Together against Torture

IRCT’s Global Report on the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June 2005

© International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)

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Front cover illustration:
At the end of the day’s activities the Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture held a candlelight vigil for all the victims of violence and torture in the world.

The International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) is an independent, international health professional organisation, which promotes and supports the rehabilitation of torture victims and works for the prevention of torture worldwide. The vision of the IRCT is a world that values and accepts shared responsibility for the eradication of torture.

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

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The United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June is a vital day in commemoration of all the victims of torture worldwide. On this day, we take the opportunity to raise awareness of torture and its terrible consequences, not only for the victims and their families but also for society as a whole. It is also a day of celebration, as the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment entered into force 26 June 1987. The Convention is one of the most efficient legal instruments against the use of torture and in particular it acknowledges the victims’ right to reparation.

The activities on 26 June highlight the importance of human rights education. Not only do people learn about human rights in the classroom, but also through the work and experience of local organizations such as the accredited centres and projects of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). Through increased knowledge and understanding, the public becomes more aware and involved in the issue of torture. Consequently, more people increase their efforts to eradicate torture and to support the international mechanisms intended for this purpose. I find it encouraging seeing a movement composed of so many individuals and organizations dedicated to the eradication of such a heinous practice.

I would like to applaud all those who have contributed to this annual campaign, the IRCT and all the individuals who stand “Together against Torture”. With your efforts, the global movement against torture can eliminate this abhorred violation of universal human rights.

Manfred Nowak
UN Special Rapporteur on Torture

Introduction by the IRCT Secretary-General

The leaders of the international community cannot get a more direct and inspiring signal than the one they get from thousands of people, who take to the streets demanding governments to take responsibility and end torture under the slogan “Together against Torture”.

The demonstrations and other events – from theatre and music to prison visits and public debates – that take place on 26 June form the pillars of the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The IRCT Secretariat supports these events and tries to help raise awareness about 26 June internationally. In 2005, a special focus was put on the events that took place in all the different regions of the world to commemorate the victims of torture in the form of a 30-second TV-spot that was produced by the Spanish film director Isabel Coixet. Altogether approximately 300 million viewers were able to see the spot.

The IRCT is very grateful to Isabel Coixet and to the TV-stations who broadcast the spot for helping us to raise awareness about torture. We would like to thank all the participants of the 2005 global 26 June campaign for their devotion to our common cause. This report reflects that when we use the positive elements of human life and transform music, dance, poetry and other expressions into the simple message “Stop Torture” the world will hear what we have to say.

Please enjoy the reading and feel free to find inspiration for a way to share this message on 26 June 2006.

Brita Sydhoff
IRCT Secretary-General
Why was the 26 June selected as the International day in support of victims of torture?

This is the day for paying respect to the victims of torture. The day was not chosen at random. On the 26 June 1987 the Convention against Torture entered into force. Ten years later the General Assembly of the United Nations, in resolution 52/149, proclaimed the 26 June the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. This day was proclaimed with a view to the total eradication of torture and the effective functioning of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

For the first time there is a special day to focus on helping torture victims and ending torture - the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture - to be observed every year on 26 June.

Sadly, only 140 of the 191 Member States of the United Nations have ratified the UN Convention against Torture. Of these far from all have met their obligation not to use torture and other forms of ill-treatment - to promptly and efficiently investigate cases of torture, to bring perpetrators to justice and to provide reparation to victims of torture.

The effects of torture should not be underestimated

In April 2005, the Human Rights Commission adopted the “Basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law”, which identify mechanisms, modalities,
ties, procedures and methods for the implementation of existing legal obligations regarding different forms of reparation. The Commission of Human Rights recommended the adoption of the Principles by the UN General Assembly which it did in November 2005.

The effects of torture should not be underestimated. Physical and mental consequences of torture can endure for several years and may be irreversible, often affecting not only the victims themselves, but also their relatives. One of the means of mitigating the subsequent effects of torture on victims and their families can be achieved by providing medical, psychological, social, legal and economic aid. Therefore, rehabilitation is an essential form of reparation for victims of torture. Yet, resources allocated to the rehabilitation of victims of torture are mostly not sufficient to meet their needs. At the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), we advocate for a serious commitment of governments to support victims of torture and their rehabilitation.

The rehabilitation centres and programmes have been working to increase information about torture and other forms of ill-treatment and their devastating effects. Further, we have been working on the prevention of torture and we are committed to fight impunity of the perpetrators. In this light, centres and programmes are documenting cases of torture to be used as evidence to fight impunity of the perpetrators. The IRCT and its partners have been involved in the development and implementation of the Istanbul Protocol, the Manual of Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture Cases as

BANGLADESH: A “Human Chain” organised by BHRC
an effective system to prevent the use of torture and other forms of ill treatment as well as to bring perpetrators to justice.

The empowerment of victims of torture and the importance of an international movement that says “basta” to the use of torture

The International Day to Support Victims of Torture is a day when we ask governments to reaffirm their pledge that torture will not be tolerated and all necessary steps will be taken to support torture survivors and their families and assure there will be no more victims in the future.

Anyone can become a victim of torture. Torture affects not only politicians, union leaders, journalists and human rights defenders but also ordinary citizens including women and children, often for no other reason than to create a climate of fear. It is also increasingly used as a means to subdue and inflict pain on civilians in conflicts and wars.

