



**Introduction
by the IRCT
Secretary-
General,
Jens Modvig,
MD, PhD**

On 8 July 2003, the new IRCT Council was announced following the first democratic elections to be held within the global network of accredited rehabilitation centres and programmes.

During 16 June – 6 July 2003, a total of 94 accredited centres and programmes participated in the IRCT's first General Assembly, conducted as a written event due to funding constraints. The elections are the result of an accreditation process which began in mid-2002 and represents an important milestone in the development and democratisation of the global network.

The IRCT Council is comprised of 30 members, including 27 regional representatives from accredited centres or programmes and three independent experts. The regional representatives were elected by region in Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub Sahara Africa, Latin America, North America, and Europe. In addition, four of the Council members were nominated by IRCT-recognised regional networks in Asia, the USA, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa.

The IRCT Council, whose terms will be for three years, will meet between 6-8 September 2003 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Key topics are expected to include the IRCT's future vision, policies, and strategies and the funding situation for the work against torture. Also, the IRCT President, Vice President and Executive Committee shall be elected.

The IRCT General Secretariat sincerely thanks all rehabilitation centres and programmes and nominees that participated in this important process.

Together against Torture

The UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was commemorated by more than 300 organisations in some 100 countries worldwide on 26 June this year. Since 1998, the IRCT has coordinated the global campaign 'Together against Torture', which has continued to grow in participation each year.

The many different events which took place on 26 June 2003 illustrate the importance of the International Day for the global movement against torture. At the same time, the commemoration of the day in itself strengthens the global network as it provides an opportunity for many rehabilitation centres and programmes to collaborate with other local organisations on the planning and implementation of 26 June events.

Among the hundreds of events were: a workshop with the participation of some 80 representatives of different government and non-government organisations, held by the Treatment & Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture in Ramallah (the Palestinian Authority), and an art exhibition and a public debate organised by the Grupo Torture Nunca Mais/RJ (Brazil).

The IRCT was represented in a number of countries this year. The IRCT President, Dr Maria Piniou-Kalli participated in the International Conference against Torture organised by the Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture in Lebanon. The IRCT Ambassador, Dr Inge Genefke, received the Eclipse Award 2003 at a ceremony in the UN Congress Building, Washington, D.C., USA, presented by the Center for Victims of Torture, USA.

The IRCT Secretary-General, Dr Jens Modvig, participated in a joint press briefing with Danièle Smadja, Director of the Directorate for Multilateral relations and human rights under the European Commission, where the 'Istanbul Protocol Implementation Project' was presented. The European Union is the major donor of the 'Together against Torture' campaign, and is also funding the Implementation Project which will be implemented in Georgia, Mexico, Morocco, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. The Istanbul Protocol is a manual for the effective investigation and documentation of torture.

The IRCT also participated in an event held in Geneva, Switzerland, by the Coalition of International NGOs against Torture. In Copenhagen, Denmark, the IRCT organised a "reflective hour" in one of the churches in the city centre, featuring a number of highly talented musicians. The IRCT was also represented at a discussion forum, organised by Amnesty International in Århus, Denmark.

The events held around the world included essay and art competitions, round-table discussions, seminars, art exhibitions, music, drama and poetry. The IRCT encourages all participants to submit information about their activities, in order that we may include a description of all events in the *Global Report on the 26 June 2003 Campaign*.

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The IRCT Council: 2003-2006

The IRCT General Secretariat is pleased to announce the composition of the newly elected IRCT Council, whose terms are for a three-year period. There are 30 Members, 27 elected from the six voting regions of Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub Sahara Africa, and Europe, and three independent experts*.

- Abdel Hamid Afana, GCMHP, Palestine
- Okan Akhan, HRFT, Turkey
- Abraham Asnake, RCVTE, Ethiopia
- Alan Chapman, WNRAS, New Zealand
- Akram H. Chowdhury, BRCT, Bangladesh
- Ibeneche Churchill, C3RJ, Nigeria

- Kashaka Karegeya Davis, FACT, Rwanda
- Camelia Doru, ICAR Foundation, Romania
- Lucila Irene Edelman, EATIP, Argentina
- Sana Hamze, Restart, Lebanon
- Jim Jaranson* (WPA)
- Norma Josephs, ASeTTs, Australia
- Niels Krusturp, RCT Jutland, Denmark
- Veli Lök* (FIDH)
- Abdallah Mansour, El Nadim, Egypt
- Vivienne Nathanson* (WMA)
- Donald Payne, CCVT, Canada
- Maria Piniou-Kalli, MRCT, Greece
- Ludmila Popovici, RCTV Memoria, Moldova

- Christian Pross, BZFO, Germany
- José Quiroga, PTV, USA
- Asko Rauta, CTSF, Finland
- Alfredo Ruiz, Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz, Venezuela
- Marcela Salazar Posada, Corporación AVRE, Colombia
- Khalida Salimi, SACH, Pakistan
- Bhogendra Sharma, CVICT, Nepal
- S.D. Singh, TOP Centre, India
- Laurent Subilia, UMVM, Switzerland
- Fernando Valadez, ACAT, Mexico
- Nomfundo Walaza, TCSVT, South Africa