



ANNUAL REPORT **2009**



**HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE  
NETWORK**

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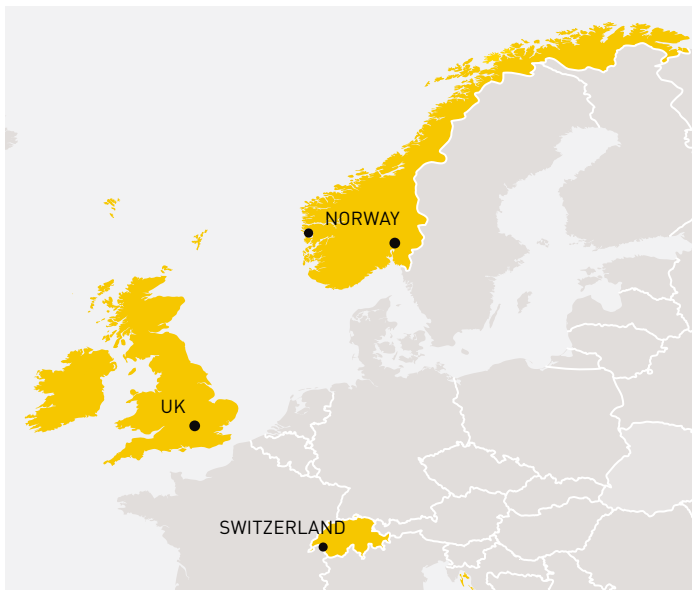
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COVER PHOTO: A young activist lighting a candle on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June 2009. The street action organised by the Georgian Centre for Human Rights and the Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims at Vere Park, Tbilisi, Georgia.

PHOTO BY: ZURAB KURTSIKIDZE

## WHERE WE ARE

### WESTERN EUROPE



### WESTERN BALKANS



### EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS



### EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA





## MANDATE

The Human Rights House Network's **mandate** is to protect, strengthen and support human rights organisations locally, and unite them in an international network of Human Rights Houses. HRHN's **four strategic objectives** are:

1. to strengthen human rights defenders and their work,
2. to facilitate establishment of sustainable institutions,
3. to generate political support for human rights defenders and NGOs, and
4. to promote and protect the rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression, and the right to be a human rights defender.

The Human Rights House Network (HRHN) is an international network of Human Rights Houses (HRHs). Each HRH consists of 3-10 local human rights organisations. HRHN was formally established in 1994 and in 2009 had members in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Norway, Russia, Poland, and UK. Partners are also found in Armenia, Macedonia, Kenya, Uganda, Ukraine, Ethiopia and the Eritrean Diaspora. In total, these Human Rights Houses represent more than 70 local human rights organisations in 15 countries.

# ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE NETWORK

## Programmes

To reach its strategic objectives, HRHN has four programmes:

### 1. Networking and capacity building

Independent human rights organisations come together in a joint working place, a physical or a virtual Human Rights House, and unite with other Houses in the international Human Rights House Network. HRHN is a 'bottom-up' network, thus, depending on the local needs and desires, the engagement of organisations varies from participation in joint programmes nationally or regionally to sharing information and practical experience with the others.

See p. 8-11

### 2. Institution building

Each Human Rights House is independent and locally owned; the member organisations are equal and independent. Our aim is to secure a sustainable joint institution at the local level. See p. 14-31

### 3. Lobbying and advocacy

To generate political support for human rights, human rights defenders and NGOs alert each other when protection is at stake. HRHN utilises the joint website [www.humanrightshouse.org](http://www.humanrightshouse.org), initiates campaigns and engages in advocacy work with different stakeholders and

actors. The network focuses on the defence and promotion of:

- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of association
- Freedom of assembly
- The right to be a human rights defender See p. 12-13

### 4. Fundraising

HRHN fundraises for the establishment of local Human Rights Houses, development of joint activities and national and regional projects in the network. See p. 34

## Secretariat

The network's secretariat is the Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF) based in Oslo and in Geneva. HRHF works closely with the local HRHs on joint projects, and hence possesses unique competence and knowledge about the human rights situation in many of the member countries, as well as the challenges that human rights defenders face in their daily work.

HRHF opened an office in Geneva at the end of 2008 to support HRHN members in their advocacy efforts. See p. 35

## Membership in HRHN

New membership applications are considered by the International Advisory Board biannually. For more information, please visit [www.humanrightshouse.org](http://www.humanrightshouse.org).



### **Maria Dahle**

Executive Director of the Human Rights House Foundation

Among the greatest fears of human rights violators are the local voices, simply saying what they have seen.

When senior Russian human rights defenders look back, they sum up that “in the Soviet times, we were arrested and deported to remote places. Today we are killed.” This is happening in the Russian Federation in 2009. The tendency towards more repression and increasingly violent methods is alarming and widespread. Worrysome are reports of the Human Rights House Network’s members that their countries are already contributing to this trend.

Authorities have become less open to critical voices and are using harsher means to clamp down on free speech. New legislation and bureaucratic regulations have made it much easier for authorities to control the NGO’s activities and use the court system to close down independent human rights structures.

A tougher climate for human rights defenders calls for more targeted, diverse and sophisticated mechanisms

of protection and support. More human rights defenders need access to local and regional shelters, as well as flexible short-term visas to countries where they can be safe. Family members of targeted human rights defenders have to be included in the protection programmes. Health care and insurance provisions for those facing exclusion from social security schemes as a consequence of their human rights work is also needed.

Human rights organisations stand stronger together. Support for developing joint strategies, stronger networks for cooperation and communication and rapid response mechanisms between human rights defenders and journalists must be increased. To become more efficient, members of the HRHN recommend that human rights organisations share and unite their efforts, and jointly refine their strategies. Hence, independent local voices must be the focal point of our work brought forward to the regional and international arena.



**Rohan Jayasekera** is an Associate Editor at Index on Censorship and a member of the HRHN Advisory Board. Together with Article 19 and English PEN, Index on Censorship represent the Human Rights House in London.

Two diary entries in my 2009 schedule particularly inspired and energised me. In September, I was fortunate to travel to Georgia, a favourite country of mine, for this year’s Human Rights House Network advisory board meeting.

Even more luckily, I got the chance to meet with the extraordinary team of rights advocates behind the forthcoming new Tbilisi Human Rights House. The new House is the joint ambition of the city’s Human Rights Centre, the Georgian legal rights NGO Article 42, the regional rights monitoring group CAUCASIA, the Georgian Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and the women’s rights group Safari.

These deeply impressive, courageous organisations are using the tools of communication at every level, from print to internet, through mass media and personal contact, to spread the message. The basic right to information, of freedom of expression, is the guarantor of all other rights. Only when people are informed of their entitlement to a right can they act to demand it. Only through free communication can they organise to act effectively.

The second event saw Human Rights House Network members join scores of the world’s most prominent global free expression networks in Oslo, Norway to play its part in the Global Forum on Freedom of Expression in June.

Speaking for myself, the appeal of both events lay in their commitment to networking and joint initiatives, at home, regionally and internationally. So there was no surprise in discovering that the key to the connection between both of them was the HRHN itself.

In many ways the HRHN is an exciting model for rights activism for the next decade.

HRHN grows organically, and from the ‘bottom-up’. Driven by local needs and expectations, its members’ engagement varies from participation in shared actions nationally or regionally to simply sharing know-how and key information.

Framed by the ways of the internet and driven at speed by online social networking tools, from Iran to Burma, Zimbabwe to China, this is the way change is being achieved.

And while many international free speech organisations and donor agencies are scrambling to make sense of the open collaborative model, the HRHN has that methodology already written deep in its DNA.

The year 2010, indeed the decade itself to come, will be a significant one for the HRHN, and Index on Censorship and I are pleased to be playing a continued role in it.

## JANUARY:

**SOUTH CAUCASUS:** The South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders was formed with the selection of 30 NGOs from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The selection process was carried out by the project's co-ordinator, Human Rights Centre in Georgia, and the international partner, HRHF.



**USA:** The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Committee on NGOs, which has been handling the HRHF's application for consultative status since 2006, deferred the consideration of the application yet again.

**RUSSIA/NORWAY:** Amnesty International, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the HRHF held a memorial in front of the Russian Embassy for lawyer Stanislav Markelov and journalist Anastasia Baburova, who were killed in Moscow on 19 January 2009. In their appeals, human rights defenders and Norwegian politicians demanded that Russia takes responsibility and conducts a proper investigation into the murders.



## FEBRUARY:

**AZERBAIJAN/GENEVA:** Azerbaijan was reviewed by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group in Geneva. The Human Rights Center of Azerbaijan, a partner of HRH Baku, submitted a report, met with several state delegations to inform them about the human rights situation in Azerbaijan, and took part in the review.

**GENEVA:** Representatives of the HRHN from Georgia, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Ethiopia and Norway took part in the HURIDOCS conference in Geneva devoted to the Universal Periodic Review and the International Criminal Court.

## MARCH:

**BELARUS:** After a five-year gap, the Belarusian authorities granted permission to hold the VI Congress of the Assembly of Pro-democratic NGOs in Minsk. The Congress attracted 330 participants, including more than 30 foreign guests. The Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the HRHF were among the foreign participants.

## APRIL:

**AZERBAIJAN:** The Human Rights House Baku was officially opened. More than 50 guests, including the Norwegian Ambassador in Azerbaijan H.E., Mr Jon Ramberg (left) and coordinator Shahla Ismailova (middle), the British Ambassador to Azerbaijan, senior diplomats from the US Embassy, the leaders of national and international human rights organisations in Azerbaijan, as well as the President of the Belarusian HRH in exile in Vilnius, attended the opening ceremony.



**AZERBAIJAN:** Experts from the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) and the Azerbaijani partner organisations held a training session on international human rights mechanisms for 22 human rights defenders from six regions.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF

# 2009

One of the greatest assets of belonging to an international network is the possibility to extend cooperation beyond the borders of one country and amplify the voices of human rights defenders and organisations. The following pages shed light on the key activities jointly organised and implemented by several members of the Human Rights House Network.

**UGANDA:** East and the Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders project hosted an all-African HR defenders conference in Kampala. Together with the partners from Africa, the HRHF attended the conference and discussed their future role in the region.

## MAY:

**SOUTH CAUCASUS:** Members of the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders gathered for a security training session in Georgia, led by the experts from the Assembly of Pro-democratic NGOs in Belarus and Front Line. The session was organised by the Human Rights Center in Georgia in cooperation with the HRHF.

**EASTERN EUROPE/CZECH REPUBLIC:** Partner organisations from Belarus, Azerbaijan and the HRHF took an active role in the conference 'Eastern Partnership: Towards Civil Society Forum', devoted to the engagement of civil societies in eastern European countries. They made presentations, conducted interventions, and submitted recommendations for the Eastern Partnership Summit.

**BELARUS/CZECH REPUBLIC:** The HRHF took part in the bi-annual Belarusian International Implementers Meeting (BIIM) in Prague, which attracted representatives from 31 NGOs and donor organisations from Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden, the US, as well as from the European Commission. BIIM served as a platform for discussing common dilemmas, analysing changes in the situation in Belarus and generating new ideas to shape strategy development.

**KENYA:** The Kenya Human Rights Commission hosted the first civil society Universal Periodic Review workshop in Nairobi, which attracted human rights organisations from across Kenya. The Human Rights House Foundation contributed as part of an international expert team.

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## JUNE

**NORWAY:** 58 participants from 20 countries gathered at the HRHN's annual meeting in Oslo. Most of the participants also attended the Global Forum for Freedom of Expression, a partnership initiative led by International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX), Norwegian PEN and The Freedom of Expression Foundation (Fritt Ord), which was held later that week.

**EASTERN EUROPE/NORWAY:** Zoya Svetova, a Russian journalist and correspondent for Caucasian magazine DOSH, and the Azeri newspaper Azadliq received the Oslo's Fritt Ord (The Freedom of Expression Foundation) and Hamburg's ZEIT Foundation press prizes "Free Press of Russia" and "Free Press of Eastern Europe" for 2009. The nominations were submitted by Norwegian PEN, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the HRHF.



**BELARUS/LITHUANIA:** The preparation for the launch of the HRHN project 'Electronic Human Rights Education for Lawyers' was started by a working meeting of the steering committee, national experts and coordinators from Georgia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Poland. The meeting took place at the Belarusian HRH in exile in Vilnius.

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## JULY:

**SOUTH CAUCASUS:** The South Caucasus Network of Human Rights defenders had its first regional meeting in Georgia to identify the main human rights concerns in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. In solidarity with their colleagues in Russia, the meeting participants organised a protest campaign in front of the Russian Embassy in Tbilisi in response to the shocking and brutal murder of the Russian human rights defender Natalia Estemirova.

**AZERBAIJAN:** Nine Azerbaijani NGOs from the South Caucasus Network, as well as the Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) and the HRHF, submitted an NGO report, entitled "Replies to the list of issues" to the UN Human Rights Committee. The report emphasised some of the most dire human rights problems in Azerbaijan. In their recommendation to the Azerbaijani authorities, the UN Human Rights Committee highlighted the violations of freedom of expression, assembly, fair trial and domestic violence. HRHF organized a briefing together with IRFS, Article 19 and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

**ETHIOPIA:** As part of a study on the possibility of engaging with the independent human rights community in Ethiopia, HRHF met with the leading human rights organisations and representatives of the donor/diplomacy community in Addis Ababa. Following the meetings, a researcher from Christian Michelsen's Institute (Norway) prepared an independent assessment of the possible engagement.