Today, we also pay tribute to all those who have worked selflessly to relieve the suffering and assist the recovery of torture victims around the world. These efforts by individual medical staff, governments, organisations, social workers, lawyers and volunteers deserve our gratitude.

Some years ago there were only a few treatment centres or services to address torture survivors. Today there are some 200 centres and programmes in more than 80 countries around the world. The global movement of treatment centres has developed profound knowledge of torture methods, the effects of torture, and how to diagnose and rehabilitate torture victims.

This year is also the 20th Anniversary of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). As this 26 of June, our Anniversary is a bittersweet occasion. The practice of torture is still prevalent and the number of victims has not decreased. Yet we provide rehabilitation and support to thousands of victims around the world together with friends and partners, and because empowering the movement has made us stronger and more efficient in the fight against this abhorrent practice. However, we need to improve and address new challenges.

On this day we also express our solidarity and pay tribute to our colleagues who have suffered harassments, threats, raids in their centres by governments and their

The T-logo symbolises 26 June: Together against Torture.
agents, or others as a result of their courageous activities supporting victims of torture.

With this report, we would like to present the activities of an international movement, which, on the 26 of June 2005, gathered together to say “basta” and stop to the use of torture and other forms of ill treatment and to pay respect to the hundreds of thousands of victims. We will continue our tireless efforts to eradicate the use of torture and ill treatment and stay together committed to this important mission.
Albania
The Albanian Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma and Torture Victims (ARCT), in collaboration with the Shkodra branch of the National Association for the Integration of the Former Politically Persecuted (NAIFPP), organised a discussion forum to commemorate 26 June. The audience represented people from all walks of life, such as: the chairman of the municipality and other local authorities; the Prefect, Catholic, Muslim, and Orthodox clerics; media representatives; political figures such as lawmakers or deputies; former politically persecuted individuals and representatives from the civil society. There were a number of speeches related to torture, and a film entitled “The Wounds”, dedicated to those who suffered political persecution. The event was concluded with a cocktail party for the participants.

An employee of the ARCT, a collaborator from the Albanian Human Rights Centre and a victim of political persecution visited an elementary school in Tirana. The aim of this visit was to raise awareness of torture and to speak with both the teachers and pupils as future participants in the prevention of torture.

Australia
On 26 June, in Sydney, the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) and the New South Wales branch of Amnesty International jointly hosted a forum entitled “Torture Demeans Us All”. It addressed the ethical, legal and personal consequences of the use of torture and was also used to launch Amnesty International’s new campaign “Stop torture and ill-treatment in the ‘war on terror’”. Three speakers presented their views at the forum: Raimond Gaita, Professor of Moral Philosophy at King’s College London and Foundation Professor of Philosophy at Australian Catholic University; Ben Saul, Lecturer in international law at the University of New South Wales and Associate of the Australian Human Rights Centre and Jamila Araste, a Kurdish refugee, human rights activist and torture survivor from Iran.

The Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service Inc. (STTARS) hosted a public forum in Adelaide, South Australia on 26 June. The topic of the forum was “Can the Use of Torture ever be Justified?” and dealt with the debate surrounding the use of torture in the “war against terrorism”. The forum was opened by the Attorney General of South Australia, Michael Atkinson; who was followed by Paris Aristotle AM, Director of the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture; Justice Robyn Layton, Queen’s Council, Supreme Court Justice of South Australia and Rodney Hall, Senior Lecturer in Moral Philosophy at Flinders University.

Bangladesh
A “Human Chain” organized by the Bangladesh Human Rights Commission (BHRC) outside the Supreme Court building brought torture to the attention of the public and supreme court officials. Afterwards, participants attended a public meeting arranged by the BHRC calling for both public and private bodies to acknowledge 26 June. It focused on a number of other topics including: the increase in the torture of women, the legal proceedings of torture cases and other human rights violations and an end to terrorism. There were also a number of other activities organised by smaller branches of the
BHRC such as: meetings, seminars, rallies, human chains, and exhibitions of posters.

The Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT) organised a meeting on 25 June at the BRCT Conference Hall in Dhaka involving 12 different health professional organisations. They discussed, among other topics, how to include 26 June in their programs. Many of the organisations decided to begin commemorating the day next year. The following day, the BRCT held a rally, a human chain and a discussion including 114 different organisations from Bangladesh.

The Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Survivors (CRTS) organised a variety of events for 26 June. They began the day with an art competition involving 100 children. This was followed by a forum entitled “How to Prevent Torture?” There were a number of prominent activists present at the discussion. Lastly, was a cultural presentation by many of the city’s known artists.

Bolivia

In the capital city of La Paz, the Instituto de Terapia e Investigación sobre las Secuelas de la Tortura y la Violencia Estatal (ITEI) organised an all day event to enlighten the public about torture. ITEI and other organisations displayed informational panels dealing with torture and the international mechanisms used against it. In addition to these panels, videos dealing with torture in Bolivia and dictatorship were shown intermittently throughout the day. The centre also distributed flyers, stickers, and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture; issued a
statement to the press; and held interviews with many local officials. Spectators were also given the opportunity to watch a play denouncing torture. The ITEI centre in Cochabamba also held a similar event in honour of 26 June.

Brazil
The Grupo Tortura Nunca Mais/Rio de Janeiro (GTNM/RJ) held a public round table discussion at the University Federal Fluminense entitled “Torture and Human Rights in Latin America”. The discussion panel was composed of representatives from Latin American countries, such as: Miguel Scapuzio (Uruguay), José Maria Gomez (Argentina), Luiz Antonio Botelho Andrade (Brazil) and Eduardo Passos (Brazil). The event was advertised in the university’s calendar and in the GTNM Journal, which contained an article and front page recognising 26 June.

