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Report for the next round of consultations on Human Rights
European Union – Russia

The situation in the conflict zone of the North Caucasus
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Introduction

The North Caucasus remains one of Russia's least prosperous regions in the field of human rights. Although the situation in various republics and regions of the North Caucasus differs remarkably, some general factors, spread over a large territory of the North Caucasus adversely influence the development of the situation. These are:

- the ongoing fighting. Right now armed underground forces, using terroristic methods, oppose the Russian state on the North Caucasus. The power structures, in turn, implement a politics of state terror;
- the impunity for mass crimes, committed by state representatives during a “counterterrorist operation”. This way, the fate of the absolute majority of thousands of people, that have forcibly “vanished” on the territory of Chechnya since 2000, has not been established. The database of the HRC “Memorial” contains more than three thousand cases on those kind of forced “disappearances”, and no one has so far been punished for these crimes;
- the corruption, whose level is high even against the background of the rest of Russia;
- the arbitrariness of the officials;
- a high unemployment rate;
- the conflict between the supporters of the “traditional” Islam for the North Caucasus and the relatively new, fundamental Salafism movement of Islam.

The activity of rebels

The representatives of the Ministries of Defense and Internal Affairs of the RF argue, that the activation of rebels in Ingushetia and Dagestan has allegedly been due to the fact, that the rebels were driven there from Chechnya. Nevertheless it's not like that. The armed opponents of the Russian Federation created an underground “basis” out of local residents in a number of republics of the North Caucasus (the Chechen Republic, the Republic of Dagestan, the Republic of Ingushetia, the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic). This becomes clear if one pays attention to who gets killed in armed conflicts with state representatives, and who is arrested for participating in illegal armed forces.

Most regrettably, what human rights campaigners had long been warning about, happened earlier than it was even expected: the refusal to enter into any negotiations with the guerilla underground has resulted in the radicalization of the latter and its gradual adoption of the Islamic fundamentalism as the ideological basis for its struggle. Nowadays, the militants are no longer guided by rational goals and objectives - their goals now are either the utterly utopian ideas of creating an Islamic state, or simple revenge.

Taking into account the fact that the scale of armed violence has recently been on the wane in Chechnya, yet it has spread across other regions of the North Caucasus, it would only be logical to make a decision on lifting the counter-terrorist regime which had been governing the life in Chechnya over a number of past years (see below).

In the winter of 2008-2009 Russian representatives of power structures conducted a number of successful operations in different regions of the North Caucasus, leading to substantial loss on the side of the rebels, also among the leaders of the underground.

Nevertheless now, unlike in previous years, official representatives of federal power structures and leaders of the republics comment on the events in the region with unconcealed dismay. Only the president of Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov is still an incorrigible optimist, in January once again declaring total victory over terrorism. For everyone else it is now clear, that the armed resistance has reached a lingering, positional stage. For the first time it was openly talked about the broad base of support for the underground among the population, without which it would

not be able to exist.¹

However, these assessments coexist with long-established schemes, that look for the roots of all evil abroad. According to Arkadi Edelev, Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs of the RF, the rebels are supported with money, weapons and equipment from members of “Al-Qaeda”.² Earlier this Deputy Minister spoke about the destructive work of “*a series of foreign special services*”³ on the North Caucasus. The leader of the UFSB (Department of the Federal Security Service) in Dagestan, Vyacheslav Shanshin, said more precisely, that he thinks that the rebels are supported by representatives of special services of a number of western countries, that come to the North Caucasus in the guise of tourists or representatives of non-governmental organizations from the USA, England, Poland, Turkey and others.⁴ Also the new president of the Republic of Ingushetia, Yunus-Bek Evkurov, has more than once mentioned the interference of special services from the USA and England in the republic's situation.⁵ It should be recalled, that earlier the chief of the Department of combat training and service troops of the General Staff of the Russian army, Vladimir Shamanov, and the senator of Ingushetia, Vasiliy Likhachev, expressed a similar opinion.

If all the statements of these officials are combined and taken seriously, it turns out, that “Al-Qaeda” is waging war against Russia in the North Caucasus, together with the special services of the West.

The force of the rebels and their supporters has this winter been officially evaluated as follows: 120 people and up to 1237 supporters in Ingushetia; up to 500 rebels in Chechnya, the number of supporters was not submitted.⁶ For Dagestan such official evaluations were not announced. It should be recalled, that almost a year ago, in March 2008, the number of rebels on the whole territory of the North Caucasus was officially estimated at 400-500 people.⁷ At the same time, according to official statements, the rebels lost not less than 546 people who were killed, arrested or laid down their arms, through the whole year of 2008.⁸

This way we are either facing a traditional statistical confusion between agencies, or the growth of the underground and their supporting base.

The past year of 2008 has for the first time seen an increase in the number of losses (approximately 1.3 fold) of representatives of Russian power structures in summer and fall, compared to the same period in the previous year. This was largely due to the actions of rebels in Ingushetia. Below are the data, obtained by summing up the reported loss of Russian power structures in the media.⁹

In the summer of 2008 - 82 killed and 169 wounded; in the fall of 2008 - 83 killed and 143 wounded.

With the beginning of winter 2008-09 the rebels reduced their activities, just like in the previous years, which was reflected in a decrease of losses among Russian representatives of power structures – 37 were killed, and 113 wounded. One year ago 5 more people were killed, but there were 28 less wounded.

At the moment of writing this report (ie, at the end of the first decade of May), during approximately the first two months of spring 31 people were killed and 47 wounded. One year ago

1 No one of the officials has so far tried to discuss the reasons for the existence of such a supportive base.

Mentioned is only the active propaganda of followers of religious fundamentalism.

2 RIA Novosti, 21.01.2009

3 Grozny-Inform, 22.11.2007

4 RIA Dagestan, 27.12.2008

5 Novaya gazeta, № 13, 09.02.09, O. Bobrova, Interview with Yu.-B. Evkurov; Journal “Vlast”, № 5, 09.02.2009, M. Muradov, Interview with Yu.-B. Evkurov

6 Interfaks, 23.1.2009, Interview with the Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs of the RF, A. Edelev

7 RIA Novosti, 26.03.2008

8 Calculations of the Online-Media “Kavkazskiy uzel”, 21.01.2009

9 This data is obviously far from being complete. We, for example, don't know, how many of the wounded died because of their injuries, and the official agencies do not report all cases of destruction and firing to the media.

during three months of spring 40 soldiers and other representatives of power structures were killed and 89 people were wounded on the North Caucasus. Still, in comparing we unfortunately have to take into account, that a significant number of losses happened in May, when the first leaves appeared on the trees.