**KENYA:** In co-operation with the International Federation of Journalists, the National Union of Somali Journalists hosted a conference in Nairobi. The culture of impunity and safety of journalists in Somalia were the central topics, discussed by more than 60 journalist and media executives from Somalia. HRHF attended and spoke at the conference.



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## AUGUST

**SOUTH CAUCASUS:** Trainers from the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Poland and an expert from Article 19 in the UK held a training session on monitoring skills for 25 human rights defenders from Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The workshop was organised by the Human Rights Center in Georgia in co-operation with the HRHF.

**CROATIA:** Renovation started on the building leased to the Human Rights House Zagreb under favourable conditions by the City of Zagreb. The renovation is supported by the Norwegian MFA, the local entrepreneurs and the City of Zagreb.

**POLAND:** The Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights contributed to the review of Poland at the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

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## SEPTEMBER:

**BELARUS/LITHUANIA:** Graduates of 'Bring International Standards Home' gathered to a follow-up seminar at the Belarusian HRH in exile in Vilnius. Former participants presented the projects undertaken in 2009, such as the publication of a legal magazine, a campaign for the rights of disabled people in Soligorsk, and material for electronic human rights education.

**UKRAINE:** The Ukrainian Helsinki Union hosted a round table discussion of 25 human rights defenders for the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Council of Europe. The co-ordinators of the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders and other partners of the HRHN were among the participants.

#### **GEORGIA:**

The HRHN International Advisory Board meeting took place in Tbilisi. The Board approved a new Plan of Action for 2010-2012, the Advocacy Strategy, the Code of Conduct and considered new membership applications.



**GEORGIA:** HRHN members from Russia, Uganda, UK, Norway and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as representatives from the network's Secretariat, held meetings with the Core Group of HRH Tbilisi, the Ombudsman and various foreign embassies. HRH Georgia was accepted by the Network's International Advisory Board as a formal member of the Network.

**AZERBAIJAN:** Azerbaijani partner organisations met with the HRHF board chairperson and the head of HRHF Geneva Office at the Human Rights House Baku. The organisations discussed the advocacy strategy towards the UN and the up-coming review on the Convention against Torture.

#### **OCTOBER:**

**CAUCASUS/POLAND:** The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (OMCT/FIDH) and the HRHF organised an independent event focusing on the situation for human rights defenders in the Caucasus at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) 2009 Human Dimension Meeting in Warsaw. Partners from Georgia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Dagestan, Chechnya, Ukraine and Russia voiced their concerns and called upon the ODIHR and OSCE to work with critical independent NGOs in the regions.

**RUSSIA/GENEVA:** The Russian Research Centre for Human



Rights submitted a set of "Replies to the list of issues" to the UN Human Rights Committee highlighting some of the most severe human rights problems in the country. Prior to the review at the UN Human Rights Committee, FIDH, Article 19, The Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) and the HRHF organised a joint briefing with 11 Russian NGOs in Geneva

**BELARUS/LITHUANIA:** The Belarusian Human Rights House in exile in Vilnius convened the general meeting of stakeholders and a donor meeting. The participants received a status report, presented the situation in Belarus, and were given an op-

portunity to discuss future activities of the Belarusian Human Rights House.

#### **NOVEMBER:**

**AZERBAIJAN/NORWAY:** Journalist and human rights defender Malahat Nasibova from Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, Azerbaijan, was awarded the 2009 Rafto Prize for Human Rights. The laureate visited the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Parliament and asked the Norwegian authorities to discuss the situation in Azerbaijan at the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly.

**BELARUS/LITHUANIA:** The Belarusian Human Rights House in exile hosted a seminar devoted to journalism and human rights for Belarusian journalists and human rights defenders. Trainers from Norway, Poland, Belarus and Lithuania shared their experience at the event, organised by the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the HRHF.

**ERITREA/GENEVA:** Following the submission of a joint report, a delegation of four leading Eritrean HR defenders from different diasporas advocated at Eritrea's Universal Periodic Review hearing in Geneva. HRHF initiated the report and facilitated the advocacy.

**HRHN:** The Russian version of the HRH Moscow webpage was launched on [www.humanrightshouse.org](http://www.humanrightshouse.org).

**CROATIA/GENEVA:** Croatia was reviewed at the UN Human Rights Committee. Documenta, a member of the HRH Zagreb, published a report and, together with Amnesty International and the Croatian Human Rights Centre, participated in the briefing of the Committee members.

**AZERBAIJAN/GENEVA:** Five Azerbaijani members of the South Caucasus Network submitted a joint report 'Reply to the list of issues', which was presented by IRFS and HRHF in Geneva at the NGO briefing of the UN Committee against Torture where Azerbaijan was reviewed.

#### **DECEMBER:**

**NORWAY:** HRH Oslo celebrated its 20th anniversary.

**CROATIA:** The Human Rights House Zagreb was officially opened.



#### **NORWAY/GENEVA:**

The Norwegian NGO Forum for Human Rights, including HRH Oslo, advocated key issues from the Forum's report on the human rights situation in Norway at the Universal Periodic Review mechanism in Geneva.

**ETHIOPIA/GENEVA:** A delegation of Ethiopian HR defenders took part at Ethiopia's Universal Periodic Review hearing in Geneva. HRHF provided leading Ethiopian human rights organisations with editorial advice and facilitated the advocacy at the international level.



# ANNUAL NETWORK MEETING

The Human Rights House Network has had its Annual Meeting and a yearly international conference dedicated to the situation of human rights and human rights defenders since its inception in 1994. The HRHN annual meeting is the highest decision making body, which decides upon the development of the network and upon the inclusion of new members.

The 2009 annual network meeting took place in Oslo on 1-2 June, 2009. Among the topics discussed were ways to improve cross-border cooperation, how to work in conflict regions and protect endangered human rights defenders, and how to strengthen advocacy on the local and on the international levels.



The annual meeting was attended by 58 people from 20 countries. Among them were representatives of all 9 established and 5 emerging houses as well as a number of observers.



HRHN members made 7 presentations on last year's achievements and challenges.



Far left: Ass. Prof. Paul Opoku-Mensah presented his suggestions for HRHN Africa Strategy.

Left: Prof. Jan E. Helgesen, President of the Venice Commission, presented the work of the Venice Commission and answered the participants' questions.



The participants initiated and led 12 group discussions and proposed 7 follow-up projects.

Previous annual HRHN meetings:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>2009</b> Norway - Oslo                   | <b>2004</b> Norway-Oslo                     |
| <b>2008</b> Bosnia and Herzegovina-Sarajevo | <b>2003</b> Norway-Bergen                   |
| <b>2007</b> Kenya-Nairobi                   | <b>2002</b> Russia-Moscow                   |
| <b>2006</b> Croatia-Zagreb                  | <b>2001</b> Poland-Warsaw                   |
| <b>2005</b> Azerbaijan-Baku                 | <b>1999</b> Bosnia and Herzegovina-Sarajevo |
|   | <b>1998</b> Norway-Oslo                     |

## 20th ANNIVERSARY OF HRH OSLO

At the end of May 2009, the Human Rights House Oslo moved to a new office. HRH Oslo decided to take the opportunity of so many network members being in Oslo in June and invited all of them to an informal opening and 20th anniversary of the House. Over 100 people gathered to the HRH Oslo on 2 June 2009. The House was opened by Lars A. Christensen, Chairperson of the board of HRHF, and Chungdak Koren, leader of the Norwegian Tibet Committee. More than 20 international participants of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee's educational program joined the celebration.







# GLOBAL FORUM FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Each year the HRHN organizes an international conference devoted to human rights and the situation of human rights defenders in various regions. In 2009, however, the HRHN decided to join an international event - Global Forum for Freedom of Expression (GFFE), organized by a partnership initiative led by International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX), Norwegian PEN and The Freedom of Expression Foundation (Fritt Ord). HRHN became a strategic partner of the Forum.



GFFE was a 6 day event, which was attended by more than 500 participants from 230 organizations and 103 countries, which offered 29 training workshops and 28 seminars, included 4 free expression network meetings, 3 awards, 3 lectures, 3 films, 3 performances and 2 exhibitions.

The HRHN led panels focused on the new UN mechanism - the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and on the dif-

ficult situation of human rights defenders in Eastern Europe and Caucasus. The panels were attended by over 130 people. In addition, HRHF regional manager Niels Jacob Harbitz and head of the HRHF Geneva Office Florian Irminger led a total of 4 workshops on different aspects on the Universal Periodic Review.



## JOINT PROJECTS



Facts versus Opinions

The Observatory of Media Freedom in Poland was launched in November 2008 by the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Poland, which is a member of the Human Rights House in Warsaw. It is a two-year programme implemented by three members of HRHN: the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, HRHF and Article 19.

The Observatory of Media Freedom in Poland was created in order to address the existing gaps in free expression in Poland. The programme aims to:

- Increase the protection of freedom of the media
- Spark a debate on freedom of expression issues
- Unify the journalism community, bring about self-regulation, increase journalistic reliability, influence legal changes and law
- Educate students about freedom of the media

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A year on from the implementation of the project, some results have already been achieved. The Observatory has:

- organised 7 seminars and debates open to the public
- prepared and hosted 4 lectures in cooperation with the University of Warsaw
- published 10 information bulletins
- worked on 13 cases pending before the national courts and the ECHR
- presented the project to over 50 representatives of the HRHN during the annual meeting in June 2009
- acted as a consultant and became a partner in a new project, Observatory of Media Freedom in South Caucasus, which will transfer best practice from Poland to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

The project is funded by the EEA Financial Mechanism.



## JOINT PROJECTS



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The South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders was established with the support of the European Commission and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate the creation of a safer and productive environment for human rights defenders in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia by increasing cooperation and solidarity among them. HRHF is the international partner of the network.

# THE SOUTH CAUCASUS NETWORK OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The network aims to strengthen the human rights movement at national and regional levels and to give local human rights defenders greater international visibility.

The selection of organizations was done by the HRHF in cooperation with the coordinator of the project, the Human Rights Center in Georgia and the national coordinators the Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety (IRFS) and the Armenian Helsinki Association. [memo.ru](http://memo.ru) has participated as an advisor for the awareness raising campaign.

### The Network has:

- provided support to 5 human rights defenders and journalists from Azerbaijan and Georgia, including prompt evacuation and provision of safe shelter to an Azerbaijani satirical poet in Georgia and to a Georgian journalist at the Belarussian HRH in Vilnius.
- conducted analysis of the threats and key challenges defenders face in the region.
- monitored the trials against an Armenian election observer, Arshaluis Hakobyaan, and two Azerbaijani bloggers, Emin Milli and Adnan Hajzade.
- raised concerns related to the work of HR defenders in the region in joint statements and through interventions in international and regional meetings.
- conducted two regional meetings and three training sessions in networking, organizational and personal security, tools for regional and international human rights work, monitoring and documenting human rights violation.
- cooperated with HRHN experts from Article 19, the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and the

Belarusian Assembly, together with experts from International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and The Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre).

### Members of the network:

- Armenia:** Armenian Helsinki Association  
Helsinki Citizen Assembly, Vanadzor  
Socioscope  
Democracy Today  
Armenian Helsinki Assembly, Yerevan  
Jurists against Torture  
Public Information and Need of Knowledge (PINK)  
Women's Resource Center Armenia  
Wives of Armenia's Political Prisoners  
Asparez, Journalist Club, Gyumri region
- Azerbaijan:** Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety  
Human Rights Center  
International Student Cooperation  
Public Association for Assistance for Free Economy  
Association for the Protection of Women's Rights  
Sungait  
Legal Education Society  
Society for Humanitarian Research  
Institute for Peace and Democracy  
Media Rights Institute  
Election Monitoring and Education Center
- Georgia:** Human Rights Center (HRDC)  
Centre for Protection of Constitutional Rights  
Anti-violence Network of Georgia (AVNG)  
Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights  
Article 42 of the Constitution  
Multinational Georgia  
Inclusive  
Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims  
Studio Reporter  
Caucasian Center for Conflict and Human Rights



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It is a HRHN program devoted to human rights education of lawyers and HR defenders. The program was started by several HRHN members with the aim to educate lawyers and HR defenders in international human rights protection, to facilitate the implementation of international human rights standards in national practice and to provide better protection for HR defenders and victims of fundamental rights violations.

## 'INTERNATIONAL LAW IN ADVOCACY'

Two projects have been developed under this program:

1. 'Bring International Standards Home - De facto implementation of international obligations of the Republic of Belarus in the field of civil rights and freedoms'
2. 'Electronic Human Rights Education for Lawyers'

### 'Bring International Standards Home'

The project for Belarusian human rights defenders and lawyers focuses on teaching the participants the application of international and constitutional human rights law. It started in 2006 and continues until the present day.

In addition to seminars, home assignments on constitutional protection as well as drafts of individual communications to the UN HR Committee have helped the participants to build their skills in preparing real-life lawsuits.

### Highlights of 2009:

- 5 seminars on the freedom of speech, assembly, association and fair trial were conducted in Chernihiv (Ukraine) and at the Belarusian HRH in exile in Vilnius (Lithuania).
- Several lawyers and HR defenders went on a study trip to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in March 2009.
- In September 2009, 16 alumnae participated in the follow-up seminar and had consultations with international experts, including the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) lawyers.
- All participants in Belarus continue to use the legal portal, <http://prava-by.info>, created by one of the participants.
- Participants carried out a solidarity campaign to support HR defender from Viciebsk Leanid Svetsik and to condemn the Belarusian authorities for persecution of HR defenders
- Alumni contributed to the ICJ's submission to the Universal Periodic Review of Belarus.

