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Human Rights Center

Human Rights Center and the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders invite you to a Regional Roundtable

Civil Society 20 years after the fall of totalitarian regimes in the South Caucasus: Analyzing the Past, Planning the Future

Date: November 25, 2009

Time: 16:00

Duration: 4 hours

Venue: *Hotel Tiflis Palace*, 3/5 Gorgasali Street, Tbilisi, Georgia

Panel I: *Past twenty years revisited [with a special focus on the recent years]*

Major achievements and setbacks, analysis of the reasons, lessons to be learned;

The panelists will discuss the last twenty years in the perspective: what has been the driving force of NGO community during these years (values, principles, donors' agenda, financial resources from the west, etc.), donor intervention strategies and their dialogue with the NGOs on the ground – how do they correspond to the socio-political and cultural realities on the ground, how do the NGO community reflect the principles of good governance and transparency in their own work and organizational culture.

The situation in media and freedom of expression, judiciary and elections will also be discussed as the main concerns in all three countries.

Panellists

Lela Gaprindashvili, Philosopher

Mikael Danelyan, Chairman of the *Armenian Helsinki Association* (Armenia)

Intigam Aliev, Chairman of the *Legal Education Center* (Azerbaijan)

Oliver Reisner, *European Union*

Ane Bonde, *Human Rights House Foundation*, Regional Manager for Caucasus

Gela Nikolaishvili, human rights lawyer, *Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights*

Ana Natsvlshvili, *Human Rights Center*, *Coordinator of the Network in Georgia*

Panel II: *Defending rights in the region ridden by ethno-territorial conflicts*

A short film “Neighbours” the winner of a Canadian Film Award as well as an Academy Award, will be screened (by Scottish-Canadian filmmaker Norman McLaren in 1952.)

A brief presentation about the film by Helena Zajicova, Festival Manager for South Caucasus Documentary Film Festival of Peace and Human Rights - Nationality: Human.

The panellists will discuss how the conflicts influence the work of defenders and the civil society at large - South Caucasian experience.

Specific issues to be discussed will be the obstacles defenders face to carry out human rights monitoring in the occupied and nearby territories in Georgia, Georgian law on occupied territories and its impact on human rights defenders' work.

The situation in Karabakh region: how safe and enabling is the environment in the region for human rights defenders? Main obstacles and existing initiatives.

Panellists

Nina Tsihistavi, Chair, *Caucasus Women's Network* (CWN)

Artur Sakuntz, Chairman, *Vanadzor Helsinki Assembly* (Armenia)

Lia Mukhashavria, lawyer, *Human Rights Priority*

Dilara Efendeeva, *Women Association Center after Aliyeva* (Azerbaijan)

Jeff Hoppenbrouwers, *EUMM*

Panel III: New realities, new needs - new agenda for the defenders

In this panel a new geopolitical situation created in the region will be discussed and the ways of how to lobby mainstreaming human rights priorities in international politics towards the region – reality check for defenders.

Peace building and public diplomacy initiatives will be discussed and the role NGOs/civil society should take upon itself in building sustainable peace in the region.

The key concerns and priorities for human rights work identified during the first and second regional meetings of the Network as well as the recommendations by the member organizations will be discussed.

What are the main factors NGOs should take into consideration while drafting a new agenda for defence and promotion of human rights? What should be the communication strategies with the population, with the national governments, with international stakeholders.

Where does the EU and European institutions fit within this agenda, etc.

Panellists

Lasha Baqradze, Germanist-Historian

Emin Huseynov, Chairman, *Institute for Reporters Freedom and Safety*

Sabrina Buechler, Human Rights Adviser, *Office of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights*

Ucha Nanuasvhili, Chairman, *Human Rights Center*, Georgia

Levon Barsagyan, *Journalist Club "Asparez"*

Simultaneous translation to the Russian and English languages will be provided. Please RSVP to ana@hriddc.org or call 857 362684.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR ATTENDANCE!