

# APPEAL in Support of Victims of Torture

June 26 is the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, an occasion for us to recall to the entire world that torture is a severe human rights violation. Torture destroys people's sense of dignity and human worth. In some cases, torture is part of a deliberate state policy of instilling fear and intimidating its population. Its consequences are extremely serious for women, men or children alike. It is in light of this that we find with deep regret that twenty-five years since the entry into force of the Convention against Torture, this cruel and dehumanizing practice remains pervasive in some regions around the globe. Even when regimes change, torture often persists and a culture of impunity remains, constituting an obstacle to progress in society.

Rehabilitation can help victims of torture continue and rebuild their lives after trauma. However, rebuilding the life of a person whose dignity has been hurt or destroyed through inhuman treatment and torture necessitates time and can be only the result of a complex long-term assistance – medical, psychological, legal and social.

On the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture:

1) we express our solidarity with the numerous victims of torture in the Republic of Moldova, including in the Transnistrian region, who suffered or continue to suffer acts of torture or their consequences, as well as with their families;

2) we recall the obligation of the Republic of Moldova not only to prevent torture, but also to provide all torture

victims with effective and prompt redress, compensation and appropriate social, psychological, medical and other forms of rehabilitation;

3) we insist that urgent and unconditioned steps be taken to comprehensively monitor and defend fundamental human rights and freedoms of persons held in prisons in Moldova's Transnistrian region, in particular of the persons who sought assistance on claims of torture and inhuman treatment;

4) we urge the Government to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT), alongside other State Parties to the UN Convention Against Torture.

This Fund is very important for numerous torture survivors worldwide as it is one of the major specific sources of funding for rehabilitation services around the world. Most rehabilitation centers worldwide, including RCTV "Memoria", rely financially on this Fund to realize one of the most basic rights of the victims of torture – the right to free medical and social rehabilitation, which is guaranteed by all the relevant international instruments, including Art.14 of the Convention Against Torture, to which Moldova is a party.

We recall that the Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims "Memoria" is the only of the kind in Moldova. Since its inception in 2000 it has made considerable efforts to meet the rehabilitation needs of torture survivors from the present and the past, including from the Transnistrian region, without adequate support from the state.

We are expecting concrete actions and a positive reaction to this Appeal, both from the authorities of Moldova and from the international institutions accredited in Moldova and for which democratic values and respect for human rights represent a priority.

Only by providing direct support to victims of torture can we prove the unequivocal determination and commitment to fight

torture and impunity!

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Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova

For additional details contact:

- Ludmila Popovici, RCTV Memoria,
- Ion Manole, Promo-LEX,
- Lela Metreveli, „Human Rights Embassy”,
- Natalia Mozer, „Mothers for Human Rights”.