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## **Report on the Public Verdict Foundation's activity in 2008**

During 2008 the Public Verdict Foundation has been offering legal, information, and psychological assistance to the victims of human rights abuse by the law enforcement bodies. Such key activities as analytical work and preparation of reviews, reports and recommendations and their subsequent submission to relevant Russian and international bodies have been further developed by the Foundation. In 2008 the Foundation continued to develop research activity, elaborated and carried out sociological surveys. Many attention and the Foundation's resources have been devoted to arrangement and holding educational events for partner NGOs from different regions of the country.

The main activities of the Foundation are closely interconnected and their comprehensive fulfilment contributes to achievement of the Foundation's goals - promoting reforms of the law enforcement system based on respect for human rights, ensuring civil society monitoring of the law enforcement practices, and creating a climate of zero tolerance for abuse of power in any form in the Russian society

In 2008 the activities described below have been implemented in the course of following projects:

- project "Strengthening Regional Human Rights Organizations to Combat Arbitrary Law Enforcement" (supported by the Open Society Institute – assistance Foundation)
- project "Protection of citizens against arbitrary practice of law-enforcement bodies" (supported by the Open Society Institute – assistance Foundation)
- project "Counteracting arbitrary actions of law enforcement bodies: joint mobile groups of Russian human rights NGOs" (supported by The state of Netherlands represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- project "Towards complex rehabilitation of torture victims -2". Program for development and improvement of services provided by NGOs to torture victims» (supported by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture)
- project "No to Arbitrary Actions by the Law Enforcement (Consolidation of Russian civil society organizations to counter arbitrary actions by the law enforcement and to implement civic watch over their operation)" (supported by the MacArthur Foundation)

## The Foundation's activity

### • Legal work on cases

The main task of the Foundation in 2008 remained to provide assistance to the citizens affected by unlawful actions of law enforcement officers, restoration of their violated rights specified by the European Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms (hereinafter ECHR).

During 2008 likewise in preceding years the legal department of the Public verdict Foundation tackled citizens' petitions received by ordinary and electronic mail. The Foundation received 160 petitions from different Russian regions in 2008. As a result of studying these petitions the following decisions were taken:

- For 27 cases – additional documents were requested, without which a decision on presence or absence of the human rights (as specified by the ECHR) violation by law enforcement officers can not be taken;
- In 48 cases – consultations were given both in verbal and written form;
- In 56 cases – the decision of denial in assistance was taken since the offences committed by the law enforcement officers lay beyond the competence of the Foundation's activities and in general concerned proofs of the guilt;
- 29 cases were taken over by the Foundation, active work on them is currently going on.

In 2008 the foundation took over 42 new dossiers. 13 from abovementioned were submitted by regional partners: Yoshkar-Ola NGO "Person and Law", Human Rights Movement "OSA" (Abakan, Khakasia), and Komi Republican Human Rights Commission "Memorial".

In general, complaints drawn by the Foundation and its regional partner organisations helped to reverse more than 20 unlawful resolutions of inspectors of the investigative bodies attached to the Russian prosecution offices and inquiry departments during the pre-trial checks, of which:

- 13 unlawful resolutions on suspension of investigation by virtue of impossibility to identify the person to be brought to responsibility  
*For example, on April 5, 2007 the acting investigator of the Directorate of internal affairs for Balashikha district delivered a resolution of dismissal of a criminal case upon the death of a citizen K., born in 1946. This resolution was appealed by the victim's brother, because the medical certificate contained the data of a different person. Besides, according to the certificate, the man whose body was examined, was aged 47, which did not correspond to the true age of the victim. Hence the question of the identity of the person whose body was examined remains open. Despite such obvious violations of the current legislature, this resolution was confirmed as lawful and grounded by the acting vice prosecutor of the Balashikha district. Besides, the victim's brother was not informed in the due time and thus was deprived of the opportunity to pay his respects and bury the body. The unlawful actions of the prosecutor were appealed to a higher prosecution office, i.e. Moscow oblast prosecution office, which forwarded the complaint to the Balashikha prosecution office for consideration. Upon the consideration of the complaint, the resolution was found lawful. The decision of the Balashikha prosecutor was again appealed to the Moscow oblast prosecution office. As a result the Moscow oblast prosecution office took a decision to consider the resolution of dismissal as unlawful. The materials have been given to the investigative bodies attached to the Balashikha prosecution office. A final decision is not delivered yet.*

This example starkly illustrates the failure of the Balashikha prosecutor to perform his duties, i.e. control over the work of both inquiry bodies and his own subordinates. Not only did he fail to reverse the unlawful decision of the acting prosecutor, but also backed these actions.