In Dagestan rebels are leading a true hunt for high officials of law enforcement agencies. Only within three months of fall 2008 four Majors, a Lieutenant and a Colonel were killed as a result of attempts on lives. Another two Majors of the police were killed this winter. And in December General Major Valeriy Lipinskiy, temporarily working as Commander of a formation of the Internal Troops of the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) on the North Caucasus, was killed in Makhachkala.

As before not only representatives of power structures or officials, but also civilians become victims of terrorist acts.

On the 6th of November 2008 a female suicide attacker blew up a micro-autobus in Vladikavkaz, the capital of North-Ossetia, killing 12 people.

In Ingushetia the number of terrorist attacks, committed in public places and not directed against the “power” or enforcement officials, has increased. Shopping centers, selling alcohol, markets, game halls, hotels and administration buildings are fired at or blown up. Also a Christian church was shelled. In situations like these, low-power explosive devices were used, that are not filled with deathly materials. It is obvious, that the Islamic fundamentalist underground this way tries to influence the society, dictating them norms of behavior.

However the terrorists do not limit themselves to demonstrations like this. In January 2009 a merchant, dealing with alcohol, was killed in the city of Malgobek (Ingushetia). During the investigations it was established, that she was killed with the same pistol, that earlier, on the 30th of November 2008, killed the assistant of the Imam of the mosque in Malgobek, Sultan Yalkhoroev. And then, on 6th of February 2009, out of the same weapon shots were fired on the leader of the Children's Dance Ensemble “Zori Ingushetii” (“Dawns of Ingushetia”) Zurab Dzhavakhashvili (an ethnic Georgian). He died from his wounds in the hospital. In the city of Karabulak a local resident, an ethnic Russian, was attacked; two explosive devices were found near her house.

As a result of the terror the fundamentalists can often achieve their goals – the Ingushetian salesmen scale down their trading with alcohol and other products, that could cause the anger of religious extremists. It's now even difficult to buy cigarettes in Nazran. The hairdressers are separated by gender.

Ingushetia

Over the last two years the situation in the republic has remained highly unstable. The activity of the armed underground has increased, and respectively also the number of wounded and killed representatives of power structures and officials rose. The power representatives have in abrasive manner violated human rights, and corruption has attacked the state apparatus. As a result a non-violent movement of civilian protest emerged in the republic, all of which manifestations the republican power has tried to suppress. Acting like that the power structures and civilian authorities only “played into the hands” of the underground.

In late October 2008 president Medvedev decided to take a step, that Putin was stubbornly unwilling to do – he changed the republic's leadership. The Moscow-suggested candidature of the 45-year old Yunus-Bek Evkurov, a professional military paratrooper, as Ingushetia's new president, was fulminantly confirmed by the local parliament.

To really achieve positive changes in the republic, the president has to start monitoring the activities of law enforcement organs, smash the system of “institutionalized illegality” and reduce corruption. Only then will the supporting base for the armed underground among the people start to shrink.

Evkurov himself does clearly not have the possibilities and power to do this without active support of the Kremlin. President Medvedev has more than once met with the new head of the republic and several times in public spoken in support of Evkurov. January, 2009 he especially flew to Ingushetia accompanied by high-ranking officials of the power block, and his plenipotentiary representative on the Caucasus, Vladimir Ustinov. The poor economic situation of the republic clearly stunned the president of the RF, judging by his answers and comments. For the first time, one other thing was officially recognized: Bortnikov, director of the FSB, at last in public confirmed the obvious fact, that in 2008 in Ingushetia the “*number of different terrorist and extremist acts has increased for several times. There were more than 400 incidents*”.

Relying on Moscow's support, Evkurov tries to reverse the situation in Ingushetia. He has made real advances to the civil society. Representatives of the opposition were integrated into the power structures, there were a number of meetings between the president and members of non-governmental human rights organizations and families, that had suffered from illegitimate actions of power representatives. On the 1st of December 2008 the president of Ingushetia established a Public Board for human rights, chairman of which became Azamat Nal'giev, a prominent public figure, who has often worked with human rights organizations. A number of criminal cases on corruption have been instituted, among the arrested are high-positioned officials.

The government has been changed, and the odious minister for Internal Affairs has been removed.¹⁰

Evkurov marked new guidelines for the republican powers: “*There can be no special operations on the territory of Ingushetia without informing the law enforcement authorities of the country or without participation of their representatives*”.¹¹

However, Ingushetia's new leadership can not stabilize the situation at the moment. Its politics are attacked from two sides – from rebels, and power representatives.

Ingushetia's armed underground is doing everything to keep the new president from feeling confident and provoke the authorities to use responsive terror, as under ex-president Zyazikov. This way the underground is recruiting young people into its ranks, people, whose brothers and friends became victims of the “special operations”.

The power representatives still often continue to carry out counter-terrorist acts, without regarding the social consequences for the republic. This way, despite all of Yu.-B. Evkurov's efforts, the practice of abductions, extrajudicial executions and arbitrariness in carrying out special operations has not stopped yet.

Shortly after his inauguration Evkurov immediately had to deal with cases like that.

On 13th of November 4 residents of the city of Malgobek – Magomed Tsokiev, Timura Tsokiev, Ibragim Aushev and Tamerlan Tankiev – , were arrested by law enforcement agents on suspicion of involvement in an attack on policemen. T. Tsokiev's house was searched, gravely violating procedural rules, soldiers were brought as witnesses. As a result ammunition was found in the house. During the search valuables disappeared. The arrested were brought to the ROVD (Russian Department for Internal Affairs) of the Malgobek region. The advocates, that could only get to them after 24 hours, detected numerous traces of beating.

The violation of procedural rules, the beating, the stealing – seems like a usual way of “investing” a case on terrorism. Only this time there were existential differences. The president of the republic found out about what had happened. He invited the relatives of the arrested and promised them not to allow arbitrariness. The MVD RI (Ministry of Internal Affairs for the Republic of Ingushetia) he ordered to either show evidence of the arrestee's involvement in the crime within ten days or release them.

In the end two were released on the 18th of November: I. Aushev and T. Tankiev. In regards

¹⁰ He, however, was promoted to a position in the central apparatus of the MVD RF (Ministry for Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation).

