



World Organization against Torture



Public Health and Medicine
Development Fund of Georgia



Human Rights Information
and Documentation Center



Georgian Young
Lawyers' Association

P r e s s r e l e a s e

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GEORGIA SHOULD CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING LEGAL REFORMS TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in partnership with Georgian NGOs Human Rights Information and Documentation Centre (HRIDC), Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), and Public Health and Medicine Development Fund of Georgia (PHMDFG) has organized workshops on 27 & 29 September in Tbilisi, Georgia on the implementation of the Recommendations adopted by the UN Committee Against Torture in May 2006¹.

These workshops gathered several national and international NGOs to ensure that civil society take an active part in the implementation of the Recommendations of the United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT). In this regard, a declaration has been adopted and points out some key issues that the NGOs would like the government to address in the following months. *"In particular, it suggests concrete and updated proposals such as the legislative regulation of the use of force by police officers when conducting special operations"* said Cécile Trochu Grasso from OMCT.

Earlier in May 2006, the Committee Against Torture considered the third periodic report of Georgia on the implementation of the rights contained in the UN Convention Against Torture. In this occasion Georgian NGOs HRIDC, GYLA and PHMDFG, together with OMCT, had submitted an alternative report on the human rights situation in Georgia². Although it is acknowledged that positive steps have been undertaken by the Georgian authorities since the Rose Revolution, the alternative report denounces the Georgian government's *"policy to fight against crime [which] leads to unacceptable abuse and torture"*. The alternative report by NGOs also deplores the culture of impunity which still prevails in Georgia and highlights inhuman conditions of detentions (namely, overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions and deaths in detention). Violence against women and children, perpetrated by both private and public actors is also condemned.

¹ CAT/C/GEO/CO/3

² The English version of the alternative report is available on OMCT website www.omct.org.

The examination of the human rights situation in Georgia has led to several recommendations in which the Committee Against Torture expresses its concern regarding *“impunity and intimidation still [persisting in Georgia, in particular] the use of excessive force, including torture and other forms of ill-treatment by law-enforcement officials, especially prior to and during arrest, during prison riots and in the fight against organised crime”*. The high number of sudden cases of deaths of detainees has also been raised by the CAT that recommended the Georgian authorities to act to strengthen their efforts in the adequate implementation of the Convention.

The follow-up of the CAT's recommendations was also an opportunity to meet the Georgian authorities in order to elaborate a plan of action to address the problem of torture and other forms of violence in Georgia. This meeting was an *“occasion to exchange and obtain information from the very authorities whose responsibility is to take concrete steps towards implementation”* added Cécile Trochu Grasso. OMCT and the national NGOs firmly wish to closely collaborate with all relevant public entities in order to fully and adequately implement the recommendations suggested by both civil society and the Committee Against Torture.

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) is the world's largest coalition of non-governmental organisations fighting against arbitrary detention, torture, summary and extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances and other forms of violence. Its global network comprises nearly 300 local, national and regional organisations, which share the common goal of eradicating such practices and enabling the respect of human rights for all.

Visit our website: www.omct.org

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