- Four unlawful orders to dismiss criminal complaints on the grounds of absence of crime in the act, delivered by prosecution office investigators.  
*On the night of October 27<sup>th</sup>- 28<sup>th</sup> officers of the Department of internal affairs for Dalnegorsk unlawfully detained 26 citizens, some being underage. They unlawfully used force and tortures against the detainees. The victims submitted complaints to the respective law-enforcement bodies. The checks conducted by the Investigative department for Dalnegorsk brought about nothing but numerous orders to dismiss criminal complaint. A number of violations were committed when delivering the orders. For example, the checks were conducted poorly; the complaints of all the victims were studied separately, which excluded the possibility of an unbiased, comprehensive and full investigation of the circumstances; the orders to dismiss the complaints were delivered in regard to unidentified persons, which violates the current legislature (an order to dismiss a criminal complaint can only be delivered with a reference to a particular person). Following the latest order which was delivered on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Foundation sent a request to the head of the Investigative directorate (ID) of the Investigative Committee (IC) attached to the RF prosecution office for Primorskiy krai to check the legality and well-foundedness of the decision and in case of violations to take adequate measures. On December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the decision was repealed by the vice head of the Investigative department for Dalnegorsk as unlawful and unfounded. A new check is in progress. The head of the Investigative Department for Dalnegorsk responsible for poor procedure control over his subordinates, was punished financially.*
- Six unlawful decisions to terminate prosecution on the grounds of absence of crime in the act or under the statute of limitations.  
*On August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 the Investigative Department attached to the Department of internal Affairs for Moscow Meshchanskiy district under the statute of limitations terminated the prosecution which had been initiated on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 under the article 116, part 1 of the Criminal Code of the RF (beating). The decision was taken in regard to unidentified persons which constitutes a serious violation of the RF Criminal Procedure Code. This order was appealed to the court which found it unlawful and obliged the investigator to eliminate the committed violations. Following the court decision the investigator repealed the order and launched a new investigation.*

On the cases executed by the Foundation in 2008 13 law-enforcement officers were charged in crimes specified by the articles 285 and 286 of the Russian Criminal Code (the exceeding of official duties). 11 of them were found guilty. All of them received imprisonment for 1.5 to 5 years. The sentence of one policeman has not come into force so far.

Two officials were charged with official malfeasance (one – under the article 286 of the Criminal Code of the RF – exceeding of official duties, the other – according to the article 128, part 2 of the Criminal Code, i.e. unlawful placement of a person into psychiatric facility by a person using his official status). Bringing an official to a criminal responsibility under the article 128 of the Criminal Code is a big success due to a rare opportunity to initiate a criminal case of this category and bringing it to court, however, the low level of pre-trial investigation due to which the case was sent back for an additional investigation, remains alarming.

*On May 26, 2005 a citizen B. without his consent and in contempt to the federal law "Psychiatric assistance and guarantees of human rights" was placed into the psychiatry department №2 of the Institute named after N.V. Sklifosovskiy, where he was unlawfully kept for 15 days. During this time B. was unlawfully being beaten by the specialists of the department with the help of another patients. 1.5 years later on November 2, 2006 law-enforcement bodies initiated a criminal case under the article 116 of the Criminal Code (beating up) against unidentified people. Before that there were numerous unlawful decisions of dismissal which were later reversed by the prosecution office or court. The guilty in the case are still not found. The doctor L., responsible for the treatment of B., also committed a number of offences. Despite the fact that B. gave neither oral nor written consent to him being placed in the psychiatric hospital, the director of the department Dikiy I.P. kept him there unlawfully for 15 days. By doing this Dikiy I.P. infringed the rights of the patient described in the article 5 of the ECHR and articles 21, 22 of the Constitution of the RF. Dikiy was charged with a crime under the article 128, part 2 of the Criminal Code of the RF. However, only on October 12, 2007, i.e. 2,5 years later, after numerous complaints of the victim and petitions of the Foundation to respective bodies, a criminal case was finally initiated. During the investigation Dikiy I.P., a director of the department №2 of the Institute, was charged with the crime. The criminal case was forwarded to the prosecutor for a confirmation of the indictment, but he reversed the case for an additional investigation due to incomplete information on the case (for example, how lawful was placement of B. into a psychiatric hospital), significant contradictions between the evidence of B. and his doctor, lack of legal assessment of the actions of the doctor L. and the head of the department. These issues are of significant importance for making a final decision in this criminal case.*

The Foundation is helping victims of arbitrary actions of law-enforcement bodies to obtain compensation for moral and physical damage both from the state and the guilty.

*On October 14, 2008 a Sochi Lazarevskiy district court found 8 SWAT officers (OMON of the Krasnodar krai Directorate of internal affairs) guilty under article 286, part 3, section "a, 6" of the Criminal Code. The court decided to levy 50500 roubles as a compensation for physical and moral damages. We are currently drawing similar statements of claim to obtain compensation of moral and physical damages from the Russian treasury.*

During 2008 the total sum of 65500 roubles was paid out as a compensation of moral and physical damage to victims of human rights abuses.

**During the reporting period The Foundation continued the work in joint mobile groups (JMG)** which include representatives of several Russian human rights organisations from different regions working on cases of mass violations committed by law-enforcement bodies.