### 'Electronic Human Rights Education for Lawyers'

The primary goal of the project is to provide systematic electronic human rights education for lawyers and enable them to apply international human rights standards in daily litigations on the national level. The project aims to:

- promote a greater understanding of HR law among lawyers;
- advance access to HR information through electronic communication channels;
- improve the quality of lawsuits through the use of correct HR based approach;
- improve communications lodged to international bodies;
- contribute to the consolidation of joint initiatives between lawyers and HR defenders.

The project was started in 2007 by HRHN and, thanks to the financial support of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Marshall Foundation and others is now being implemented as a pilot project in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and Russia.

### Highlights of 2009:

- A team of regional and international experts, coordinators and managers has been established
- E-library, educational HR program for lawyers and e-platform on HR law have been created
- E-library was posted online at <http://elibrary.humanrightshouse.org>
- A working meeting and workshop for coordinators, managers and national experts on e-learning and communication was conducted in June.
- A call for applicants to the educational program was announced in all four countries in November.

The educational program will be launched in February 2010.



# LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY 2009

HRHN bases joint advocacy efforts on the local calls for action and brings the local voices and experts to the regional and international arena. Members of the HRHN are professional organisations that are human rights experts in their countries and regions. Via HRHs they form coalitions to produce joint reports and letters of concern on human rights.

HRHN mobilizes international support in the form of letters of concern, reports, protest campaigns, memorials, etc. and raises awareness of such violations on the international level. In cases where urgent intervention is needed, the complaint procedures of special procedures, treaty bodies and the UN Human Rights Council, the focal point of ODIHR Human Rights defenders and the Council of Europe's special representative on human rights defenders are used. The local Human Rights Houses follow-up the cases and keep the members of the HRHN informed about the developments and the need for further actions.

### 2009 AT A GLANCE:

- 26 joint **letters of concern** – 21 on the issues in Eastern Europe and Caucasus, 1 in the Balkan region, 3 in East and Horn of Africa and 1 in Iran - sent to relevant institutions and published on [www.humanrightshouse.org](http://www.humanrightshouse.org).
- 10 **coalition reports** on Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Norway Poland and Russia submitted to the Human Rights Council, Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture and Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- **Contribution to the NGO list of recommendations** to the UN Inter-Committee Meeting
- Close to 1000 **articles** published on [www.humanrightshouse.org](http://www.humanrightshouse.org)

### SELECTED LETTERS OF CONCERN:

#### COUNTRY: ARMENIA

**Issue:** Unlawful detention of HR defender Arshaluys Hakobyan

**HRHN action:** Letter of concern signed by 23 HRHN members

**Outcome:** The court found Arshaluys Hakobyan innocent and acquitted him on the grounds of lack of evidence.



#### COUNTRY: AZERBAIJAN

**Issue:** Politically motivated imprisonment of journalists and bloggers Emin (Milli) Abdullayev and Adnan Hajizade

**HRHN action:** Letter of concern signed by 34 HRHN members, protest campaigns in Baku, Azerbaijan

**Outcome:** The bloggers continue serving their time in prison.

#### COUNTRY: BELARUS

**Issue:** Unlawful conscription of youth activists into military service, especially Ivan Shyla and Franak Vyachorka

**HRHN action:** Letter of concern, petition to collect signatures



**Outcome:** Both men appealed against unlawful conscription but their appeals were turned down and they continue military service.



#### COUNTRY: BELARUS

**Issue:** Politically motivated criminal charges and a monetary fine against HR defender Leonid Svetsik

**HRHN action:** A total of four letters of concern in

2009 and a national support campaign in Belarus by the participants of the HRHN project 'Bring International Standards Home'

**Outcome:** In July, the court fined Svetsik with 30 million BYR (7500 EUR) and until the fine was paid, banned him from leaving the country. As a result, Svetsik was unable to participate at a seminar of 'Bring International Standards Home' for Belarusian HR defenders. Yet, he continued his HR activities inside the country. Thanks to a national campaign to support Svetsik, the fine was paid in November and the ban to travel was lifted.



#### COUNTRY: RUSSIA

**Issue:** Murder of HR defender and lawyer Stanislav Markelov and journalist Anastasia Baburova

**HRHN action:** Letter of concern signed by 26 HRHN members, memorial in Oslo, Norway and protest campaign in Tbilisi, Georgia

**Outcome:** On 5 November 2 members of the nationalistic organization Russian National Unity were detained as suspects in the murder case.



#### COUNTRY: RUSSIA

**Issue:** Murder of HR defender and journalist

Natalia Estemirova

**HRHN action:** Letter of concern signed by 25 HRHN members

**Outcome:** Investigators claim to have suspects, but nobody has been arrested as yet.



**COUNTRY: UGANDA**

**Issue:** Deterioration of freedom of expression situation: closing down of 4 radio stations, ban on 3 radio and TV hosts  
**HRHN action:** Letter of concern signed by 32 HRHN members  
**Outcome:** Situation remains alarming.

**COALITION REPORTS:**

**COUNTRY: AZERBAIJAN**

**Report:** Replies to the list of issues submitted to the UN Human Rights Committee  
**Issues:** Discrimination against women and domestic violence, right to a fair trial, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association and assembly  
**Organisations:** Partners of the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders and of HRH Baku  
**Outcome:** Together with Article 19 and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (Norwegian Refugee Council), and with the support from the Centre for Civil and Political Rights, the Institute for Reporters’ Freedom and Safety (IRFS) briefed the members of the HR Committee in Geneva. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee underlines the importance of media freedom and expresses concern about the situation of human rights defenders.

**COUNTRY: AZERBAIJAN**

**Report:** Replies to the list of issues submitted to the UN Committee Against Torture  
**Issues:** Violence against human rights defenders, journalists and other media workers, among others  
**Organisations:** Partners of the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders and of HRH Baku  
**Outcome:** On behalf of the submitting coalition, IRFS briefed the members of the Committee in Geneva. The Committee raised the coalition’s concerns during the dialogue with the State, and concluded *inter alia* that the State should conduct prompt and impartial investigations into the allegations of violence against journalists and human rights defenders, and prosecute and punish the perpetrators.

**COUNTRY: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**Report:** Submission to the Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review  
**Issues:** Discrimination, national minorities, HR defenders, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment, sexual minorities, sex and gender based violence, persons with disabilities, freedom of expression, association, etc.  
**Organisations:** Coalition of 30 NGOs, including HRH Sarajevo  
**Outcome:** The coalition lobbied 20 countries. 7 recommendations on human rights defenders were made; for instance, Norway has asked “To forcefully denounce attacks against human rights defenders, and to ensure State authorities give human rights defenders legitimacy and recognition through supportive statements.”

**COUNTRY: ETHIOPIA**

**Report:** Submission to the Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review  
**Issues:** Rights to liberty, security and freedom, freedom of

association, assembly and expression, political participation, rights to adequate standard of living, education, health, housing and food, rights of disadvantaged groups.

**Organisations:** Coalition of four organisations  
**Outcome:** This UPR was the last hope for the civil society in Ethiopia. Recommendations of some countries reflected the NGOs’ requests put forward in the report, e.g. the USA asked to “Repeal the Proclamation for Registration of Charities and Societies and promote the development of an independent, transparent, and effective civil society and human rights community.”

**COUNTRY: ERITREA**

**Report:** Submission to the Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review  
**Issues:** Non-discrimination and equality, right to life, liberty and security of the person and administration of justice and the rule of law, freedom of religion and belief, expression and opinion, right to privacy, marriage and family life, right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work, right to education, minorities and indigenous people & migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDP).  
**Organisations:** Eritrean diaspora organisations  
**Outcome:** The first ‘victory’ of the NGOs was to have the government participate at the review; few days before the UPR, Eritrea had not sent its report to the HR Council. The diaspora coalition had a great impact on the recommendations, which reflected the disastrous human rights situation in Eritrea.

**COUNTRY: NORWAY**

**Report:** Submission to the Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review  
**Issues:** Non-discrimination and equality; right to life, liberty and security of the person; administration of justice and the rule of law; right to privacy, marriage and family life; right to social security and to adequate standard of living; minorities and indigenous peoples; migrants, refugees and asylum seekers  
**Organisations:** Norwegian NGO Forum, including HRH Oslo

**COUNTRY: RUSSIA**

**Report:** Report and Replies to the list of issues submitted to the UN Human Rights Committee  
**Issues:** Freedom of opinion and expression, reform of the penal system, Federal Law on Combating Extremist Activity, abuse and killing of civilians by military in Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, etc.  
**Organisations:** Members of the Russian Research Center for Human Rights (HRH Moscow)  
**Outcome:** 15 Russian and international NGOs, including representatives of Article 19 and the Prison Reform Committee (member of HRH Moscow) briefed the Committee on numerous issues. Freedom of expression, penal system and the protection of human rights defenders are some of the issues the Committee focuses on in its Concluding Observations.



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Eldar Zeynalov from the Human Rights Center attending the UPR review on Azerbaijan in February. The HRHF supported the trip and organized meetings with the delegates. PHOTO BY: HRHF GENEVA

The Human Rights House in Azerbaijan was officially opened on 25 April 2009. In the first eight months more than 800 people visited the house. The interest in holding activities at HRH Baku increased during the year as a result of the intensified pressure on human rights activists.

## AZERBAIJAN – HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE BAKU

### A gathering place for HR work

- Since its opening in April the House has hosted a series of events organised by different local NGOs, including a round table of the youth organisations to mobilize after the university massacre in April, presentations of movies, books, songs, poems of Mirza Sakit and press conferences. All these events focused on the pressure on human rights activists; special focus was given to supporting the two arrested bloggers.
- On 28 – 30 April a seminar on the international mechanism for human rights defenders from different regions was carried out by the International Service for Human Rights in Geneva in cooperation with the HRHF, WARD, Legal Education Society, Human Rights Center and the Association for Protection of Women Rights.
- The South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders (see p. 10) prepared reports to the UN before the review on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in July and the Convention against torture in November. A representative from the IRFS was present during the hearings in Geneva with the support from the HRHF.
- The human rights lawyer Integam Ajliyev from the Legal Education Society participated at the OSCE Implementation meeting in Warsaw and at the side event of HRHF and FIDH/OMCT on human rights defenders in Caucasus.

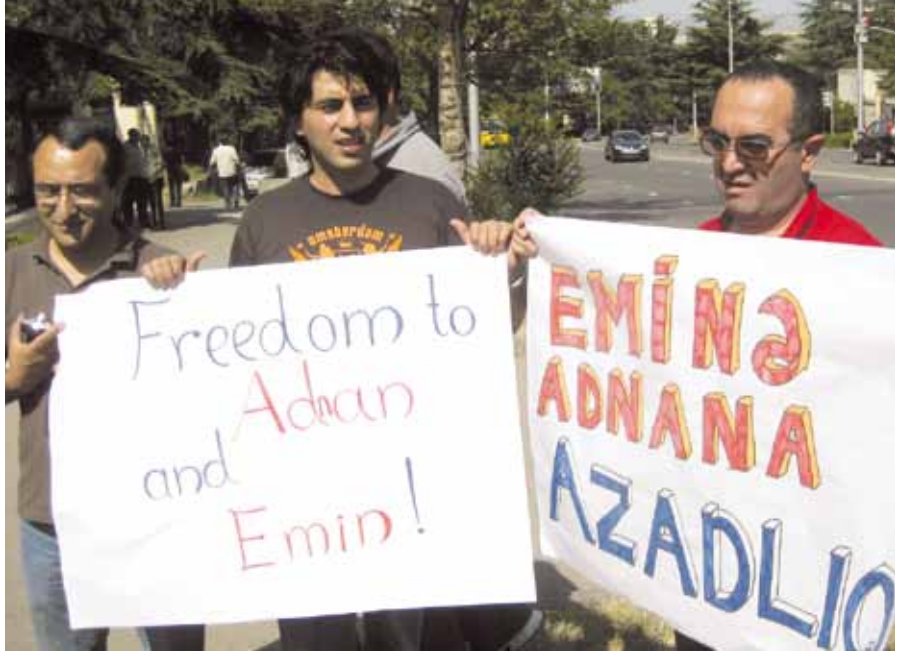
### Increased pressure

- Youth, activists and journalists have faced psychical pressure by police during protest actions in May,

beatings in July and physical assault by men in civilian clothes in October.

- The Minister of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan started civil proceedings against HR defender **Leila Yunus**, director of the Institute for Peace and Democracy, for alleged defamation of “attacking the honour and dignity” of the police and the Interior Minister. Due to national and international attention to the case the charges were withdrawn.
- Legal Education Society’s **President Intigam Aliyev**, and **Nurlana Aliyeva** were sued on 30 April by a regional judge for violating the honour and dignity of the judge by publishing information on their website. The 15 July court judgment stated that Aliyev had to apologize. A non-execution of the court decision is a criminal offence that envisages 2 years of imprisonment.
- In May the **Media Rights Institute** was evicted from their office due to the organization’s high profile in freedom of expression cases.
- Different court instances have refused to issue judgment about the violation of peaceful assembly when **Emin Huseynov** was unlawfully taken to the police department on 14 of June 2008.
- In spite of the national and international pressure to urgently transfer **Novruzali Mammadov** to a civilian hospital, the Editor-in-Chief of Taloshi Sado newspaper and Head of the Talysh Cultural Center died in prison on 17 August.
- In December, journalist **Ilgar Nasibov** was beaten up in Nakhchivan after trying to organize a seminar about corruption.

