

WORLD ORGANISATION AGAINST TORTURE

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CONTENTS

MISSION	3
A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT	4
FOREWORD BY OMCT'S DIRECTOR	5
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES	6
URGENT CAMPAIGNS PROGRAMME	8
URGENT ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TORTURE PROGRAMME	10
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME	12
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS PROGRAMME	14
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAMME	16
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS PROGRAMME/ OBSERVATORY FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS	18
STATE COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME	20
OMCT EUROPE	22
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS	24
LIST OF OMCT DONORS	28
OMCT BODIES	30
PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS IN 2006	32
GLOSSARY	34

MISSION

Created in 1986, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) is today the main coalition of international non-governmental organisations fighting against torture, summary executions, enforced disappearances and all other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. With 282 affiliated organisations in its SOS-Torture network and many tens of thousands of correspondents throughout the world, OMCT is the biggest network of NGOs working for the protection and the promotion of human rights in the world.

Based in Geneva, OMCT's International Secretariat provides personalised medical, legal and/or social assistance to hundreds of torture victims, and disseminates urgent appeals across the world in order to protect individuals and to fight against impunity. Specific programmes allow it to provide support to women, children and human rights defenders. OMCT also submits individual communications and alternative reports to the special mechanisms of the United Nations (UN), and actively collaborates in the development of international norms for the protection of human rights.

OMCT enjoys a consultative status with the following institutions: the UN Economic and Social Council, the International Labour Organization, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, and the Council of Europe.

“On behalf of our Union, we would like to thank you for support given by [...] the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in what was a difficult period for us. Your assistance was crucial to us and to our future activities”

ARNOLD STEPANIAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE UNION “PUBLIC MOVEMENT MULTINATIONAL GEORGIA”, IN RESPONSE TO AN URGENT APPEAL BY THE OBSERVATORY

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Guided by a concern for efficiency, OMCT is engaged in the fight against torture through dedicated and targeted programmes, three of which are presented below.

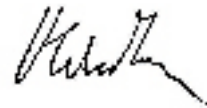
Launched immediately after the Organisation was established, the Urgent Campaigns Programme continues its work, by issuing appeals regarding specific victims (women or children) or by denouncing acts perpetrated against human rights defenders who are often a favourite target for repressive regimes.

For implementation of the State Compliance Programme, the year 2006 brought a major contribution in the form of four practical legal guides published in several languages and dealing with the international and regional human rights protection procedures (European, Inter-American, African and international human rights systems). These are precious tools for helping victims of torture and their defenders obtain justice via these various procedures. In 2006, the European Union agreed to provide substantial support for the continuation and development of the programme.

At its Manila Conference in 1991, OMCT was given a mandate to analyse the economic, social and cultural causes of violence and torture. The resulting programme continues its work and was further strengthened by our international conference, "Poverty, Inequality and Violence: Is there a human rights response?", held in Geneva in October 2005. The conference highlighted the links between the violation of economic, social and cultural rights and their consequences in terms of poverty, inequality and discrimination – which in turn increase the risks of torture, arbitrary detention, summary execution or enforced disappearances. Moreover, in 2006, OMCT also secured substantial funding from the European Union that will enable the International Secretariat to implement the recommendations adopted at the conference and to develop new activities, particularly in the field of training and education.

In parallel, the past year has been marked by efforts to rationalise and enhance the efficiency of the International Secretariat in Geneva, for the benefit of the 282 members of the SOS-Torture network. Several evaluation processes have enabled us to determine the extent to which these objectives are being met: one was conducted among network members and confirms the positive results stemming from our urgent appeals, as well as the increasing requests for our intervention from grassroots organisations. Other evaluations conducted with partners and donors have underscored the effective operation of the organisation, particularly in terms of its administrative and financial management – while also suggesting some useful measures to improve its efficiency, including professionalising the communication/fundraising sector.

OMCT's activities are possible only because of the resolute commitment of its team members, who often have to face a variety of obstacles in performing the tasks that the network expects of them, and because of the precious support of motivated volunteers who assist it through the Organisation Committee. Our action is more necessary than ever at a time when the United Nations is engaging in a process of reform which, one might legitimately fear, contrary to what is hoped, may not in fact result in reinforcing victim protection systems and guaranteeing full respect for human rights. The intervention of civil society and NGOs is more crucially relevant than ever. With this in mind, OMCT intends to play its role to the full, thanks to the added value conferred by its distinctive assets: a lightweight structure guaranteeing fast intervention, flexible working methods, and of course the inestimably valuable support of the SOS-Torture network.



Olivier Mach, PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

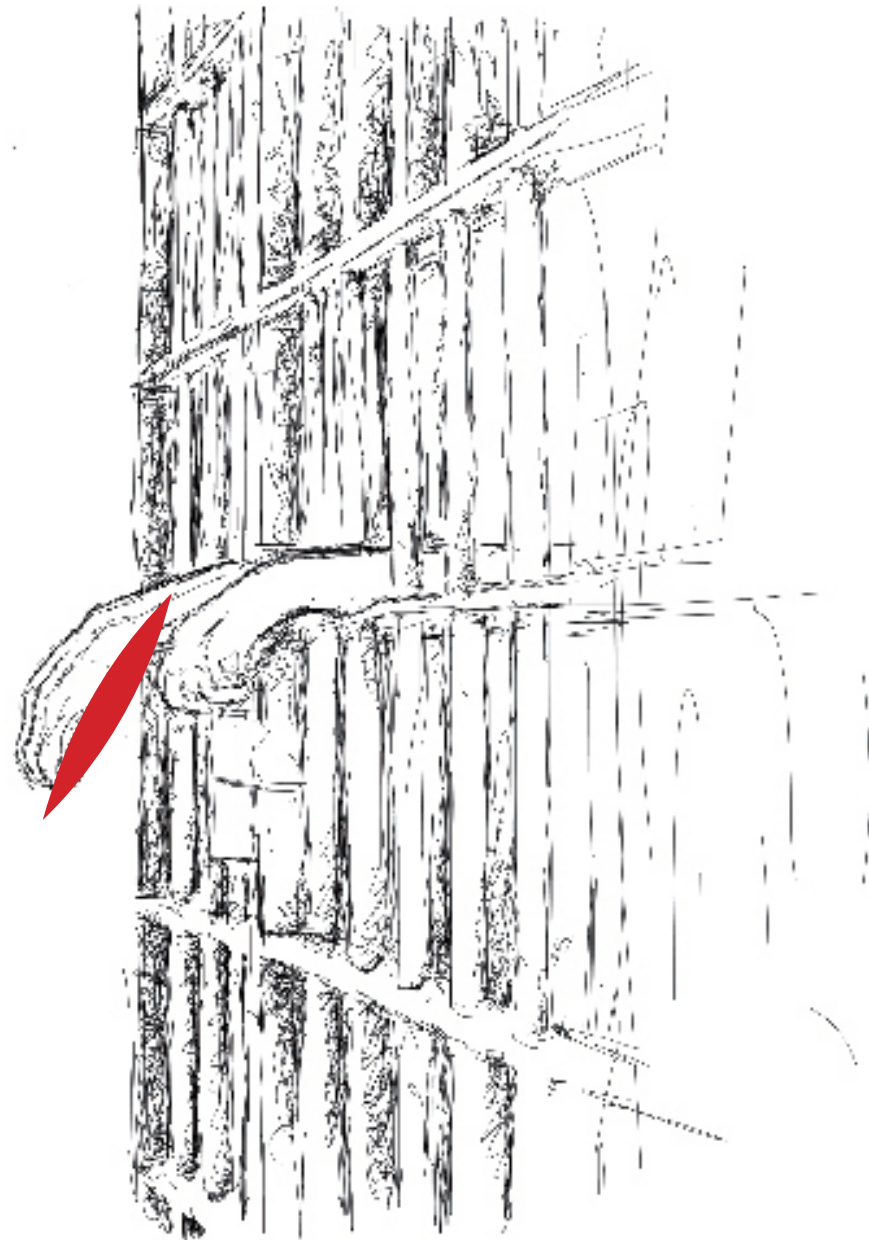


FOREWORD BY OMCT'S DIRECTOR

2006 will go down in the history of the UN as the year in which the Human Rights Council replaced the Commission that had been established in the wake of the Second World War.

