

**CONFERENCE  
STANDARDS FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM  
DEVELOPING STANDARDS FOR ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TERRORISM  
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Statement of Albina Ovcearenco  
Counter-Terrorism Task Force, Council of Europe**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to be here today on behalf of the Council of Europe and to address such an eminent audience of representatives of international organisations, host authorities, victims' organisations and academic circles.

On behalf of the Council of Europe, I would like – first of all – to thank the organisers for this useful and thought-provoking Conference and the authors of the draft Recommendations for the considerable efforts they have made to provide a paper which approximates and develops further the existing European policies regarding assistance to victims of terrorist acts.

The Council of Europe considers that addressing the needs of victims of terrorist acts and their families is one of the priorities of the international action against terrorism.

Since the 1980s, the Council of Europe has integrated the victims' perspective into its work in the field of the fight against crime and has paid particular attention to states' capacity to restore the situation of victims of terrorism.

The Council of Europe's action has resulted in the adoption of a number of binding and non-binding instruments which provide Council of Europe member states with useful guidance in defining their legislation and practice on assistance to victims, including the victims of terrorism.

The compendium of Council of Europe standards – available for the participants of the Conference – contains the relevant Council of Europe conventions, including the European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes, and a dozen relevant resolutions and recommendations, including the 2006 Recommendation on Assistance to crime victims.

This Recommendation addresses the support services offered to victims, and also deals with such matters as the provision of information to victims; victim protection; social measures; selection and training of staff working with victims; aspects of criminal and civil justice systems; compensation and mediation.

In 2005 the Council of Europe also adopted further Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism specific to the protection of victims of terrorist acts. These Guidelines recognise the suffering endured by victims and call for them to be shown national and international solidarity and support.

States are also encouraged by this document to provide victims and, where appropriate, their close family, with emergency and continuing assistance.

In addition the Guidelines deal with key issues, such as the need to award fair and appropriate compensation to victims of terrorist acts, to facilitate their access to the law and to justice, as well as to protect their private and family life, their dignity and security.

The objectives of the Guidelines were endorsed in the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, which contains a binding provision for Council of Europe member states on protection, compensation and support for victims of terrorism.

Following the finalisation of these standard-setting activities, the current priority of the Council of Europe is to ensure the effective implementation of the existing standards in its 47 member states.

It is evident that terrorist acts, and other forms of transnational crime, or the threat of such acts, call for constant improvements to the forms of assistance available to victims and for the development of new, innovative approaches.

However, it is of the utmost importance to avoid duplication, which may also create confusion and double standards and ultimately undermine the efficiency of states' responses to the needs of the victims of terrorism.

We recognise and welcome the standards elaborated by other international organisations in the field of victims and terrorism, in particular those of the European Union which Mr Seniore has already mentioned:

- EU Council Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings
- EU Council Directive relating to compensation for victims of crime, and
- EU Framework Decision on combating terrorism.

We welcome the present initiative and we believe that the European Union can and should make a substantial contribution to the protection of victims of terrorism by acting within its powers and by building on the existing national laws and European policies and instruments in this field.

Thank you very much for your attention.

# DRAFT “RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TERRORISM, MARCH 3 OF 2008<sup>1</sup>

*Statement by Maria de la Luz Lima, World Society of Victimology*

## 1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The draft has an asystematic approach which confuses principals, rights, and public policies recommended for the members States.
- The Draft’s name is limiting not reflecting the paper’s content. The name should be more inclusive and integral such as **Recommendations for solidarity, assistance and compensations for victims of terrorism and families (integral response)**.
- There is a need in the preamble to include some documents approved by The European Union and United Nations; such as the European Union Counter-Strategy and United Nations Global Counter-Terrorist Strategy, which have special features for victims of terrorism.
- The content of some paragraphs are repeated
- Some recommendations are not done specifically for victims of terrorism; furthermore they could be seen as a simple repetition of other documents already approved. We consider that a unique document has to be done to address in a different manner the rights and needs already given to victims, but implemented in different way.
- This document is very similar as the one approved by the Council of Europe. As Benitez Rafael said “This could create confusion and double standards and ultimately undermine the efficiency of States responses to the victims of terrorism”.<sup>2</sup>
- This draft is a ‘gender-neutral policy’ without any clear gender-based recommendations.
- Special recommendation is needed to be included for Child victims and witnesses services.
- This draft has to encourage members of States to strength the human rights integral vision in all counter-terrorist pillars strategies, including the legislation review on: victims’ rights, assistance programs and community civil protection mechanisms.

