

**ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOs
1 – 3 JULY 2015 - International Conference Center Geneva**

SIDE EVENT

BACKGROUND PAPER

Title: **Approaches to rehabilitation services for torture victims**

Date: **Thursday 2 July**

Time/Room: **13h00 – 14h30 - Room 6**

The continued torture and ill-treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the Sinai desert, Western Egypt and along the migratory route from Sub-Saharan countries to Libya, as well as the lack of action on this issue, is the subject of this side event. After being released torturers make sure that the victims have just enough money left to pay for smugglers to cross the Mediterranean to Europe (mainly Italy and Greece), where there is a mass influx of new arrivals.

There is a wide range of theories of rehabilitation around the world. Many of them provide psychotherapy in one-on-one consultations. Such treatments are common in countries where the number of new arrivals is low or where the state is funding such treatments. In Ecuador, for example, survivors who require it receive psychiatric care. The psychologist accompanies the patient through the public health system. HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) often provide assistance to pay for the medication.

In Israel a new Ministry of Health mental health clinic was opened a year and a half ago to provide free treatment to asylum seekers. However one-on-one treatment cannot be provided to all in need in situations of mass influx of new arrivals with a high percentage of torture victims.

New research is needed to develop treatment models that can be scaled to a national and international level. The academic research, being conducted by Haifa University, Israel, will provide high-quality data regarding the scale of trauma, mental health problems and rehabilitation needs for torture survivors residing in Israel. The research in progress will be discussed during the panel.

The panel will include representatives of civil society organizations from one country that provides one-on-one consultations as well as countries where the number of new

arrivals is very high and one-on-one services are not possible based on the number of people in need.

The presentations will focus on exchanging knowledge and information in order to provide improved assistance for victims. Content will include:

1. New developments in providing treatment to large numbers
2. Access to minimum services
3. Mental health and rehabilitation services as part of lasting solutions.