As soon as the reform project was submitted for consultation, OMCT – while recognising the imperious need for change – expressed strong concerns about the new structure. Undoubtedly, the essential principle of a periodic and systematic review of the human rights practices of all States was an innovative idea that was positive in itself, but it was not enough to guarantee an objective, balanced and non-selective examination. The instigators of the reform had not dared to take their reasoning to its logical conclusion. A solid body of independent experts should have been set up, charged with the delicate task of performing periodic evaluations according to rigorous criteria uniformly applicable to all States. On such a basis, and while taking account of the specific nature of each case, the political authority represented by the ambassadors sitting on the Council could have adopted the most appropriate measures within the boundaries imposed by the necessities of “realpolitik”. Such a “judgment” would thus have been balanced and comparable for all, even if the follow-up and measures stemming from this scrutiny were to remain variable – and therefore debatable – owing to the respective weight and influence of each State. By offering merely an evaluation for all, and not providing for the essential separation of roles that is indispensable to the principle of checks and balances, the advocates of the reform have raised expectations that the new institution is bound to disappoint. Today, those who enthusiastically welcomed this reform are reduced to fighting, as we are, to save the assets that remain from the Commission on Human Rights.

However, these difficulties and the resulting uncertainties with regard to the future of the Human Rights Council do not have purely negative effects. They oblige the NGOs such as ours that are fighting to promote respect for human rights to conceive their actions, not in terms of established procedures and institutions,



but by diversifying their forms of intervention according to varied needs and possibilities. For, it is sad to say, torture has not lost any ground in 2006. On the contrary, the security-related fears engendered by terrorist attacks involving massive loss of life have led growing segments of the population to show a dangerous tendency to accept resorting to extreme means. To meet this new challenge, we cannot be content with simply reinforcing the legal mechanisms which, although essential, are inadequate to eradicate this scourge. We must extend our fight to the search for the underlying causes of torture and to intervening on levels such as prevention, promotion, the defence of victims and the punishment of perpetrators, as well as those whose lives have been broken by this intolerable practice.

OMCT, building on a network that is strongly diversified in both geographical and operational terms, can rely on the cooperation of more than 280 organisations around the globe.

The OMCT's approach from grassroots level up towards the national or international systems, has led to better use of existing mechanisms and promotion of what is necessary when they are lacking, and to a determination to tackle the causes of the violations, even though the methods and the framework conceived to prevent them need to be entirely rethought.

The present report provides a glimpse of these ongoing efforts. The sheer diversity of the interventions it reveals does not stem from feverish activism; its coherence and unity instead lie in an unswerving loyalty to victims' expectations. This is made possible by the active involvement and commitment of a wide range of NGOs that have agreed to pool their efforts in the fight against torture, each according to its own specific "modus operandi".



Eric Sottas, DIRECTOR

OVERVIEW OF OMCT PROGRAMMES

URGENT CAMPAIGNS PROGRAMME

The Urgent Campaigns Programme is one of OMCT's core programmes and aims to react as quickly as possible to cases of torture and other forms of violence occurring around the world by disseminating urgent interventions to carefully targeted audiences (intergovernmental bodies, specialised organisations, NGOs, individuals, etc.). The appeals are based on the information submitted by member organisations of the SOS-Torture network, and other contacts, and seek to denounce human rights violations in order to protect victims from further abuses. They also call for reparation and redress to be awarded and for the perpetrators of the acts to be brought to justice.

URGENT ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TORTURE PROGRAMME

OMCT provides indispensable, urgent medical, legal and/or social assistance to men, women and children who are victims of torture. Thanks to the SOS-Torture network, OMCT is able to identify and verify requests for urgent assistance in order to grant the necessary aid within a very short timeframe.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME

The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme aims to protect individuals and groups from torture, arbitrary detention, summary execution, enforced disappearance and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment by identifying and reacting to the economic, social and cultural roots of such acts. It does this by developing a better understanding of the links between violations of economic, social and cultural rights and the poverty, inequality and discrimination that lead to such violence.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS PROGRAMME

The Children's Rights Programme promotes the protection of children against torture and other forms of violence. Almost all States of the world have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights



of the Child, adopted on 20 November 1989. The Children's Rights Programme aims to ensure that those rights are not only recognised in theory, but also implemented in practice.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAMME

The main goal of the Violence against Women Programme is to offer protection to female victims of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, such as rape, and domestic violence. It also seeks to ensure the respect and promotion of the human rights of women, on equal terms with the respect and promotion of the human rights enjoyed by men.

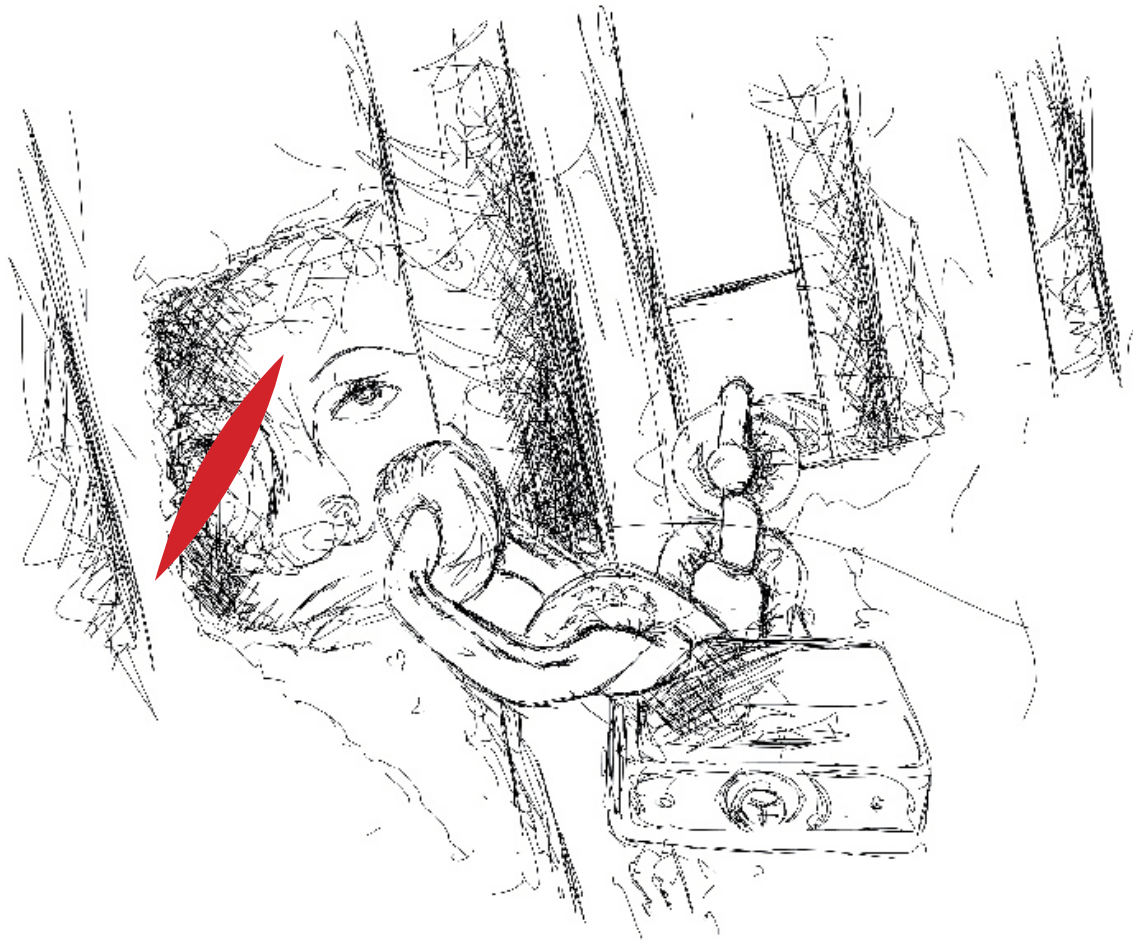
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS PROGRAMME/OBSERVATORY FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Owing to their commitment, human rights defenders, such as lawyers, NGOs, and trade unions, are prime targets for many regimes. NGOs and individual defenders constitute the link between victims and regional and international solidarity actions. If that link is broken, victims no longer have any means of making their situation known and violations go unpunished.