## 2. PRINCIPALS

The principals are confused with rights

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Maria de la Luz Lima, (2008) Comments. Member of the ISPAC Council and the Executive Committee of the World Society of Victimology WSV – Mexico.

<sup>2</sup> Benitez, Rafael. (2008) Letter from the Council of Europe Anti-Terrorism Coordinator to INTERVICT Tilburg University.

- Principals mentioned in this draft must be included together in one chapter. (Solidarity, no discrimination, continuity, independence, confidentiality, privacy etc.)
- “No discrimination”<sup>3</sup>, should consider the essential principal, which will be the guide of accessibility criteria to redraft legislations including mechanisms to assist all victims (victims of States members, victims of non States members, tourists, migrants, etc).

### 3. USE OF TERMS

Special mechanisms are needed for the following subjects:

- Collective victims
- Victims of contra-terrorism state actions
- Victims of abuse of power
- Families of the front counter-terrorism agents

### 4. RIGHTS FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM

- Victims of terrorism rights have to be included in one chapter, pushing up the implementing of the unique principals.
- **Chapter VIII, could be named Right for Compensations and other financial mechanisms**
- **Chapter IX could be named Right to privacy and family life**

### 5. PUBLIC POLICIES RECOMENDATIONS

The specific public policies have to be included in a unique chapter as the following founded.

All members of States should develop:

- **A. Criminal crises responses standards (CCR)** (Proposals to victims of terrorist short and long term response. The distinction could reinforce some crucial mechanisms)

**Including the followings:**

**Emergency services**

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<sup>3</sup> Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, UN Declare A/RES/40/34

- Emergency response including a strategic plan for multi-agencies action for victims of crimes mass violence, taking into consideration Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Communities emergency plans of actions
- Programs implementation guides
- EU victims of terrorism protocols
- Interagency coordination criteria
- Special policies for victim's associations
- Special victims services (24 telephone, multilingual native languages support, consulates emergency victim's services etc.)
- National Recovery Guidance<sup>4</sup>

#### **Ongoing victims of terrorist services**

- Eligibility requirements
- Applications procedures
- Compensable expenses
- Fund-raising policies
- International terrorism victims' standards to engage victims of terrorist services, in order to receive cross borders mutual operational support.

#### **B. Victimization preventive policy**

##### **Including the followings:**

- Identify risk communities (potential targets)
- Practical steps enhancing the empowerment of victims and communities direct affected by terrorism (preventing retaliation actions).
- Restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency
- Peace and reconciliation approaches, using methodologies on long term integration. For example: restorative justice, (when is it needed for relief process), intercultural dialogue and to developed a non-emotive lexicon, for the issues discussion.

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<sup>4</sup> The guidance to provide a single point of reference to local responders dealing with the recovery phase of an emergency.

## **C. Information policy**

### **Including the followings recommendations:**

Reinforce consensus with mass media corporations in terrorist attacks, to have specific standards for crisis management and communication.

- Safeguard victims data protection
- Creation of public servants Ethic Codes

## **D. Private sector coordination policy**

Private sector could be included to promote negotiations and agreements, enhancing states counter-terrorist strategies. Such as the collaboration of victims of terrorism fund, fund-raising researches and insurances special policies.

## **E. Civil society policy**

- An alliance with all sectors to engagement all populations in Europe and beyond.
- Voluntary sector
- Non governmental organizations

## **6. TRANSPARENCY AND MONITORING**

There is need to include recommendations for States members to create domestic monitoring and transparency mechanisms to follow up and updates policies performing, like the Security and Intelligence Committee created in the UK to examine the policy, administration and expenditure of the Security Service, Secret Intelligence Service (SIS).

## **9. EUROPEAN CRISES COODINATIONS ARREGEMENTS**

Special crises coordination arrangements should be included to ensure the coherence of the European Union responses for terrorism attacks: as “shared EU database listing the resources and assets of Members States,”<sup>5</sup> to contribute to dealing with such events in other Members of States or overseas completes this work.

## **12. Last Chapter could be named Building capacities including**

- Training
- Research
- Technical assistance
- And other mechanisms

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<sup>5</sup> The European Union Counter- Strategy. (2005), The Justice and Home Affairs Council (adopted 5 th December 2005) 14469/4/0. Rev 4.

