims or indeed messages of defiance. This proved very successful, producing some very moving messages – including the sentiment “Let’s fight together to eradicate torture. It’s a crime which question us all”. A petition condemning torture and asking the government to act on measures to prevent torture in Togo was also signed voluntarily during the course of the afternoon.

ACTV - African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims

UGANDA

ACTV in Uganda, together with the Coalition against Torture (CAT) and the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) issued a press statement that “Torture affects development”. The organisations held a series of radio and TV talk shows highlighting the challenges of torture and calling upon the President of Uganda to assent to the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Bill 2010. ACTV also ran advertorials in the leading dailies dissecting the concept of torture and the road to having it prohibited through a law in Uganda. Testimonies of survivors of torture featured prominently. On 21 June in Katwe-Kampala there was a community dialogue between state actors and non-state actors to discuss the concept, common causes and possible remedies to torture. The police were engaged by the community in a discussion surrounding policing and torture. There was also a public debate with leading players in the state and civil society in Uganda to discuss the effects of torture on development. CAT and partners presented short documentaries and a photo exhibition showing the faces of torture. On 26 June, CAT, UHRC and partners held a procession in Kampala with the ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs, the Uganda police and other security agencies’ leadership in leading the procession against torture.

THE CASE OF HELLEN, MT ELGON, KENYA

Hellen lives in Mt Elgon, an area that has been affected by conflict since 1992. Nearing the election period in 2006, an organised militia sprung up called Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF); they extorted, tortured, raped, abducted and forced disappeared, murdered and evicted people from the mountain.

Hellen, a resident of Chemuses, was tortured and sexually abused by the SLDF in 2007. She was still living in the Mt Elgon region, with her husband and four children, in August of 2008 when a group of five men came into her compound.

At around 5pm, Hellen was home when the men came to her compound. They asked for her husband, but he was not at home. They demanded to know how many of the SLDF she knew, since they alleged that she went round talking about them. She declined and that is when they kidnapped her and brought her to an unknown place.

There, they blindfolded her, raped her in turns and even beat her for almost 24 hours. The following day she was

unconscious, but they did not let her go. She was told to open her mouth where one of them urinated and yet another forced her to eat human feces.

After all this, they left her, but she was nearly unable to walk home because of the pain she had. She forced herself

Helen and her family still have a long way to go – they require counselling sessions about once or twice a month. But with the organisation's ongoing support, Helen is moving towards an increasingly full and healthy life.

up because she believed that if she continued to stay there, others might come and continue the torture. She tried, and thankfully, a person helped her home.

When she made it home, her husband took her to hospital where she was treated and tested for HIV/AIDS. Later

on that husband rejected her, alleging that she was infected with HIV/AIDS and other venereal diseases. In this domestic dispute, she lost her child as a result of family negligence and the stigmatisation she underwent.

She lost her first husband but found a new one, with whom she now has one child.

MATESO intervened in the case providing Hellen with treatment and counselling. They have set routine home-based visits and care. Although she had been treated before, it was not enough as she still complained of chest pain and backache. Hellen and her family still have a long way to go – they require counselling sessions about once or twice a month. But with the organisation's ongoing support, Hellen is moving towards an increasingly full and healthy life.

Testimony submitted by MATESO, Kenya

Social media

Together we can make our voices heard and join with the many men and women all over the world who dedicate their lives to the prevention of torture and the rehabilitation of its victims.

Through the tool of social media, people from all over the world could make their voices heard and share their support for the victims of torture. We wanted to ensure that those who lived far away from an event, rehabilitation centre or anti-torture organisation could still join in the global call for a world without torture.

This year, we also asked supporters to send us a photo of themselves with a message to victims of torture. Photos came from Sweden, the United States, Portugal, Korea, Wales and more.

Furthermore, this year the use of the #26June hashtag flooded Twitter on the day itself. See some of the messages and photos from the supporters.

#26june





“@withouttorture: Each year, hundreds of #torture victims & #humanrights activists around the globe come together & say #notorture on #26june”

Maya the bee @_eelai



CVT board member starting #26june commemoration @cvt_staff



Holly @hziemer



Team H2H, Manipur (India) joins the global movement against torture! The team is gearing up to participate in the international event at home and spread the message against torture and other ill-treatment and crimes.