In 1997, OMCT joined forces with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) to create the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. The Observatory provides concrete protection to human rights defenders who are harassed as a consequence of their commitment to defending universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms; builds the capacities of local NGOs, while affirming their indispensable role in promoting peace, the rule of law and democracy in all parts of the world; and mobilizes the international community to act against the repression to which defenders are subjected.

STATE COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME

The State Compliance Programme follows up States' international commitments under human rights instruments. It complements the Urgent Campaigns Programme by facilitating access for



victims and local NGOs to intergovernmental mechanisms to fight torture and providing them with the legal and practical support needed to participate in the various procedures of specialised bodies such as the UN Committee against Torture and the Human Rights Committee. The Programme also strives for effective implementation of international instruments by the States Parties, especially the concluding recommendations adopted by those specialised bodies.

URGENT CAMPAIGNS PROGRAMME



The Urgent Campaigns Programme is one of OMCT's core programmes and aims to react as quickly as possible to cases of torture and other forms of violence occurring around the world by disseminating urgent interventions to carefully targeted audiences (intergovernmental bodies, specialised organisations, NGOs, individuals, etc.). The appeals are based on the information submitted by member organisations of the SOS-Torture network, and other contacts, and seek to denounce human rights violations in order to protect victims from further abuses. They also call for reparation and redress to be awarded and for the perpetrators of the acts to be brought to justice.

Urgent interventions (appeals, letters, press releases), many of which are prepared in conjunction with other OMCT programmes, are sent out as quickly as possible and the recipients well targeted in order to maximise the impact. OMCT also sends out **bilateral communications**, written at the request of members of the SOS-Torture network, which address situations that are not as pressing or as recent as those requiring an urgent appeal, but which nevertheless require intervention by the Organisation.

In 2006, OMCT issued 217 urgent interventions concerning 1,273 individual victims and 9 groups in 44 countries¹. In 2006, greater emphasis was placed on following up urgent appeals with relevant organisations, be they members of the SOS-Torture network or not, international and regional human rights mechanisms, and the States concerned.

The Urgent Campaigns Programme is regularly called upon by the various UN mechanisms set up to deal with country-specific or thematic human rights issues – the Special Procedures – to provide further information on the cases or countries contained in its appeals. The Programme is able to respond rapidly in most cases owing to the well-established and personal nature of relations with the Special Procedures². In 2006, the Programme





“The appreciation shown by the OHCHR and the Special Rapporteurs for the precise and detailed information on cases of human rights violations is also a sign of recognition. A high-level representative of the OHCHR stated in an interview that it would not be possible for this office to do its work properly without the information submitted by serious and reliable local NGOs through the intermediary of international NGOs, such as OMCT.”

Elisabeth Lewin, “Giving Voice to the Victims of Torture, an Evaluation of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)”, commissioned by SIDA and the Oak Foundation, December 2006

responded to requests from and worked with, *inter alia*, the Special Rapporteurs on Torture and on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, and the Working Groups on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and on Arbitrary Detention.

In 2006, the Urgent Campaigns Programme was subject to two evaluations: an internal one carried out by OMCT with the 282 members of the SOS-Torture network, and an external one led by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Oak Foundation, concerning the years 2003 to 2005. These two evaluations clearly showed that:

- many urgent appeals lead to positive results;
- the demand for urgent appeals by local organisations is high; and
- the level of satisfaction of participating NGOs and their confidence in the way OMCT manages the programme is also high.

More precisely, with regard to the impact of urgent appeals on the situation of individuals, 94% of those that responded (some 100 members of the network) felt that urgent appeals have a positive impact on the situation of individuals.

1. Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Maldives, Morocco, Mexico, Nepal, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

2 Mechanisms set up by the UN Commission on Human Rights to deal with country-specific or thematic human rights issues (i.e. Special Rapporteur on Torture).

URGENT ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TORTURE PROGRAMME





OMCT provides indispensable, urgent medical, legal and/or social assistance to men, women and children who are victims of torture. Thanks to the SOS-Torture network, OMCT is able to identify and verify requests for urgent assistance in order to grant the necessary aid within a very short timeframe.

In 2006, urgent medical, legal and/or social assistance was provided to 180 victims of torture (113 men, 67 women including 38 children) from 23 countries: Angola, Bhutan, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Congo-Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Mauritania, Peru, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela and Yemen.

Torture victims, or those at risk of being tortured, frequently face serious social problems through loss of their possessions, employment, arrest and arbitrary detention. The situation is even more tragic if the victims have families who are dependent on them. Some victims of torture are helped to leave the country where they were at risk; others are granted aid for a limited period to enable them to overcome their difficulties, including after expatriation.

For women and men suffering from health problems caused by the acts of torture suffered, OMCT might cover the costs of medical treatment or put them in touch with a centre specialised in the rehabilitation of torture victims. The moral and psychological support provided by OMCT is just as important to victims as financial aid, as they are comforted by the fact that their cases have reached the public eye and that States will eventually have to answer for their actions.

Torture victims may also receive legal assistance from OMCT. They may require help in seeking political asylum in a host country; exposing the treatment they have suffered; applying to the courts to have the perpetrators brought to trial; seeking compensation through national or international courts.

The Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture Programme cooperates with the State Compliance Programme in assisting victims in submitting individual complaints to UN mechanisms, such as the Committee Against Torture and the Human Rights Committee.

In some countries, victims of torture require the assistance of foreign lawyers who are not subject to pressure by the national authorities. In such cases, OMCT with other NGOs might undertake missions to the relevant courts or send lawyers to visit prisoners and act as their defence.

Furthermore, OMCT helps organise events, such as round-tables, to raise public awareness of the issue of torture and to encourage authorities and NGOs to take action, such as in Colombia and Sierra Leone on the occasion of International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June 2006).

In 2006, the Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture Programme was subject to an internal evaluation carried out by OMCT with the 282 members of the SOS-Torture network. Those that responded confirmed that the programme provided tangible medical, legal and social support to victims. They also felt that OMCT had reacted quickly and concretely, with clear criteria for providing assistance, thereby facilitating the efforts of their local organisations to obtain support and refuge for those affected.

“(...) First I want to thank you for the help that you gave to me and wish that God gives you more and more so you can help those who need help.”

LEBANON, JANUARY 2006

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME

The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme aims to protect individuals and groups from torture, arbitrary detention, summary execution, enforced disappearance and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment by identifying and reacting to the economic, social and cultural roots of such acts. It does this by developing a better understanding of the links between violations of economic, social and cultural rights and the poverty, inequality and discrimination that lead to such violence.

Economic, social and cultural factors are all-pervasive and therefore an integral part of many of the cases dealt with by OMCT. As a result, the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme is often heavily involved in the activities of the other OMCT programmes.

As highlighted by the annual report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture published in 2000, people who are socially and economically marginalised are the ones who, in most cases, are subject to inadmissible treatment by police or armed forces. This is not a coincidence, but in fact shows that acts of torture are just one aspect of a complex web of violations.

The Programme works with national NGO partners to help them identify and act on the economic, social and cultural root causes of torture and other forms of ill-treatment. It assists them in finding the most efficient means to prevent these violations, for example by preparing alternative reports¹ for submission to UN Treaty Bodies or by circulating urgent appeals to the Special Procedures.

In 2006, the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme issued 18 urgent interventions concerning 2,000 direct victims in 10 countries: Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Mexico, and Sudan.

The process of preparing the interventions also serves to build the capacities of the NGOs concerned, which often realise, through their actions, that torture results from violations other than those that are obvious *prima facie*. During the year, OMCT helped national NGOs prepare a report on agrarian policy, human rights and violence in Egypt, which was presented to the institutions of the European Union, and information on forced labour and violations of economic, social and cultural rights in Myanmar, which was presented to the 94th International Labour Conference.

The Programme also prepared two reports on the economic, social and cultural root causes of violence in Guatemala and South Africa, which were presented to the UN Committee against Torture. Furthermore, OMCT organised a hearing at the request of the European Parliament, during which it discussed with members of parliament means of pre-emptive intervention in situations where socio-economic imbalances might be at the origin of acts of torture.