**Statement to the draft standards on restorative justice, Tilburg conference,  
11 March 2008**

*Siri Kemény, Chair of the European Forum for Restorative Justice*

- First of all – it is very positive that restorative justice (RJ) is included in the draft standards. This is not self-evident; we have to acknowledge that restorative justice is still not a common approach even to more ordinary criminal acts. So – I would like to honour the European Union for their proactive attitude - to ask for the potentials of restorative justice as a remedy for victims of terrorism to be explored.
- It is contestable what the cutting edge between the traditional criminal justice system (CJS) and RJ should be – or if RJ should be part of the CJS. Thus it is overall important that the member states are urged to establish general RJ services or programs, to be applied with ordinary criminality.
- Experiences with the use of RJ in all kinds of criminality will most likely yield valuable knowledge also for the development of RJ assistance to victims of terrorist acts.
- It is important that the standards regarding restorative justice, especially at this early stage leave space enough to different RJ approaches to develop - to let national governments and NGOs develop different kinds of RJ practices that will fit into their culture.

Transnational exchange of experiences, both from the practitioner's point of view and from the researcher's – should be stimulated and supported.

- Terrorism as we have seen it during the last decades is new in the history of mankind, due partly to advanced technology. International exchange of experiences becomes even more important as terrorist acts are a result of a globalised world, a kind of acts, of behaviour, that threatens our common humanity.
- Restorative justice can be helpful (be seen as a tool) also to counteract the de-humanisation that terrorist acts represent, as it is based on key human values and principles. Maybe it is too much to hope for that RJ, at its best, can also play a role as gate-opener to a constructive dialogue also with the terrorists, supporting them to realise that terrorism will not help them, will not help mankind. On the other hand – if we stop believing that it is possible to stop terrorism – to create a better and more just world – we have definitely lost our humanity.

- To conclude – for RJ - the challenge is to develop practices based on the RJ principles and values – practices that will work to take care of the special challenges with victims of terrorism.

A standard on RJ gives the basis for this to happen.

On the spot amendments:

- The European Forum for Restorative Justice is happy with the change of process – not to endorse the standards today, but to open up for further comments at the conference and for a while afterwards.
- Restorative justice is the most controversial point in the standards and in the report. It has been contested at the conference if RJ should be included in the draft standards for the assistance to victims of terrorism. On behalf of the European Forum for Restorative Justice, I will express that our opinion is that restorative justice on the contrary should be included. The standards pay attention both to short term and long term assistance. I will remind you that RJ is voluntary, and it should definitely be an option for those victims who want to meet ‘his’ or ‘her’ offender.  
It can seem as if the reason for the opposition to include restorative justice in the draft standards is unclarity and/or lacking knowledge about the potentials of restorative justice.
- To include restorative justice in the standards will also give the member countries a signal that it is expected that they establish and develop restorative justice programs and also explore its applicability for victims of terrorism.
- Exchange of experiences and more research internationally will be needed.
- We will challenge the Steering group of the project to discuss if the research team should develop an Explanatory Memorandum to the draft standards. The reason for this is that it seems that some of the concepts, and especially the concept of restorative justice need clarification and explanation.

I just want to share with you our actual experience with Media professionals, give a testimony on what is possible and make some additional comments on the standards...

Since 2005, we are running a project called EURESTE (thanks to the European Commission). Its goal was to establish a sort of inventory/idea of useful resources to help victims of terrorism, in particular with regard to the experiences of people affected directly and indirectly.

According to the statement in the pilot project and in light of the difficulties experienced by various professional sectors, the project aims at fostering experience-sharing among 4 main target audiences:

- crisis responders
- The Media
- Legal professionals (Magistrates)
- Children (Schools 11-12 years old)

You'll find more information on [www.eureste.org](http://www.eureste.org) (Fr/Engl)

We think that violent situations cause ruptures and that working on reinforcement or new existing links is fundamental.

The Media are potential resources for communities. Because of their roles in and after crisis, we feel that it's essential to work "with" instead of "against" them. We have also noticed that "teaching" them the "appropriate behaviours" is not a suitable strategy.

Together with the Belgian Association of Professional Journalists, we have organised, last February, an inter-professional meeting with crisis responders and media professionals from different fields (the press, radio, TV).

The objectives were to let the opportunity to meet each other (outside a crisis time). To create a space to understand the work and constraints of everyone. And, finally to become acquainted with the realities and needs.