¹¹ «Respublika Ingushetiya», 09.11.2008

to the other two a lawsuit was filed under Article 222 (illegal possession of weapons) of the CC RF (Criminal Code of the RF). The earlier charge under Article 317 (assault on the life of a member of the law enforcement) of the CCRF was withdrawn. All four of them could officially document their beating and received medical help.

In turn, also the law enforcement officers who tortured the detainees, were prosecuted under Art. 286 (“abuse of authority”) of the CCRF. But despite the assurances of the president it was not easy to seriously punish those, who had violated the law. At the moment the investigation of the criminal case is suspended due to the “inability to find the persons to be charged”.

There were also other promises, that Evkurov couldn't keep, for example to find Akhmed Tochiev, Islam Mal'sagov and Gapur Tankiev, who were abducted in November and December 2008 and April 2009. The circumstances of these abductions suggest, that representatives of “power” structures were involved in the act, and the president of the RI promised the relatives of the disappeared that he would take the investigation of these crimes under his personal control.

It is possible, that the main difficulties are related to the fact, that the new president has not yet been able to coordinate the activity of the local police and the federal institutions, that are not under his control (the Federal Security Service, the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, sent to Ingushetia from other regions of Russia, and others) on Ingushetia's territory.

Special operations are still often carried out with grave violations of human rights.
Here are just a few examples.

On the 26th of March in the settlement of Ordzhonikidzevskaya members of the FSB (Federal Security Service) and the MVD, coming from other regions of Russia, stormed the apartment Nr. 1 on Demchenko Street, where two rebels lived, with grenades. They didn't allow the civilians, living in neighboring apartments, to evacuate for several hours, threatening them at gunpoint. As a result children, caught in the midst of the battle, received a severe psychological trauma. Besides, the local residents declared, that the government representatives robbed several apartments, that they entered during the operation.

On 22nd of April armed people in camouflage entered the house of the family of the Patievs in Karabulak (Targimskaya Street 27). Nothing illegal was found during the unauthorized search. Nevertheless they took Aslan Patiev, who lived there, with them when they left, and it is not clear where to. The relatives turned to different organizations (among others also to the administration of the president of the RI), but couldn't clarify the destiny of the kidnapped man. No one “knew anything” neither about the special operation, nor about A. Patiev. The situation only changed after direct intervention of Evkurov. He himself was in Moscow at that time, but kept in contact with the Minister of Construction of the RI, who visited the house of the Patiev by his order. Only afterwards, on the evening of April 24th, they found out, that Aslan was held captive in a detention facility of the MVD RI and was charged under part 2 of Art. 222 (illegal possession of weapons) and part 2 of Art. 208 (participation in illegal armed forces) of the CCRF. On the next day an advocate, hired by relatives, was allowed to see him. On 4th of May Aslan Patiev was released under the subscription of house detention.

Thus, the new president of the RI constantly has to interfere with irregular situations, that develop after illegal actions of representatives of power structures.

During operations in settlements, the government representatives often do not allow local policemen on the sight. However, even the presence of local police officers does not stop the lawlessness. On 25th of April 2009 members of one of the power structures (apparently of the FSB), blocked the village Surkhakhi and executed a “clean up”. The Metsol'gov family filed a complaint to the HRC “Memorial”. They reported, that unknown armed people in masks had entered their courtyard, and without showing any documents searched the house. They used the woman, Maka Mutsol'gova, as a “human shield”. Her relative Aza Mutsol'gova couldn't take the nervous tension

and fainted. Nothing illegal was found in the house, no search protocol was made, there were no witnesses for the search. The local policemen came to the house of the Mutsol'gov's half an hour after the search had begun, but didn't do anything against the violation of the norms of Russian law, that were going on before their eyes, because the armed, masked people strictly warned them to interfere.

On 21st of April Adam Aushev, local resident of the village Sukhakhki, was killed by members of the FSB, driving into the village. In a distributed press release of the department of the Federal Security Service in the RI it was stated, that Adam Aushev “didn't obey requirements of law enforcement officers and opened fire with an automatic weapon”, which is why he was killed by retaliatory fire.

Still the circumstances of A. Aushev's death suggest, that this was a planned shooting, and that he didn't resist. Shortly before his death A. Aushev had calmly stopped his car on demand of a policeman at the post. A witness said, that when on 21st of April the car of A. Aushev drove through another post, set up by soldiers or members of the FSB, fire was opened without any warning out of an ACV (Armored Combat Vehicle). The location was blocked for several hours by the offenders. Deputies of the republican police, who arrived at the location, were shot at and forced to stop. Also Isa Gireev, Vice Minister of the MVD RI was not admitted into the cordoned off zone, and only when the Minister of the MVD RI Ruslan Meyriev arrived, the local policemen were admitted into the cordoned off zone.

As noted above, the armed underground is in turn not only choosing military and police as targets of their attacks, but also civilians. For example in 2009 two Muslim clerics were killed and one beaten up. Terror like this is resented by the absolute majority of the people. The murder of the popular religious leader Musa Esmurziev has e.g. caused a great resonance in the country, and many people of Ingushetia, among them also the president of the republic, came to the funeral of the diseased.

Statistics show a still growing number of violent incidents in Ingushetia.

For four months of 2009 the HRC “Memorial” registered five cases of abduction in the republic. Subsequently two of the abducted were killed, two disappeared, and one was “found” in the IVS. For comparison, from January to April 2008 two local residents were abducted (one was subsequently released, the other one disappeared), 22 people were abducted during the whole year.

For four months of 2009 the HRC “Memorial” registered 59 cases of death in the republic.

Among those killed were:

- 21 civilians (killed by unknown offenders – 6 people; killed by power representatives or presumably by power representatives – 5 people; killed, eminently, by rebels – 2 people; killed in an explosion in the Department of bailiff – 8 people),
- 12 officials of local power structures
- 6 soldiers and members of the armed forces doing military service
- 20 rebels

For comparison, from January to April 2008 the HRC “Memorial” registered the death of 9 people on the territory of Ingushetia: 6 civilians, and 3 members of power structures (9 according to official data).

Chechnya

At first glance it may appear that the Chechen situation is generally moving towards stabilization, quite unlike the situation in Ingushetia. However, this seeming stability is that of a totalitarian regime based on brutality, suppression and fear and aiming at maximum restrictions on the outflow of any information on the actual situation.