Cameroon
The Center for Rehabilitation and Abolition of Torture (CRAT) visited with approximately 500 inmates of Bamenda Central Prison on 26 June. They were first given a tour of the prison, with the exception of the juvenile cells. During this tour they stopped and spoke with some of the female inmates about their problems. They then conducted a working session with the inmates, beginning with a speech by CRAT Director of Programs Mr. Nicholas Njua N. He highlighted the significance of 26 June, and the purpose of CRAT. Mr. Akufor Joseph, a psychiatric nurse working for CRAT, explained how they could offer mental assistance to these victims. Lastly, CRAT presented the inmates with gifts, such as rice, salt and soap.
During the entire month of June, the Friends of the Press Network, Freedom of Expression and Human Rights Organisation (FEPNET) conducted a radio program on torture sensitization. They also held several public lectures and events involving the public. At the lectures, they discussed torture and, in particular, the UN Convention against Torture. Through creative means such as dances, songs, football matches, and quiz competitions, the people of Cameroon learned more about this serious issue. A church service was also held for the victims of torture in Cameroon.

The Tort for Torture Victims Centre (TT-VC) began their activities on June 24 with visits to different prisons in the area. While there, members of the TT-VC spoke with inmates about ongoing treatment and legal redress. The same day they held a marathon, involving both victims and non-
victims from different countries. Later on, they conducted a round table discussion with 40 participants from different branches of government, a variety of NGOs and members of civil society. During the meeting 42 strategies for overcoming torture were developed and then sent to the Prime Minister and other relevant organisations. At the end of the day, members of TT-VC spoke on the radio about the topics and strategies discussed at the meeting. On the day of 26 June there was a football match held at Mankon Cathedral, followed by a two hour long march in the rain to protest against torture. The march ended at the TT-VC conference hall, where there were speeches by the TT-VC Executive Director and other important personalities. There was also a debate entitled “Torture, a Myth or a Reality in Cameroon”, an awards ceremony from the races on the 24th, and last of all, dancing.

Canada
The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) hosted an event full of colourful entertainment and moving speeches. The theme for the night was “Celebrating the Courage of Survivors”. The entertainment began with the Cabbagetown Youth Centre Tamil Dancing Group, which lit up the stage with young dancers dressed in costumes performing a traditional snake dance. Next, Zohreh Riahi, a CCVT client from Iran, performed songs from her homeland. Rodrigo Chavez and Antti Ohenoja then played Latin rhythms with guitar and percussion. The last performer of the night was Adam Solomon, who along with his band, played upbeat and energetic African songs. In addition to the performances there were speeches by CCVT Executive Director Mulugeta Abai, CCVT Board Chair Hari Lalla and Felix Mora, a former political prisoner from Chile and current judge on the Immigration and Refugee Board. Lalla and Abai focused on the important role of the CCVT. Felix Mora spoke of his experiences while imprisoned in Chile.

The residents of Ottawa packed their city hall on 22 June for a discussion about torture arranged by the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) and many other local non-profit organisations. The discussion panel, which consisted of representatives from five different
organisations, examined international law and torture, counselling of survivors of war trauma and torture, the representation of survivors before Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Board, and the role of an Immigration and Refugee Board member when questioning survivors. In addition to flyers sent out before the event, the discussion was covered in the evening news by the national television station Canadian Broadcast Corporation.

Chad

The Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non Violence (AJPNV) began their commemoration of 26 June with a presentation by the President of the AJPNV Nodjigoto Charbonnel to students, professors and teachers of the high school Felix Eboue in N’Djamena. This presentation dealt with the AJPNV theme for the day “Think about the Victims of Torture”. Following this presentation, the AJPNV presented a theatrical piece which demonstrated the effects of torture.

Chile

The Centro de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos (CINTRAS), as part of the Comision Ética contra la Tortura (CECT), arranged a plethora of activities during the days surrounding 26 June. On 21 June at the School for Journalism and Social Communication of the Bolivian University they presented a documentary entitled “Che, Vo, Cachal”, which showed the struggle for truth and justice by children of parents who disappeared or were executed as the result of political repression during the dictatorships of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile. There was a discussion panel afterwards regarding the film.

On Wednesday, 22 June, a petition was submitted to the President of Chile soliciting the reopening of the enrolment list for victims to come before the commission for political prison and torture, the approval of a new reparations law, and the instatement of 26 June as a National Day in Support of Victims of Torture in Chile. The day after, in the amphitheatre of the Academic University of Christian Humanism, a panel discussion was held entitled “The Right to the Truth: Experiences of Chilean Organisations”.

On Saturday, 25 June, CINTRAS and 14 other organisations presented information to the public regarding the problem of torture. The last of the events was a theatrical presentation, on 29 June, by the Compañía de Danza Contemporánea
(OMBU) named “The Women of Villa Grimaldi, Stories of Repression, Resistance and Solidarity”, which artistically illustrated one of the worst cases of torture during the first years of Pinochet’s dictatorship. To conclude the event, there was a round table discussion of the show.