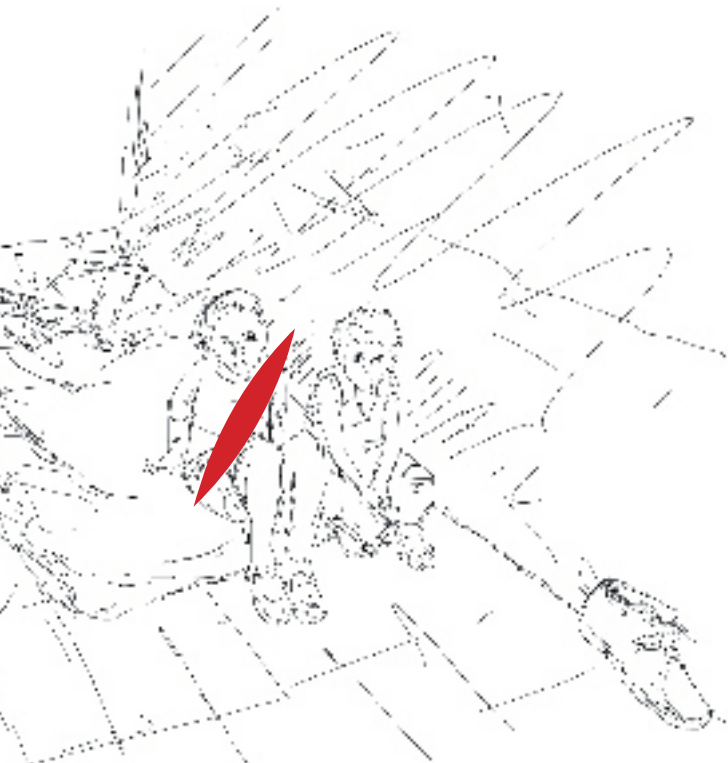
OMCT published the report of the 2005 international conference "Poverty, Inequality and Violence: Is there a Human Rights





Response?" and prepared proposals for implementing the conference's recommendations. The Organization also published the results of an interdisciplinary study "Attacking the Root Causes of Torture: Poverty, Inequality and Violence".

OMCT continued to raise awareness among UN human rights bodies regarding the link between violence and violations of economic, social and cultural rights, and to advocate the need for an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. OMCT thus welcomed the UN's decision to begin drafting such an instrument and the decision by the UN Sub-commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights to approve the draft guidelines and transmit them for action to the UN Human Rights Council.



"Grassroots organisations, such as OMCT, have daily contact with people victimised by violence and socio-economic injustice. They provide a link between the people and the justice system by: informing them of their rights, helping them frame and voice their concerns; consolidating group action; ensuring access to legal representation; and monitoring decisions. Where change is required at policy level or in influencing traditions, civil society has a crucial role in forging partnerships with policy-makers and communities and in identifying and analysing policy options based on respect for human rights. Your discussions here provide an opportunity to make high-level political declarations work on the ground."

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MS LOUISE ARBOUR,
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS,
GENEVA, 4 OCTOBER 2005

¹ The reports are an alternative to reports by States Parties, which do not always portray country situations in an unbiased way.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS PROGRAMME



The Children's Rights Programme promotes the protection of children against torture and other forms of violence. Almost all States of the world have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted on 20 November 1989. The Children's Rights Programme aims to ensure that those rights are not only recognised in theory, but also implemented in practice.

Acts of torture committed against children – a particularly abject practice – are, paradoxically, one of the least documented types of human rights violation, for several reasons. First, States try to hide these crimes as they raise more indignation than other kinds. Second, children find it harder than other categories of

victims to make their voice heard. Finally, crimes against children are very often committed by people who have an acknowledged authority, such as staff in an orphanage, but who are not legally considered as agents of the State. As a consequence, the ill-treatment they inflict is not defined as torture.



The Children's Rights Programme drafts and circulates urgent interventions¹ and submits to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child alternative reports², based on analysis of States Parties' compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, so that these violations do not remain unknown and unsanctioned. In 2006, the Programme prepared and sent out 39 urgent appeals concerning 267 children and 2 groups in 15 countries: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Sudan and Venezuela. In addition, it sent out seven press releases and four bilateral communications and submitted three NGO alternative reports on Benin, Chile and Kenya to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The reports are prepared in close cooperation with local partner NGOs, and preparatory missions are often carried out for such alternative reports. Meetings with field NGOs, local authorities and governmental representatives, visits to custodial premises, child detention centres or protection services are organised in order to obtain first-hand information and to establish or strengthen contacts with the local NGOs.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is not the only body to deal with these violations. Within the framework of the State Compliance Programme, the Children's Rights Programme co-writes reports that are submitted to the UN Human Rights Committee and the UN Committee against Torture. The aim is to contribute to a more effective integration of children's rights issues into the Committees' work. Issues that have been addressed involve child torture, including extra-judicial killings, administration of juvenile justice, child soldiers, children living or working on the streets, and child labour in general. In 2006, the Programme prepared the children's rights sections of four alternative reports on Burundi, Georgia, Guatemala, and Tajikistan, ready for submission to the Committee against Torture, and the children's rights sections of two alternative reports on

Honduras and Rwanda, ready for submission to the Human Rights Committee. OMCT also strives to increase the capacity of its local NGO partners to make effective use of international human rights mechanisms.

Since 2003, OMCT has been a member of the Inter-Agency Coordination Panel on Juvenile Justice, an expert committee established by a 1997 Resolution of the Economic and Social Council. The Panel, which comprises UN agencies and NGOs, aims to coordinate policies, projects and activities among international organisations dealing with national authorities in the reform of juvenile justice.

OMCT is also an active member of the NGO Sub-group on the Human Rights Council where it lobbies for children's rights, and a member of the Sub-group on Juvenile Justice of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 2006, the Sub-group contributed to the General Comment of Committee on the Rights of the Child, advising on issues such as the minimum age of criminal responsibility, rehabilitation, gender mainstreaming, and the prohibition of corporal punishment as a judicial sanction.

In 2006, urgent interventions circulated by the Children's Rights Programme were assessed with members of the SOS-Torture network. Analysis of the responses showed that those who considered the appeals to have a positive impact felt that they helped protect children and their rights, giving them a sense of security and solidarity. Concretely, by putting pressure on public authorities, members felt they had contributed to a reduction of the number of victims and the severity of the violations. They cited cases where appeals had led to positive change, such as the dismantling of child prostitution rings, the decline of impunity, the demobilisation of children soldiers, and the reduction of trafficking in children. One member indicated that the appeal process had also promoted university research on such issues.

1. See Urgent Campaigns Programme

2. See Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAMME

The main goal of the Violence against Women Programme is to offer protection to female victims of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, such as rape, and domestic violence. It also seeks to ensure the respect and promotion of the human rights of women, on equal terms with the respect and promotion of the human rights enjoyed by men.

By issuing urgent appeals, letters and press releases, OMCT aims to prevent and respond to acts of torture or other forms of violence against women. Through these urgent interventions¹, prepared in partnership with national NGOs, OMCT also raises awareness of the issue of gender-based violence, including its causes and consequences, among members of the SOS-Torture network, international, regional and national human rights mechanisms and other interested groups, and seeks remedy and reparation for victims. A large number of the interventions concern rape and other forms of sexual violence.

In 2006, the Violence against Women Programme prepared and sent out 25 urgent interventions concerning 91 women and girls in 12 different countries: Bangladesh, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Sudan and Turkey. It also issued six press releases.

Since OMCT began to issue urgent interventions on violence against women and to raise the awareness of members of the SOS-Torture network of the problem, there has been a perceptible increase in gender-sensitive information coming from the network. As a result, OMCT has been able to better target its actions and gain a broader view of the causes and consequences of violence against women. The number of urgent interventions with a gender-specific component almost doubled between 2005 and 2006. As gender-specific violence is a widespread phenomenon, the Violence against Women Programme works closely with the other OMCT programmes.