The South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders protesting in Tbilisi against the arrest of the two bloggers in July. From left: Avas Hasanov, Emin Huseynov and Rachid Hajili. PHOTO BY: HRHF



Human rights defenders and youth activists are protesting against the suggested amendments to the NGO law in July. PHOTO BY: IRFS



Journalist Malahat Nasibova from Nakhchivan was awarded the Rafto Award in November in Bergen. After returning to Azerbaijan, she gave a briefing to the human rights defenders and journalists at the HRH Baku. PHOTO BY: IRFS



Novella Jafarova and Saida Mamekdetova and other human rights defenders, diplomats and journalists were denied access to the court. Human Rights defenders Leila Yunus and Emin Huseynov are trying to get permission to observe the trial against Emin Milli and Adnan. PHOTO BY: IRFS



Avas Hasanov, the head of the Society for Humanitarian Research, is screening documentary movies for students and youth every second week at the HRH Baku. PHOTO BY: HRH BAKU

## DANGEROUS SITUATION FOR JOURNALISTS

In November Azerbaijan again reached the highest number of imprisoned journalists in the OSCE area. Two journalists were sentenced to three-month imprisonment and one journalist was sentenced to six-month suspended imprisonment. In October two online media journalists were sentenced to six months and one year of corrective labour respectively for defamation. In July 2 young bloggers Adnan Hajizade and Emin Milli (Abdulayev) were arrested under article 221.2.1 (hooliganism) of the Criminal Code. The bloggers were arrested after being beaten up at a restaurant and reporting the incident to the police. On 11 November, the bloggers were found guilty. IRFS declares that although the young bloggers were accused of "hooliganism," they were slandered and arrested for placing critical material about the government on the Internet.

## Government control of NGOs

- In June the Government proposed to make amendments to the NGO-law that would further limit the functioning of NGOs. Local and international protests contributed to the 'softening' of the amendments demonstrating the effectiveness of united efforts of the civil society. Unfortunately the amended law still allows the government to collect information on NGOs without referring to any specific purpose articulated in this or other laws.

- Also, the amended law and a December decree have decreased the possibility of NGOs to carry out activities.
- The latest example of increased government control over NGOs in 2009 was the inspection at the Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety (IRFS) office on 29 October by the Ministry of Justice with the purpose "to determine if IRFS's activities comply with the legislation and the organization's charter."



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The Belarusian Human Rights House (HRH) addresses challenges faced by human rights activists in Belarus - the right to assembly and association and freedom of expression. This is achieved through the provision of a safe training and meeting space and facilities for human rights defenders, NGOs, journalists, students and teachers, as well as for international meetings and cultural events.

## BELARUS – BELARUSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE IN EXILE IN VILNIUS

### Activities in 2009

The House provided organizational and logistical support to over 60 training sessions, seminars and other events held at the House in 2009. Most notably, it hosted and supported:

- Human rights summer schools for 88 young Belarusians
- The projects 'Bring International Standards Home' and 'Electronic Human Rights Education for Lawyers'. Both projects aim for a more effective application of international HR standards in the legal system at a national level, as well as the harmonization of national human rights laws and legal practice with international human rights standards
- Human rights film screenings and music concerts to express solidarity with political disappearances in Belarus
- An informal helpdesk for Belarusian human rights defenders, facilitating their communication with the UN Human Rights Committee. This was introduced to the House through the involvement of European Humanities University (EHU) undergraduate students in international law, who volunteered their time.

### Joint activities of organisations

Besides serving its mission of providing assistance to individuals and organizations that protect human rights and democratic freedoms in Belarus, the House has been actively involved in a number of activities this year.

Together with many Belarusian and international NGOs, the House joined the STOP 193.1! civic campaign initiated by the Belarusian Assembly of Pro-Democratic NGOs, aimed at abolishing Article 193.1 from the Criminal Code. This article classifies as a felony participation in activities of unregistered organizations or initiatives, entailing a crimi-

nal penalty of up to 2 years in jail. The House initiated joint letters of concern from the HRHN members to the Belarusian government and international organizations, calling for the abolition of the Article and raising awareness of the gruesome situation for any human rights or civic initiative in the country.

The HRH is a co-partner in a range of projects, for example, the Election Observation: Theory and Practice Project, which brings together young members of the Belarusian civil society, EHU students, and Lithuanian and Swedish students, who learn the theory of election observation to subsequently observe elections in European and post-Soviet countries.

### Looking ahead

The House will continue offering available resources, organizational, administrative, logistical and other kinds of support to founders, partners and other NGOs, enabling activities that are impossible to bring about in today's Belarus, with a particular focus on human rights summer schools, human rights training for lawyers and human rights defenders, solidarity concerts and other cultural events.

Together with partner organizations, the House will develop the Election Observation: Theory and Practice Project, which exposes young Belarusians to the European political culture and provides them with first-hand experience in the unhampered exercise of the right to elect and be elected, an experience currently absent in Belarus.

In May 2010, the Belarusian HRH will host the 2010 Annual Human Rights House Network Meeting and HR defenders conference that will bring together some 100 HR defenders from the HRH Network, including Belarus and other countries in the region.





The funeral of Yana Paliakova, PHOTO BY: PHOTO.BYMEDIA.NET



HR activist Valiantsin Stefanovich of Viasna was knocked down on the ground by militia-men at a rally of solidarity with the political prisoner Aliaksandr Kazulin. PHOTO BY: PHOTO.BYMEDIA.NET



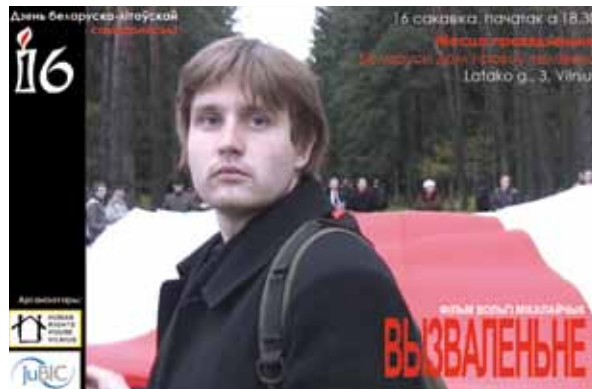
Election Observation: Theory and Practice project. PHOTO BY: JUBIC



Militia prevented journalists from covering the crackdown on peaceful Solidarity Action in Minsk, 16 October PHOTO BY: PHOTO.BYMEDIA.NET



Human Rights Summer School for young Belarusians, an amateur Human Rights Theatre performance by the participants. PHOTO BY: BELARUSIAN HRH



Poster prepared for the Solidarity Day at the Belarusian HRH, for the screening of Liberation. PHOTO BY: JUBIC



'Unregistered NGO of Santa Claus' surrendering to prosecutor's office - an action within the STOP 193.1! campaign, highlighting the absurdity of banning unregistered activities in Belarus. PHOTO BY: [HTTP://BELNGO.INFO](http://belngo.info)

## SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In 2009 there were no indications that the situation for human rights defenders in Belarus was improving. Human rights workers were fined, intimidated, arrested and physically assaulted. Human rights defender from Viciebsk, Leanid Svetsik, who tried to oppose an openly fascist organization, Russian National Unity, active in Belarus, was, grotesquely, found guilty of stirring up national hatred and sentenced to a fine equivalent to €7875 (32 average monthly salaries in Belarus).

A respected human rights organization, Viasna, closed by authorities in 2003, was repeatedly denied official status for dubious and nonsensical reasons. It puts Viasna activists at risk of imprisonment for up to two years, since Article 193.1 of the Criminal Code of Belarus stipulates that anyone who acts on behalf of an unregistered NGO can be punished and imprisoned for criminal activity.

In March, the human rights community was shocked by the death of Yana Paliakova, an activist from Salihorsk. She committed suicide after a heavy court sentence and a humiliating libel published in a state-owned daily.



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Free Hugs street action in Sarajevo, organised by the Regional Coordinator for Youth Groups in the Western Balkans.

The Human Rights House Sarajevo continued to be an open place where the representatives of NGOs meet and work together. In 2009 it hosted seminars and workshops, round tables, press conferences, meetings and gatherings.

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE SARAJEVO

### HRH Sarajevo and the Universal Periodic Review

The HRH Sarajevo implemented a set of activities for the project *UPR – Occasion to Strengthen Civil Society and Improve Human Rights in B&H*, which is financed by the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and supported by the Human Rights House Network.

The House held a regional seminar on UPR for the countries of South-East Europe (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) in November 2008 and was, as of then, actively engaged in the UPR process in B&H.

In the beginning of 2009, HRH Sarajevo created a broad informal NGO coalition, which discussed human rights' issues in the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and held set of consultation meetings with the state authorities.

The outcome of the national consultation meetings and numerous discussions among the NGO sector in B&H was a draft of the UPR report, which was presented during a public debate in July 2009. The debate opened a discussion on the content of the report and human rights violations in B&H. The debate was attended by more than 50 representatives of the NGO sector of B&H, including 3 representatives from the Ombudsmen for Human Rights in B&H, and one representative from the Ministry of Human Rights in B&H.

Finally, the joint UPR submission was made by over 30

non-governmental organizations in B&H, and finalized by the Editorial Group for UPR. Once the UPR process is concluded with the adoption of the HRC report and recommendations in February 2010, the NGO UPR Informal Coalition will monitor its implementation until the next UPR cycle in 2014 in order to strengthen civil society and improve human rights in B&H.

### In 2009 the HRH Sarajevo:

- formed informal NGO coalition for UPR;
- held numerous meetings with authorities, public, media and NGOs;
- held a press conference and public debate on the draft of the final UPR report;
- created a joint UPR submission/report in behalf of over 30 NGOs in B&H;
- published a UPR report in English and Bosnian

### Plans for 2010

- to monitor the human rights situation and implementation of the UPR recommendation that will be made to Bosnia and Herzegovina in February 2010
- to continue giving support to the member organizations of HRH Sarajevo
- to participate in joint statements and activities of the Human Rights House Network.



UPR Brochure, published by HRH Sarajevo



Race for the Cure, event organised by Renaissance.



Workshop for the CURE initiative *Know Your Rights and Herstory, Empower and Activate Yourself!*, held for women from Zenica in HRH Sarajevo.



CURE Foundation's workshop for elementary school students, devoted to reviving women's movement in B&H.

## SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In 2009 the situation for human rights defenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina was alarming. NGOs and activists who deal with corruption and criminal investigations were the victims of harassment and assaults. For instance, official representatives of Transparency International in B&H received threats from the Republika Srpska Prime Minister Milorad Dodik, as well as public threats by other officials of the SNSD, the ruling party in the territory.

Journalists engaged in investigative journalism dealing with unlawfulness of any kind were threatened and even attacked. For example, Bakir Hadziomerovic, editor-in-chief of the programme "60 Minutes", broadcast by the television channel FBiH, and one of the country's leading investigative journalists, received multiple death threats in connection with his reporting on alleged links between politicians and organized crime. Another journalist and a colleague of Hadziomerovic, Avdo Avdic, also received death threats linked to his reporting on organized crime in the country. Both Hadziomerovic and Avdic have been placed under police supervision and are trying to carry on with their work as journalists.

In previous years, attempted murders of some activists have been recorded. It is significant that none of the cases have been solved, nor properly investigated, regardless of the fact that the perpetrators of violence were recognized. The case of Mladen Mimic, who was the victim of murder attempt, remains unsolved. Family members of human rights activists are often targeted, which indicates that there is an intention to create a sense of fear and to prevent any thought or act of criticism.

Severe attacks against trade union activists have been recorded, as well as cases of job dismissals for some of the activists. For example, Mirza Huskić, trade union activist with the Federal Television was fired after he was accused of "giving statements to other media outlets".

Worryingly, attacks against human rights defenders most frequently come from politicians, and, of late, from high-ranking religious officials. The authorities do almost nothing to protect human rights defenders. The courts and police fail to respond and sanction assaults against these activists. Moreover, nothing has been done by the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina to provide a safe environment for them.



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Norwegian Ambassador Terje Hauge, left, and Slobodan Uzelac, Deputy President of Croatia, middle, at the opening of the HRH Zagreb.



Peaceful demonstration against Croatian asylum system. PHOTO BY: CMS

The Human Rights House Zagreb (HRH Zagreb) was officially opened on 10 December 2009, the International Human Rights Day. At the opening ceremony it was stressed that the House is there to serve not only organizations and their programmes but also all Croatian citizens.

## CROATIA - HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE ZAGREB

In 2009, HRH Zagreb was mostly focused on the reconstruction of the building donated by the City of Zagreb. The building needed major repairs in order for all six members of the House to move in and start their joint work and activities on the promotion and protection of human rights in the Republic of Croatia.