It creates links but also respect between professions who are seen sometimes "in war" on the field.

The process followed was a step-by-step participative approach with journalists and focus on developing ethical choices about information on crisis and people affected by crisis. Despite the fact that it's important to "restore" links between people affected and offenders, it's also crucial to restore/build links between helpers or responding agencies.

Some summarised recommendations for the "standards of Tilburg":

1. The relationship between the Media and public authorities/responders has to start before the acute phase of a disaster.
2. Politician and public authorities have to manage the consequence of such event (terrorist treats) in a :
  - Brave
  - Humble

- Smart... way

Especially, their relationship with “Media Group” and stay really oriented on the benefit of those affected.

3. How assistance and help is provided is often more important than what is provided. When we communicate/act in front of people affected, we are showing the example and the meaning of our words and behaviours are powerful. So be responsible and sensible.
4. Create trust and respectful links with Media professionals is the best way to prevent chaos in communication and information to citizens before, during and after a crisis event.

## **Remarks at the INTERVICT conference**

*by Anne Wu, United Nations*

First of all, I would like to thank INTERVICT and its partners for convening this conference on developing standards for victims of terrorism at European level.

I would say that this initiative is in line with the United Nations' endeavor on supporting victims of terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006, emphasized the importance of supporting victims of terrorism. The Strategy calls on UN Member States to "consider putting in place, on a voluntary basis, national systems of assistance that would promote the needs of victims of terrorism and their families and facilitate the normalization of their lives". The Strategy also calls for "promoting international solidarity in support of victims and foster the involvement of civil society in a global campaign against terrorism and for its condemnation."

The United Nations Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) is in to process of helping advance initiatives in line with the Strategy's call for supporting victims of terrorism. The Task Force was established by the UN Secretary-General in June 2005 to coordinate counter-terrorism action across the UN system and it consists of 24 UN system entities.

As one of the steps towards achieving objectives in the Strategy, the Task Force will help organize an international symposium on victims of terrorism which will be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General this September in New York. This symposium aims to provide a platform for dialogues and sharing of best practices between Member States, victims, civil society, and other relevant actors on support to victims of terrorism. This symposium also aims to provide a global platform for victims of terrorism around the world, give a voice to them, make their needs and concerns heard, and involve them in UN's counter-terrorism efforts.

Finally, I would like to thank INTERVICT for the invitation and express my gratitude for the opportunity to establish at this conference contacts with many of the participants. Your suggestions and inputs to the international symposium on victims of terrorism are most welcome as we continue to shape this event in the coming months. Thank you.



## **REGIONAL PUBLIC ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSISTANCE OF THE DEFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF THE SUFFERED FROM THE TERROR ACT “VOLGA-DON”**

*Statement by Irina Khalay, Chairman of the Coordination  
Council of RPO ADRST “Volga-Don”  
E-mail: volga.don.63@mail.ru*

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**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

The International standards of the help of the victim of terrorism are quite important. It is very important to use the experience of different people, who became the victims of terrorism to overcome their problems.

Terrorism and violence don't have citizenship and nationality; it is the world's problem. We all together will be able to overcome the consequences of the terror acts.

8 years ago have passed after the terror act in Volgodonsk took place where 180 000 inhabitants lived and as a result of the explosion of two tons of trotyl and geksofen in September, 1999. More than 15000 people suffered. All inhabitants of 3 parts of the town where terror act happened got a air wave, contusion, barotraumas, psychological injure, the heaviest stress as well as a plenty of injuries, cuts, bruises and now it influences the psychological and physical health (headaches, heart diseases, memory worsening, the worsening of the eyesight, hearing, irritability, aggression, post trauma disorders), “the syndrome of panic attacks” as well they lost their dwellings, property, income in connection with the lose of the ability to work.

The people both grown-ups and children even those born after the terror act whose mothers got injury, suffered from the strongest stress need help too – psychological, medical, professional and legislative.