Colombia

The Corporación AVRE - Apoyo a Víctimas de Violencia Sociopolítica Pro-Recuperación Emociona (AVRE) as part of the Coalición Colombiana contra la Tortura presented a number of activities on 30 June at the National Library in Bogotá. A journalist from Univisión, Adriana Villamarín, presented a video about torture, mainly in Colombia, and the international instruments used in combating torture. This was followed by a variety of presentations: the Coalición presented their organisation, a representative of the United Nations spoke about the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, a representative of the European Union presented EU programs for torture prevention and the rehabilitation of victims, and lastly there were further presentations about the Convention against Torture and the Committee against Torture. There was also musical entertainment by “Entre Andes” and a local musical youth group that sang about the violence in Colombia. The event ended with the testimony of a Colombian victim of torture, followed by a “gallery of memories” exhibition presented by the Asociación de Familiares Detenidos Desaparecidos.

Congo, The Democratic Republic of the

The organisation Oasis for the Distressed - Love in Action presented an interactive theatre on 26 June in which the audience took part in a play dealing with violence. When the play was concluded there was an open discussion with the public about torture and how to prevent and abolish it. In addition to public participants, there were representatives from the local justice department, police department, the military and the criminal investigation department.

On 26 June, SOS Jeunesse et Enfance

en Détresse – SOS JED/Previt organized a public forum in Kazimia. The day-long forum dealt with many topics, such as: the meaning of 26 June, the meaning and consequences of torture and how to deal with torture. Later, there were interviews with
local victims of torture and afterwards performers lifted the mood with local songs. At the end of the day some of the other organisations present offered information about themselves and refreshments were served.

**Ecuador**

The Fundación para la Rehabilitación Integral de Víctimas de Violencia (PRIVA), in cooperation with other local organisations, held a panel discussion with a number of panellists, both medical and non-medical, to discuss, among other topics: the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the quantification of the harm done by torture and women and torture. From 20-30 June PRIVA presented an artistic exhibition in the hall of the Central University of Ecuador, where the panel discussion was also held.

**France**

Association pour les Victimes de la Répression en Exil (AVRE) produced a special issue of their periodical entitled “Havre” dedicated to 26 June. It included topics dealing with torture such as: youths’ views on torture; the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; ACAT; reparation and more.

**Georgia**

On 26 June, the Georgian Center for Psychological and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT) and Human Rights Information and Documentation Center (HRIDC) conducted a joint event in the capital city of Tbilisi to educate the public about torture. There was a press conference, with a statement by the HRIDC Executive Director Ucha Nanuashvili. Through a theatrical presentation and an exhibition of torture tools, the public was given direct exposure to the issue of tortu...
tecture. Participants also received booklets, handbooks and leaflets regarding torture.

The Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture EMPATHY (RCT-EMPATHY), in coordination with other local NGOs, also brought awareness to torture on 26 June through a press conference held at the public defender’s office conference hall in Tbilisi. They urged the parliament of Georgia to ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture, to include an article about torture in the Criminal Code of Georgia, and to change the Georgian law regarding imprisonment.

On 7 July the Georgian Parliament ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture.

**Germany**

The Behandlungszentrum für Folteropfer Berlin (BZFO) held a press conference under the title “Where are the rights for survivors of torture to rehabilitation and protection in the Federal Republic of Germany”. They discussed with journalists a number of issues revolving around the rehabilitation of Turkish refugees in Germany.

**Ghana**

At a public lecture, Action by Christians against Torture (ACAT) discussed “Torture in Ghanaian Society”. The main speaker was Mr. Saviour Dzikunu, former chairman of Amnesty International - Ghana. In addition to encouraging citizens to bring instances of torture before a court of law, participants spoke about the need for local NGOs to work together.

In a media statement released on 26 June, the Coalition of African NGOs against Torture raised public awareness of torture and the international instruments being used to combat it. They also encouraged the government of Ghana to set up a rehabilitation fund for torture victims and they called on all governments who have not ratified the UN Convention against Torture and the Optional Protocol to do so.
Greece

On 23 June, the Medical Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (MRCT) held a conference in the amphitheatre of Athens University’s medical school. They discussed “Civil Society and Prisons” and presented awards to the former and current President of the Greek parliament, respectively. They also raised awareness through a media campaign involving posters throughout the city, interviews with television, press releases and on-line articles.

Guatemala

On 29 June, the Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Acción Psicosocial (ECAP), in cooperation with a number of local organisations, presented an exposition about torture at the University of San Carlos. There were a variety of displays with information about torture which attracted passers-by and throughout the day there were different types of entertainment. The first performance was by a group of indigenous youth called “Circus of Children”. A little later, there was a dramatic theatrical presentation. There were also different musical groups which performed at different times during the day.

India

A public meeting was held by the Centre for Care of Torture Victims (CCTV) at the Rotary Club of South Calcutta. Among other topics they discussed the importance of youth in the struggle against torture and the role of domestic violence and torture. For the event, the CCTV produced a booklet full of messages to the public about torture and information about their organisation. The CCTV also presented an award to the President of the Indian Medical Association. In addition to this meeting CCTV conducted a blood drive with the Association of Voluntary Blood Donors.

On 28 June, the Rural Uplift Centre (RUC) held a meeting, in cooperation with the Women’s Collective of Tamil Nadu and local political figures, to discuss the responsibility of the state with regard to human rights. During the meeting there were also a few cultural events. RUC also produced a statement encouraging the government to ratify a number of protocols on torture, such as the UN Convention against Torture.
26 June TV-Spot Touches Millions

“You can’t do anything to stop a tsunami”

“You can’t do anything to stop a hurricane”

“You can’t do anything to stop an earthquake”

The 26 June has always been a global effort, and the IRCT has always strived to make this day as international as possible. That is why this year, the worldwide network of the IRCT and television stations across the globe worked “together against torture” to broadcast a 30 second TV-spot to some 300 million viewers.