Within the framework of the State Compliance Programme, the Violence against Women Programme participates in the

preparation and presentation of reports to the UN Human Rights Committee and the UN Committee against Torture. Furthermore, the Programme also cooperates with other relevant bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The reports are prepared in conjunction with local women's rights organisations that play a key role in preparatory and follow-up missions to the country concerned. In 2006, the Programme prepared the women's rights sections of four alternative reports on Burundi, Georgia, Guatemala, and Tajikistan, as well as an alternative report on State violence against women in Mexico, for submission to the Committee against Torture. It also prepared the women's rights sections of two alternative reports on Honduras and Rwanda for submission to the Human Rights Committee, and submitted an alternative report on State violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a briefing note on Georgia and a preliminary report on Mexico to CEDAW.

A persistent challenge faced by the Programme with regard to follow-up of identified cases is that in many societies surviving victims of rape or other forms of sexual violence are often threatened with expulsion from their homes or communities, or are at risk of being killed or subjected to further violence at the hands of members of their families or communities or by the perpetrators themselves. In some countries, women victims of rape risk being charged with and condemned for adultery. Faced with these consequences, women victims of sexual torture are reluctant to report the crime, which leads to impunity. The Violence against Women Programme aims to make public such cases, naming and shaming perpetrators, and calling on States to assume their role in prevention, investigation, punishment of those responsible, and protection and redress for victims.





Once there is a decrease in impunity, fewer violations will be committed.

OMCT also strives for the integration of a gender perspective into the work of all Treaty Bodies². Furthermore, OMCT has noticed that the treaties and their monitoring bodies remain largely unknown or are under-exploited by both victims of violence against women and national women's human rights NGOs, a problem it strives to redress.

OMCT is a major protagonist in the International Campaign on Women Human Rights Defenders. Often as a result of its urgent appeals and press releases, there has been an increase in the denunciation of cases of torture and extra-judicial executions of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender individuals.

Analysis of the responses of the members of the SOS-Torture network to the evaluation carried out in 2006 showed that they felt that urgent appeals issued by the Programme supported the efforts of women towards establishing their rights and/or having them recognized by authorities, families, businesses and other institutions. As women are empowered, they gain more political power, supported by the existence of a global opinion movement, which works to raise awareness and reduce impunity and violence. Members' responses also revealed that appeals often become advocacy tools for national organisations and encourage them to work together. They also assist lawyers in their work in forming new legislation, for example, on femicide in Guatemala and Mexico. Authorities, for their part, feel observed and pressured by the international community to demonstrate progress on this issue.

1. See Urgent Campaigns Programme

2. See Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS PROGRAMME/OBSERVATORY FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN

Owing to their commitment, human rights defenders, such as lawyers, NGOs members and trade unions leaders, are prime targets for many regimes. NGOs and individual defenders constitute the link between victims and regional and international solidarity actions. If that link is broken, victims no longer have any means of making their situation known and violations go unpunished.

In 1997, OMCT joined forces with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) to create the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. The Observatory provides concrete protection to defenders who are harassed as a consequence of their commitment to defending universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms; builds the capacities of local NGOs, while affirming their indispensable role in promoting peace, the rule of law and democracy in all parts of the world; and mobilizes the international community to act against the repression to which defenders are subjected.

Urgent interventions¹ are at the core of the alert system of the Observatory, which aims to break the isolation faced by numerous defenders at the local level, and to improve their situation by securing their release or the withdrawal of charges and judicial proceedings against them, or by encouraging the adoption of protection measures. In 2006, the Observatory sent out 241 urgent appeals, 61 press releases and 26 bilateral communications concerning the cases of 594 defenders and 92 NGOs in 61 countries (see box).

The Observatory's urgent interventions constitute an important source of information for the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders and the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. In addition, the Observatory's urgent interventions are systematically sent to other regional mechanisms for the protection of human rights

defenders, in particular the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The Observatory may also provide material assistance to a defender (or a member of his or her family) who faces a situation of serious risk or danger, or when the existence or the operational survival of an organisation depends mainly on additional resources, in which case the Observatory might provide financial support for its institutional development. In 2006, two human rights defenders from the Democratic Republic of Congo and two from Uzbekistan were provided with material assistance either to cover livelihood costs while in detention; residence costs in a country of temporary asylum; or medical costs.

In support of the above activities, the Observatory organizes international missions: to determine facts, support individual defenders and NGOs, for instance during their trial, and to raise awareness of violations. In 2006, it undertook four international fact-finding missions to Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Peru and Vietnam, and seven judicial observation or assistance missions in Ethiopia (2), Israel, Turkey (2), and Zimbabwe (2). It also published six mission reports on Bolivia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Peru, the Russian Federation, and Thailand.

In 2006, the Observatory also attended 13 international and regional forums with a view to mobilizing inter-governmental institutions and strengthening human rights protection mechanisms.

In March 2006, the Observatory launched its 2005 Annual Report, *Steadfast in Protest*, which addressed the cases of 1,172 oppressed defenders and the obstacles to freedom of association in nearly 90 countries around the world. In addition to reporting the repression affecting individuals or groups, the report also aimed to analyse trends in that repression and the strategies implemented by a number of actors, particularly States. The





publication of the Observatory’s Annual Report has now become key to mobilising the media, and the report is to be further used to draw the public’s attention to the repression of defenders.

In 2006, the Observatory was subject to an external evaluation covering the period 2003 to 2005, which was carried out by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Oak Foundation. This evaluation, “Giving Voice to the Victims of Torture”, highlights the positive impact of the Observatory’s urgent interventions and its fact-finding and judiciary observation missions: “Together with the Urgent Campaigns Programme, the Observatory is regarded as the most important programme by many local NGOs. A highly efficient worldwide monitoring and messaging system has been put in place. There is plenty of evidence that many appeals and missions produce tangible results for individuals and organisations in terms of protection and strengthened moral.”



COUNTRIES OF OBSERVATORY INTERVENTION

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo-Brazzaville, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco/Western Sahara, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

1. See Urgent Campaigns Programme

STATE COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME

The State Compliance Programme follows up States' international commitments under human rights instruments. It complements other OMCT's programmes by facilitating access for victims and local NGOs to intergovernmental mechanisms such as the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee. The Programme also strives for effective implementation of international instruments by the States Parties, especially the concluding recommendations adopted by those specialised bodies.

The State Compliance Programme works with the other OMCT programmes, particularly the Violence against Women Programme and the Children's Rights Programme, to help draft and submit alternative reports. In 2006, it submitted three alternative reports on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Honduras, and Rwanda to the Human Rights Committee and four alternative reports on Burundi, Georgia, Guatemala and Tajikistan to the Committee against Torture.

It also conducts preparatory missions for the drafting of NGO reports and follow-up missions to check on the effective implementation of the recommendations adopted by treaty bodies, ensuring that civil society, the national authorities and the media are fully involved. In 2006, preparatory or follow-up missions were undertaken to Albania, Brazil, Burundi, DRC, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Rwanda, and Tajikistan. The Programme also provides logistical and/or financial support to enable NGOs to attend committee sessions in Geneva or New York when their country is scheduled for review by one of the Treaty Bodies¹. In 2006, 22 NGO representatives received such support.