On April 16, 2009, based on the decision of A. Bortnikov, the Chair of the National Anti-Terrorism Committee, Director of the RF Federal Security Service (FSB), the long maintained on the territory of the Chechen Republic counter-terrorism regime was lifted. As was announced, all the troops currently deployed in Chechnya on a temporary basis, will be gradually withdrawn from the republic. The only remaining troops will be the 42 Guards Motor Rifle Division of the RF Ministry of Defence and the 46 Separate Internal Troops Brigade of the RF Ministry of Interior, which are deployed in the republic on a permanent basis.

It should be noted that the current law of the Russian Federation vests the authorities engaged in combating terrorism with extraordinary, unacceptably broad powers¹². The Federal Law On Combating Terrorism¹³ authorizes imposition of the counter-terrorism regime on any territory and without any limitations. The territory on which such regime is to be introduced is determined by the operation commander accountable only before the FSB Director or the Head of the territorial FSB department. The law does not stipulate who such operation commander is appointed by. The duration of the effect of such regime is not specified by the law. No elected body may either terminate or extend the duration of this regime. At all that, the limitations of rights and freedoms imposed under the counter-terrorism regime are almost fully identical to those provided for under state of emergency.

The lifting of the counter-terrorism regime in Chechnya was actively advocated by President of the Republic Ramzan Kadyrov. In his view, this would have contributed to Chechnya's economy growth, including the plans of granting of the international status to the Grozny airport and creating Chechnya's own customs service. He declared that the day of lifting the counter-terrorism regime would henceforth be considered a public holiday.

We believe, however, that this change will not have much impact on the life of ordinary people in Chechnya. The degree of involvement of the federal military services in the counter-terrorism operations on the territory of Chechnya has at any rate been constantly diminishing over the past years. The troops operating on the plains rarely changed their deployment base and only operated in the highland regions. The absolute majority of block posts have been abolished. Comparing to the previous years less police forces from other regions of Russia are being sent to Chechnya. The task of combating the armed underground and the opposition, as well as the "powers" related to this task and application of unlawful violence in connection with it were transferred to the republican security structures. The latter include the republican Ministry of Interior as well as the Russian Ministry of Interior Internal Troops battalions which consist largely of those who used to be referred to as "kadyrovists". They act in total defiance of the norms

¹² See <http://www.memo.ru/2008/09/04/0409081rus/index.htm>
<http://www.memo.ru/2008/09/04/0409081rus/dk1rus.doc>
«Governance as a Counter-terrorist operation. Notes on the Russian legislation against terrorism».
L. Levinson, Human Rights Institute
<http://www.memo.ru/2008/09/04/0409081eng/index.htm>
<http://www.memo.ru/2008/09/04/0409081eng/dk1eng.doc>

¹³ Adopted on March 6, 2006.

provided by the counter-terrorism regime, frequently in total defiance of the provisions of the Russian law at all. Technically, they are part of the federal security forces, however, in actual practice they are only accountable before the President of the Chechen Republic. This is what makes this republic fundamentally different from all other subjects of the Russian Federation.

The lifting of the counter-terrorist regime may, nevertheless, have affected the highland parts of the Chechen Republic where military operations continue to take place, artillery and bomb attacks continue to occur and restrictions on people's movement continue to exist. However, some time after April 20, the counter-terrorism regime was again imposed by virtue of a decision by the head of the republican FSB department on the territory of the three highland districts: Vedensky, Shatoisky and Itum-Kalinsky, as well as on the highland part of the Shalinsky district¹⁴. Ramzan Kadyrov declared on April 25 that this measure was absolutely unjustified. Nevertheless, the office of the republican military commandant told a *Kavkazsky Uzel* correspondent that the re-imposition of the counter-terrorist regime was due to the significant escalation of the militants' activities in these regions, there have even been occasions when their groups would enter settlements.

Such discrepancy between the accounts of the republican and of the federal authorities is rather surprising, to say the least. For example, on April 21 the press service of the Chechen Ministry of Interior released the statement of Republican Deputy Minister of Interior M.Isayev claiming that over the first three months of 2009 not a single terrorist attack or extremism-related crime had been registered on the territory of Chechnya¹⁵. On the same day spokesman of the Chechen Republic Military Control Headquarters in charge of coordinating the counter-terrorism operations of the federal security structures in the Chechen Republic reported that since the start of 2009 16 armed attacks, 3 gunfire attacks and 11 blasts had been committed in Chechnya resulting in 8 police officers and servicemen of the federal forces being killed and 20 being wounded¹⁶.

Since the lifting of the counter-terrorism regime on the territory of the Chechen Republic (over the period from April 16 to May 15) at least 6 armed attacks have already taken place, 10 servicemen and police officers were killed and 7 were wounded as a result¹⁷.

On May 2, for the first time in recent years, selo Benoy of the Vedensky region was bombed. As a result, one man was wounded, one house suffered severe damages, while two more were damaged to some extent. The head of military administration attributed this to a mistake on the part of artillerymen. He did not allow journalists to film and said that they need to show "positive" things.

On May 15 in Grozny, for the first time in recent years, a suicide bomber detonated an explosive, killing himself and two policemen.

It is obvious that complete victory over the armed underground in Chechnya has not so far been achieved. Moreover, according to the most recent information, this spring brought another wave of young people leaving their families and joining the militants hiding in the highlands, just as it happened two years ago.

The tactic frequently referred to as the "Chechenisation" of the conflict, which proved to be rather effective for suppression of the guerilla underground in 2004 -2007, has apparently exhausted its potential.

Over the period from 2007 and up to the mid-2008 the republican authorities, though not renouncing the practice of unlawful violence, nevertheless, demonstrated the tendency to reduce its

¹⁴ On April 27 the counter-terrorism regime was again lifted in the Shalinsky district, yet it remains in force in the other three districts.

¹⁵ REGNUM Information Agency

¹⁶ The casualties figures are therefore considerably understated

¹⁷ These figures were obtained by way of monitoring and analysis of media reports and reports received by the Memorial Human Rights Centre

scale. Human rights rhetoric was widely used by Ramzan Kadyrov in his contest for power in the Chechen Republic. This had resulted in a significant drop in the number of reported abductions and torture cases.

However, starting with the late 2008 we can observe gradual return to earlier practices.

We can currently speak of a steady growth in the number of abductions. The circumstances of these crimes indicate involvement of officers of the security authorities, chiefly of the Chechen Ministry of Interior.