The spot, created by Spanish director Isabel Coixet, was broadcast free of charge by the following international and national television stations: the Arab station Al Jazeera, the Cameroon station Republican Television, the Croatian station RTL, the Danish stations DR 1 and DR 2, the French station TV 5, the German station Deutsche Welle, the Moldovan station of TVC 21, the Nigerian station African Independent Television, the Peruvian station Canal N, the Portuguese station SIC, the Spanish television stations Canal + and Televisió de Catalunya and the American station Bay News 9 in Florida.

The spot represents the powerful affect that the anti-torture movement can have through the synergistic cooperation of the IRCT Secretariat and centers with civil society.

If you are interested in viewing the spot, it is available through our homepage www.irct.org.
About the Director

The TV-spot was created by Spanish director Isabel Coixet. She owns a successful production company, “Miss Wasabi Films” which produces spots and commercials. She has made several TV-commercials, both in Spain and internationally, and directed a TV Documentary for Canal+ España in 2003 entitled “Life after Torture”.

Her international breakthrough came in 2003 with the intimate drama “My Life Without Me”, based on a short story by Nanci Kincaid.

She has recently finished her new film for Pedro Almodóvar’s production company El Deseo, “The Secret life of Words”, starring Tim Robbins, Julie Christie and Sarah Polley, and preparing for a sequence of a new film about Paris “Paris, je t’aime” where twenty filmmakers will bring their own personal touch to the various atmospheres and lifestyles in the 20 arrondissements of Paris.
Vaan Muhil organised a meeting in Tamil Nadu with local NGOs to discuss custodial torture, untouchable practices dealing with castes, violence against women and violations of children’s rights. They took to the streets to engage the public by performing plays and exhibiting art focused on torture by folk artists.

Iran, Islamic Republic of

Over 70 experts in the field of rehabilitation met for a one-day seminar organized by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), in cooperation with the University of Welfare and the Rehabilitation Sciences and the Iranian Scientific Counselling Association. In addition to talking about general aspects of torture, they focused specifically on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and domestic violence.

Ireland

Clients of The Centre for the Care of Survivors of Torture (CCST) met for an intercultural event to commemorate 26 June. There were inspirational speeches, a discussion and later a celebration, with food and dancing.

Italy

With the centuries old Cortile di Sant’Ivo alla Sapienza in the background, clients of the Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (CIRVI.TO) performed a play for spectators on 26 June. After the play, the audience was entertained by the African singer Badara Sek and a video made by the clients of

India: CCTV produced a booklet full of messages to the public about torture.

Italy: The audience was captivated by the cast of survivors of torture who performed a play entitled “The Word of the Invisible Ones”.

INDIA: CCTV produced a booklet full of messages to the public about torture.
CIR-VI.TO was also presented. Additionally, the centre displayed an exhibition against torture at the Archivo de Stato in Rome.

Through cultural performances and art at the Centro Richiedenti Asilo, Rifugiati, Vittime della Tortura (NAGA-HAR) the Italian public could view life through the eyes of a refugee. On June 25, spectators viewed an exposition of photos of Milan taken by clients of the centre. There were also different musical performances, a discussion with different victims of torture, and a theatrical presentation.

**Italy**

11-12 giugno Festa di quartiere Certosa-Garegnano
25 giugno Barrio’s - Via Boffalora 109

**Italy: Photos taken by clients of the NAGA-HAR centre were on exhibit at the “Centro Sociale Barrio’s”.

Kenya

The Mwatikho Torture Survivors Organization (MATESO), in cooperation with a number of local organisations, organised a series of events from the 22-26 June. They began with a press conference, where they spoke about torture and the importance of 26 June. In the following days there were theatrical presentations and poems. They also exhibited art reflecting torture. They held a marathon with approximately 3000 participants and a march through the city. To end the commemoration, they organised a candle light vigil for recently released political prisoners and victims who had died.

To begin their commemoration of 26 June the Independent Medico Legal Unit (IMLU), from 19-24 June, visited settlement camps of Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya in their "Freedom Bus". They also planted trees and discussed peace building and reconciliation with the displaced persons. On 23 June, the members of IMLU marched from Freedom Corner to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in Nairobi to present a petition on unresolved torture cases. On 25 June they began the day with a church service at Kitale Cathedral.
Kosovo

The Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT) organised a number of activities to commemorate 26 June. On 22 June, they took part in a conference entitled “The Social Situation of Torture Victims – Necessary Steps to Overcome the Situation” in which they spoke about the challenges faced by their clients in every day life. On Friday 24 June, the centre received a visit from the Prime Minister of Kosovo. He gave a speech and met with staff and clients of KRCT. In an interview with Radio-Kosovo, the KRCT spoke about 26 June and the need for public support against torture. On 26 June, there was a reception with many representatives from local and international NGOs. The final event was the inauguration of a café for clients at a KRCT satellite centre in Suhareka.