The Programme's individual complaints activity assists victims of torture in securing international remedies when recourse to their own domestic courts fails. Such remedies include compensation for harm suffered, rehabilitation, and the investigation and prosecution of the offenders. In 2006, the Programme filed four

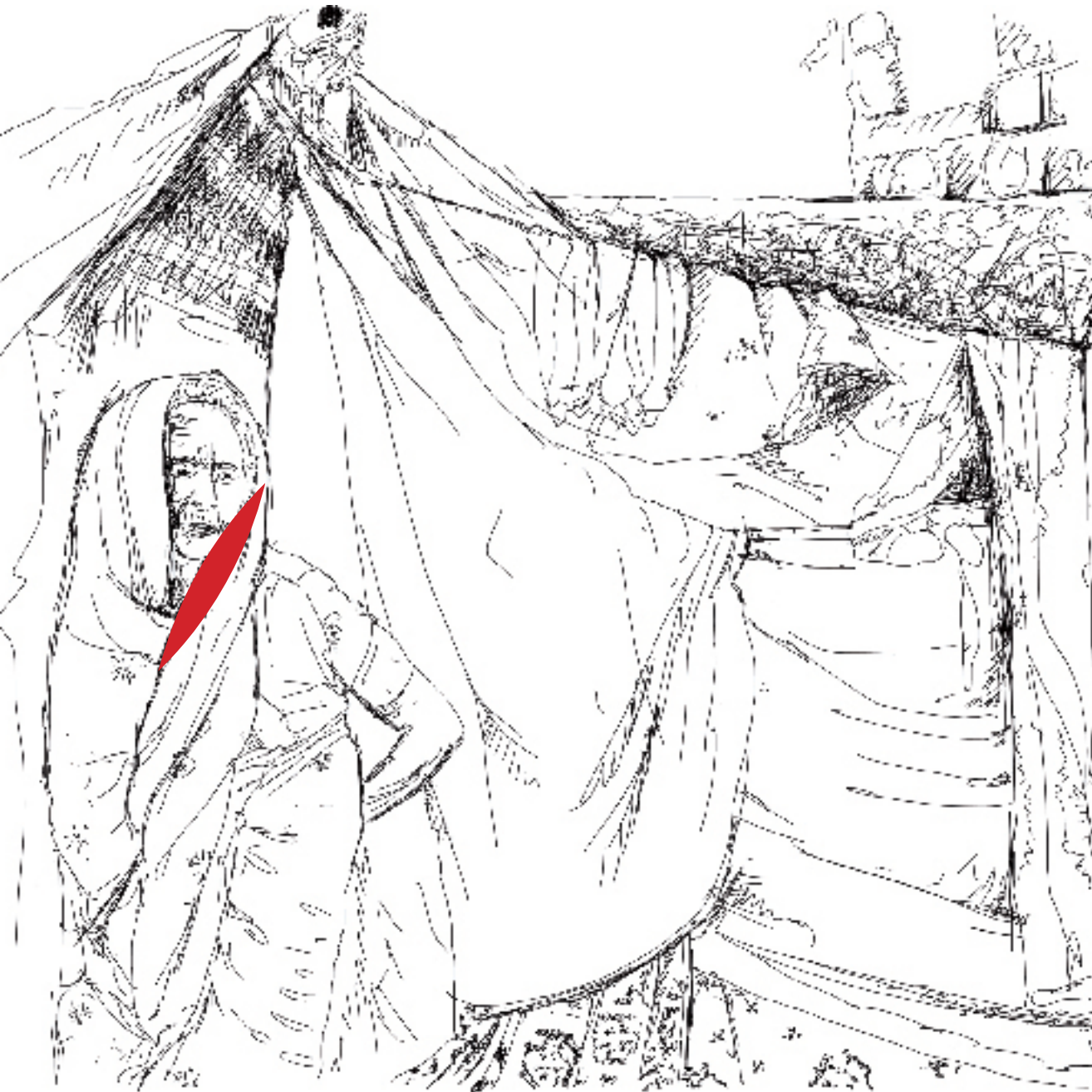
individual complaints before the Committee against Torture and the Human Rights Committee against Greece (2), the Russian Federation, and Tunisia.

In the longer term, the Programme endeavours to improve individual victims' access to UN Treaty Bodies by broadly disseminating technical information on how to file claims with these mechanisms. Collaborating closely with local partners in the screening, researching, drafting and filing of these complaints serves to build the NGOs' capacities by familiarising them with the relevant procedures, jurisprudence and practical considerations, and by doing so, to contribute to the eradication of torture and ill-treatment in their countries.

In 2006, OMCT published a four-volume *Handbook Series* providing a step-by-step guide to the practice, procedure, and jurisprudence of the human rights mechanisms (European, Inter-American, African and international human rights systems) competent to examine individual complaints. By publishing the *Handbook Series*, OMCT seeks to build the capacity of civil society in general, and of the SOS-Torture network in particular, in order to combat impunity and secure remedies for torture victims.

Another important long-term goal is to contribute to the development of the case law of the committees and other international and national legal bodies by litigating strategic cases.





The independent evaluation of the Torture Prevention Project that was implemented under the State Compliance Programme from June 2003 to November 2006 showed that the majority of national NGOs that took part in the project and responded to the assessment questionnaire felt that it enabled them to improve their knowledge of the functioning of the Committees concerned and to strengthen their capacity to prepare alternative reports for submission to these mechanisms. Cooperation with OMCT was also assessed positively.

EVALUANDA, "EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE TORTURE PREVENTION PROJECT", DECEMBER 2006

1. See Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme



OMCT-EUROPE

The mission of the European office of OMCT is to advocate a more coherent and efficient European policy on human rights, internally, through the successful integration of human rights norms within the Member States of the European Union (EU), and externally, in terms of the EU's contribution to defending and promoting human rights in third countries, particularly those relating to torture and ill-treatment.

OMCT-Europe ensures that information collated and analysis carried out by OMCT is rapidly disseminated to key actors in European institutions. In 2006, this included feeding and updating the urgent interventions database, sending out alternative reports, and making handbooks available. OMCT-Europe maintains direct contact with the key individuals in these institutions, and the members of the European Parliament sympathetic to OMCT's concerns.

Furthermore, through weekly newsletters and briefing papers, OMCT-Europe informs the International Secretariat, and thus the entire network, about the policies and meetings of European institutions relevant to the organisation's mandate. This allows OMCT to contribute, in a timely manner, to the debates and initiatives under way in those institutions, such as the evaluation of the EU guidelines on human rights defenders by the Austrian presidency of the EU, the Annual Report of the European Parliament on human rights in the world 2006 and the EU's policy on the matter. OMCT also plays its part within the Council of Europe, notably through the human rights working group. In particular in 2006, it sought to mobilize the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights on the issue of human rights defenders, and participated in the colloquium "Protecting and supporting human rights defenders in Europe".

OMCT-Europe also pays particular attention to the funds that the European Union devotes to human rights activities, so as to ensure that an integrated approach to the fight against torture is seen as a priority activity. OMCT-Europe participated in negotiations regarding the adoption of a new European instrument on democracy and human rights during 2006. It advocated a separate financial instrument in the field of the promoting democracy and human rights, with the fight against torture and ill-treatments remaining one of the thematic priorities, and sought to mobilize EU institutions to increase protection for human rights defenders.

Finally, European office of OMCT took part in the development of a study financed by the European Parliament that aimed to evaluate the implementation of the EU guidelines on torture and other cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment. The study was carried out in partnership with an independent expert, whom OMCT-Europe assisted by preparing a table of general analysis of the situation in 30 countries and by conducting two missions, to Egypt and Ukraine. The results of the study would be presented to the European Parliament's Sub-committee on Human Rights in mid-2007.



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

MARCEL LAUPER - EXPERT COMPTABLE  - GENÈVE

RAPPORT du vérificateur des comptes
À l'attention du Conseil exécutif de

L'ORGANISATION MONDIALE CONTRE LA TORTURE - SOS TORTURE

Conformément au mandat que votre Conseil a bien voulu nous confier, nous avons vérifié les comptes annuels 2006 arrêtés au 31 décembre 2006.

Nous avons constaté la concordance de l'état de fortune et du compte de dépenses et recettes avec la comptabilité tenue avec exactitude.

L'exercice dégage un excédent de dépenses de CHF 53'872.65. Nous confirmons la bien fondée des actifs de CHF 1'508'338.76.

En conclusion, nous vous recommandons l'approbation des comptes qui vous sont soumis.

L'engage de son nom

Marcel LAUPER

Genève, le 17 avril 2007

ANNEXE I : Etat de fortune au 31 décembre 2006

ANNEXE II : Compte de recettes et dépenses 2006

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Executive Council of

THE WORLD ORGANISATION AGAINST TORTURE - SOS-TORTURE

In accordance with the mandate which we have been entrusted by your General Assembly, we have audited the annual accounts for 2006 up to 31 December 2006.

We have noted that the balance sheet and the statements of income and expenditure exactly concur with the books, which have been accurately kept.

The financial year has shown an excess in spending of CHF 53'872.65. We confirm the legitimacy of the assets of CHF 1'508'338.76.

In conclusion, we recommend the approval of the accounts submitted to us.