We think that it is necessary:

1. To create the international database of the victims of terrorism
2. To accept the International Convention about the status “of the victim of terrorism”. To include the people whom the harm (moral, material, physical, psychological) was done by the act itself as well as its consequences. To foreseen the action of this Convention on all suffered in the acts. It shouldn't depend on the time of the act of terror before and after the Convention. This Convention should include the children born from the mother who were the victims of terrorism. To foreseen in the Convention the compensation to the victim of terrorism who became disabled.
3. To create the International Fond of the help to the victims of terrorism to solve the problem of the suffered from the acts of terror.
4. To develop the International program of rehabilitation of the victims of terrorism to foreseen in the standards- the procedure, sizes, times of the help to the victims of terrorism. To foreseen the mechanism of the help to the people suffered on the territory of another state.
5. To affract the international medical centers having the experience in contusion, barotraumas, psychological injure to the investigation of the dynamism of the health state of the suffered from terrorism of different age group and different levels of health injure restore (cure) their health more completely.
6. To develop grant projects of the European fund to NGO which defense the rights of the suffered from terrorism, to social (medical, psychological, professional, legislative) of rehabilitation of the victims of terrorism

## **Victims of terrorism, march 2008 Tilburg, Jaap Smit CEO Victim Support Netherlands, President Victim Support Europe**

First of all let me give my compliments to the organizers of this conference in general and Intervict in particular. It's a privilege to have such a good research institute nearby!

We have been discussing the need of victims of crime. The project was aimed at this special category of victims and the outcome is a series of recommendations in order to help victims of terrorism in a proper way.

I want to make three comments on this research project and its outcomes:

1. The main question during the research and this conference has been: is there a real difference between 'normal' victims of crime and victims of terrorism.

The question following this first one is: if yes, what are the needs of this special category of victims.

I have the strong impression that this first question, - is there a difference between victims of crime and victims of terrorism -, cannot be answered positively in a convincing way.

I really don't think there is a real difference between victims of crime and victims of terrorism. That brings me to my concern that the political attention for victims of terrorism seems to be much bigger than the attention for victims of 'ordinary' crime. Every year we see that many victims of crime are made throughout the whole of Europe who in many cases can not find proper help. In spite of the Framework Decision from 2001 which implies every member state to organize proper support for victims of crime, many member states have not yet implemented this Framework Decision in a proper way and therefore many victims of crime don't get proper support in the aftermath of a crime.

It is good to draw attention to victims of terrorism at this moment. I hope it will draw attention for all victims of crime.

Victim Support Europe, formerly known as the European Forum for Victim Services, has recently launched its Manifesto in Brussels. Victim Support Europe has offered this Manifesto to all members of the EU parliament and urges them to give thorough attention to the position of victims of crime in the next five year program of the EC to be drawn in 2009.

2. The second comment I want to make is about the recommendation on Restorative Justice. I made my comments on that in a workshop yesterday, but I repeat it at this plenary session. I want to be clear about this and it might sound rather critical but, I really don't think Restorative Justice should have a prominent place as it has now in the recommendations as formulated right now. With all due respect, I don't think that victims of terrorism will think about meeting the offender as one of the first and main aspects of proper support in the aftermath of a terrorist attack. It might be a harsh comment, but I can assure you that I think Restorative Justice in the meaning of victim – offender meetings can be of importance and personally I am responsible for the Dutch organization appointed by the Dutch government to facilitate these meetings. But the way it is given a place in this set of recommendations is overdue, as far as I can see it.

I therefore ask the project group to reconsider this recommendation on Restorative Justice and give it a less prominent place.

3. What instead of this strong emphasis on Restorative Justice might be of great importance is to organise meetings of vicarious victims and 'vicarious offenders'. This last term is new and

I mean with this that part of the national population that might be identified as ‘co-offenders’ by other groups of the society. An attack by Muslim fundamentalists might influence the image of all Muslims in the country in which the attack has taken place and then the risk is very high that groups within society will fight each other. This is what we already see after 9-11.

I would not call this Restorative Justice, but rather ‘Societal Repair’ or something like that. This might not be the best definition so maybe we can find a better one. But this Societal Repair could be part of the recommendations, because I think this really is of great importance for the society in the aftermath of a terrorist attack.

Finally I want to thank the project group for all the good work that has been done and I look forward to the definite version of the report.

Thank you for your attention.

## **Tilburg conference, 11 March 2008**

*Statement by Juan Gutierrez, "Asociación 11-M Afectados del Terrorismo"*

Standards to meet the victim's needs would be reductive if they would only consider them as receivers from aid and assistance in order to heal their wounds and recover overshadowing their engagement as social actors.

Member States attention to a victim of political motivated violence should therefore take into account not only the victim itself in its needs and vulnerability as the receiving point of violence but also the response from the victim reacting as an engaged citizen to assure that the suffering and loss caused by violence "never again" occurs.