Statistic for abductions registered in the course of the monitoring conducted by the Memorial, as of the end of 2008

Month	abducted:	of which: released or ransomed	of which: found dead	of which: went missing	of which: "found" in police detention units
October	1			1	
November	6	3	3		
December	4	2		2	
Total for the entire year:	42	21	4	12	5

2009

Month	abducted:	of which: released or ransomed	of which: found dead	of which: went missing	of which: "found" in police detention units
January	7	7			
February					
March	25	20	2	2	1
April	26	18		2	6
Total:	58	45	2	4	7

The peculiarity of these abductions consists in the fact that in the majority of cases abductors release their victims after regular tortures and intimidation. This is regarded by the authorities as "terrorism prevention measures", and is also used for collecting information about people and forcing them to clandestine cooperation with the authorities. But the key goal here is to maintain the atmosphere of fear in the society. A minority of abductees are either killed or handed over by the abductors to their colleagues at the Ministry of Interior for registration of their "confessions".

It is difficult to assess the percentage of abductions that is currently covered by the attention of the Memorial Human Rights Centre but it is quite obvious that this number accounts for less than a half of all abductions. This category of crimes has become thoroughly latent in modern-day Chechnya, not being monitored by human rights campaigners and still less by law enforcement agencies, since families most often choose not to complain to anyone about abductions. The events in the village Dargo may be an example.

In March 2001 we found out, that since January power structures periodically abduct local residents from the village Dargo (Vedensky region) of the CHR. Members of the HRC "Memorial" were in Dargo and convinced themselves, that uniformed people regularly come to the village and take young men with them, sometimes also girls. Usually the abducted return after a few days, beaten up and scared. More than 20 of these cases were registered. It could be established, that the illegally arrested people are brought to the village Nozhaj-Yurt, where they are kept and exposed to beatings on a dislocation spot of the "A.-Kh. Kadyrov" subunit of the patrol- and posting Regiment of the MVD CHR. "Memorial" sent a letter to the Prosecutor's Office of the CHR about this. On

14th of April members of the HRC “Memorial”, visiting Nozhaj-Yurt, could see, that the organs of the Prosecutor's Office were seriously verifying the letter. Many of Dargo's residents, that representatives of power structures had illegally arrested, were questioned. But the scared victims, although not denying these facts, resolutely refused to give any official statements. However, immediately after the intervention of the Prosecutor's Office, the illegal arrests in Dargo stopped completely.

It is likely, that similar incidents in many other locations stay hidden.

Human rights defenders receive more and more information about torture. A terrible example of torture and following non-judged penalty is the case of murder of the brothers Ilaev.

On 30th of November 2008 armed people entered the house of the Ilaev family in the settlement Pervomayskaya. They unauthorizedly searched the house, taking valuables, and took the three Ilaev brothers Akhdan, Al'vi and Imam away with them in an unknown direction. Afterwards it became known, that they had been brought to a territorial police unit (TOM) of the Grozny (rural) region. Their sister and the pregnant wife of them of them were also brought there. The women heard, how their relatives, that were tortured in the next room, were screaming in pain. Forced out of them were the names of rebels, that the Ilaevs had, according to the policemen, been hiding. After a few hours the women and one of the brothers – Imam – were released. Imam told them, that he had been tortured with shocks.

On the same day one of the Ilaev brothers, Zurab, who lived alone, was called to work. He served in the MVD CHR. Soon Zurab called his sister and told her, that he was to be interrogated.

After that all three brothers – Zubar, Akhdan and Al'vi – disappeared.

Two days afterwards, on 2nd of December, the press service of the MVD CHR spread the information, that two rebels had been killed in a fight. On 3rd of December the bodies of Akhdan and Al'vi Ilay, that were allegedly these killed rebels, were handed to the relatives.

On 5th of December the Ilaevs notified the Prosecutor's Office of Zubar's disappearance. On 10th of December it became known, that the body of Zurab Ilaev was found on a landfill next to the dislocation spot of the “Sever” battalion. The body showed traces of beating and strangulation.

The organs of the Investigation committee of the Prosecutor's Office for a long time refused to open a criminal case on the murder of Akhdan and Al'vi Ilaev, because, according to the investigator, they were killed during a firefight.

Only in February 2009 did the Prosecutor's Office of the CHR suspend the order on the rejection of the opening of a criminal case, and the investigator was forced to take the opposite decision and open the criminal case № 70008 on the murder of Akhdan and Al'vi Ilaev (Art. 105 of the CCRF), and on theft (Art. 158 CCRF). The case was on the same day handed to the department for the investigation of particularly important cases of the Investigation office of the Investigation Committee with the Prosecutor's Office of the RF in the CHR. There it was combined with the case on the murder of Zurab Ilaev.¹⁸

Although more than five months have passed since the murder of the Ilaev brothers, no one has so far been charged.

In the Chechen Republic the practice of burning houses of relatives of rebels is continuing. The arson is committed openly and demonstratively by armed people in camouflage and masks. President R. Kadyrov stated the following about the relatives of rebels in public: “*The Chechen traditions have to be applied. In earlier times people like that were cursed and cast out. [...] These families, whose relatives are in the woods, are accomplices in the crimes, they are terrorists, extremists, Wahhabists and Shaytans (devils)*”.¹⁹

Since October 2008 the HRC “Memorial” has registered cases of arson in ten families, that

18 From an answer of the Investigation office of the Investigation committee of the Procurator's Office of the RF in the CHR to a letter of the HRC “Memorial”.

19 Taken from a speech of R. Kadyrov on a government meeting on 09.08.08; aired on TV “Grozny”

are relatives of rebels. It is obvious, that this number is not comprehensive.

To be fair we have to admit, that an analogue practice has earlier been actively used by rebels against people, who had changed sides to the current republican power.

The traditional customs also create a basis for violation of women's rights. Forcing women to wear a veil in public places is the best known example for the impairment of women's rights and the state's interference in private lives. Still a lot worse is that, what stays "out of sight".

From an interview with Ramzan Kadyrov:

*"I have the right to criticize my wife. The wife doesn't have this right. For us the wife is a housewife. The woman needs to know where her place is. [...] A woman has to be a possession. And the man is the owner."*²⁰

Forced marriages, polygamy, marriage with under age girls – this is just one part of those violations of the Russian law, against which there is no defence in Chechnya right now.