The auditors:

Marcel LAUPER

Geneva, 17 April 2007

ANNEX I : Balance sheet as at 31 December 2006

ANNEX II : Statement of income and expenditure in 2006



Annex I

BALANCE SHEET AS OF	31/12/2006	31/12/2005
	CHF	CHF
Assets		
Cash funds	873.50	2,971.34
Postal check account	114,049.52	19,565.94
Banks	1,001,695.32	1,136,203.96
	<u>1,116,618.34</u>	<u>1,158,741.24</u>
Contributions	251,064.36	222,515.05
Costs paid in advance	140,656.06	71,057.13
	<u>1,508,338.76</u>	<u>1,452,313.42</u>
Liabilities		
Grants paid in advance	396,041.93	6,895.00
Creditors	53,362.49	231,535.90
Other liabilities	475,034.55	556,110.08
	<u>924,438.97</u>	<u>794,540.98</u>
Provision for specific activities	490,000.00	490,000.00
Differed income	162,718.25	182,718.25
	<u>1,577,157.22</u>	<u>1,467,259.23</u>
Deficit		
Deficit brought forward	14,945.81	0.00
Surplus expenditure	53,872.65	14,945.81
	<u>68,818.46</u>	<u>14,945.81</u>

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ON 31 DECEMBER 2006

(with 2005 comparative)

Annex II

INCOME

	YEAR 2006		YEAR 2005	
	CHF		CHF	
		3,120,936.50		2,977,493.78
Membership fees	5,145.54		9,397.85	
Donations «Club des Cent»	53,500.00		110,000.00	
Private donations	229,096.25		302,830.00	
Gala evening / Vernissage / Bridge	145,168.38		116,338.90	
Bulletins and various donations	15,870.05		36,889.64	
Federal, cantonal, communal grants	87,400.00		190,450.00	
Grants from European governments	743,265.99		707,316.00	
Grants from foundations and others	294,965.60		45,858.12	
Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture	293,143.94		300,569.56	
Children's Rights	65,574.07		126,424.42	
Violence against Women	95,776.21		104,832.28	
Human Rights Defenders / Observatory	132,226.00		119,709.00	
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	0.00		318,600.85	
State Compliance	872,304.47		450,309.16	
Urgent Campaigns	68,750.00		37,968.00	
Audit	18,750.00		0.00	



	YEAR 2006		YEAR 2005	
	CHF		CHF	
EXPENDITURE		-3,187,356.53		-2,993,870.98
Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture	304,548.02		312,184.82	
Children's Rights	265,895.46		171,661.40	
Violence against Women	161,809.97		202,418.71	
Human Rights Defenders / Observatory	289,708.76		309,695.55	
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	225,666.30		418,225.85	
State Compliance	1,453,681.71		918,568.32	
Urgent Campaigns	209,436.43		102,897.00	
Training	21,522.75		11,363.55	
Extensions	27,822.71		151,490.25	
Promotion	148,550.72		139,220.59	
Special and unforeseen events	73,610.76		219,566.08	
Miscellaneous	5,102.94		36,578.86	
RESULTS BEFORE CREDITORS INTERESTS AND OTHER INCOMES		-66,420.03		-16,377.20
CREDITORS INTEREST AND OTHER INCOMES		12,547.38		1,431.39
Creditors interest	10,340.38		256.07	
Other income	2,207.00		1,175.32	
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES		-53,872.65		-14,945.81

Geneva, 16 April 2007



LIST OF OMCT DONORS

Non-governmental grants

Caritas
Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour
le Développement
Diakonisches Werk
ICCO
King Baudouin Foundation
Misereor Foundation
Oak Foundation

Grants from international or intergovernmental organisations

European Commission
United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Government grants

France
Finland
Liechtenstein
The Netherlands
Sweden (SIDA)
Switzerland

Cantonal and municipal grants (Switzerland)

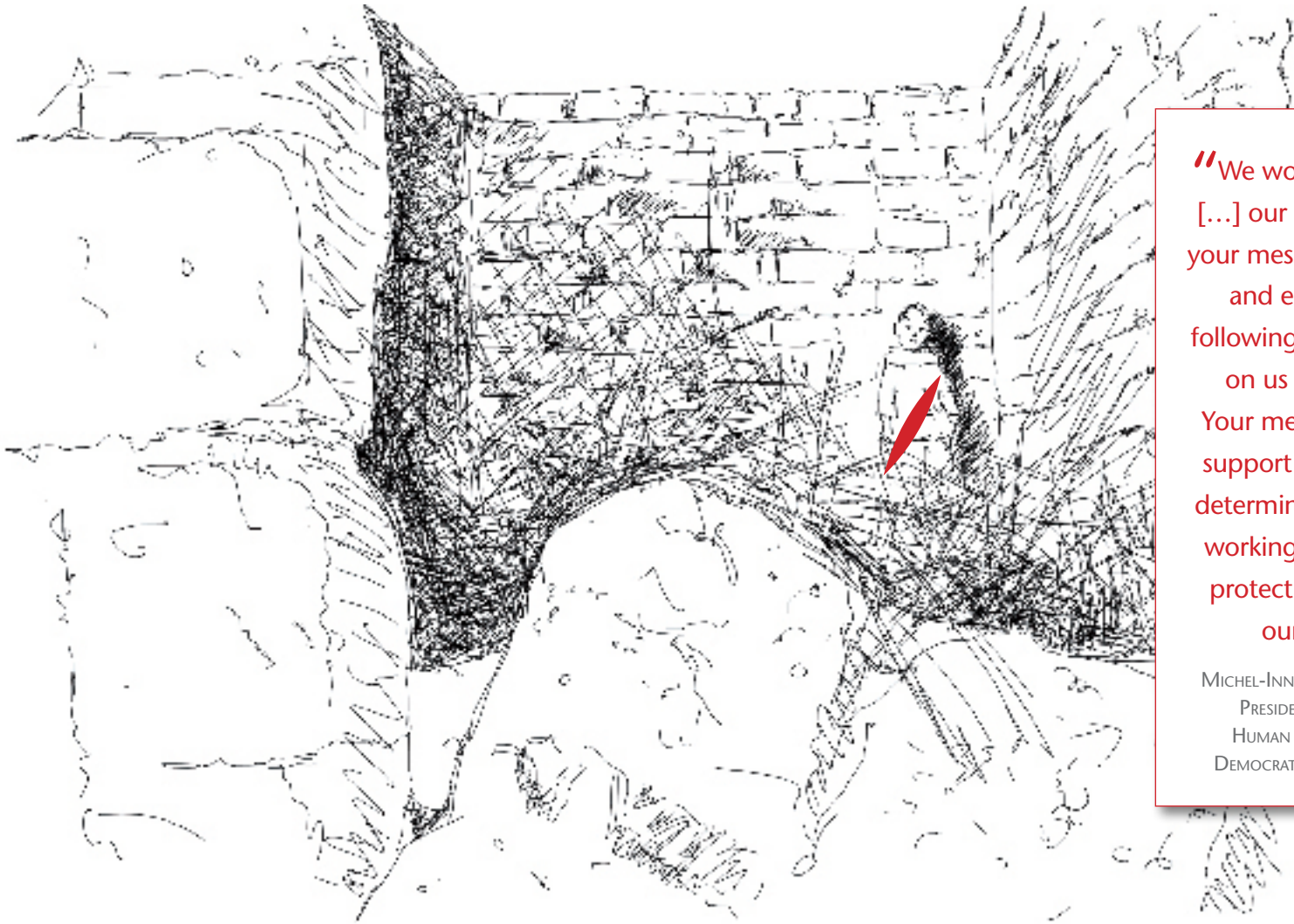
• Cantons

Geneva
Jura
Schaffouse

• Municipalities

Bottmingen
Dardagny
Erlenbach
Geneva
Heimberg
Jussy
Lancy
Lausanne
Le Noirmont
Meinier
Troinex
Winterthur
Zug

SOS-Torture network membership fees



“We would like to express [...] our sincere thanks for your messages of sympathy and encouragement following the armed attack on us and our family. Your messages offered us support and boosted our determination to continue working to promote and protect human rights in our country.”