During 2008 the Foundation worked on two cases of mass human rights violations which took place in **Dalnegorsk (Primorski krai) Shalya (Sverdlovsk region).**

*In April 2008 the Foundation received a petition from Dalnegorsk (Primorsk krai) about the mass beating of local citizens (mostly minor) committed by officers of the department of internal affairs for Dalnegorsk city district on the night of 27-28 October 2007. To clarify the situation in May 2008 we sent a joint mobile group to Dalnegorsk comprising specialists of three Russian human rights organisations (the Public Verdict Foundation, the Nizhniy Novgorod Committee against torture and the Yoshkar-Ola organisation "Person and Law"). The public investigation revealed serious violations committed by the officers of Dalnegorsk Investigative body attached to the prosecution office for Primorsk krai which investigated the case.*

Over the period under review, the Foundation's requests helped to repeal two unlawful orders to dismiss a criminal case delivered by investigators of the Investigative department for Dalnegorsk, Primorskiy krai. Three functionaries who had violated the current legislation were amerced. In December 2008, the members of the joint mobile group, sent to Vladivostok, met with senior executives of the Investigative

body attached to the RF prosecution office for Primorskiy krai. There the materials of the check conducted by the Investigative department for Dalnegorsk on the case of mass beating happened on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007, are studied. During the meeting the sides discussed the possibilities of cooperation.

In December 2008 we sent again a JMG to the village Shalya of the Sverdlovsk oblast, where on October 2, 2008 a new mass violation of human rights by officers of the Directorate for combating organised crime from Yekaterinburg and Sverdlovsk oblast. During the face-to-face meeting we handed out complaints of the victims to the head of the Pervouralsk interdistrict investigative body attached to the prosecution office for Sverdlovsk oblast; the check is in progress.

It is worth noting that mass human rights violations are not the only reason for sending a joint mobile group of human rights experts to regions. We also organise mobile groups for investigation of serious human rights violations in the regions which lack human rights organisations that could be interested in a thorough and multisided investigation of violations and punishment of the guilty.

*For example, in March 2008 media (including TV and radio channels of the RF) reported about an operation conducted on the 13th March 2008 by special police force (OMON) with the aim to detain and neutralise "Leshiy" ("Dryad"), a citizen who lived on the territory of the natural park "Kologriv forest" in Kostroma oblast. During the operation the person was killed. Media reported that the person was not identified, his relatives were not known. Besides, the comments of law-enforcement officers on the operation revealed obvious mistakes and serious violations committed by them. In the mid April 2008 a joint mobile group of representatives from two Russian human rights organisations (Public Verdict Foundation and Ryazan society "Memorial") went to the Kologriv district of Kostroma oblast. The investigation showed that officials (including command staff) had committed a number of violations not only during the operation, but also while preparing it. The mobile group prepared several petitions to the prosecution office of the RF.*

The Foundation continues work on the case of Bychkov A.G. gunned down during the special operation conducted by special police force on the night of March, 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in the sanctuary "Kologriv forest", Kostroma oblast. The main question to be answered is how lawful the decision of law-enforcement officers to use guns against Bychkov was. The victim's sister's testimony makes procedural violations during the investigation of the case obvious. On these grounds the Foundation drew a request to the head of the Investigative Committee attached to the RF prosecution office.

- **Psychosocial rehabilitation of survivors of torture perpetrated by police and law enforcement**

The experience of working with survivors of torture and abuse demonstrates that the survivors are in acute need of not only legal assistance, but also in need of psychosocial rehabilitation. This understanding led the Foundation to incorporate the program of psychosocial rehabilitation of torture survivors into the spectrum of the branches of work of the organization. The program was initiated in 2007.

In 2008 the Public Verdict Foundation continued the program of psychosocial rehabilitation of survivors of torture perpetrated by police. In 2007 the methodological and organizational basis was created and needs assessment was conducted in collaboration with regional partner organizations, and in 2008 the focus of the project switched to exchanging experience between regional partner organizations, and training local therapists to use the helping practices accumulated by the project. Throughout the year, direct free of charge psychological assistance was provided to more than 20 people.

On June 10-11<sup>th</sup>, 2008, a two-day project-developing seminar took place in Moscow, which brought together therapists, lawyers, PR-specialists and other workers from human rights agencies from Krasnodar, Ryazan', Perm', Novokuznetsk, Abakan, Syktyvkar and Moscow. During the seminar the participants were able to exchange experience, establish necessary work alliances and also learn some skills of community building and community work, interviewing and creating 'therapeutic documents' according to the methodology of narrative approach (these techniques of work allow to lessen the probability of re-traumatization). Special emphasis during the seminar was put upon prevention of burnout among human rights activists and the resources available to them.

A brochure was published where there were collected descriptions of various aspects of psychosocial rehabilitation of survivors of torture and abuse, including articles about posttraumatic growth, empathic stress disorders, collecting testimonies of trauma, use of written word in therapy and self-help etc.

At the end of 2008 a new step of the program was initiated which consists in collecting the stories of survival – the first-person accounts of the torture survivors about they ways of dealing with hardship, adversity and its consequences. These stories are collected in the Archive, which is presented on the Foundation's website (<http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/fperson.html>). Thus the survivors from different regions of Russia can come in touch with each other's experience, and a social network of support and mutual assistance is being created. Two field trips have been already conducted under this methodology – to Novokuznetsk and to Syktyvkar.