Lebanon

In commemoration of 26 June the Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (KRC) conducted a number of activities. Leading up to 26 June, they offered free medical services for a week and held a festival for female ex-detainees. On the day itself, in Beirut, there were cultural and artistic presentations, beginning with a photo exhibition about torture. This was followed by a drawing activity for children.
There were two theatrical presentations dealing with torture and a dance performed by the National Institute for Social Care and Vocational Training. Afterwards, participants saw a film about torture, and Wissam Hamadeh played music. To end the day a candlelight vigil was held for all the victims of violence and torture in the world.

Mexico

The Colectivo Contra la Tortura y la Impunidad (CCTI) began their commemoration on Friday, 24 June with a roundtable discussion of “The Role of the Psychoanalyst in Political and Social Movements”. Many mental health professionals attended and talked about the necessity for and ethical standards of mental health professionals when dealing with victims of torture. The following Sunday, CCTI held a workshop with a variety of participants from NGOs and others directly affected by torture. They looked at each of the separate rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and then discussed in groups human rights violations in the region. The workshop concluded with the video “The Militarisation of Guerrero” which dealt with the violation of Human Rights in Guerrero.

On Monday, 27 June, members of CCTI and a physical education professor visited political prisoners in Guerrero. The prisoners explained their stories of why they were imprisoned and the numerous human rights abuses they suffered. They also visited prisoners in Chilipancingo, despite the initial denial of entry by the prison.
The day after CCTI participated in a press conference concerning the human rights abuses of another political prisoner Jacobo Silva Nogales. The Guerrero chapter of CCTI also participated in a march against the massacre of 17 people in Aguas Blancas and for the release of political prisoners. A psychologist from CCTI participated in a forum “Mexico, Torture in a Democratic Country?”

Moldova, Republic of

The Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims “Memoria” (RCTV “Memoria”) organised a series of activities aimed at raising public awareness of torture. On 6 June, they met with representatives of the Parliamentary Commission to discuss human rights. On 16 June, they met with journalists to get them involved in an anti-torture program. On the morning of 20 June, they organised a round table discussion with the Ombudsman from the Center for Human Rights, Amnesty International and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Moldova to talk about torture, the legal framework regarding torture in Moldova and Moldova’s fulfilment of its international obligations in this area. Participants wrote and sent an appeal to the Government of Moldova to contribute to the UN Voluntary Fund for Torture Victims. Later that day, RCTV held a press conference “Together against Torture” involving the media and two recent victims of torture. All the beneficiaries of the centre were invited to a seminar on 22 June to inform them about the consequences of torture and the national and international legislation concerning human rights. The day after, RCTV held an Open House day and invited local NGOs and others.

MOLDOVA, REPUBLIC OF: A range of meetings were organised by RCTV with the public and NGOs.

Le 26 juin, Journée internationale des Nations-Unies

La Croix-Rouge Monégasque lutte contre la torture

La Croix Rouge Monégasque (CRM) participe à une Journée internationale organisée le 26 juin pour sensibiliser à la prévention des droits fondamentaux de l’homme et à la lutte contre la torture.

Pour sensibiliser les jeunes, la CRM, par l’intermédiaire de la section internationale d’Oraison, a organisé un débat public le 22 juin à Monaco. A cette occasion, un débat a été organisé autour des questions liées à la torture.

MONACO: The Croix-Rouge Monégasque focused its efforts on raising the awareness of local youth.

Monaco

The Croix-Rouge Monégasque brought attention to the issue of torture through local papers, in which it published articles, and through posters and flyers, which targeted youths at local schools and other youth organisations.

MOLDOVA, REPUBLIC OF: A range of meetings were organised by RCTV with the public and NGOs.
**Morocco**

Mental Health Professionals met at a seminar on 24, 25, and 26 June, organised by the Association Medicale de Réhabilitation des Victimes de la Torture (AMRVT) to discuss the psychological effects of torture and the treatment of torture victims. Participants also signed a declaration stipulating the responsibility of the State of Morocco to physically and mentally rehabilitate victims of torture. The seminar also resulted in the establishment of an AMRVT section in Marrakech.

**Nigeria**

Listeners to the Nigerian radio program “Know your Right” received a special message about torture from the Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA) on 11 and 18 June. Callers phoned in their questions about and experiences of torture, while representatives from PRAWA gave feedback and when relevant referred listeners to international tools such as the UN Convention against Torture. On 24 June, PRAWA held an essay competition and debate for local secondary school students. Later that week, they organised a peaceful rally in Lagos and the following day a peaceful rally in Enugu.

They also conducted a study of Pakistani police officers’ perceptions of torture.

**Pakistan**

SACH-Struggle for Change united a wide variety of people from different walks of life at a conference focused on the ratification of the UN Convention against Torture. They drew on everyone from journalists, to lawyers and police officers in an effort to create as wide a support as possible for the ratification. As a result articles were published in most of the major national newspapers during the month of June. They also conducted a study of Pakistani police officers’ perceptions of torture.

**Palestine**

On 26 June, the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (TRC) held workshops in Ramallah, Jenin and Hebron. The workshop in Ramallah was organised by the TRC and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, and there was a very wide
variety of participants. Many participants spoke about issues surrounding torture in both Palestine and Israel. There was also a presentation by a female ex-detainee. As a result of the workshop a number of recommendations were made: an international anti-torture convention should be established, 26 June should be a Palestinian day to prevent torture, perpetrators should be tried, there should be monitoring of hidden torture methods, the freeing of Palestinian political prisoners should be a top priority, female prisoners should be given more importance, organisations should work together and there should be an anti-torture curriculum in Palestinian schools. There were also similar workshops in Jenin and Hebron. They spoke about many similar issues such as political prisoners, Israeli prison conditions, the Jenin refugee camp and others. The events were covered by media from many national newspapers and television stations.

The Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP) organised a workshop with the Ministry of Prisoners, the Prisoners Association (Hossam) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights. At the workshop, with approximately 120 professionals from human rights organisations, ministries and other official and civil society institutions; they discussed torture in Palestine and Israel and the issue of political prisoners. They also discussed the problem of financing the rehabilitation centres in Palestine. In the end, the participants created a set of recommendations, such as the increased cooperation of governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to spread the culture of anti-torture and the involvement of the media in the discussion of how to abolish torture in the Palestinian community.
Philippines
Participants of the 26 June commemoration event organised by Balay Rehabilitation Center, Inc. experienced a number of artistic, cultural activities dealing with torture. They began the day with a prayer and followed it with the presentation of a book "In search of Balms: A Walk Forward to Healing", which shares the stories of five torture survivors in their journeys towards healing. An ex-detainee and torture survivor then read a poem he wrote in his detention cell. There was a variety of music, such as songs, the native nose flute, and a gong. Guests also participated in an indigenous ritual calling upon the four elemental gods to bless the space where a memorial marker for torture victims and human rights advocates would be placed.

Poland
The Centre for Victims of Political Persecution (CVPP) held a lecture at Jagiellonian University Collegium Medicum involving health professionals to speak about treating torture victims. They also distributed posters around the area informing locals about 26 June.

Senegal
In preparation for 26 June, Victimes de Violence Réhabilitées, Le Centre de Soins du CAPREC (VIVRE/CAPREC) placed a banner on the city hall in order to bring torture to the public eye. They also spoke on a local radio station "RTS" about the centre and torture. On the day of 26 June they hosted a round table discussion about issues surrounding torture. Topics discussed included the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture, the psychological consequences of torture, relations between VIVRE and the Office of Refugee Orientation (BOS) and other general information concerning torture. There was also a segment where seven torture victims presented their stories and also interacted in the debate.
Serbia and Montenegro
On 26 June, the International Aid Network – Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (IAN CRTV) and the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) distributed 2,000 writing pads to judges and public prosecutors with the text “Forcibly mobilised refugees - are they victims of criminal acts?” and on the back side a list of all the domestic and international laws broken by forcibly moving refugees. The day after the organisations held a conference with staff from the centres and the media where they discussed the legal and psychological consequences of forcibly mobilised refugees.

Sudan
The Amel Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture in collaboration with Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development launched a campaign in June in support of the fight against torture and aiming to reach their goal of “a society free of torture”. This campaign consisted of workshops and lectures in several different cities in Sudan, among these were Neila, Om Dorman, Kesla and Khartoum including a number of its universities. The subject of discussion was how to eradicate torture and end impunity.

On 22-23 June the AMAN Network meeting took place at the Amel Centre where the performance of the network was discussed and a plan for the upcoming few months was made. It was stressed that it was extremely important that the centres communicate together and share information and experiences with each other. A commemoration of the international day against torture 26 June was held and was aired live on Al Jazeera news channel. The celebration was also covered by Reuters and many local and international newspapers.
Switzerland

A number of NGOs, including: the Swiss section of Action des Chrétiens pour l’Abolition de la torture (ACAT), the Swiss section of Amnesty International, the Association for the Prevention of Torture, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), and the Ambulatory Service for Victims of Torture of the Swiss Red Cross in cooperation with the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, organised an awareness raising campaign this year in Bern. They circulated a letter entitled “Right to asylum: Switzerland must respect human rights” to show support against new policies and measures which restrict asylum. They collected more than 7200 signatures and presented the letter to the Swiss authorities on 19 September. They also held a discussion “Prevention of Torture and the Rehabilitation of Victims” on 21 June.

Turkey

A series of lectures, organised by the Centre d’Action Sociale, Réhabilitation et Adaption (SOHARM-CASRA), took place from 24 to 26 June. They dealt with topics regarding psychotherapy and methods of rehabilitation, with the participation of the public, clients of the centre and staff. In an effort to protest against torture, children released balloons in front of Fort Diyarbakir and then visited different local NGOs to invite them to an informational meeting at the centre. This meeting presented the centre to the public and other NGOs and informed participants about the international human rights mechanisms used to combat torture.

Uganda

Before commemorating 26 June, the African Centre for Treatment of Torture Victims (ACTV) and the Ugandan Forum Against Torture and Organised Violence (UFATOVE) held a massive media campaign where they distributed some 5,000 posters and flyers throughout the city, hung banners, advertised on television, and held press conferences to bring atten-
In cooperation with many other Ugandan NGOs, they held a meeting on 25 June to discuss human rights and torture in Uganda. Local political figures and human rights defenders attended and gave presentations about the human rights situation in Uganda. The following day the organisations held a peaceful street march against torture and a national prayer led by religious leaders.

United Kingdom

This international day against torture marked the beginning of a campaign by Amnesty International aimed at stopping torture in the context of the “war on terror” and with the specific goal of establishing an independent commission of enquiry to investigate the actions of all U.S. agencies and all their detention and interrogation practices related to the “war on terror”.

