

SECOND CONFERENCE “TOGETHER AGAINST TORTURE”, 2004, TBILISI

Venue and date

Second Conference “Together against Torture” in Georgia, Tbilisi was held at June 26, 2004 at the Hotel “Simpatia” Conference Hall.

Details of the event/s

The Second Conference “ Together against Torture” in Georgia, was organized and held in Tbilisi at 26 June, 2004.

This conference was organized by the Centre EMPATHY with financial support of European Union and Open Society Institute.

The special materials received from IRCT were distributed during the Conference. As well as the Centre EMPATHY publications, Brochures on Centre EMPATHY activities and “Stop Torture” were distributed during the Conference. All these publications were published or printed on three languages: on Georgia, English and Russian. The Conference was held with simultaneous translation on three languages: Georgia, English and Russian by the reason that the international organizations, as well as refugees from Chechnya were attend these Conference.

The conference was continued during 6 hours. in Opening and Welcome sessions were participated as speakers: Centre EMPATHY President, Head of the Operational Section in the EC Delegation to Georgia and Armenia; Member of the Parliament of Georgia, Head of the Health and Social Welfare Committee; Deputy Minister on Penitentiary System, Ministry of Justice of Georgia

The key presentations were focused on Torture situation in Georgia and on the recommendations to the Government on torture persecution, the special case on torture was presented by the Centre EMPATHY on this Conference too. The presentations were covered each aspect of target beneficiaries in Georgia: Police Torture Victims, Military Conflict Zones Torture Victims as well as refugees – torture victims from Chechnya (Russia). Key speakers were from Georgian Non – Governmental and Governmental organizations, as well as from Refugees from Chechnya and from Military Conflict Zone in Georgia (Abkhazia) own organizations. The following key presentations were presented at the Conference:

1. Sequels to Torture and International Standards for Persecution of Torture – Dr. Mariam Jishkariani, RCT/EMPATHY, Georgia
2. Torture and Rough Violation of Human Rights in Georgia after the Revolution – Mrs. Nana Kakabadze ; Chairman of the “Former Political Prisoners for Human Right”
3. Situation in Gali Region: Problems and Ways for Solution - Dr. Nona Tarbaia, Gali Crisis Centre Director, EMPATHY Partner Organization.
4. Presentation of Case on Torture – Dr. Zurab Chkhikvadze, Independent Forensic Expert Psychiatrist, RCT/EMPATHY, Georgia
5. Problems of Refugees from Chechnya – Mr. Said Madaev, NGO “Bart”(Consent)
6. Georgian Legislation and Practice Concerning of Torture in Connection with International Liabilities – Mr. Vakhtang Vakhtangaze; NGO “Union Article 42 Constitution”
7. Anti - Torture Measures in Georgian Penitentiary System - Ms. Maia Khasia, Head of the Prisons’ Department Ministry of Justice of Georgia.
8. Independent Expertise Role on Documenting and Preventing of Torture – Dr. Zurab Beria, Prof., George Naneishvili – Society of Psychiatrists of Georgia

The Second Declaration “Together Against Torture” was elaborated by the Centre EMPATHY and presented to the Conference participants for approval and signature. The Declaration was approved on this Conference and send to the President of Georgia; Head of Georgian Parliament and Premier minister of Georgia.

The Declaration includes the analyze of situation and legislation on torture in Georgia and special recommendations in accordance with international standards on how to improve the situation on torture in Georgia to the Government; Especially advise Georgian Government to joint to the UN Convention against Torture ... Optional Protocol and to create the National Preventing Mechanisms on Torture Persecution in Georgia; To Joint the Istanbul Protocol and Article 22 of the UN Convention Against Torture ...

The special letters to the President of Georgia; Chairman of the Prliament of Georgia and to the Premier Minister of Georgia were elaborated and sent by the Centre EMPATHY.

The Centre EMPATHY declared regarding IRCT and Partners’ IPIP Training in Georgia and it’s importance role on prevention of Torture in Georgia during the Conference, all IPIP local partners “Article 42” and “Georgian Medical Association” representatives were invited and participated on this Conference too.