### Joint activities

- In June 2009, HRH Zagreb addressed an open letter to the President of the Republic of Croatia, to the Prime Minister and the president of the Assembly, urging them to clearly and openly condemn human rights violations in China during the visit of the President of People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, to Croatia.
- In October 2009, the Human Rights Committee considered the second periodic report of Croatia on the measures undertaken to implement the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Chairman of the Human Rights Committee said that the dialogue with the delegation of Croatia had been a good and rich one on the basis of which the Committee would make its concluding observations. These would hopefully help Croatia to further improve the human rights situation.
- The **Center for Human Rights Zagreb** has submitted their Replies to the List of Issues for the Second Periodic Report for Croatia made by the Croatian Government. Three more Croatian human rights organizations, namely **Center for Dealing With the Past - Documenta**, **Civic Committee for Human Rights - GOLJP** and also, **Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights Osijek** handed over their reactions to the Report, where they focused on war crimes trial

and their effect on the process of dealing with the past. All three organizations have been monitoring those issues systematically since 2004.



Conference on the Role of youth in peace-building process. PHOTO BY: CMS

### SITUATION FOR JOURNALISTS

At the end of June, an international conference took place in Zagreb, focusing on the situation of media in Croatia and the Western Balkans. The topic of the conference was dictated by the situation in the country where many journalists quit jobs or left their profession completely, opting not to work in the media field any longer due to the ongoing restrictions on freedom of expression and decreasing professionalism in mainstream media outlets. Most job transitions came from the two most influential Croatian media outlets: Croatian Public Television – HRT and EPH/WAZ. Journalists chose to work for less prominent and powerful outlets that face fewer restrictions with less pressure and censorship.



HRIDC and GCRT organized an International Day for the support of the victims of torture on June 26 by lighting candles, carrying anti-torture posters, exhibiting torture tools, public screening of documentary and presentation of books.

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Article 42 of the Constitution  
providing legal consultation in  
the regions of Georgia.



HRH Tbilisi was initiated by five organizations in 2009. Its aim is to enhance the respect for human rights in Georgia, support the work of human rights defenders in the country and to be a focal point for human rights organisations in Georgia and the South Caucasus region, serving as a meeting place for the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders.

## GEORGIA – HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE TBILISI

The core group of the new HRH Tbilisi – the Human Rights Center (HRIDC), Article 42 of the Constitution, The Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT), the women's organization Safari, and the Caucasian Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Studies (CAUCASIA) – had meetings with the Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF) in February, in April in Tbilisi, as well as in June in Oslo. In September, the HRH Tbilisi became an official member of the HRHN and received funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to co-fund the establishment of the human rights house.

In September, the Advisory Board meeting of the HRHN was held in Tbilisi where the representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, the UK, Norway and Uganda met with the core group.

### Joint events

Organizations comprising the core group have a longstanding experience of cooperation. HRIDC, GCRT and CAUCASIA continued to monitor detention facilities in Georgia and the needs of IDPs from the 2008 conflict in South Ossetia. Three of the organizations contributed to the documentation of war crimes and crimes against humanity that took place during the war between Georgia and Russia.

HRIDC and GCRT organized an International Day for the support of the victims of torture on June 26 by lighting candles, displaying anti-torture posters, exhibiting torture tools, organizing a public screening of documentary and presentation of books. HRIDC and Safari, as well as GCRT, often send assistance to their beneficiaries whenever there is a need for legal or psychological consultations.

GCRT and HRIDC conducted two-day trainings in five regions for representatives from the police and prosecutors, as part of the 3-year project on the Improvement of Rehabilitation Services to Torture Survivors in Georgia.



Together with the representatives from the HRIDC, the HRHN Advisory Board visited the settlements of internally displaced persons (IDPs) outside Gori and met with the human rights defenders at risk in the region.

### SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

From January to March 2009, the journalist and human rights defender of the regional Gori Office of HRIDC was in exile at the Belarusian Human Rights House in Vilnius, as he had been threatened by the local authorities at the end of 2008. In September, the office of HRIDC and the home of the director were searched by police, who questioned staff members on international and national partners, different projects of the organization and other related matters.



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**Yodok film poster**  
Yodok is a shocking documentary describing the conditions in North Korean concentration camps.  
FILM POSTER. PHOTO: PIRAYA FILM.

The Rafto House was established in 1997 and has become a vital nexus for human rights activities in Bergen. Since 2008 the Rafto Foundation has been operating as the Human Rights House in Bergen.

## NORWAY – THE RAFTO HOUSE IN BERGEN



**Nasibova receives Rafto Diploma**  
Malahat Nasibova from Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, Azerbaijan, the 2009 Rafto Prize Laureate, received the award at the National Venue of Theatre in Bergen, Norway, on 1 November 2009. PHOTO: LIV-RANDI LIND AND ODDMUND LUNDE.



### The 2009 Rafto Prize

The 2009 Rafto Prize was awarded to journalist and human rights activist Malahat Nasibova. Nasibova (40) has been awarded the prize for her courageous and unwavering struggle for a free and independent press. Risking her own safety, she reports on abuse of power, human rights violations and corruption in the isolated autonomous republic Nakhchivan, which is part of Azerbaijan.

Malahat Nasibova is a correspondent for the independent information bureau, 'Turan' in Azerbaijan and for 'Radio Free Europe'/'Radio Liberty'. She is the leader of the human rights organisation 'Democracy and NGO's Development Resource Center' in Nakhchivan. Nasibova has

been a critical voice against the authorities for ten years and she reports on violations by the police against ordinary citizens, kidnapping of members of the opposition, and attacks on journalists. In the absence of other independent institutions, Nasibova has become a kind of ombudsperson whom the local population turn to, to be heard.

"I am receiving this award on behalf of all those people in Azerbaijan and around the world who are struggling for democracy, human rights and the freedom of speech. I hope the recognition we received here will bring the attention of the international community to the problems of our region," said Malahat Nasibova in her acceptance speech.

## Yodok Stories Cinema Release

Yodok is a shocking documentary describing the conditions in North Korean concentration camps. Yodok, directed by the prize winning Polish documentary film director Andrzej Fidyk, had it's Norwegian premiere on 16 October.

Today, more than 200,000 men, women and children are locked up in North Korea's concentration camps where inmates face systematic torture, starvation and murder, and very few survive the atrocities.

A small number of people have managed to flee the camps and start a new life in South Korea. Yodok shows how some of them meet and decide to make an extraordinary and controversial musical about their experiences in the Yodok concentration camp. For the refugees, this raises the possibility to talk about their experiences and inspires others to protest against the existence of such camps.

Cinemas across Norway have also arranged special free screenings for school classes. The Rafto Foundation in cooperation with Piraya Film has made a Yodok study guide to assist teachers in carrying out follow-up work with their classes. The study guide and other relevant information (in Norwegian only) for teachers and students is available on [www.rafto.no](http://www.rafto.no) or [www.yodokfilm.com](http://www.yodokfilm.com).

## Free Suu Kyi – free Burma

The celebration of Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday on 19 June 2009 entailed a strong appeal to Norway and the international community. Joint international action is necessary to secure the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, all political prisoners and people in Burma from the military junta's systematic abuse.

The celebration of Suu Kyi's birthday had a special significance in 2009. She was moved from house arrest to the notorious Insein prison outside Rangoon. In August 2009 Aung San Suu Kyi was sentenced to another 18 months of house arrest, after the American John Yettaw swam across a river and got into Suu Kyi's house. Burma prepares for elections in 2010 and in connection with this, more democracy activists are being imprisoned.

## The 2008 Rafto Prize DVD

One of the follow-up projects linked to the 2008 Rafto Prize winner Pastor Bulambo Lembelembe Josué from DR Congo was the production of a DVD, which the Rafto Foundation has made together with the communication company Frø film & media.

### Left: Nasibova torchlight procession

"This prize will encourage me to continue to work for freedom and democracy in my country, and I hope it will encourage others. This prize means that our efforts are recognised and they are supported by the global human rights community, even if we sometimes feel they are ignored or thwarted at home," said Nasibova in her acceptance speech. Torchlight procession after the award ceremony in Bergen, 1 November 2009. Malahat Nasibova (centre), front right: Ilgar Nasibov, Malahat Nasibova's husband. Front left: Chairman of the Rafto Prize Committee 2009, Arne Liljedahl Lynngård. Behind, to the right: Mayor of Bergen, Gunnar Bakke. PHOTO: LIV-RANDI LIND AND ODDMUND LUNDE.



### Nasibova speech at the Rafto Symposium

"As journalists and human rights activists, we report on crime, corruption and human rights abuses, we seek accountability and demand justice," said Malahat Nasibova in her speech at the Rafto Symposium "Azerbaijan's brave voices: The role of critical journalism in an oil rich state" at the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel, Bryggen in Bergen on 30 October 2009. PHOTO: GUNTA VENGE/THE RAFTO FOUNDATION.



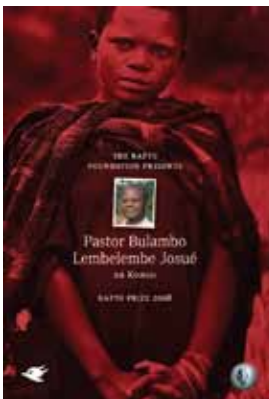
### Nasibova after attack of her NGO in 2002

Journalist and human rights activist, Malahat Nasibova, pointing to attackers after being beaten in 2002. The office of her NGO was attacked by group of conservatives who blamed Nasibova in introducing western values to women of Nakhchivan, trying to change mentality. PHOTO: ILGAR NASIBOV/RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY.



### Burmese appeal

Free Aung San Suu Kyi, free Burma and free political prisoners. That was the clear message from the participants in the demonstration on Suu Kyi's birthday on 19 June in Bergen, Norway. PHOTO: KARI AMBLE/THE RAFTO FOUNDATION.



### Rafto Prize 2008 DVD Cover

In this DVD Pastor Bulambo describes the situation and his work in DR Congo. His message is clear: "We can no longer accept that our daughters, our sisters and our wives are raped. It should be possible for women to be safe. It's our responsibility to make life safe". CHILD SOLDIER PHOTOGRAPH: KRISTIAN JACOBSEN/STAVANGER AFTENBLAD. COVER DESIGN: SNEDIG.NO



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Chungdak Koren and Nora Sveaass at the reception to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and official opening of the new HRH Oslo. PHOTO BY HRHF

Established in 1989, the Human Rights House in Oslo celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2009. In new premises, it currently hosts seven organisations.

## OSLO – HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE OSLO

### Main highlights of 2009

Following the move to new premises in May, all organisations in the House took part in the HRH Network's annual meeting in Oslo in early June, scheduled to coincide with the high profile event, the Global Forum for Freedom of Expression, which hosted a large number of participants.

Thirteen member organisations of the Norwegian NGO Forum for Human Rights, including four from the Human Rights House in Oslo, contributed to a joint submission to the United Nations Universal Period Review mechanism, in advance of the review of Norway. Staff from some of the contributing organisations advocated different aspects of the submission at the review in Geneva in December. The NGO Forum also submitted its annual set of issues of particular concern accompanied by recommendations on how Norway should raise them, and what should be demanded.

HRH Oslo celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and officially opened at the new premises in December.

### Joint activities of organisations

- For the parliamentary elections in September, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee organised a professional observation conducted by observers from the South Caucasus and Central Asian countries, as well as from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Many of the observers came from organisations in the HRHN.

- In October, many of the organisations on the House signed the Norwegian Tibet Committee's appeal to Ban Ki-moon to raise climate issues with China, since fundamental rights of Tibetans are violated as a direct consequence of Chinese pollution.
- The same month, Health and Human Rights Info Reference Group (HHRI) and Fighting Hunger with Human Rights (FIAN) were among the organisers of the international Blue October Campaign, raising awareness about the right to access to clean water and adequate sanitation. Likewise, most letters of concern distributed by HRHF on behalf of organisations in the HRHN have been supported by one or more of the other organisations in the Oslo House.

### Plans for 2010

Early February, the HRH Oslo will cohosts the second Human Rights Human Wrongs Documentary Film Festival with the Oslo Documentary Cinema. With some 40 quality films from around the world on show, the festival will bring together human rights defenders, film makers, researchers, journalists and others for a number of associated events.





The Norwegian Burma Committee and the Burma Nationalities Association-Norway protesting in front of the Storting against the imprisonment and the court procedures in Burma. PHOTO BY: SVEIN ELVSBORG



International Blue October Campaign in Oslo. PHOTO BY: FIAN



Members of the parliamentary election observation delegation in Norway. PHOTO BY: NHC

### SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In Norway, human rights defenders live and work in relative safety. However, harassment, threats and even attacks, particularly against defenders of minorities' and marginalised groups' rights, occur. While some human rights organisations work on domestic issues to do with immigration, minorities' rights, racism, women's and children's rights, or religious, cultural, health and welfare rights, others concentrate their efforts on other parts of the world.



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The European Day Against Death Penalty.

Located in Warsaw, the House of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights was established in 1993. Five human rights organizations are located in the same building.

## POLAND – THE HOUSE OF THE HELSINKI FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

### Developments in 2009

The activity of most human rights organizations in Poland is based on the statute of public benefit and volunteerism. After fulfilling some formal requirements, organizations are able to apply for public money from individual income tax. At the moment, Parliament is working on draft amendments to this statute. There is a proposition to delete “the fight against discrimination” from the list of public benefit activities.