MICHEL-INNOCENT MPINGA TSHIBASU,
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL
HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVATORY,
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO.



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INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT 2006

Director

Eric Sottas

Deputy Director

Anne-Laurence Lacroix

Administrator

Hans-Peter Haslebacher (until 31 August 2006)

Urgent Campaigns Programme

Manager: Alexandra Kossin

Evelien van Essen (until 31 October 2006)

Clemencia Devia Suarez

Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture Programme

Manager: Anne-Laurence Lacroix

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme

Manager: Tom McCarthy

Mohamed Lotfy (until 31 May 2006)

Stéphane Kessler (11 July–14 December 2006)

Children's Rights Programme

Manager: Cécile Trochu

Violence Against Women Programme

Manager: Mariana Duarte

Human Rights Defenders Programme/Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Manager: Delphine Reculeau

State Compliance Programme

Manager: Patrick Mützenberg

Legal Adviser: Boris Wijkström

Deputy Legal Advisers:

Leonor Vilas Costa (until 31 December 2006)

Victoria Lee (until 31 May 2006)

Administration

Dorothea Hoehtker

Annik Malburet (until 1 April 2006)

Kurt Hofstetter

Carole Argand (until 31 August 2006)

Liaison Officer

Yaël Reinharz Hazan

IT Support

Alain Gross

Webmaster

Sébastien Courvoisier

Accounting

Marc Aebersold, Société NDC





PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS IN 2006

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Programme

- *Attacking the Root Causes of Torture. Poverty, Inequality and Violence*, an interdisciplinary study, edited by Thomas E. McCarthy, Geneva, September 2006, available in English
- *Report on the International Conference, 4–6 October 2005. Poverty, Inequality and Violence: Is there a Human Rights Response?*, Geneva, December 2006, available in English

Children's Rights Programme

Alternative reports submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child:

- *Children's Rights in Benin* – submitted in 2006, to be published in 2007 in French
- *Children's Rights in Chile* – submitted in 2006, to be published in 2007 in Spanish
- *Children's Rights in Kenya* – submitted in 2006, to be published in 2007 in English

Violence Against Women Programme

Alternative report submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women:

- *Violence against Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in English and French

Alternative report submitted to the United Nations Committee Against Torture:

- *State Violence against Women in Mexico. The San Salvador Atenco Case* – submitted in 2006, to be published in 2007 in Spanish

Human Rights Defenders Programme/Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Annual Report:

- *Steadfast in protest – Annual Report 2005 of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders* – published in March 2006 in English, French, and Spanish (the section on Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States was also published in Russian)

Mission Reports:

- *Bolivia: Human Rights Defenders between Intimidation and Hope* – published in 2006 in English and Spanish
- *Djibouti: Les défenseurs des droits économiques et sociaux paient le prix fort* – published in 2006 in French
- *Ethiopia: The situation of Human Rights Defenders from bad to worse* – published in 2006 in English
- *Peru: Una situación preocupante para los defensores de derechos humanos* – published in 2006 in Spanish (to be published in early 2007 in English)
- *Russian Federation: Attacks on Human Rights Defenders in Saint Petersburg: Russian Authorities guilty of Negligence* – published in 2006 in English and French
- *Thailand, Somchai Abduction Trial: Justice granted or Justice denied?* – published in 2006 in English

State Compliance Programme

(as part of the framework of the Prevention of Torture Project)
Alternative reports submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Committee:

- *Human rights violations in Brazil* – submitted in 2005, published in 2006 in English and Portuguese
- *Human rights violations in Honduras* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in English and Spanish
- *Human rights violations in Rwanda* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in French
- *Violations of Human rights in Uzbekistan* – submitted in 2005, published in 2006 in English and Russian

Alternative reports submitted to the United Nations Committee against Torture:

- *Human rights violations in Burundi* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in French
- *Human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of Congo* submitted in 2005, published in 2006 in English and French
- *Human rights violations in Georgia* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in English and Georgian
- *Human rights violations in Guatemala* – submitted in 2006, published in 2006 in English and Spanish
- *Human rights violations in Tajikistan* – submitted in 2006, to be published in 2007 in Russian
- *Human rights violations in Togo* – submitted in 2005, published in 2006 in English and French

OMCT handbook series (part of State Compliance Programme)

- *Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. A Practitioner's Handbook* by Ugur Erdal and Hasan Bakirci, with a preface by Sir Nigel Rodley, OMCT Handbook Series Vol. 1, series editor: Boris Wijkström, Geneva, November 2006, available in English, French, Russian and Turkish
- *The Prohibition of Torture and Ill-treatment in the InterAmerican Human Rights System: A Handbook for Victims and their Advocates* by Diego Rodríguez-Pinzón and Claudia Martin, foreword by Claudio Grossman, Vice Chair of the United Nations Committee against Torture, OMCT Handbook Series Vol. 2, series editor: Boris Wijkström, Geneva, September 2006, available in English, Portuguese and Spanish
- *The Prohibition of Torture and Ill-treatment in the African Human Rights System. A Handbook for Victims and their Advocates* by Frans Viljoen and Chidi Odinkalu, preface by Adama Dieng, OMCT Handbook Series Vol. 3, series editor: Boris Wijkström, Geneva, November 2006, available in Arabic, English and French
- *Seeking Remedies for Torture Victims. A Handbook on the Individual Complaints Procedures of the UN Treaty Bodies* by Sarah Jones, Katie Mitchell, Linda Gyorki and Carin Benninger-Budel, foreword by Manfred Nowak, OMCT Handbook Series Vol. 4, series editor: Boris Wijkström, Geneva, November 2006, available in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish

Other Joint Publications

Violaciones de derechos humanos en el Estado español. Human rights violations in the Spanish State. Joint publication of the OMCT and the Coordinadora para la Prevención de la Tortura (Committee for the Prevention of Torture, Spain), November 2006, in English/Spanish

“Thank you very much for ... your effective efforts.”

MR ALI AL-DAILAMI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE YEMENI ORGANIZATION FOR THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS, WHO WAS ARRESTED ON 9 OCTOBER 2006 ON HIS WAY TO DENMARK TO PARTICIPATE IN A HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE. HE WAS RELEASED WITHOUT CHARGE ON 5 NOVEMBER 2006 AND TOLD THAT IT WAS TO “TEACH HIM A LESSON” FOR ENGAGING IN HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES.



GLOSSARY

ALTERNATIVE REPORTS

The reports are an alternative to reports by States Parties, which do not always portray country situations in an unbiased way.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

Based on the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1998, the Observatory defines a human rights defender as follows: “Any person who is the victim or is at risk of becoming the victim of reprisals, harassment or violations as a result of his convictions and actions exercised individually or in association with others – in conformity with international instruments protecting human rights – to promote rights recognised by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and guaranteed by several international instruments”.

OHCHR

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OMCT

World Organisation Against Torture (Organisation mondiale contre la torture)

NGO

Non-Governmental Organisation

SOS-TORTURE NETWORK

The SOS-Torture network is at the heart of OMCT’s work. It is a global network of organisations fighting torture. At the outset, in 1986, it comprised 48 NGOs. Today, it is composed of 282 organisations spread across 92 countries. Network members are chosen on the basis of the criteria of independence, professionalism and credibility. Integration into the SOS-Torture network enables NGOs to benefit from logistical and legal support from OMCT, which acts as the network’s coordinator.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

Mechanisms set up by the UN Commission on Human Rights to deal with country-specific or thematic human rights issues (i.e. Special Rapporteur on Torture)

TREATY BODIES

Mechanisms set up by international human rights treaties to monitor their implementation (i.e. Committee against Torture)

UN

United Nations

PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION CREDITS



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B. Heger



M. Kokic



F. Clarke



N. Ng



H. Dittmar

“Dear OMCT and FIDH, [...] on behalf of the ZimRights Board and staff, I would like to thank you once again for your continued support and urgent response to any distress call from human rights defenders across the globe. Activists throughout the world remain indebted to your timely and urgent appeals which indeed have seen many human rights defenders escaping from the draconian teeth of repression. Please keep up the good work.”

MUNYARADZI BIDI, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF ZIMRIGHTS, ZIMBABWE.