Special Press Realize was elaborated by the EMPATHY and distributed among participants; organizations and mass media representatives before and during the Conference that was printed on three languages: Georgian; Russian and English.

The Women Prisoners' Art Therapy Works' Sale – Exhibition was provided during this day at the same venue as well (that works are produced during the EMPATHY activities in Women Colony – Branch office of the EMPATHY in Women Colony in Tbilisi).

Organizations that co-organized the event

Crisis Intervention Centre (Gali, Nabakevi – military conflict zone in Georgia/Abkhazia) – Partner organization of the Centre EMPATHY

Financial support was provided by the European Union and Open Society Institute.

Organizations that participated in the event:

Following international, non – Governmental, Governmental and target beneficiaries representatives were participated on this Conference: As well as mass media representatives were participated too.

Embassy: US Embassy in Georgia representative.

International Organizations: EC Delegation to Georgia and Armenia; OSCE; PRI; ABA/CEELI; ICRC; UNDP; Womenaid International;

Non – Governmental Organizations working on the medical field and human rights field: Society of Georgian Psychiatrists; Georgian Medical Association; “Article 42”; Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights; Institute of Liberty; “Caucasian House”; Yung Lawyers' Association; Crisis Centre “Ndoba”; Association of Mothers and Children with Disabilities”; Crisis Centre from Gali Region (Military Conflict Zone in Abkhazia); Refugees from Chechnya Organization “Bart” (Consent); Chechnya - Caucasian Committee; IDP Women Association ‘Consent’; Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Georgian Committee; Women's Informational Centre; etc

Governmental Organizations from Tbilisi and from regions of Georgia: Georgian Parliament Medical and Social Welfare Committee; Georgian Public Defender's Office; Ministry of Justice of Georgia Deputy Minister on Penal System; Medical Department representatives Ministry of Justice of Georgia; Prisons' Department Ministry of Justice of Georgia; as well as other Ministry of Justice Penal System authorities: Women Colony; Juvenile Colony; Prisons' Central Hospital; Pre – Trial Prisons in Tbilisi; as well as in Kutaisi and in Zugdidi representatives from Prisoners' Rights' departments; Ministry of Health representatives; Georgian General Prosecutor's Office representative; Research Institute of Psychiatry; Department of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology Georgian State Medical University.

Mass Media: State TV Chantal I; Press Representatives from “Republic of Georgia”

Independent TV Companies: “Rustavi 2”; “Imedi”; “Caucasia”

International: Radio Liberty

Approx. number of participants attending the event

80 persons from about 47 International, Local non – Governmental and Governmental organizations; As well as society representatives; mass media representatives; Independent Journalists and Torture Victims themselves – refugees; IDPs; Former Prisoners, were participated on the Conference; among them 15 persons representatives from Georgian regions' local Governmental and non – Governmental organizations including the military conflict zone in Abkhazia and nearest military conflict zone in Pankisi (Collective living area of refugees from Chechnya).

Media coverage of the event

The all Georgian TV Channels (TV First Chantal; “Imedi”; “Rustavi 2” etc - Governmental and Independents too during three days (26, 27, 28 June, 2004) were coverage this Conference in News with interviews with Centre EMPATHY President and Manager as well as other Conference participants from Governmental and non – Governmental organizations.

Produced Materials:

The special Press Realize was elaborated and printed and distributed.

1. Second Declaration “Together Against Torture” was elaborated; printed and distributed;
2. The IRCT 26 June materials and IRCT information regarding Istanbul Protocol and Optional Protocol of UN Convention Against Torture were printed; Copies were distributed among Conference participants. on Georgia; English and Russian Languages;
3. The special files and pens were produced by the EMPATHY and distributed with materials during the Conference.
4. All Conference materials will be published on Georgia; English and Russian Languages and will be distributed.
5. Special Brochure “Stop Torture” on Georgian; Russian and English Languages was published and distributed during the Conference;
6. Special Brochure regarding EMPATHY Activities was published and distributed on three languages too.
7. The Centre EMPATHY has the Video Record of the Conference too.