



# RCTV Memoria

Medical Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims



## 2012 ACTIVITY REPORT

Chisinau  
Republic of Moldova



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2012 was one full of events, new activities and achievements in fulfillment of our mission. I am very grateful to our team members for their hard work, dedication and abnegation. Despite financial difficulties, and with limited staff, we managed to provide appropriate rehabilitative care to 438 beneficiaries. We continued to ensure their access to justice and to international human rights mechanisms.

States are responsible for the crime of torture and for ensuring the provision of redress and rehabilitation for the victims. Torture victims have the right to the selection of such services, whether through civil society or government healthcare systems, but it is the financial obligation of the state to support rehabilitation. We are glad that in 2012, the UN Committee against Torture took the bold step towards clarifying the right to rehabilitation for victims of torture through its General Comment 3. This document validated many of the key aspects of our mission and activity we started in Moldova in 2000 – that within their right to redress, torture victims have a right to holistic, appropriate rehabilitation services.

Besides rehabilitation, the impact of our activity on prevention of torture in Moldova is widely recognized by other NGOs, partners, various professionals and various stakeholders.

We are very grateful to our donors, who made it possible to maintain our activity. We are also grateful to all our partners, friends and supporters, and we are convinced that together we can provide hope to the victims of torture and to make a difference in the situation in Moldova.

With my deepest appreciation,  
Ludmila Popovici

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### VISION

A prosperous society in which respect for human rights is guaranteed, especially the right not to be tortured; a society in which every person will benefit from quality services, including medical assistance, and where each individual can feel valued and contribute to social progress. As a representative of civil society, RCTV “Memoria” takes an active and important role in reforming and developing our society and contributing to its prosperity.

### MISSION

Rehabilitation through comprehensive medical, social and legal assistance for victims of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; as well as advocacy for a society free of torture.

### VALUES

- Quality service and dedication to our beneficiaries
- Professional ethics and morality
- High individual and group responsibility
- Transparency of the activities performed
- Team spirit, good cooperation and mutual support

### BENEFICIARIES

- Torture victims among former political prisoners and their families
- Torture victims among refugees and asylum seekers and their families
- Recent victims of torture and their families from Moldova, including the Transnistria region

## ABOUT MEMORIA

The Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims “Memoria” (RCTV “Memoria”) is a private non-profit institution located in Chisinau, Moldova. It was the first, and remains the only center in Moldova for rehabilitation of individuals subjected to torture and inhuman and/or degrading treatment. RCTV “Memoria” was founded on 12 November 1999 and registered at the Ministry of Justice on December 7, 1999. The Center quickly became internationally recognized as a professional team and an active member of:

- The European Network of Rehabilitation Centers for Survivors of Torture, and
- The International Network of Centers and Torture Rehabilitation Programs, managed by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT).

As one of the Rehabilitation Centers accredited at the international level, in 2002 RCTV “Memoria” became a member of the General Assembly of IRCT. One team member was elected as an IRCT Council member for the periods of 2003-2005 and 2012-2015.

At the local level RCTV "Memoria" has a representative in the National Council for Participation (NCP), which ensures the participation of civil society in the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision of various national policies. RCTV "Memoria" is represented in two working groups of NCP:

- Social, Educational and Youth Policy
- Justice and Human Rights

## OBJECTIVES

- Providing medical, social, and legal support to torture victims and their families
- Improving the health status and quality of life of the assisted persons, facilitating their social reintegration by helping reestablish their integrity;
- Strengthening of the rehabilitation services model created for victims of torture in Moldova and replicating the model for other categories of persons with special needs arising from injuries suffered
- Preventing torture and advocating for a society free of torture



## **OUR WORK    REHABILITATION & ASSISTANCE**

### **MEDICAL**

Medical assistance provided by Memoria in 2012 included everything from medical consultations and diagnoses, health screening and monitoring, to comprehensive treatment and coordination of referrals to the Medical Territorial Association (AMT) Center. Medical documentation is maintained on all patients, and medications can be dispensed free of charge, based on the health status and available income of the patient.

### **PSYCHIATRIC & PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Mental health practitioners at Memoria made extensive use of several forms of psychotherapy throughout the year, spanning the various modalities of cognitive-behavioral therapies, humanistic-experiential therapies, and short-term therapies drawing explicitly on specific skills and resources identified in patients. As part of the therapeutic process, beneficiaries were also encouraged to develop hobbies and partake in art therapy, including participation in music, drawing, sewing, crocheting, and other artistic endeavors.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL**

Psychological assistance was focused on (1) the identification of essential needs through the use of psychological testing, and (2) the psycho-emotional rehabilitation of beneficiaries through counselling. Moldovans in general are not accustomed to being assisted by a psychiatrist or psychologist due to the long-standing perception of psychiatry as a punitive measure. Thus, one of Memoria's goals is to facilitate a change in this perception and an openness towards mental health treatment. Memoria's staff psychologist encouraged beneficiaries to follow individual counselling and psychotherapy in order to help them overcome their traumas, rebuild their lives, and increase their self-confidence.

### **SOCIAL**

Social assistance in 2012 was focused on assessments of individual needs, social counselling and support, providing information about available services and opportunities, helping beneficiaries to obtain financial assistance from state institutions, and coordinating social services with institutions such as The Departments for Social Assistance, The Municipal Fund for Social Help, and The Municipal Employment Office. In addition, cooperation with The Governmental Commission for identification of victims from April 2009 was initiated, in order to help victims receive compensation.

### **LEGAL**

A legal advisor assessed beneficiaries' specific needs and provided appropriate counselling to clients and family members from all target groups. A case analysis was performed for each beneficiary, and petitions and claims were filed on their behalf. Some beneficiaries were encouraged to begin or continue claiming their rights at both the national and international level, despite many of the difficulties encountered and the frequent attempts of authorities to avoid responsibility.