At the same time the Chechen traditions, that the current Chechen powers are so often referring to, contained many mechanisms, that constrained arbitrariness against women. But these mechanisms are virtually not effective in Chechnya.

In the fall of 2008 an old conflict between R. Kadyrov and the Yamadev-clan, that is controlling a mighty power structure in Chechnya, the battalion "Vostok" ("East"), was unexpectedly solved. In November this battalion, and at the same time also the battalion "Zapad" ("West"), that had also not been under presidential control, were liquidated.²¹

Even earlier, in September, the Press Service of the president of the CHR spread information, that Sulim Yamadaev, commander of the battalion "Vostok", would be put on trial for a number of cases, connected with abductions, murder and the "cleansing" of the village Borozdinovskaya, during which one person died and 11 civilians "disappeared". Testimony against Sulim Yamadaev was given by some of his former subordinates, who had urgently shifted to serve in the MID CHR (Ministry of Internal Affairs of the CHR).²²

It was reported, that allegedly a search warrant had been issued. However, all this didn't disturb S. Yamadev to live in Moscow, practically not hiding, and then without any hindrances leave for the United Arab Emirates, where on 28th of March 2009 he was assaulted.

Human rights organizations already a long time ago reported, that commanders and fighters of the "Vostok" battalion are involved in a number of crimes, among them abductions, torture and murder. The complaints of the residents of the village Borozdinovskaya, supported by advocates of human rights centres, will be examined by the European Court for Human Rights.

However it is obvious, that the 2008 filing of a lawsuit on the crimes, committed by Yamadaev and his subordinates, has only been one move in the battle for the absolute power in the Chechen Republic. Sadly, neither the federal, nor the republican powers are interested in a real investigation of the crimes and in a legal punishment of the guilty ones.

Up until now the investigation of the "cleansing" of Borozdinovskaya has not moved forward even one step, despite the obviousness of the case.

Former subordinates of Yamadaev testify in a way, that is absolutely perfect for the investigation and what they say is aired on television in the CHR. According to them, the Yamadaev brothers themselves planned and carried out all the crimes, and it was them, who settled old scores with their victims.

²⁰ Interview with a correspondent from the „Komsomol'skaya pravda“ A. Grymov, 24.09.08, <http://www.kp.ru/daily/24169/380743/print/>

²¹ A month before that, on 24th of September, the oldest Yamadaev brother, former delegate of the State Duma Ruslan Yamadaev, was shot in Moscow.

²² S. Yamadaev in turn accused R. Kadyrov of involvement in a number of crimes.

It is almost a repetition of the story of the “investigation” of the crimes, committed by Movladi Baysarov and the soldiers of his special squad “Gorec” (“Highlander”), that was led by the FSB in Chechnya until 2006. Public and human rights activists had been accusing the “Baysarovs” of committing many serious crimes, like murder, abduction, extortion and others. But only when the squad lost its special status, and Baysarov allowed himself to withstand R. Kadyrov, the government of the CHR in public accused Baysarov of committing these crimes. The former “Baysarovs” started to testify, laying the blame entirely on their ex-commander. As a result associates of the MVD CHR shot M. Baysarov on the 18th of November 2006 in Moscow “because of resistance while being arrested”, and the criminal case was closed “in connection with the death of the accused person”.

The majority of the former “Baysarovs” is now working for the MVD CHR. And now one of them, Khuseyn Magomadov, is the head of this territorial police unit of the Grozny (rural) region, where the Ilaev brothers were tortured and from where they were taken to their death.

The effective reconstruction of settlements in the Chechen Republic through huge funds, allocated out of the federal budget, has increased the popularity of the current republican authorities among the population.

This was done with absolutely non-transparent financial schemes. This approach inevitably led to erratic spending of money, theft, charges for the population and enrooted arbitrariness as well as the absolute power of the authorities.

The examples of bureaucratic arbitrariness in the republic are striking, even when compared to other regions of Russia.

For example, on October 5, 2008, on R. Kadyrov's day of birth, Chechen authorities inaugurated a new avenue named after Putin. However, until recently, this avenue was called the Avenue of Victory and was rebuilt in 2007. But in the summer of 2008, the reconstruction started again. Expenses for reconstruction were split between businesses and state institutions with offices located at the avenue. The day after the new avenue was opened, workers who came to their offices at the avenue found out that the buildings were sealed. The workers could only enter the offices if they paid a significant sum of money to representatives of construction firms. No documents to prove the fact of payment were filled out.

In Grozny, Gudermes and other settlements, state officials continue violating the right to own property. Even when residents have title deeds for their houses and land, officials can deny permission to rebuild destroyed housing or even destroy already reconstructed housing, if the land is proposed to be development for commercial or state purposes. In these cases, owners receive no or very little compensation.

Republican newspapers and television are under total control of the authorities. More than half of the news are dedicated to the activity of the president of the CHR. The rest is with no exception “about the success and victories in building a peaceful life”. Alongside the streets and roads of Chechnya numerous enormous pictures of R. Kadyrov, the current president of the CHR, his father A.K. Kadyrov, the previous president of the CHR, and of V.V. Putin, are set up.

Dagestan

The socio-political situation in the republic of Dagestan (RD) has, alongside the pervasive corruption, the unemployment, the flagrant violation of the electoral rights of the citizens or the police's arbitrariness, that are also characteristic for other regions of the North Caucasus, its own specifics. In contrast to the virtually mono-ethnic Chechnya and Ingushetia, Dagestan's population

is formed by many ethnic groups. This fact defines the multiplicity of the forces, that are active in the republic and presumes the alignment of their interests when conflicts come up, which prohibits the establishment of a rigid authoritarian power in the republic. However, this “alignment of interests” is usually achieved by illegal means and usually leads to clan fights. Political killings happen regularly in the republic.

This is the background, against which the armed confrontation between illegal armed forces and state-authorities is being carried out for the second decade. The conflict in Dagestan has a strong religious connotation. The majority of the population practice the for this region “traditional” Sufi Islam. Besides, also Salafism (fundamental Islam), by the authorities usually called “Wahhabism”, has firmly established itself. In a number of settlements in Dagestan this religious movement has a great influence on the public life of the regional community.

Islam fundamentalism is the ideological basis of the underground. Still, the fundamental movement is not, as long as it is not of political character, and as long as his followers do not try to dictate norms of behaviour to others, a threat to society – the people live and celebrate their rites, how they think it's right. But in the last decade the official authorities have effectively equated fundamentalism with terrorism and banditry. Criminal law and religious concepts have been mixed: the fight against terrorism has actually turned into a fight with the supporters of “Wahhabism” as a religious movement. The authorities deliberately push them into a marginal state, that is only one step away from armed struggle.