- **Analytical activity: drawing reviews, reports, recommendations and their submission to the relevant Russian and international bodies**

The Foundation pays due attention to analytical work that is integral part of its activities.

In March 2008 the Foundation prepared an analytical review "Abuse of office by law-enforcement personal: circumstances and judicial practice of imposition of penalty". <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/230608.html>.

The review presents an analysis of cases of unlawful usage of force by law-enforcement officers, executed by the Public Verdict Foundation during 2004-2008. The cases were investigated by official bodies, while the Public Verdict Foundation and its partners in 11 regions provided legal assistance and defence of the victims. The review consists of 6 sections:

- Structural divisions whose officials unlawfully used force and were convicted under the article 286 of the Criminal Code of the RF (exceeding of official duties).
- Aims of officials using force and special means, as well as dependence of aims on the place of their work.
- Special means used by law-enforcement officers while committing a crime.
- Health damage as a result of exceeding duties by law-enforcement officers.
- Punishment in correspondence to the health damage.
- Time passed from a commitment of a crime until the conviction.

The review also contains recommendations to officials of the Ministry of internal affairs, Investigative committee and courts which could improve the situation.

The Foundation and its partner organisations in the correspondence with investigative bodies and prosecution offices usually refer to the acts issued by the Prosecutor General, which helps to achieve a more effective reaction to the requests of the Foundation and eventually raises the overall efficiency of investigations of the cases of unlawful actions of law-enforcement bodies. One of such acts that we had been constantly referring to was the Instructions of the Prosecutor General № 74/40 from December 17, 2002 "On the interaction between prosecution offices and human rights organisations and other NGOs". However, in March 2008 this act was repealed and replaced in September by the Decree of the Prosecutor General № 182 from September 10, 2008 "On the interaction with the public, the explanation of the legislature and legal education". This decree's main aim is to make prosecution offices raise the legal awareness of citizens. The work with human right organizations on the cases of infringement of citizens' rights is mostly left out of this document. The Foundation conducted a comparative analysis of these and other normative acts of the prosecution office concerning requests submitted by both citizens and organizations. On the basis of this analysis the Foundation worked out recommendations which would make collaboration between law-enforcement bodies and human rights organizations on the restoration of infringed rights of citizens more efficient. In December 2008 representatives of human rights organizations met with officials of the Prosecutor General's office in order to discuss a number of issues, including the abovementioned decree. Among other participants there was V.M. Gefter, a member of the Foundation's

board of trustees. An analytical report prepared by the Foundation was submitted to the prosecution office; an oral agreement to renew the discussions on this question was made.

The Foundation is a member of the group working in Moscow Parliament on amendments to the law "About communication", in particular to the section on the security of the private information. The analysis of the legislature (the laws "On communication", "On operative investigative work") conducted by the legal department of the Foundation revealed the necessity of certain amendments to the current legislation in order to provide the right of security of private information. Namely it is necessary to introduce amendments to both laws so that they:

- Overtly and unambiguously oblige the parties concerned to install all necessary equipment and provide its technical maintenance at their own expense or compensating the expenses to the service providers. It would probably decrease the usage of the systems for operative investigative activities.
- Make it obligatory to present a court or senior investigator's decision to the service providers.
- Make service providers responsible for the material and moral damage inflicted to citizens when the operator allows the interference of the investigative bodies without the necessary documents.
- Oblige service providers to register dates of the requests of the investigative bodies to limit the right of security of private information.

The analysis was presented to the working group which keeps on working on amendments.

The Foundation took part in preparation and editing of the materials of the Russian NGOs for the Universal periodic review on Russia at the UN Human Rights Council. The materials were prepared and sent to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights according to the procedures adopted by the Council. The texts are available here: <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/1040209.html> (in Russian) и <http://www.publicverdict.org/eng/articles/library/2040209.html> (in English). It is important that the document was thoroughly studied in the UN and its many points were reflected in their Summary prepared on the basis of the information received from different stakeholders, including Russian NGOs.

In 2008 the Foundation organized and conducted with colleagues from different regions a series of discussions on problem of reform of law enforcement system and what kind of contribution shall be made by Russian human rights NGOs in this process. In fall 2008 the Foundation jointly with the Russian section of the Amnesty International initiated a preparation of an analysis of the situation in law enforcement system and prospective of collaboration between police and human rights NGOs. 7 Russian NGOs participated in preparation of this analysis. Results of this work will be a basis for a discussion on future strategy of collaboration between police and NGOs with participation of representatives of Russian NGOs and specialists from Dutch Amnesty which planed on February 2009.