During the period from 23 June – 3 July, REDRESS, in cooperation with The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture and Amnesty International, hosted a special art exhibit at the Oxo Gallery in London. Photographer Véronique Rolland displayed her photos taken of survivors of torture who reside in the United Kingdom. Subjects are young and old, from different backgrounds, religious and political beliefs. Displayed with the photographs were moving personal statements from the survivors themselves.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum held a special ceremony at St. Paul’s...
Church in London in honour of 26 June. The event began with a prayer and continued with a hymn and poetry. The director of the centre spoke about torture in Zimbabwe and the chairperson for the National Constitutional Assembly gave an update of the current situation of torture in Zimbabwe. More songs followed and a Zimbabwean torture victim spoke about her experiences. After a community theatre presentation there was more singing and a final prayer.

**United States of America**

On 23 June the *Florida Center for Survivors of Torture* (FCST) hosted an event entitled "Courage for Tomorrow: United Nations Day in Support of Victims of Torture". After a welcome by the Mayor of St. Petersburg and a proclamation of the day by Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, the president of the University of South Florida gave the keynote speech. Afterwards, participants saw the world premiere of the documentary "Eyes that Don’t See, Hearts that Don’t Feel", which tells the story of torture survivors from around the world who live in the Tampa Bay area. A panel discussion involving the filmmakers, clients, legal staff and centre staff, followed the film. There was also artwork displayed at the event by Carlos Manuel Soto, a survivor of torture himself. At the end of the event awards were presented to staff of the University of South Florida for their ongoing support of the Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services, which supports the centre.

*Survivors of Torture, International* commemorated 26 June with an event called "Songs of Healing and Hope". Sounds of songs, jazz music and African drumming and dancing filled the air and brought the audience a greater awareness of torture. There were also presentations by the offices of the senator, congresswoman and governor. The afternoon ended with chocolates and wine from local donors.

**Venezuela**

This year the *Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz* took to the streets in honour of 26 June. In the centre of Caracas victims of torture, their families and staff from the centre used television, radio, newspapers, banners and flyers to bring a message to the public and the government of Venezuela: the government must establish mechanisms for the reparation and rehabilitation of victims of torture.
States which have RATIFIED or acceded to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

140 States as of 7 October 2005

Afghanistan  
Albania  
Algeria  
Antigua and Barbuda  
Argentina  
Armenia  
Australia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Bahrain  
Bangladesh  
Belarus  
Belgium  
Belize  
Benin  
Bolivia  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Botswana  
Brazil  
Bulgaria  
Burkina Faso  
Burundi  
Cambodia  
Cameroon  
Canada  
Cape Verde  
Chad  
Chile  
China  
Colombia  
Congo  
Congo, Democratic Republic of the  
Costa Rica  
Côte d’Ivoire  
Croatia  
Cuba  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Djibouti  
Ecuador  
Egypt  
El Salvador  
Equatorial Guinea  
Estonia  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
Gabon  
Georgia  
Germany  
Ghana  
Greece  
Guatemala  
Guinea  
Guyana  
Holy See (not UN member state)  
Honduras  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Indonesia  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Japan  
Jordan  
Kazakhstan  
Kenya  
Korea, Republic of  
Kuwait  
Kyrgyzstan  
Latvia  
Lebanon  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of  
Malawi  
Maldives  
Mali  
Malta  
Mauritania  
Mauritius  
Mexico  
Moldova, Republic of  
Monaco  
Mongolia  
Morocco  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Nepal  
Netherlands  
New Zealand  
Nicaragua  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Norway  
Panama  
Paraguay  
Peru  
Philippines  
Poland  
Portugal  
Qatar  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Saudi Arabia  
Senegal  
Serbia and Montenegro  
Seychelles  
Sierra Leone  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Somalia  
South Africa  
Spain  
Sri Lanka  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Syrian Arab Republic  
Tajikistan  
Timor-Leste  
Togo  
Tunisia  
Turkey  
Turkmenistan  
Uganda  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
United States of America  
Uruguay  
Uzbekistan  
Venezuela  
Yemen  
Zambia
States which have NOT RATIFIED the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

52 States as of 7 October 2005

For the fifth consecutive year, the IRCT has published the Global Report on the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The report gives a good overview of the many different types of events that were held on 26 June 2005, as part of the IRCT’s “Together against Torture” campaign.

We encourage you to use this report as inspiration when considering what type of event to plan for 26 June 2006. We also encourage you to collaborate with other organisations in your country which have an interest in the fight against torture. You may find that you can learn from each other’s experiences or that you can plan your 2006 event together.

The IRCT is once again in 2006 supporting the global 26 June campaign and would like to collaborate with as many rehabilitation centres and anti-torture organisations as possible. The worldwide commemoration of 26 June will once more raise awareness of the problem of torture and the achievements of the global movement against torture. During the weeks prior to 26 June 2006 the IRCT website (www.irct.org) will provide an overview of the activities commemorating this day in every region of the world.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have a small sum of money available for campaign and documentation materials in 2006. If you have any extraordinary ideas of how we can spread our message and reach even more people during the 2006 campaign, please contact us and discuss the possibilities. Innovative ideas are most welcome – in particular those which can be documented by pictures.

For more information on how to join the 26 June 2006 campaign, please visit our website or contact:

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Please send a cheque that is made payable to:

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Borgergade 13
P.O. Box 9049
DK-1022 Copenhagen K
Denmark

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Account No: 4310-005029
IBAN: DK18 3000 4310 0050 29

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Account No: 4310-821152
IBAN: DK90 3000 4310 8211 52

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Account No: 3001-957171
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