### **MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION**

RCTV "Memoria" remains the only institution in Moldova where survivors of torture can receive a comprehensive medical certification, in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol. Our team made consistent and thorough medical documentation of each case, ensuring that any required extracts (medical reports) were accurate for release to beneficiaries, their legal representatives, and appropriate authorities.

## IN 2012 RCTV MEMORIA

<b>ASSISTED</b>	a total of <b>438</b> beneficiaries through comprehensive rehabilitation services
<b>REGISTERED</b>	<b>81</b> new beneficiaries
<b>RECEIVED</b>	<b>5023</b> external references
<b>PREPARED</b>	<b>30</b> extracts from medical files
<b>CONDUCTED</b>	<b>2406</b> in-house visits by our general practitioner
<b>FACILITATED</b>	<b>1513</b> visits to our centre for psychiatric assistance
<b>ASSISTED</b>	<b>214</b> beneficiaries through psychological assistance, including <b>386</b> counselling sessions, <b>327</b> co-therapy sessions, and <b>353</b> psychological tests
<b>CARRIED OUT</b>	<b>1822</b> visits to our social worker, where <b>350</b> beneficiaries were assisted, and <b>1769</b> comprehensive conversations were conducted
<b>COMPLETED</b>	<b>82</b> consultations, <b>4</b> petitions, and monitoring of <b>154</b> cases by the legal advisor
<b>PROVIDED</b>	<b>252</b> beneficiaries with clothes in cooperation with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
<b>PERFORMED</b>	more than <b>30</b> interviews and media coverage events in support of torture victims and advocating for the abolition of torture

	Registered Beneficiaries (as of 1 JAN 2012)	Registered Beneficiaries (as of 31 DEC 2012)	New Beneficiaries in 2012	Discharged Beneficiaries in 2012
<b>Men over 18</b>	194	237	45	36
<b>Women over 18</b>	126	152	24	17
<b>Women under 18</b>	9	15	5	6
<b>Men under 18</b>	28	34	7	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	357	438	81	64



## OUR WORK AND COOPERATION

### PATH PROJECT

Through the Partners in Trauma Healing (PATH) project we have been fortunate to have the support of the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) in Minnesota, USA. Our partners at CVT made two working visits during 2012 to Memoria and conducted training focused on improving psychological assistance to victims, organizational development, and monitoring and evaluation services. Also, our psychotherapist attended the first workshop on mental health, organized within the PATH project in Brugge, Belgium, which discussed clinical best practices for facilitating healing. In September 2013 four team members will attend the second workshop in Kenya.

### JUNE 26

RCTV “Memoria” was the main coordinator for the month-long campaign dedicated to the UN International Day In Support of Victims of Torture (26 June), and received significant local support. On 25 June, 2012, Memoria opened the campaign by holding an “Open House Day.” This event was organized with partners from Promolex and was attended by our partners, guests, and beneficiaries, as well as both the Romanian and French Ambassadors to the Republic of Moldova. On 26 June, 2012, the press conference “Rehabilitation Works and is a Right of Survivors of Torture,” organized by Memoria, was facilitated by Memoria’s Executive Director.

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

RCTV “Memoria,” in partnership with the European Network of Rehabilitation Centers, conducted the International Conference “Documentation of

## TRAINING AND ADVOCACY

Torture: Providing Evidence Towards Justice.” The event was very successful, drawing 150 participants, including doctors from the Transnistrian region, where torture is still widely practiced.

### BEARR TRUST

In June Memoria started a mini project financed by the BEARR Trust from London, UK. The project is entitled “A New Start for a Better Life at Any Age,” and its aim is to improve the elderly beneficiaries’ quality of life by reducing feelings of isolation and cultivating a sense of group belonging. Approximately 52 former victims of political repression participated in various social and cultural events. Memoria distributed a flyer entitled “10 Steps to Feel Better at Any Age” that contains useful information for beneficiaries.

### RESEARCH PUBLICATION

Within the joint EU-UNICEF research project, our centre coordinated a country research publication entitled “The Torture and Ill-treatment of Children in the Context of Juvenile Justice: Prevalence, Impact, Prevention, Detection, Assistance and Accountability.” The final report with recommendations was released in April 2013.

### IPJ WOMEN PEACEMAKERS PROGRAM

One of our team members applied and was selected to be one of the 2012 Women Peacemakers at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ), at the University of San Diego, in California, USA. It was a good opportunity to share experiences and information about our centre and learn about other international human rights organizations.

## OUR WORK



## CONTEXT

The Republic of Moldova's socio-political situation during 2012 was marked by the continuing dichotomy between statements from top political officials and the reality of the persistence of torture. While Moldovan authorities continued and initiated several reforms, measures to protect and support victims of torture remained inadequate. Although compensations were paid to 88 torture victims following the April 2009 election protests, state institutions remain largely superficial in their

approach to the problems of torture and victim rehabilitation, citing institutional problems and lack of financial resources as limitations. Hopefully recent political changes will allow journalists to work more freely in this field without the risk of persecution by the state. After years of activity in difficult, hostile, and dangerous working conditions, our activity was finally accepted by authorities, and in 2012 Memoria managed to increase its visibility and convey the importance of our activity to Moldovan society.

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## RCTV MEMORIA 2012 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

2012 INCOME BY DONOR	EUR
<b>International donors</b>	
OAK Centre Support	10,000
United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT)	23,725
European Delegation to Moldova	35,193
Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)	17,701
The BEARR Trust	1,226
<b>Local donors</b>	
UNDP Moldova	3,500
AVE Copiii Moldova	669
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>92,014</b>

**Thank you for your support!**



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