## • Sociological researches and distribution of their findings

In order to assess the scale of arbitrariness of the law enforcement bodies the Foundation initiates and conducts special surveys with the assistance of competent sociological institutes. Sociological researches also help us to be current in our knowledge of people's social wellbeing, attitudes towards law enforcement authorities, concerns and expectations in regard of police, to identify what needs to be changed and how in the way law enforcement personnel operates, to receive feedback from citizens served by the Public Verdict Foundation, to ensure legitimacy of the Foundation's proposals and recommendations

The PR department of the Foundation publicise the findings of sociological surveys initiated by the Foundation. They use standard forms such as press-conferences where the journalists are informed about the results of the research, press-releases and by the word of mouth (specialists of the department call journalists who write on the violations and abuses of law enforcement officers and tell the results). Besides the results are published in Informational and analytical bulletin of the Public Verdict Foundation.

In November-December the Foundation prepared a new sociological survey which was conducted by the specialists of the Levada Center. The topic of the survey was "The awareness of citizens of the work of the police". The survey was conducted in 92 cities of Russia. Its results will be presented at the press conference in February 2009 timed to 5 year anniversary of the Foundation. The survey results are available at the Foundation's web-site: <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/19022009.html>.

## • Information and PR activity

Legal efforts alone fail to be sufficient condition to enable citizens defend their rights independently, to surpass passivity of the population, and as a result to decrease the scale of arbitrariness of Russian law enforcement officials. It is necessary to develop information and PR activities, to let people know about the successful experience of protecting rights by legal means. Information work and public relations constitute one of the important dimensions of the work of the Foundation.

There are several interconnected directions of work of our PR department. Firstly, it is a routine informational and PR tracking of the cases executed by the Foundation and in cooperation with its regional partners. Secondly, it is an informational coverage of the research programs of the Foundation. Finally, it is work of the department in the framework of the publishing programs of the Foundation.

### Informational and PR coverage of the cases in execution of the Foundation

Over the last half year the Public Verdict Foundation provided informational support to all the cases executed by the foundation. The coverage of those cases which were submitted to the Foundation from regional organisations, was conducted in cooperation with the specialists from those partner organisations. During the period under review we initiated more then 800 publications in the federal and regional media (please see attached diagrams for details).

Apart from the standard work on the cases executed, the PR department of the Foundation paid much attention and devoted a lot of its resources to the informational support of the cases which correspond to the following criteria:

- High profile case of big social significance
- Journalists' interest in the case of the Foundation
- The Foundation has been working on the case and uses story package strategy
- Media is following the stage of the trial procedure

**The story package strategy** implies that starting work on the case, the PR department assesses informational and the PR potential of the case, defines the journalists and media who would be interested in the coverage of the event, and the authors who would write articles about the case, would follow the development of the situation and be interested in exclusive information held by the Foundation. Thus the Foundation creates a case "story" in the media. This strategy is very time-consuming as it implies constant communication with journalists, rather than standard distribution of press releases, however, it allows the information on the case to be brought to the public in the fullest possible form, firstly, thanks to the interest of the journalists, and secondly, because the logic of the story itself (to start the coverage from the beginning and later not to miss any change in the situation).

We initiated publications on such high profile cases as:

- "Case of Alexander Bychkov (Dryad)" - a murder of a hermit "Dryad" committed by Kostroma special police force officers and Kologriv policemen <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2008/06/25/497583.html>
- "Case of Alexander Schmidt" - an unlawful detainment of a 19-year old Tver resident <http://gzt.ru/incident/2008/03/24/220010.html>
- "Case of Mishik Sloyan" - a falsely-extracted confession case (Krasnodar krai) <http://skavkaz.rfn.ru/rnews.html?id=128403&cid=8>

- "Case of Oksana Osadchaya" – a beating of an underage girl from Novokusnetsk (Kemerovo oblast) by a policeman <http://www.kuzbassfm.ru/news/19264/>
- "Case of Amir Chebodayev" – an unlawful detainment and beating of a visually-handicapped resident of Abakan by policemen (Republic of Khakassia) <http://www.abakan-gazeta.ru/node/1205>
- The Sochi OMON case (attack of the children's sanatorium by the policemen, Krasnodar krai) <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc-y.aspx?DocsID=1041321> ,
- Bakanova case (organisation by the police officer of an escape of the detained thieves, Moscow) [http://www.strana.ru/doc\\_print.html?id=120515&cid=8](http://www.strana.ru/doc_print.html?id=120515&cid=8) ,
- Aplekayev and Darovskikh case (beating by policemen of two teenagers, Republic of Mari El) <http://mk.12rus.ru/List/18/4225/>
- Case of mass beating of young people by the local police in Dalnegorsk (Приморский край) <http://kp.ru/daily/24217/419515/print/> .

Among the media which the Foundation efficiently cooperated with over January-December 2008, there were "Moskovskiy Komsomolets", "Gazeta", "Kommersant", "Gudok", "Novye Izvestiya". The cooperation with "Izvestiya" was renewed.

### Cooperation with regional media

During the period the PR department was actively seeking for new contacts with regional media. During the missions to different regions (organised to find out the circumstances of the mass violations of human rights) we managed to establish new links and issued the materials on the Foundation's cases (our PR specialists prepared and sent to the journalists materials necessary for articles).