My "Asociación 11-M Afectados del Terrorismo" proposes accordingly to include in the "EU Recommendations for the Assistance to Victims of Acts of Terrorism" the following point:

### **XV Recognition and support for the public engagement of victims as citizens**

The public and firm engagement of victims of terrorism through their associations in favor of all kind of democratic measures to guarantee that the scourge they have suffered does not ever again affect society or any other human being is a major factor to strengthen their communities in their reaction to terrorism. Member states should take into account and lend support to this engagement, recognizing the social value of victims acting as citizens engaged for peace.

Remembrance is compelling, selective and requires a horizon. Too much attention is paid nowadays by mainstream-media to a selective remembrance which fosters revenge, terrorism and war. The EU should empower persons deeply affected by terrorism, who act as democratic citizens in the field of remembrance raising their voices of "never again" and with the aim of a more human society.

**Conference “Standards for Victims of Terrorism” - Developing standards for  
assistance to victims of terrorism in the EU**  
10-11 March 2008  
Tilburg University (the Netherlands)

***Intervention by Fabio Piana***

(Human Rights officer, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a pleasure for me to be here and a great honour to address such a distinguished audience today. The organizers of this conference asked me to briefly speak about the OSCE experience in promoting solidarity with victims of terrorism.

***Background***

OSCE Permanent Council recognized in decision No. 618 of 1 July 2004 that there is a need to strengthen solidarity among participating States for the victims of terrorism. States were invited to explore the possibility of introducing or enhancing appropriate measures, subject to domestic legislation, for support, including financial support, to victims of terrorism and their families. PC tasked “the ODIHR to compile existing legislation relating to assistance to and compensation for the victims of terrorism, so as to promote best practices in this area, and invites participating States to provide relevant information to the ODIHR.”

**ODIHR Technical Workshop, Onati 9-10 March 2006**

As a first step in the implementation of PC decision 618/2004, ODIHR held a technical workshop in Spain on 9-10 March 2006, attended by academics and practitioners as well as delegates from international organisations (including the UN OHCHR, CoE, and EC). A report summarizing the proceedings of the workshop has been circulated.

The meeting highlighted that while the value of solidarity with the victims of terrorism is recognised across the OSCE region, there is little consensus as to what this may mean in practical terms. Quite complex issues were raised throughout the workshop, reflecting the different legal and social traditions of OSCE participating States. Another relevant point raised at the workshop concerned the significant differences in the needs of victims of different types of terrorism or terrorist acts.

A continued exchange of information on positive models for promoting solidarity with the victims of terrorism was deemed to represent an important starting point for improving the protection of and solidarity with victims of terrorism across the OSCE. This is why the two-day conference organized by INTERVICT on “Standards for Victims of Terrorism” is of critical importance.

**ODIHR Questionnaire on Victims of terrorism**

Following the tasking of OSCE PC decision No. 618, the ODIHR submitted a questionnaire to the OSCE participating States in order to gather detailed relevant information on laws and practice of participating States on solidarity with victims of

terrorism. A comparative analysis of laws and practices of OSCE participating States on solidarity with victims of terrorism is currently being prepared, and I would like to take this occasion to thank INTERVICT for its support to ODIHR's effort.

The questionnaire is composed of four parts, reflecting the outcome of the 2006 workshop:

- Part one: The victim
- Part two: Assistance and compensation
- Part three: Victims in legal proceedings
- Part four: The role of civil society

This structure was also followed in the organization of the 2007 High Level meeting on Victims of Terrorism.

### **OSCE High Level meeting on Victims of terrorism**

In cooperation with the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE, the ODIHR organised a High-level Meeting on Victims of Terrorism that took place on 13-14 September 2007 in Vienna. The Meeting provided more than 200 representatives from states, civil society (including victims' associations) and legal professionals from across the OSCE region with a forum to discuss experiences, lessons-learnt and views on how to address solidarity with victims of terrorism, including through tailored assistance programmes and specific protection in legal proceedings.

With contributions from more than 50 representatives from the civil society, the Meeting addressed the active role of civil society networks in relation with solidarity with victims and highlighted the key role of a free and vibrant civil society in addressing victims' needs, holding participating States accountable to their commitments and playing a role in preventing terrorism by tackling the dehumanization of victims of terrorism.

The final report, including specific Recommendations, is available at the conference.

Thank you.