

UN Fund for Victims of Torture, April 2015

Expert Workshop and Public Meeting with Practitioners in the field of rehabilitation of victims of torture

“ *The support of the UN Fund reassures beneficiaries of the neutrality of the assistance they receive* ”



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Ahmed Mohammed Amin,
Executive Director - Organization for
Victims of Human Rights Violations
(WCHAN), Iraq

Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Amin is a medical doctor with long experience in healing victims of war trauma and torture in Iraq. Mr. Ahmed coordinates mental health programmes and policies for trauma survivors, including through collaboration with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the University of Sulaimaniya, the UK Royal College of Psychiatry and the Iraqi National Mental Health Council. In response to the growing influx of IDPs into the Kurdish region of Iraq in 2006, Mr. Ahmed established the Trauma Rehabilitation and Training Center (TRTC) in the city of Sulaimaniya - the first specialized rehabilitation center of its kind in the area. Today, with the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, the Centre uses a treatment model that provides holistic and client-centered services to respond to the growing needs of both displaced Iraqis and Syrians.

“ Take one member of the society, torture him, send him back to the society, it is as if you have tortured the entire society. ”





Sotheara Chhim,
Director - Transcultural Psychosocial
Organization Cambodia (TPO),
Cambodia

Mr. Chhim is a psychiatrist and the Executive Director of the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO Cambodia), providing psychosocial and mental health care at the grassroots level. Mr. Chhim has been working in the mental health field for the past 17 years. He has a Degree in Medicine, a Medical Specialist Diploma in Psychiatry, a Master of Psychological Medicine and is currently completing his PhD at Monash University in Victoria (Australia). With the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, TPO has been providing since 2009 medical, psychological and legal assistance to victims of torture of the Khmer Rouge regime, as well as to detainees and former detainees.

“ To help victims of torture restore their dignity, the assistance provided needs to be holistic and culturally adapted. ”



Camelia Doru,
Director - ICAR Foundation,
Medical Rehabilitation Centre for
Torture Survivors, Romania

Ms Doru graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Bucharest and is the former Vice President of the Committee of IRCT Denmark. An expert on torture rehabilitation, Ms Doru has collaborated with organizations such as UNDP, EIDHR and OSCE. Ms Doru is the founder and the medical director of ICAR Foundation, which for the past 23 years has provided medical rehabilitation to former political prisoners in Romania who were tortured. Today, ICAR Foundation also provides psycho-social assistance in border refugee reception centres of the Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration.

“ In my country torture was a taboo. Nobody wanted to talk about it. Breaking the taboo of torture was a professional challenge for me, the forbidden land on which I jumped without suspecting its dimensions, its darkness or dangers. ”





Philip Grant,
Director - TRIAL (Track Impunity
Always), Switzerland

Mr. Grant is an international humanitarian lawyer. He practised at the bar for 10 years before committing himself full-time to providing legal support to victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture and enforced disappearances. In 2002, he founded TRIAL, a Geneva-based rights organisation, fighting against impunity for crimes under international law. He is its current Executive Director. With the support of an emergency grant from the UN Fund, in 2014 TRIAL supported Tunisian lawyers defending victims of torture.

“ Torture is an attempt to break the human in all of us. To let it exist, or worst, thrive, is to agree that pain, violence, anguish, agony and death are an acceptable part of our nature. I do not. ”



Suzanne Jabbour,
Director - Restart Center for
Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence
and Torture (RESTART), Lebanon

Ms Jabbour is a psychologist and an experienced project coordinator of psychosocial rehabilitation programmes, in particular for the rehabilitation of refugees and children affected by armed conflict, in Lebanon and abroad. Ms Jabbour is the Director of RESTART Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture in Beirut. Presently, she is also a member of the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and the President of the Executive Committee of IRCT Denmark. Since 2005, RESTART has been providing social counselling, psychotherapy, physiotherapy, educational and medical services to torture victims, including children. Since 2012, services have been extended to victims fleeing from Syria. In 2014, with the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, RESTART provided rehabilitative services to more than 300 victims of torture fleeing from Syria and Iraq.

“ *Rehabilitation and justice for all and impunity for none.* ”





Peter Kiama,
Executive Director - Independent
Medico Legal Unit (IMLU), Kenya

Mr. Kiama holds an MA in Development Studies and has over 20 years' experience in governance and human rights programming, advocacy, grassroots organisations as well as corporate governance. Before joining IMLU as Executive Director, he worked with Trocaire Kenya and with the Overseas Development Agency of the Irish Bishops Conference. Previously, he worked at the Kenya Human Rights Commission as a Senior Programme Officer. IMLU, which since 2007 has been a recipient of grants from the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, provides medical, psychological and legal services to victims of torture and combats impunity through documentation.

“ Society owes victims the right to redress and rehabilitation as fellow human beings, and in order to remedy the deleterious effects of torture on their dignity. ”



Norberto Liwski,
*President - Comité para la Defensa
de la Salud, la Ética Profesional y
los Derechos Humanos (CODESEDH),
Argentina*

Mr. Liwski is a medical doctor specialising in social paediatrics, a professor at the University of Buenos Aires and a guest lecturer in different European universities. Mr. Liwski has been working for the rehabilitation of victims of torture of the Argentine military regime for the last 30 years. From 2003 to 2007, he was a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Mr. Liwski founded CODESEDH in 1982 to provide long-term holistic assistance to victims of torture. With the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, CODESEDH continues to help victims of torture to give testimony in trials related to the crimes committed under the military regime.