The work was conducted, for example, with such media as: "Komsomolskaya Pravda" (Primorskiy krai), "Dalnegorsk Novosti", "Vesti – Northern Caucasus", "Vremya" (1<sup>st</sup> channel, Krasnodar krai) <http://www.1tv.ru/newsvideo/130310> etc.

The Foundation's PR-specialists took part in missions to regions where human rights violations, committed by law-enforcement bodies, were registered, for example, to the village Nizhneye Makopse, Krasnodar krai as a part of public investigation of the case of an attack of the children's summer camp by Sochi special police force (OMON).

The Foundation's specialists provided informational coverage and PR support to the trial process of the Sochi OMON officers who participated in the attack of the "Druzhba" summer camp (federal and regional media released more than 20 publications).

The main tasks of the PR-specialists during the mission were to maintain contacts with the victims' advocate supported by the Foundation, get information from him after each court session and draw up a press release for the media. In addition, they consulted leaders and PR specialists of regional organisations participating in the work on the case on how to organise efficient PR support.

The informational support of the Sochi OMON case involved much communication and required significant work with journalists (both on the federal level and in Krasnodar krai). We cooperated with journalists from Radio "Svoboda" (Krasnodar krai), radio "Ekho Moskvy", newspaper "Kommersant South", "Novaya Gazeta" (Krasnodar krai), the news programme "Vremya" (1<sup>st</sup> channel), TV5 (saint-Petersburg) etc.

Besides, the work of the PR-specialists in the region involved interviews of the victims, and the preparation of press releases for the media.

- **Case of mass beating of teenagers in Dalnegorsk** (Primorskiy krai)

Our PR specialists kept the media informed about the Foundation's work as a part of legal support for the "Dalnegorsk case". They held discussions with the media representatives on the possibilities for further cooperation and coverage of the progress in the abovementioned case.

Besides, we prepared materials and had consultations with journalists of a number of printed media, like "Komsomolskaya Pravda-Primoriye". As a result this paper published an extended article on the case.

The most interesting publications initiated by the Foundation's PR department can be found following the link <http://www.strana.ru/doc.html?id=120707>; <http://kp.ru/daily/24217/419515/print/>

- **Case of a murder of the hermit "Dryad" in the Kologriv forest (Kostroma oblast)**

Over the period under review the Foundation informed the media about the outcomes of its requests submitted to the official bodies with aim to look into the legality of the special operation conducted by Kostroma OMON which resulted in the death of A. Bychkov, a hermit. Federal and regional media released around 10 publications.

The Foundation's PR specialists managed to establish contacts with the editor of the district paper "Kologriv corner" in order to maintain constant interest in the case and information about it.

The most interesting publications initiated by the Foundation's PR department can be found following the link <http://www.rg.ru/2008/07/02/vistrel.html>; <http://www.gazeta.ru/social/2008/06/30/2770434.shtml>

### **Informational and PR support of the sociological researches and analytical work of the Foundation's experts**

The Foundation pays much attention to the expert and research work on the topic of law-enforcement bodies. Our PR department informs the media and hence society of the results of this activities.

In March 2008 sociologists and experts of the Foundation presented during the press-conference to the public and journalists the results of the all-Russian survey elaborated by the Foundation "Russian public attitudes towards police reform". In total about 74% of citizens support the idea of reform. A full report on the survey is available from the Foundation's web-site at the section "Surveys" [http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/reform\\_police.html](http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/reform_police.html).

Apart from presenting the results of surveys to journalists, the Foundation also conducts round tables for the expert community.

- On the 10th of April 2008 human rights activists from 10 Russian NGOs took part in the round table "Police reform: main directions and principles of reforming" conducted by the Public Verdict Foundation. Experts discussed prospects of participation of NGOs in police reform, defined significant aspects and essence of reforms, worked out suggestions on public participation in the reform planning process.
- On the 25th of April the Carnegie Moscow Centre in association with the Public Verdict Foundation organised a round table on police reform. Discussions were focused on the results of the survey "Public attitudes towards police reform" conducted by the Public Verdict Foundation and Levada-Centre, suggestions on police reform and possibilities for public participation in this process. The participants of the round table emphasized that there are a lot of laws, decrees and other documents regulating the work of the police. They often contradict to each other and prevent to make the police's work transparent. Thus it is necessary to change and normalize the legal framework. The functions of the police should be optimized and clearly articulated. Besides, police reform should be implemented as a part of reorganisation of security services and court system in the broader context of administrative reform

In July the lawyers of the Foundation prepared an analytical work "the official malfeasance of policemen". The work was compiled on the basis of the cases executed by the Foundation. The PR department initiated more than 10 publications in the internet mass media. Analysis is available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/230608.html>.

Below is general information on results of informational and PR activity in 2008.