When the authorities have to solve a crime, they first of all “look into” lists of “non-traditional” Muslims, that are by definition seen as suspicious. It is the representatives of this group, that first of all become victims of illegal actions of law enforcement and security services. According to data of the MVD RD, currently 1370 “Wahhabists” are registered at the department.

Members of the underground perpetrate terror attacks, assaults or detonations and kill members of law enforcement organs, government officials or clergy.

The authorities (especially the republic's police) is leading “counter-terrorism operations”, that are grossly violating Russian law and the norms of international law.

The most important reason for a withdrawal to the underground is revenge. It seems, that also the police is often driven by vengeance.

The strict measures, that were taken by the authorities (federal, as well as local ones) in the overall campaign of the “fight against terrorism”, like the fabrication of criminal cases, pressure on suspects and their relatives or torture, are not consistent with Russian and international law. A policy like that can not be recognized as effective; rather on the contrary, it leads to an intensification of the radical movements in the society.

Here are only a few out of many examples of grave violations of human rights through law enforcement organs of Dagestan.

On 21st of October 2008 10km away from the village Gubden, where many of the residents practice the Salfism movement of Islam, 5 policemen were killed and 9 wounded. During the following days the search for rebels didn't bring any results. In Gubden began “clean ups” and local residents were arrested.

From 27th to 28th of October two residents of the village Gubden “disappeared” at different times: Saygadzhi Saygadzhiev, Nustapa Abdurakhmanov, Akhmed Gadzhimagomedov.

Witnesses saw, how they were arrested by policemen.

On 28th of October the relatives were told, that the disappeared ones were killed while showing resistance against policemen. After two days the bodies of the deceased were given to the relatives. All bodies showed obvious signs of torture and beatings, broken hands, collarbones, numerous hematomas and burns. Two of the dead showed a control-shot in the head . The third body did not have any wounds caused by gunshots.

The situation in the village stays tense. The residents are lamenting, that in the last few years the religious people have been subjects of systematic prosecution. Regularly, unauthorized searches are held in their houses, illegal arrests and interrogations happen, during which the arrested are often beaten up and tortured, some of them are afterwards being followed, all the phones are bugged.

Mass-arrests, during which ten, twenty or sometimes forty people are taken to the police without sufficient juridical reason have become a normal part of life. Families are living under constant stress, children are afraid of soldiers, and women sleep in their clothes, waiting for another invasion of power structures.

The residents report, that they are ready to cooperate with the government and answer any question of law enforcement organs, if the actions of latter are within the law. The residents insist, that the Constitution of the RF, that guarantees them freedom of faith, has to be respected.

On February 17, 2009, unidentified law enforcement authorities kidnapped a local resident, Alibek Abunazarov, off the streets of Makhachkala. Soon after that, armed men burst into Abunazarov's home when his wife was present there, and conducted unauthorized search. The men did not introduce themselves. The wife of the kidnapped man did not know anything of his whereabouts for several days.

On February 19, Memorial Human Rights Center informed Ombudsman Lukin of the kidnapping. The very same day, Lukin called Prosecutor Tkachev, who said that Abunazarov was arrested and is kept in the Department of Internal Affairs of the Makhachkala Kirovsky region. However, when Memorial lawyer B. Guseynova, who was hired by the wife of the kidnapped, came to the Department, she was told that Abunazarov was not there.

The next day Tatiana Kasatkina, Executive Director of the Memorial Human Rights Center, called Prosecutor of Dagestan with the same question, "What is the current location of Abunazarov?" Finally, at 4 pm on February 20, Tkachev replied that Abunazarov had been released and was going home. At the same time, he was released only at 9:30 pm and came home beaten up and depressed. In his statement to Memorial Human Rights Center, Abunazarov said that his kidnappers kept him in some building (which seemed like a state institution), where they beat for a day and demanded that he confessed to participating in illegal armed forces. From there, he was taken to Kirovskiy Regional Department of Internal Affairs, and then to the special detention centre No records were kept, Abunazarov did not have a lawyer. In special detention centre Abunazarov was told that he was detained for an administrative infraction.

Memorial Human Rights Center lodged a letter to the Prosecutor's office demanding that authorities open a criminal case.

This particular case had a relatively good ending for Abunazarov because it received wide coverage. However, the vast majority of similar cases do not get attention of the human rights community, or they get attention when it is too late to do anything.

On March 2, 2009, a group of armed people kidnapped Magomedshakir Magomed, a resident of Deybuk. He followed the Salafi movement of Islam and did not hide his beliefs.

On that day, Magomedov went to Mughli, where he had lived before, to get some information from the local authorities.

On the way to Mughli he was detained by local police and was taken to the Regional Department of Internal Affairs, where he was forced to write a note explaining the purpose of his visit to the region. After that Magomedov received all the information in local administration and was going to go home, of which he told his wife on the phone. However, unidentified persons forced him into a car, with eyewitnesses present, and took him somewhere. Magomedov disappeared.

A day after the incident Magomedov's relatives found out from the media that Magomedov was allegedly killed in a shooting with police. The relatives were able to collect Magomedov's body from the morgue only through persistence. There was evidence of torture, cuts and burns on the body.

Falsification of cases. Work of courts

Many criminal cases on terrorist crimes are falsified. The standard procedure of falsifications is the same throughout the North Caucasus: security forces kidnap a suspect, and the person “disappears” for some time. As a rule, security services try to obtain confessions from the “disappeared” person using torture. At this point, defense lawyers are not provided to suspects or a ‘lawyer on duty’ is being appointed who does not file complaints related to the use of torture in respect of his defendant, does not demand medical assistance to his client or forensic examination in order to document torture. At this point the relatives usually do not yet know about the whereabouts of the detainee and they cannot hire him an independent lawyer. Even in cases when the relatives do invite another lawyer, he is being denied access to his client until all the necessary (incriminating) documents are signed by the suspect.

Documentation regarding the date of detainment of such person are backdated and oftentimes the official date of detainment is several days after the actual date when detainment took place.

Even if the lawyer knows that illegal methods have been applied to his client, he oftentimes would not send appeals about cruel treatment, being afraid for his or her own security. Very few individual lawyers dare to confront this system, but their complaints are turned down, and their appeals to the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation, to the Ombudsman of Russia or to Member of Russian State Duma are left without attention.