“ *Uno de los mayores desafíos de la asistencia por largo periodo a las víctimas de tortura es precisamente la de establecer una estrategia que aleje definitivamente el riesgo de la revictimización y estigmatización.* ”





Victor Madrigal-Borloz,
Secretary General - International
Rehabilitation Council for Torture
Victims (IRCT), Denmark

Mr. Madrigal-Borloz is an international human rights lawyer with over 18 years of experience in international dialogue, development and case management. Since 2014, he has been the Secretary-General of IRCT. He currently also serves as a member of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. IRCT is a membership based organisation, which aims at strengthening the capacity of its member centres specialised in the rehabilitation of victims of torture across the globe. In 2015, 50 IRCT members were awarded grants by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture.



Radhia Nasraoui,
*President - Organisation Contre la
Torture en Tunisie, (OCTT), Tunisia*

Ms Nasraoui is a Tunisian lawyer known for her human rights activism and stance against torture. She is a current member of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. Ms Nasraoui started her own law firm in 1978 and subsequently founded OCTT. In the aftermath of the 2011 events in Tunisia, OCTT, with the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, provides critical legal aid to over 350 victims of torture.





Lin Piwowarczyk,
Psychiatrist - Boston Medical Center,
United States of America

Ms Piwowarczyk is a psychiatrist, who started working with refugees in 1993 at the Indochinese Psychiatry Clinic in Boston and specialized in the mental health evaluation and treatment of refugees and victims of torture. Since 2002, Ms Piwowarczyk has served on the Executive Committee of the US National Consortium of Torture Treatment Programs, and has been its president since 2011. In 2009, she was awarded the Sarah Haley Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence from the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. She is a leading psychiatrist at the Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights at the Boston Medical Center, which with the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, provides high quality psychological assistance to torture victims mainly from African countries.

“ The prestige of the UN partnership with our Center emphasizes the serious merit of the work of restoring health, dignity and functionality to survivors of torture in need -thereby having a multiplier effect by encouraging other funders to contribute to the work. ”



Felicitas Treue,
Co-Founder - *Colectivo Contra
la Tortura y la Impunidad (CCTI),
Mexico*

Ms Treue is a psychologist and psychotherapist, who since 1998 has worked in the field of rehabilitation of victims of torture, including training for health and legal professionals both in Mexico and Germany. Since 2000, she has actively promoted the implementation of the Istanbul Protocol on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Ms Treue has served as an expert psychological witness for torture cases before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Presently, she is a member of the Executive Board of IRCT Denmark, where she also serves in the International Forensic Expert Group. She is a co-founder of CCTI, a Mexican organization providing medical, psychological and legal support to victims of torture.

“ *Our work is driven by the conviction that torture is unacceptable under any circumstances. Torture aims at destroying the individual’s body and mind, but also the bonds of solidarity and trust in humanity which are pillars of society.* ”

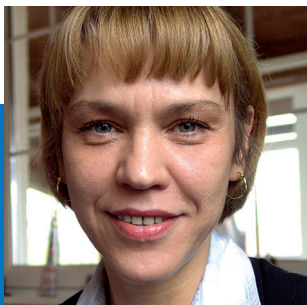




Simone Van Der Kaaden,
Director - Center for Victims of
Torture (CVT), Jordan

Ms Van Der Kaaden is a psychologist and holds a post-graduate diploma in development management, with over 15 years work experience in child protection, psychosocial services and participatory community development. Ms Van Der Kaaden has served in different centers run by CVT, including in Sierra Leone and the Sudan. Since 2010, she has been the Director of the CVT Center in Jordan, which opened in 2008 to provide mental health, physical therapy and social services to displaced Iraqis. Since late 2011, the Center has increasingly responded to the needs of Syrian victims fleeing into Jordan, including through emergency grants received by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture. In 2014, with the Fund's grant, CVT Jordan was able to deliver physiotherapy and mental health services to 500 victims of torture fleeing from both Syria and Iraq.

“ The Fund is a key partner in supporting our work in Jordan, where we rebuild the lives and restore the hope of more than 1,000 torture survivors each year. ”



Jasna Zecevic,
President and Director - Association
VIVE ŽENE, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Ms Zecevic is the Director of Vive Žene, Center for Therapy and Counselling in Tuzla, established in 1994 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A prominent advocate of gender equality in her country, she played a critical role in denouncing rape and gender-based violence during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and its aftermath. With the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, Vive Žene has been providing since 2007 psychological assistance to victims of torture, in particular victims of sexual violence in armed conflict, as well as detainees and victims of disappearances and their family members.

“ It is crucial to continue to work on rehabilitation and strengthening war and torture survivors groups in order to prevent the transmission of trauma onto the younger generation and to facilitate peaceful reconciliation. ”