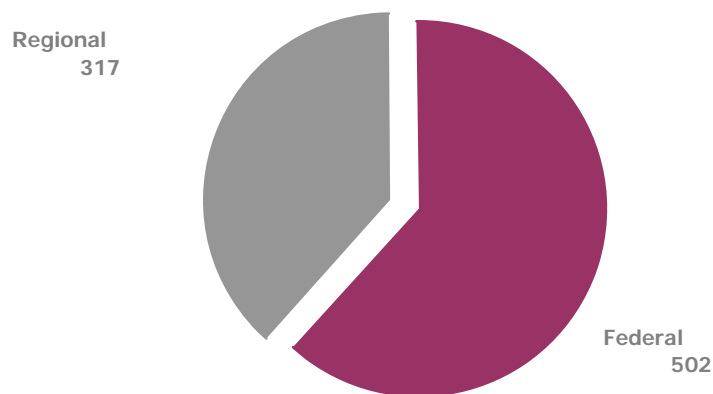
**Summary table. Statistics on publications initiated by the Public Verdict Foundation in 2008**

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>819</b>
Federal mass media	<b>502</b>
Regional mass media	<b>317</b>
TV	<b>16</b>
Internet	<b>508</b>
Printed mass media	<b>241</b>
Radio	<b>54</b>
With mention of the Foundation	<b>326</b>
Without mention of the Foundation	<b>493</b>

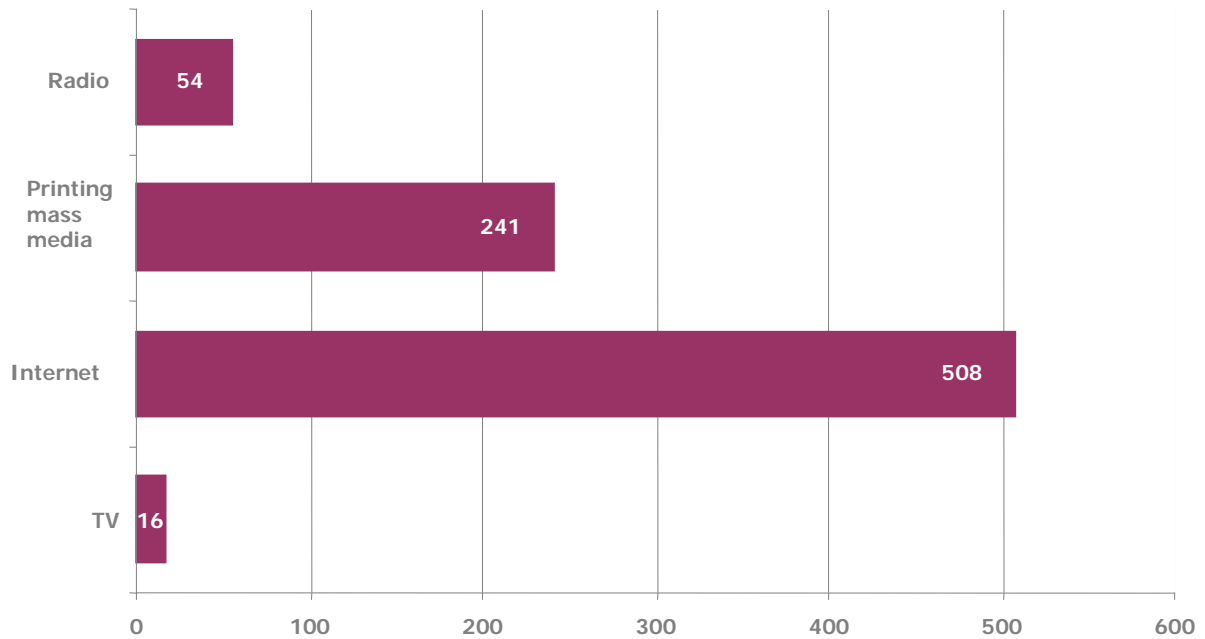
Comments:

- 1) In the statistics in the respect of mass media type originals of the materials as well as their repeats on Internet pages of sources were taken account. In particular, publications published in printed newspaper and the same publications published on web-sites of these newspapers were taken account. The reasons for this are that different versions of mass media have different audiences.
- 2) Repeats of publications were taken account, i.e. reprinting news in different Internet mass media.
- 3) Decrease of the number of publications in regional mass media in comparison with previous years is connected with those fact that monitoring of media publications was carried out only by PR department of the Foundation without participation of press-services of regional partners.

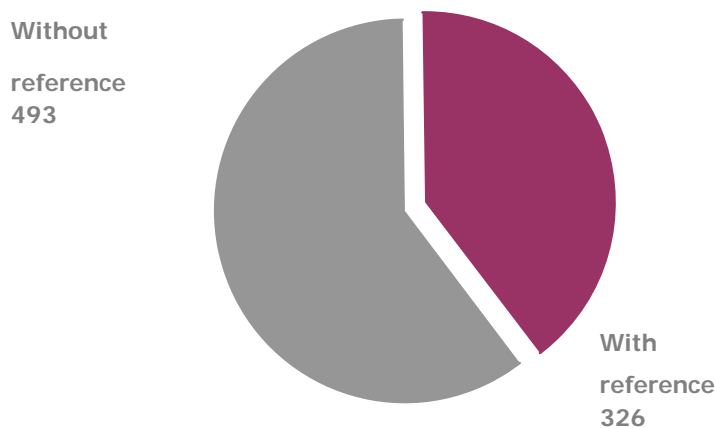
Picture 1: breakdown of publications in respect of mass media location