Parallel Ministry of Interior and Administration is working on the proposal for a new statute concerning the implementation of directive 2003/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the re-use of public sector information. The ministerial draft proposes that access to some “public sector information” (PSI) will be eligible. Due to the fact that most third-sector organizations rely on public information, this draft proposal poses a potential serious danger to their work. While work was underway on this proposal, some problems concerning access to the legislative process and social consultation emerged; most NGOs (including the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights) were not informed nor invited to present their opinions.

This year was marked by the deaths of two important human rights defender — lawyer Zbigniew Hołda and Marek Edelman, a Jewish-Polish political and social activist and cardiologist.

### Activities of the House in 2009

In 2009, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights organized a series of seminars and conferences:

- Marek Nowicki lecture (4 November 2009): the keynote speaker was Asma Jahangir, the United Nations Special
- Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
- A series of conferences as part of The Observatory of Media Freedom in Poland
- The Rights of Transsexuals conference – Model Solutions, Situation in Poland, Need for Change;
- On 25 June 2009, a major conference, The Importance of European Convention of Human Rights for Courts and Lawyers in Poland, was organized by the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, the Information Office of the Council of Europe (located in Warsaw) and the National Chamber of Solicitors
- 2 seminars were organized by the Clinic of the Property, which functions in the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
- CourtWatch – The Court Observer. On 24 March 2009, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights published a report on the monitoring of the commercial divisions of all Polish courts. Monitoring was implemented in cooperation with the law firm DLA Piper.
- 9th annual International Film Festival WATCH DOCS, Warsaw on 4-13 December 2009; This year the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights awarded the Marek Nowicki festival prize to Viktor Dashuk (Belarus).

In 2009, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights became a member of the Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP) at the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

The Helsinki Foundation began litigation against the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Internal Security



Adam Bodnar at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.



Seminar "Privacy of celebrities", part of the program 'Observatory of the Freedom of Media in Poland'. The guest of honour - famous Polish actress Joanna Brodzik.



Asma Jahangir, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, lecture at this year's Marek Nowicki Lecture.



Seminar "The importance of the European Convention of Human Rights for courts and lawyers in Poland" held on 25 June 2009.

## HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN POLAND

The most pressing human rights issues in Poland are concerned with the rights of prisoners and the justice system. There is extensive use of pre-trial detention and overcrowding in Polish prisons.. Moreover, the right to a fair trial continues to be under threat, one of the problems with the "organization of justice in Poland", In August, the Parliament amended the Enforcement Criminal Code and, on 29 October 2009, the President signed the statute. In order to comply with a law passed on 17 June 2004 ensuring the right to a trial within a reasonable time, the Polish courts are now required to pay a fine if proceedings or the waiting time for these proceedings are extensive. . In October, one of the main topics of public concern was the issue of wiretapping by special forces.

Agency, with the aim of challenging the agencies' operational control and securing the public's access information regarding wiretapping by those institutions.

### Joint activities of organisations

- The seminar Successful Strategies for Creative Internet Activities took place on 26 October 2009 at Agora (Polish media corporation). The guest speaker was Anne Nelson, a professor at Columbia University.
- The European Day Against the Death Penalty, 10 October 2009: the event was organized primarily by the Polis Association and by Halina Bortnowska, member of the Helsinki Foundation Board.
- On 24 September 2009, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights hosted a meeting with Antoni Słodkowski, who delivered a lecture entitled "Burma:

political prisoners and labour camps". The meeting was organized by the Viridairium.

- On 6 July 2009, the Viridarium Group organised a commemoration evening to mark two anniversaries: the murder of Jews in the village of Jedwabne, Poland (1942) and the murder of Moslem refugees in Srebrenica, former Yugoslavia (1995).

### 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

The main ceremony took place on 11 December 2009 in Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle. A special guest was Ludmila Alekseeva, the head of the Moscow Helsinki Group. Among the guests were alumni of the School of Human Rights, organized by HFHR, the judges of the Constitutional Court and the Minister of Justice.



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Located in Moscow, the Russian Research Center for Human Rights (RRCHR) hosts ten independent human rights organizations. The Center was established in 1992 by a number of recognised human rights activists who had struggled for freedom in the Soviet Union since the 1960s.

## RUSSIA – THE RUSSIAN RESEARCH CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

### Activities in 2009

Within a Congress of Psychiatric Associations of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia held a meeting devoted to its 20th anniversary and a round table discussion on the rights of the citizens currently not supported within the existing legal framework.

**Moscow Helsinki Group** held a major and well-attended conference, 'Formation of System of Public Control in Russia' as a part of the project 'Prevention of Tortures through Legal Support, Education and Protection'. The delegates of the conference issued a resolution with suggestions to the Russian government on how to improve the system of public control in Russia.

In cooperation with the Federal Ombudsman, the international non-government organization Psychiatric Center for Human Rights, the Russian Society of Psychiatrists and the **Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia** held a series of round table discussions on 'Human Rights and Legal Incapability', devoted to addressing the problems of disqualified people's rights and developing possible ways of reforming the laws.

In March, the **Moscow Helsinki Group** held a seminar, 'Human Rights: The Basic Course', part of the project 'Capacity Building of the Federal Ombudsman Institution in Russian Federation and Commissions for Human Rights', developed for specialists from the Federal Ombudsmen Administration.

In 2009, the **Mother's Right Foundation** took part in the All-Russia Competition of the Annual Reports of Non-government Organizations initiated by the Commission of the

Public Council for Philanthropy, Charity and Volunteering development of the Russian Federation in cooperation with the Forum of Donors, Center of Development of Non-government organizations and the Social Information Agency. In May, the **Union of Soldiers' Mothers Committees**, in cooperation with the Conference of NGOs of the European Council, organized a Conference on Gender Equality, focusing on post-conflict situations, problems of international cooperation in the sphere of gender equality and human rights promotion. In July 2009, the organizations held a series of round table discussions on the 'Interests of Frontline Soldiers between Russia and Georgia' in cooperation with the Federal Ombudsman.

**The Moscow Center for Prison Reform** held a series of training sessions on mediation in Orel female colony. It also visited France to exchange experiences in preparation for the realization of the 2-year project 'Development of Elements of the Juvenile Justice in Three Regions of Russia.'

**Dosh** visited prisons with the aim of monitoring the situation for prisoners from North Caucasus, including those whose cases were fabricated.

### Russia reviewed in the UN Human Rights Committee

The Russian Research Center for Human Rights submitted a set of "Replies to the list of issues" to the UN Human Rights Committee, which reviewed Russia during its 97th session in Geneva. In the document, RRCHR emphasized some of the most severe human rights problems in the country; it focused primarily on the rights of soldiers, persons in custody, and the rights of specific minorities.



Left: 'City' painted by young participants of the seminar on mediation, organized by MCPR. PHOTO BY: MCPR



Cover of the independent Chechen magazine DOSH, published by Right to Live and have Civil Dignity.



Annual handbook for conscripts and their parents issued by USMC in 2009. Moscow, 2009. PHOTO BY: USMC



Seminars on Mediation in one of the colonies for youngsters. PHOTO BY: MCPR

## SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The situation for human rights defenders in Russia is characterised by the authorities' blatant disrespect for human rights and democratic values. The year 2009 was marked by a serious lack of public control over the elections, the results of which were clearly falsified. In 2009, there was brutal suppression of dissent; impunity for those who perpetrated crimes against human rights defenders; attempts to establish control over bloggers; racial attacks; violations of the right to assembly; a continuous clampdown in the Northern Caucasus; and the suppression of demonstrations. Opposition activists, journalists, human rights defenders and lawyers were often threatened and attacked. The human rights (HR) community was shocked by the killings of HR lawyer **Stanislav Markelov** and journalist **Anastasya Baburova** in January, the murder of HR defender **Natalia Estemirova** in July, and the murder of **Zarema Zadulaeva** and her husband in August in Chechnya. Nobody has been convicted for the killing of **Anna Politkovskaya**, though the trial has reopened.

Lyudmila Alpern, Chief Manager of the Prisons' Visiting Program of the Russian Research Center for Human Rights (RRCHR), was present at the review in Geneva in October. In her presentation, she touched upon specific issues regarding the abolition of the death penalty, public control over places of detention, as well as prison reform in Russia.

### North Caucasus

The human rights situation in Russia showed little improvement in 2009. North Caucasus remained a territory characterised by grave violations of human rights regardless of the fact that counter terrorist operations in Chechnya had formally come to a close. There were ongoing reports of torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest, extrajudicial killing and secret detention in Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus committed by military, security services and other state agents. The perpetrators of such violations appear to enjoy widespread impunity due to a systematic lack of effective investigation and prosecution.

### Positive developments

Among the positive changes were the renewal of the Presidential Council on Civil Society Institutes Development and Human Rights (members of RRSHR are among the participants) and the renewal of the Public Chamber. Establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children in September 2009 is also an important and significant event in the arena of human rights protection.

### Plans for 2010

In 2010, RRCHR will launch a joint project 'Prevention of Torture and Violent Treatment: Humiliating Human Dignity in Closed Establishments of Russia'. The objective of the project is to develop and test a system of tools designed to prevent torture in closed establishments in Russia, a problem which is becoming worse as new opportunities for controlling the individuals and violating their human rights become available in the current climate in Russia. The project's focus will be on the prevention of torture and staff training, made possible by organisations cooperating and working jointly to develop the project together.



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In 2009, Index on Censorship, English PEN and ARTICLE 19 became part of the Free Word Centre, an international centre for literature, literacy and free expression. The three organisations played a leading and formative role in the development of the centre.

## UNITED KINGDOM – OPEN WORD HOUSE

It was officially launched in September with a three-week festival hosted by residents including readings, book launches, talks and topical debates. Free Word’s mission is innovation and collaboration, pushing boundaries to promote, protect and democratise the power of the written and spoken word for creativity and free expression. It will be a national resource, with strong links to associates and partners throughout the UK and internationally.

### Joint activities

ARTICLE 19 and Index on Censorship worked closely on a number of campaigns and initiatives in 2009. The two organisations responded quickly to news affecting the free expression community, collaborating on joint statements and press releases concerning Burma and Sri Lanka, among others. In late September, the two organisations were among international organisations that participated in a mission delegation to Belarus.

This year, English PEN and Index on Censorship conducted a year-long Inquiry into English libel law and its negative impact on freedom of expression. Their report, published in November 2009, provides strong recommendations for how the law needs to be changed and illustrates how the legal framework has become increasingly unbalanced.

### ARTICLE 19

The organisation’s varied work in 2009 included:

- international standard setting on freedom of expression and equality
- ending violence against journalists in Mexico
- campaigning for access to information on climate change in Bangladesh
- advising on media reform in Sudan

ARTICLE 19 also lobbied and provided submissions to the UN Human Rights Council on Egypt, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Russia and Sudan.



‘The Camden Principles’, published by ARTICLE 19 in April 2009. The publication, prepared in consultation with UN and civil society representatives and academic experts, was created to promote greater global consensus about the relationship between respect for freedom of expression and the promotion of equality

### Index on Censorship

It reinforced its institutional capacity, in monitoring, analysis, publishing and direct advocacy. Among other activities, we:

- expanded our website, providing news daily
- published original, challenging writing in our magazine, including issues on the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, libel law and obscenity
- worked with local journalists to secure media rights in Iraq
- commissioned a documentary play as part of our support of artists’ freedom in Burma



Poet and playwright Tony Harrison wins the first PEN Pinter Prize. PHOTO: JAMES DARLING



Top right: Mexican journalist Lydia Cacho speaks at the English PEN Literary Café at the London Book Fair, April 2009



Right: Sri Lanka -- Lal Wickrematunge receives the Guardian Journalism Award on behalf of Sri Lanka newspaper the *Sunday Leader* at the 2009 Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression Awards. PHOTO: KARIM MERIE

### SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN UK

Those working to protect and promote human rights in the United Kingdom are able to go about their work relatively safely and without threat. The environment for human rights work is largely a supportive and productive one. But conditions are not perfect – and in 2009, some of the challenges for those working to protect free speech and access to information were revealed. A request lodged under the Freedom of Information Act led to the publication of the expenses of members of Parliament, exposing the lack of transparency that had characterised British politics for decades. Also in 2009, a campaign to reform libel law has shown how English courts have increasingly threatened free speech in England and Wales, but also in other countries. The case of Suzanne Breen, a journalist from Northern Ireland who refused to hand over source material relating to an article, demonstrated how important it is to ensure that journalists are able to go about their work unhindered.

### English PEN

It continued their work promoting literature and freedom of expression around the world, through a series of UK campaigns, their Writers in Translation programme, and the very active Writers in Prison Committee. In 2009 English PEN:

- Honoured British poet Tony Harrison and the Burmese poet Maung Thura (Zargana), awarding them the inaugural PEN/Pinter Prize
- ran successful parliamentary campaigns on seditious libel and criminal memoirs
- helped set up the 64forSuu.org project
- launched a campaign for free expression in Cuba

### Plans for 2010

In 2010, ARTICLE 19's focus will include: access to information on the environment in China, freedom of expression for bloggers in Iran, violence against journalists in Central America. English PEN will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Writers in Prison Committee with an extensive series of events and campaigns. Index on Censorship will host their



Burmese poet and campaigner Zargana, sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment for his criticism of the government. ARTICLE 19, English PEN and Index on Censorship actively campaigned on Burma in 2009

10<sup>th</sup> annual Freedom of Expression Awards and is planning a series of debates and workshops on freedom of expression around the UK.