Evidence obtained through the use of torture later becomes the main evidence of the suspect’s guilt in court.

Such a system leaves little chances for fair punishment of perpetrators and acquittal of innocent. Complaints sent by lawyers to federal supervision authorities are forwarded to the Republic supervision authorities, who cover violence and arbitrariness of law-enforcement agencies and security services.

It needs to be noted that only a small number of falsified cases gets attention of the human rights community.

Until recently, a jury trial was the main hope for fair decisions on these cases. The fact of falsification was established in several cases in Dagestan and Ingushetia involving jury duty.

However, on December 30, 2008, a law came into force that prohibited the use of jury trials in cases that involved terrorist acts (UK RF Art. 205), hostage taking (art 206(2)-(4)), illegal armed unit creation (art 208(1)), organizing mass disorder (art 212(1)); state treason (art 275), espionage (art 276), violent seizure of power (art 278), armed revolt (art 279), and sabotage (art 281).

The human rights community condemned this change in the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation. Before the change, defendants could choose jury trials in cases that involved crimes mentioned above. Furthermore, falsifications are widespread in cases involving “illegal armed unit creation” and organizing “mass disorder.” Professional judges are afraid to acquit defendants in these cases.

These changes in the Criminal Procedure Code already affected the most famous legal proceeding in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic: the trial of suspected participants of the 2005 Nalchik raid. It needs to be noted that all 58 suspects were charged with the same, standard crimes without regard to the individual suspect's actual place and role in the raid. Those who were shooting face the same charges, as those who refused to participate in the raid, and voluntarily surrendered their arms and themselves. During the two years of investigations, human rights defenders and lawyers collected plenty of evidence that many confessions were extracted through the use of torture.

Achieving long-term peace in the republic is only possible if the circumstances of the raid, as well as the reasons why many young residents of the republic joined these extremist groups, are objectively and seriously examined during the trial. There was hope that the use of jury trial would facilitate such examination. Throughout 2008, a long and complicated process of forming the jury panel was conducted.

However, on February 20, 2009, referencing the change in the Criminal Procedure Code, the Supreme Court of Kabardino-Balkaria granted the Prosecution's motion to dismiss the jury trial in

the case of 2005 raid.

Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

Currently 102 judgments on the applications from the residents of North Caucasus region were pronounced by the ECHR (including 98 from Chechen Republic and 3 from Ingushetia).

And in one case only the Court did not find any Convention violations. In all other cases Russian Federation was admitted to be guilty in the Convention violations. The issues raised in the complaints were about kidnapping by the authorities' representatives, disproportionate use of physical force, disappearance of arrested people, about torture in detention, and extrajudicial killings. Thus 92 violations of the right to life were found by the Court, and in 103 cases a right to the effective investigation was violated by the Russian Federation.

What measures are being taken by Russian authorities to implement the ECHR decisions?

Applicants are given monetary compensations in time and in full. Criminal cases are investigated anew. But investigations are made formally and drag on for no good reason.

None of the officials who were clearly involved in perpetrating crimes have gone on trial. There is still no information on people whose abductions were considered by the ECHR, not to mention that no amendments have been made so far in order to change the normative acts outlining security services' actions in areas of internal conflicts (anti-terrorism legislation, charters of armed forces). Meanwhile, the need for such changes results directly from some ECHR decisions.

Over the past years some applicants have been subject to pressure from authorities after they made their complaints; some were threatened and a few of them were abducted or killed.

Recommendations

Peace and stability are inseparably linked to human rights issues. A clear illustration of this obvious truth is the situation in the North Caucasus.

Peace and stability there (which also includes the respect for the inalienable human rights) in the long run can be achieved only through political reform that ensures formation of the authorities in the subjects of the Federation on the basis of the people's will. This political reform is not possible without an end to the suppression of the opposition and the violation of the freedom of speech. Unreasonable restrictions on holding rallies and demonstrations must be removed. An integral part of such reform must also become a real fight against corruption.

However, it is clear that such policies can be implemented only if there is a political will in the Kremlin, and they should not be limited to the North Caucasus but should address all regions of Russia. The change of the leadership of Ingushetia is a half-hearted measure. Currently, the Russian federal authorities lack this political will.

Therefore, now we can talk about only the first and minimally necessary steps.

These minimal steps should be measures aimed at ending the massive and systematic violation of human rights by law enforcement agencies, especially the Ministry of Interior and Federal Security Service of Russia, and removing the climate of impunity for crimes against civilians, which is still prevalent in the North Caucasus.

Such measures should include the following in particular:

I Carrying out adequate investigation into cases of human rights violations and bringing perpetrators to accountability.

I Having the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation conduct a comprehensive review of the activities of enforcement agencies and the prosecutor's office in the region. In particular it is essential to look into all cases relevant to the participation of individuals in illegal armed formations, which have been investigated in those republics, and send those cases in which there is evidence of torture and illegal pressure against defendants for re-investigation and re-trial.

I Putting an end to the widespread practice of “temporary disappearances” of detained persons. In order to decrease the risk of torture as well to guarantee the legal rights of the family members of the detained, it is essential to ensure that relatives of the detained or arrested are speedily informed on their whereabouts.

I Instructing members of federal and local enforcement agencies and security services about the absolute necessity of respecting and observing human rights within the framework of their activities as well as about the accountability for following criminal orders of superior instances and employees.

I Ensuring the compliance of the state counter-terrorism activities, both on the level of normative acts and on the level of practices, to the international human rights standards and the international humanitarian law, including the European Convention for Human rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Geneva Conventions, and the Council of Europe Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism.

I Providing adequate legal and judicial protection and due compensation to victims of human rights violations.

I Effectively guaranteeing access to places of temporary and pre-trial detention for representatives of international humanitarian organizations, including the ICRC, in order to visit prisoners on conditions acceptable to those organizations.

I Cooperating with the human rights protection mechanisms and agencies of the Council of Europe and the United Nations, including the special procedures of the UN Human Rights Commission and the treaty bodies of the Council of Europe and the UN.

I Effectively cooperating with the Council of Europe Anti-torture Committee.

I Extending the necessary assistance to Russian and international human rights organizations in their human rights monitoring work in the North Caucasus. Cooperating with such organization in eliminating the climate of impunity and improving the human rights situation in the region.

I Fully implementing ECHR's decisions.