@human2humane

Google maps

Many supporters around the world wanted to find a local centre where they could join 26 June activities. For them, we prepared a Google Map with all this information easily accessible. Visitors to this site could see all the events around the world, and find out the details of 26 June programmes near their homes. Seventy-six centres, programmes and organisations provided information on their local events. From a concert in Kyrgyzstan to a human rights journalist award ceremony in Georgia, supporters could discover ways to participate in the UN Day through the map.



United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

26 June is also a day to remind governments of their obligations under UNCAT to provide rehabilitation services and engage in systematic efforts to prevent torture.

States which have ratified, acceded or succeeded the Convention

153 States as of 22 October 2012

Afghanistan	Costa Rica	Iraq	Mozambique	Slovenia
Albania	Côte d'Ivoire	Ireland	Namibia	Somalia
Algeria	Croatia	Israel	Nauru	South Africa
Andorra	Cuba	Italy	Nepal	Spain
Antigua and Barbuda	Cyprus	Japan	Netherlands	Sri Lanka
Argentina	Czech Republic	Jordan	New Zealand	Swaziland
Armenia	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kazakhstan	Nicaragua	Sweden
Australia	Denmark	Kenya	Niger	Switzerland
Austria	Djibouti	Kuwait	Nigeria	Syrian Arab Republic
Azerbaijan	Dominican Republic	Kyrgyzstan	Norway	Tajikistan
Bahrain	Ecuador	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Pakistan	Thailand
Bangladesh	Egypt	Latvia	Panama	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Belarus	El Salvador	Lebanon	Paraguay	Timor-Leste
Belgium	Equatorial Guinea	Lesotho	Peru	Togo
Belize	Estonia	Liberia	Philippines	Tunisia
Benin	Ethiopia	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Poland	Turkey
Bolivia	Finland	Liechtenstein	Portugal	Turkmenistan
Bosnia and Herzegovina	France	Lithuania	Qatar	Uganda
Botswana	Gabon	Luxembourg	Republic of Korea	Ukraine
Brazil	Georgia	Madagascar	Republic of Moldova	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Bulgaria	Germany	Malawi	Romania	United Arab Emirates
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Maldives	Russian Federation	United States of America
Burundi	Greece	Mali	Rwanda	Uruguay
Cambodia	Guatemala	Malta	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Uzbekistan
Cameroon	Guinea	Mauritania	San Marino	Vanuatu
Canada	Guyana	Mauritius	Saudi Arabia	Venezuela
Cape Verde	Holy See	Mexico	Senegal	Yemen
Chad	Honduras	Monaco	Serbia	Zambia
Chile	Hungary	Mongolia	Seychelles	
China	Iceland	Montenegro	Sierra Leone	
Colombia	Indonesia	Morocco	Slovakia	
Congo				

States which have NOT ratified, acceded or succeeded the Convention

42 States as of 22 October 2012

Angola	Eritrea	Kiribati	Oman	Sudan*
Bahamas*	Fiji	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	Palau*	Suriname
Barbados	Gambia*	Malaysia	Papua New Guinea	Tanzania, United Republic of
Bhutan	Grenada	Marshall Islands	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Tonga
Brunei Darussalam	Guinea-Bissau*	Micronesia, Federated States of	Saint Lucia	Trinidad and Tobago
Central African Republic	Haiti	Myanmar	Samoa	Tuvalu
Comoros*	India*	Niue	Sao Tome and Principe*	Vietnam
Cook Islands	Iran (Islamic Republic of)		Singapore	Zimbabwe
Dominica	Jamaica		Solomon Islands	

* States that have signed but not ratified, acceded or succeeded UNCAT

Torture breaks people. Your support helps us rebuild lives and fight torture.

The IRCT needs your help to rebuild the lives of torture victims and fight for the eradication of torture worldwide. The recovery of torture victims is greatly impaired if their treatment is suspended due to limited or uncertain funds. There are still many parts of the world where treatment or support continues to be scarce or completely unavailable. By contributing to our work, you can help ensure that torture survivors and their families receive the help they need.

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Denmark

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Holmens Kanal 2
1090 Copenhagen K
Denmark
SWIFT/BIC: DABADKKK

USD account
Registration no.: 3001
Account no.: 4310-005029
IBAN: DK18 3000 4310 0050 29

DKK account
Registration no.: 3001
Account no.: 4310-821152
IBAN: DK90 3000 4310 8211 52

EUR account
Registration no.: 3001
Account no.: 3001-957171
IBAN: DK69 3000 3001 9571 71

irct

International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims



International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims

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The International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) is an independent international health-based professional organisation, which promotes and supports the rehabilitation of torture survivors and works for the prevention of torture worldwide