The three organisations will build on the partnerships fostered by their move to the Free Word Centre. The publication of the Index on Censorship and English PEN report on libel, 'Free Speech is not for Sale' marked the beginning of the libel campaign, which will gain force in support in 2010. ARTICLE 19 and Index on Censorship will continue their joint work lobbying governments and highlighting cases of censorship for the attention of the European Union, the Council of Europe and relevant international bodies.



Members of HR organisations from across Kenya discussing their joint UPR report

## OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Based on the calls of local human rights organisations, HRHN was engaged in several initiatives in 2009.

### EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA: ETHIOPIA:

A coalition of four leading independent Ethiopian HR organisations developed a joint report for the country's assessment at the UN Universal Periodic Review mechanism's 6th session in December. HRHF provided editorial assistance and secured the funds to bring two delegates to Geneva to advocate the most pressing concerns addressed in the report.

### ERITREA

With contributions from representatives of the Eritrean diasporas in Australia, Europe, North America and neighbouring countries on the Horn of Africa, an NGO report was submitted for the Universal Periodic Review of Eritrea in November / December. HRHF provided editorial assistance and fundraised for the presence of four delegates at the review in Geneva, to carry out the advocacy on the report.



### KENYA

For the first time since the dictatorship years of Daniel arap Moi's presidency, human rights defenders were once again killed in Kenya in 2009. Freedom of expression and economic, social and cultural rights also came under attack. Against a backdrop of a human rights situation in rapid decline, initiatives to establish Human Rights Houses gathered momentum in Kisumu for Western Kenya, Nairobi for the Central Province, and Mombasa for the Coastal Provinces. The independent human rights community teamed up for the Universal Periodic Review and produced a powerful joint report. The review itself will take place in May 2010.

### UGANDA

The human rights situation in Uganda remained largely unchanged in 2009. Even though many internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Northern Uganda have returned to their homes, the situation remains tense, with the Lord's Resistance Army more active now than it has been in years. Refugees in Uganda also suffer severe violations of their rights. Direct threats and attacks on individual journalists and entire media outlets, together with adjustments to ownership structures, allocations of licences and the legal framework supporting such changes, continued. Sexual minorities and defenders of their rights live and work in fear of their lives. On HURINET's initiative, the human rights movement will submit a joint report for Uganda's forthcoming Universal Periodic Review hearing. HRHF Oslo and Geneva have already contributed towards this process.

### WESTERN BALKANS MACEDONIA

The process of establishing a Human Rights House in Skopje was started by five organizations in 2006 with a view to provide services for human rights activists and organizations and strengthen human rights in Macedonia and abroad. The membership of HRH Skopje in the Human Rights House Network is still pending.

In 2009, human rights organisation Polio Plus submitted a joint UPR stakeholder's report on behalf of the coalition 'Macedonia Without Discrimination'. The joint UPR submission deals with the scope of international obligations, constitutional and legislative framework, and the promotion and protection of human rights obligations on the ground as well as lists recommendations for addressing the identified problems. In the report, the Macedonian Women Rights Centre (MWRC) focused on the issue of domestic violence, sexual and reproductive health and women's rights.

The Working Group on the UPR adopted the draft report on Macedonia on 15 May 2009. The state delegation





Global Campaign on Education, Activity - March for Education.  
PHOTO BY: MEGJASHI



Youth School of Human Rights 02, Ohrid. PHOTO BY: MACEDONIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

considered all 42 recommendations for the country, stating that many of the recommendations would be accepted, while others were already being implemented.

## EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS: ARMENIA

The Armenian Helsinki Association (AHA) has been working closely with the HRHF through the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders. As the national coordinator, the Armenian Helsinki Association hosted representatives from HRHF, Caucasian Knot and HRIDC from Georgia in February, and organized meetings with Armenian NGOs interested in becoming members of the Network. The delegation also observed the court trial of the seven oppositional leaders who were arrested after the 1 March 2008 and met with the wives of the political prisoners, who protested in front of the prosecutor's office in Yerevan.

The Armenian organizations in the South Caucasus Network focus on monitoring torture and ill treatment, children rights, trafficking, LGBT rights, protection of journalists and women's rights. In October Levon Barcegyan from Azpares Press Club attended the OSCE Implementation meeting in Warsaw and raised concerns about the freedom of assembly and expression on behalf of the Armenian NGOs.

### SITUATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

- The Network is especially concerned that no officials have been prosecuted for the crackdown of the mass public demonstrations in the March 2008 events where ten people were killed and more than a hundred opposition supporters were arrested.
- In May, the HR defender Arshaluys Hakobyan was arrested by the police after observing the municipality elections. Criminal charges were brought against A Hakobyan according to Article 316.1 of the Criminal Code of Armenia (resisting the police) in the Investiga-



Grigory Shvedov from Caucasian Knot meeting the wives of political prisoners, protesting in front of the prosecutor's office in Yerevan, Armenia.

tion Department of Kentron District. After being questioned in the Investigation Department, Akobyan was taken to the pre-detention cell. 23 HRHN members called upon the Armenian authorities to release the imprisoned HR defender. From October 16 he was sentenced to home arrest. The court found Hakobyan innocent and acquitted him in February 2010.

- The case of Mikael Danielyan, the chairperson of the Armenian Helsinki Association, was closed on 21 May 2009 on the basis of absence of crime. On 21 May 2008 two men beat him up. Later, he was wounded in an attack with a gas pistol by the leader of the ruling Progressive party. The attacks were related to Danielyan's work to protect the rights of sexual minorities. The police banned doctors to provide immediate medical assistance to Danielyan. An investigation was started, but Danielyan was declared as a witness and not a victim in the case.

## UKRAINE

During the HRHN meeting in June, the network discussed the purpose and need of the Ukrainian NGOs to have a classical or regional human rights house; HRHN representatives from Russia and Belarus, also PACT Ukraine, took an active part in the discussion. HRHF met with the leader of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union in Oslo in June, in Kiev in September and in Warsaw in October and discussed further plans.

### ACTIVITIES IN 2009:

- In March the director of the Belarusian Human Rights House was invited to Kiev to sit in the Jury of the Documentary Human Rights Film Festival.
- Ukrainian trainers and experts participated in the program 'Bring International Standards Home II'.
- In September the Ukrainian Helsinki Union hosted the Commissioner of Human Rights of Council of Europe's round table in Kiev where several members of the HRHN from Caucasus, Russia and Belarus took part.
- HRHF supported the participation of Vladimir Yavorsky at the Implementation meeting in Warsaw where he met with other representatives from the HRH Network.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FOR 2009\*

<b>NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING - DONORS</b>	<b>NOK</b>	<b>Euro</b>
Norwegian MFA	2 890 500	321 167
Freedom of Expression Foundation, Norway	250 000	27 778
OSCE	97 350	10 817
The Netherlands Helsinki Committee	66 592	7 399
The German Marshall Fund	20 746	2 305
The Nordic Council of Ministers	227 682	25 298
EU/HRIDC (Georgia)	226 684	25 187
<b>Sub total donors</b>	<b>3 779 554</b>	<b>419 950</b>
<b>NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING - PROJECTS</b>		
Network and Capacity Building HRHN	1 450 000	161 111
Annual Meeting and Conference	389 000	43 222
HRHN Advisory Board Meeting	130 000	14 444
'International Law in Advocacy'	743 870	82 652
South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders	356 684	39 632
HRHN Contact persons	710 000	78 889
<b>Sub total projects</b>	<b>3 779 554</b>	<b>419 950</b>

<b>LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY - DONORS</b>	<b>NOK</b>	<b>Euro</b>
Norwegian MFA	3 801 435	422 382
Freedom of Expression Foundation, Norway	250 000	27 778
Swiss Lottery Fund	169 581	18 842
City of Carouge, Switzerland	11 215	1 246
State of Geneva, Switzerland	86 720	9 636
<b>Sub total donors</b>	<b>4 318 951</b>	<b>479 883</b>
<b>LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY - PROJECTS</b>		
Lobbying and Advocacy, HRHN	2 617 516	290 835
UPR Bosnia-Herzegovina	180 000	20 000
UPR Eritrea	100 000	11 111
HR documentation and monitoring in the Russian Federation	1 421 435	157 937
<b>Sub total projects</b>	<b>4 318 951</b>	<b>479 883</b>

<b>INSTITUTION BUILDING - DONORS</b>	<b>NOK</b>	<b>Euro</b>
Norwegian MFA	6 283 595	698 177
Freedom of Expression Foundation, Norway	250 000	27 778
<b>Sub total donors</b>	<b>6 533 595</b>	<b>725 955</b>
<b>INSTITUTION BUILDING - PROJECTS</b>		
Building Institutions HRHN	930 000	103 333
Belarusian HRH in exile	473 595	52 622
HRH Baku	600 000	66 667
HRH Tbilisi 2009/2010	2 200 000	244 444
HRH Zagreb	2 330 000	258 889
<b>Sub total projects</b>	<b>6 533 595</b>	<b>725 955</b>

<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>14 632 100</b>	<b>1 625 789</b>
<b>TOTAL DONOR INCOME</b>	<b>14 632 100</b>	<b>1 625 789</b>

1 EURO = 9 NOK

\* Human Rights Houses and member organisations also contribute to HRHN programmes by fundraising locally. These funds are reflected in the accounts of these Human Rights Houses and organisations.

## INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD OF HRHN

The International Advisory Board consists of one member from each region where the Human Rights House Network operates. The Board is responsible for the Network's strategic development.



**Srđjan Dizdarević**  
President of the Helsinki Committee in Bosnia and Herzegovina



**Ndifuna Mohammed**  
National Coordinator of HURINET Uganda



**Liubov Vinogradova**  
Executive Director of Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia



**Rohan Jayasekera**  
Associate Editor at Index on Censorship, London, United Kingdom



**Lars A. Christensen**  
Chairperson of the Norwegian Board of the HRHF, Supreme Court Lawyer and Senior Partner at Wikborg, Rein & Co

## NORWEGIAN BOARD OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE FOUNDATION

The Norwegian Board of the Human Rights House Foundation, which is the Secretariat of the Human Rights House Network, meets bimonthly and monitors the work of the Secretariat.



**Lars A. Christensen (Chairperson)**  
Supreme Court Lawyer and Senior Partner of the law firm Wikborg, Rein & Co.



**Karin Dokken**  
Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Oslo



**Elisabeth Eide**  
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Assistant (part-time until March 2009)

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**Barbara Grabowska**  
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**Ragsana Mammadova**  
(Azerbaijan)



**Vadzim Vileita**  
(Belarus, Western Europe)



**Katsiaryna Klimko**  
(Belarus)

## INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

We wish to thank the following persons for their valuable contributions in 2009:



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(USA)



**Solspek Gelogaev**  
(Chechnya)

## DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

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### A WARM THANKS TO HRHN'S DONORS AND IN KIND CONTRIBUTORS:

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- Swiss Lottery Fund, Switzerland
- City of Carouge, Switzerland
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- Civil Rights Defenders, Sweden
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- EIDHR, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights of the European Commission
- European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals, Council of Europe
- International Renaissance Foundation, Ukraine
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- Open Society Institute, Hungary
- OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)/European Commission
- State of Geneva, Switzerland
- The German Marshall Fund Transatlantic Centre for Central and Eastern Europe
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania

### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COLLEAGUES:

- All organisations in the Human Rights House Network
- Caucasian Knot, Russia
- Centre for Civil & Political Rights, Geneva
- Delegation to the international NGOs, State of Geneva
- Département du territoire, State of Geneva
- East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network



- European Humanities University, Belarusian University in exile in Lithuania
- FIDH, International Federation of Human Rights, Paris and Geneva
- Human Rights Foundation, USA
- ICJ, International Commission of Jurists
- Information Office of the Council of Europe Office in Vilnius, Lithuania
- ISHR, International Service for Human Rights, Geneva
- Jan Helgesen, National Institute for Human Rights, Norway
- Kjetil Tronvoll, National Institute for Human Rights, Norway
- Mandat International, Geneva
- National Union of Somali Journalists, Somalia
- Netherlands Helsinki Committee
- NGO Liaison Office, State of Geneva
- NOAS, Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers
- Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
- Norwegian NGO-forum for Human Rights
- Office des droits humains, Département des institutions, State of Geneva
- Open Society Initiative for East Africa
- Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights
- Oslo Dokumentarkino, Norway
- PACT Ukraine
- Paul Opoku-Mensah, University of Aalborg, Denmark
- People in Need, Czech Republic
- Rights and Democracy, Geneva
- Students of the European Humanities University
- The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (OMCT/FIDH), Switzerland, France



## Importance of joint international efforts to prevent torture

The international efforts to prevent torture and ill-treatment in places of detention, in hospitals, in secret holding places, on streets and in homes, have been strengthened over the last years. When the Optional Protocol to the Convention against torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment (Op Cat) became more regularly practised and observed, it signalled an important step to effective prevention and more independent oversight. In particular, the establishment of National Preventive Mechanisms (NPM) in states that ratified the Op Cat will hopefully mean that the mechanisms will become significant instruments for preventing and monitoring torture. The NPMs will require full and unhindered access to all places where persons are deprived of their liberty, and as such provide moral, social and legal support to persons under threat of torture. They will help individuals and organisations voice criticism, highlight the need for reform and contribute to the process of ensuring accountability in the system.

As a member of the UN Committee against Torture, and with a background as clinical psychologist who has worked with victims of torture, and as a human rights activist, the effort to prevent torture is the most important activity with which to engage. Torture and ill-treatment have devastating effects, not only on those directly subjected to it, but also on families and the communities. The obligation of states to prevent, investigate, punish and redress torture is strongly emphasised as a crucial step in the process of complying to the convention, and all possible measures must be taken to achieve these aims. The role of civil society and the numerous human rights organisations worldwide are of particular importance in the prevention of torture, and for the development and strengthening of the National Preventive Mechanisms as they begin to be firmly established and start performing their important duties. And as a member of the torture committee, I am able to watch, from a very close and strategic position, the unique importance of independent monitoring and oversight activities, as well of the reporting and documentation carried out by human rights de-

fenders and human rights organisations. The inclusion of and close collaboration with human rights defenders is of the utmost importance in the process of developing the national preventive mechanisms.

The contribution of national and international non-governmental organisations to the work of documenting and monitoring human rights violations, with a view to preventing such violations, cannot be overstated. At the same time, the presence and engagement of human rights defenders cannot be spoken about without also referring to the many dangers these defenders face. While performing their brave duties and contributing to the international system of protection of human rights, they are themselves in need of protection and defence.

Human rights work is not something that can be done by individuals standing alone. In all work related to human rights monitoring and the prevention of torture, people must collaborate closely, there must be spaces to meet and networks to join, and there must be ways to inspire, train and protect those who are active. It is therefore with great pride and conviction that I give my full support to the work organised and initiated by the Human Rights House Network, a network that for so many years has inspired and supported a large number of fine individuals and groups dedicated to the work of defending human rights, even at times risking their own lives, security and health. The existence of such a network, and the work to secure its continued existence, must be given high priority by the state that host the networks and by the international community. For this is *about defending human rights*, and it is *about defending the rights of those who are doing this work*, preventing, documenting, reporting and claiming full accountability for those responsible for violations, abuses and atrocities, in the local community as well as in the power centres in this world.

**Nora Sveaass**

*Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Oslo*

*Member of the UN Committee against Torture*

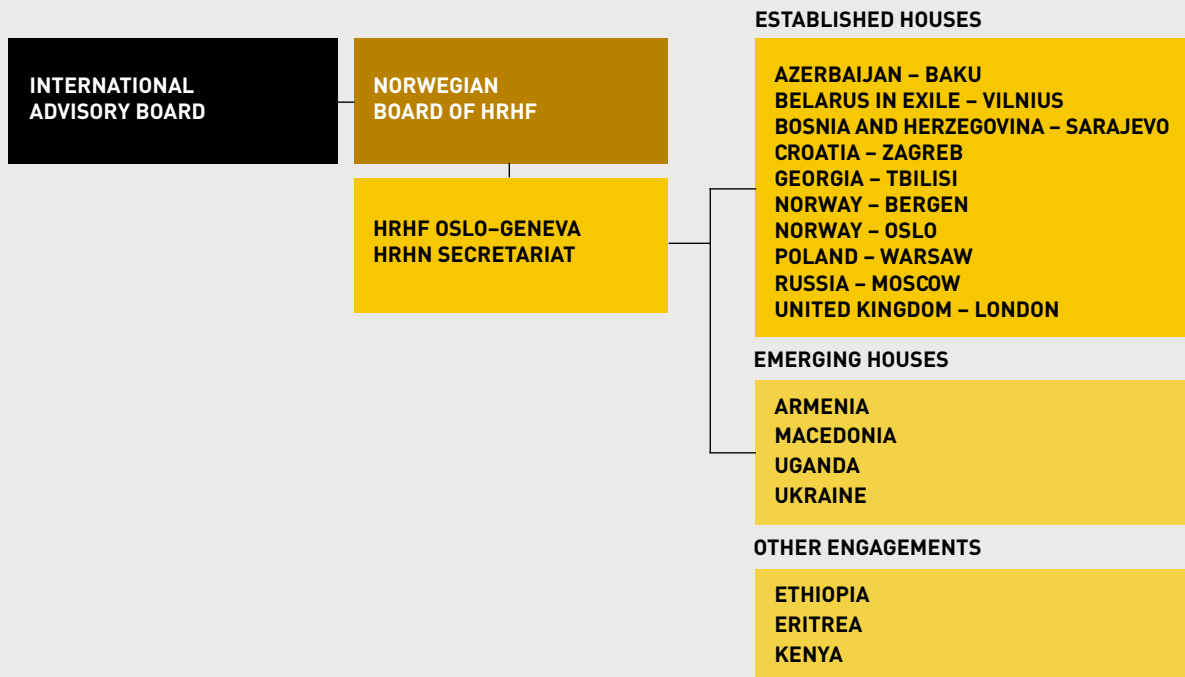


# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## ESTABLISHED HOUSES

AZERBAIJAN – BAKU [SEE P. 14-15]	BELARUS IN EXILE – VILNIUS [SEE P. 16-17]	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – SARAJEVO [SEE P. 18-19]	CROATIA – ZAGREB [SEE P. 20]	GEORGIA – TBILISI [SEE P. 21]
<p><b>Partners:</b> Association for Protection of Women's Rights (APWR)</p> <p>Azerbaijan Human Rights Centre (AHRC) <a href="http://www.aihmm.org">www.aihmm.org</a></p> <p>Azerbaijan Lawyers Association <a href="http://www.aha.az/backup/index.html">www.aha.az/backup/index.html</a></p> <p>Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety (IRFS) <a href="http://www.irfs.az">www.irfs.az</a></p> <p>Legal Education Society Society for Humanitarian Research (SHR)</p> <p>Women's Association for Rational Development (WARD) <a href="http://www.ward.az">www.ward.az</a></p>	<p><b>Partners:</b> Belarusian Association of Journalists <a href="http://baj.by">http://baj.by</a></p> <p>Belarusian Helsinki Committee <a href="http://belhelcom.org">http://belhelcom.org</a></p> <p>Belarusian Legal Portal <a href="http://prava-by.info">http://prava-by.info</a></p> <p>Civic Belarus <a href="http://www.civicbelarus.eu">www.civicbelarus.eu</a></p> <p>European Humanities University <a href="http://www.ehu.lt">www.ehu.lt</a></p> <p>Human Rights Centre Viasna <a href="http://www.spring96.org">www.spring96.org</a></p> <p>Scholars at Risk Network <a href="http://scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu">http://scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu</a></p> <p>United Centre of Initiatives for Belarus <a href="http://www.jubic.org">www.jubic.org</a></p>	<p>Association of Female Citizens "Renaissance" <a href="http://www.renesansa.com.ba">www.renesansa.com.ba</a></p> <p>Foundation CURE <a href="http://fondacijacure.org">http://fondacijacure.org</a></p> <p>Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina <a href="http://www.bh-hchr.org">www.bh-hchr.org</a></p> <p>Regional Coordinator for Youth Groups <a href="http://www.humanrightsschools.org">www.humanrightsschools.org</a></p> <p>Serb Civic Council Woman and Society Centre <a href="http://www.soros.org.ba/en/spinoff_zenski_centar.htm">www.soros.org.ba/en/spinoff_zenski_centar.htm</a></p>	<p>Association for Promotion of Equal Opportunities for people with Disabilities</p> <p>Association for Protection and Promotion of Mental Health Svitanje <a href="http://www.udruga-svitanje.com">www.udruga-svitanje.com</a></p> <p>B.a.B.e. Women's Human Rights Group <a href="http://www.babe.hr">www.babe.hr</a></p> <p>Centre for Peace Studies Zagreb <a href="http://www.cms.hr">www.cms.hr</a></p> <p>Civic Committee for Human Rights <a href="http://www.goljp.hr">www.goljp.hr</a></p> <p>Documenta <a href="http://www.documenta.hr">www.documenta.hr</a></p>	<p>The Human Rights Centre (HRIDC) <a href="http://www.humanrights.ge">www.humanrights.ge</a></p> <p>Article 42 of the Constitution <a href="http://www.article42.ge">www.article42.ge</a></p> <p>The Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT) <a href="http://www.gcrt.ge/">www.gcrt.ge/</a></p> <p>Union 'Saphari' - Family Without Violence</p> <p>The Caucasian Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Studies (CAUCASIA)</p>

## HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE NETWORK 2009



NORWAY – BERGEN [SEE P. 22-23]	NORWAY – OSLO [SEE P. 24-25]	POLAND – WARSAW [SEE P. 26-27]	RUSSIA – MOSCOW [SEE P. 28-29]	UNITED KINGDOM – LONDON [SEE P. 30-31]
<p>AFS Norway <a href="http://www.afs.no">www.afs.no</a></p> <p>Medecins Sans Frontieres <a href="http://www.leger-uten-grenser.no">www.leger-uten-grenser.no</a></p> <p>Rafto Foundation <a href="http://www.rafto.no">www.rafto.no</a></p> <p>Changemaker <a href="http://www.student.uib.no/change-maker">www.student.uib.no/change-maker</a> (until September 2009)</p>	<p>FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN) <a href="http://www.fian.org">www.fian.org</a></p> <p>Human Rights House Foundation <a href="http://www.humanrightshouse.org">www.humanrightshouse.org</a></p> <p>International Society for Health and Human Rights <a href="http://www.hhri.org">www.hhri.org</a></p> <p>The Norwegian Burma Committee <a href="http://www.burma.no">www.burma.no</a></p> <p>The Norwegian Helsinki Committee <a href="http://www.nhc.no">www.nhc.no</a></p> <p>The Norwegian Tibet Committee <a href="http://www.tibet.no">www.tibet.no</a></p> <p>Voice of Tibet <a href="http://www.vot.org">www.vot.org</a></p>	<p>Association of the Young Journalists POLIS <a href="http://polis.youthpress.org">http://polis.youthpress.org</a></p> <p>Helsinki Committee in Poland</p> <p>Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights <a href="http://www.hfhrpol.waw.pl">www.hfhrpol.waw.pl</a></p> <p>The Association Initiative 33</p> <p>Viridarium - Polish Students Group against anti-semitism and xenophobia</p>	<p>Human Rights Network Group <a href="http://www.hro.org">www.hro.org</a></p> <p>Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia <a href="http://www.npar.ru">www.npar.ru</a></p> <p>Moscow Centre for Prison Reform <a href="http://www.prison.org/english">www.prison.org/english</a></p> <p>Moscow Helsinki Group <a href="http://www.mhg.ru/english">www.mhg.ru/english</a></p> <p>Mother's Rights Foundation <a href="http://www.mright.hro.org">www.mright.hro.org</a></p> <p>Regional Organisation Non-violence International</p> <p>Regional Organisation Right of the Child <a href="http://www.pravorebenka.narod.ru/eng">www.pravorebenka.narod.ru/eng</a></p> <p>Right to Live and have Civil Dignity</p> <p>Social Partnership Foundation <a href="http://www.openweb.ru/sociopart">www.openweb.ru/sociopart</a></p> <p>Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia <a href="http://www.ucsmr.ru/english">www.ucsmr.ru/english</a></p>	<p>Article 19 <a href="http://www.article19.org">www.article19.org</a></p> <p>English Pen <a href="http://www.englishpen.org">www.englishpen.org</a></p> <p>Index on Censorship <a href="http://www.indexoncensorship.org">www.indexoncensorship.org</a></p>

## EMERGING HOUSES

ARMENIA [SEE P. 33]	MACEDONIA [SEE P. 32]	UGANDA [SEE P. 32]	UKRAINE [SEE P. 33]
<p><b>Coordinator</b> Armenian Helsinki Association <a href="http://www.hahr.am">www.hahr.am</a></p>	<p>Association for Democratic Initiatives <a href="http://www.adi.org.mk">www.adi.org.mk</a></p> <p>First Children Embassy in the World – Megjashi <a href="http://www.childrensembassy.org.mk">www.childrensembassy.org.mk</a></p> <p>Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia <a href="http://www.mhc.org.mk">www.mhc.org.mk</a></p> <p>Macedonian Women's Rights Centre – Shelter Centre <a href="http://www.mwrc.com.mk">www.mwrc.com.mk</a></p> <p>Movement Against Disability - Polio Plus <a href="http://www.polioplus.org.mk">www.polioplus.org.mk</a></p>	<p>Human Rights Network Uganda <a href="http://www.hurinet.or.ug">www.hurinet.or.ug</a></p> <p>African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims <a href="http://www.actvuganda.org">www.actvuganda.org</a></p> <p>Greenwatch <a href="http://www.greenwatch.or.ug">www.greenwatch.or.ug</a></p> <p>Hope After Rape</p> <p>Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange <a href="http://www.isis.or.ug">www.isis.or.ug</a></p> <p>Legal Aid Project <a href="http://www.uls.or.ug">www.uls.or.ug</a></p> <p>Public Defender Association of Uganda <a href="http://www.pdefender.org">www.pdefender.org</a></p> <p>Refugee Law Project <a href="http://www.refugeelawproject.org">www.refugeelawproject.org</a></p> <p>The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers <a href="http://www.fidauganda.or.ug">www.fidauganda.or.ug</a></p> <p>Uganda Women's Network <a href="http://www.uwonet.or.ug">www.uwonet.or.ug</a></p>	<p><b>Partners:</b> Ukrainian Helsinki Union <a href="http://www.helsinki.org.ua">www.helsinki.org.ua</a></p> <p>The Civic Organization MART</p>

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