Picture 2: Breakdown of publications in respect of mass media type



Picture 3: Breakdown of publications in respect of the Foundation's mentioning



### Publishing programs

As a part of its publishing activities, the Foundation prepared and issued several publications:

- Two issues of the Informational and analytical bulletin
- Handbook "Legal standards of the investigation of torture cases in Russian and international law"
- Handbook "Psychosocial rehabilitation of the victims of arbitrariness and violence"
- Brochure "Joint mobile groups of human rights organisations: from Kostroma to Vladivostok. Documentaries"

The main topic of the fifth issue of the Informational and analytical bulletin is the problem of psycho-social assistance to victims of tortures. It also covers questions of compensations to victims, their payments/ non-payments in due time. The materials of the fifth issue are available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/bullet08.html>.

The last issue of the Informational and analytical bulletin (№6) is devoted to the 5 year anniversary of the Foundation. In this milestone issue we gathered materials on the directions of the Foundation's work, comments of experts on the results of the Foundation's work over these 5 years, expert survey of the leading human rights NGOs, working on the problem of current law-enforcement bodies, about human rights violations by law-enforcement bodies, as well as articles on the most important cases executed by the Foundation. The materials of the sixth issue are available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: [http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/bullet\\_ubiley.html](http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/bullet_ubiley.html).

The handbook "Legal standards of the investigation of torture cases in Russian and international law" includes a list of principles of an efficient investigation, as they are specified in the international and Russian legislature. The handbook's target audience is officers of the prosecution offices and investigative bodies of the Investigative committee at the General Prosecution Office. These international principles can be integrated into the Russian law-enforcement practice. The Foundation with the assistance of its partners intends to promote it. The foreword for the publication is written by the Russian Human Rights Ombudsman. The handbook is available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: [http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/broshura\\_buklet.html](http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/broshura_buklet.html).

In October the Foundation issued a practical guide "Psychosocial rehabilitation of the victims of arbitrariness and violence", which aims to tell about current thinking on psychic trauma and its repercussions, ways of interaction with victims and rehabilitation work. The practical guide is available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/kutuzova.html>.

In the end of 2008 the Foundation prepared the brochure "Joint mobile groups of human rights organisations: from Kostroma to Vladivostok. Documentaries". It tells about several most significant cases executed by the Public Verdict Foundation together with other human rights organisations in Russian regions. The brochure is based on the materials and documents of investigations conducted by the lawyers of the JMG. It is targeted at human rights activists, social researches, lawyers as well as ordinary citizens interested in human rights activities in today's Russia. The brochure is available in Russian at the Foundation's web-site: [http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/kostroma\\_vladivostok.html](http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/kostroma_vladivostok.html).

## Web-site of the Foundation

The Foundation's web-site has 2 main objectives:

- To inform users about the Foundation's activities,
- To inform users about the problem of arbitrariness in law-enforcement bodies.

The web-site's pages "the Foundation's News", "Announcements", "Help the victims", "Our supporters", "Our partners" as well as "Cases", "About us" and "Research" serve the first objective.

The second one is achieved through the sections "News", "Police", "Prosecution Office", "International adjudication", "Court", "Federal Security Service", as well as "Library", "Articles" and "Legislation".

## Principles of selection of the information

- The main newswire contains all news on the problem of arbitrariness. It is updated daily.
- The *section "Police"* includes news on the arbitrariness problem in the police: from corruption to the attitude of citizens towards the police.
- The *section "Prosecution office"* covers the crimes within the prosecution institution, as well as the problem of its reforming and relations between prosecution offices and the police.
- The *page "International adjudication"* embraces information on the events connected to and decisions taken by international bodies in regard to Russia in the sphere of arbitrariness in law-enforcement bodies, as well as framework decisions on human rights in Russia.
- The *page "Court"* includes information on human rights cases heard in court and on verdicts delivered to the law-enforcement officers.
- The *section "Federal Security Service"* has information about arbitrariness within this structure, relations between the FSS and other law-enforcement bodies and courts, as well as the influence the FSS has on legislature.

- The *section "Library"* provides access to the documents and analytical information which we find important, reflecting the problems of law-enforcement bodies or suggesting solutions to them. The "Library" is enriched both with the Foundation's materials and reports published by other organisations.
- The *section "Articles"* contains "programme" texts. One can find here interviews with the main field actors, for example, Minister of Internal Affairs Rashid Nurgaliyev, as well as expert comments.
- The *section "Legislation"* reflects the alterations in the legislation in regard to law-enforcement bodies and those which could potentially have implications on the sphere of human rights.
- The *section "the Foundation's News"* covers the activities of the Foundation and partner organisations, and is therefore similar to the contents of the section "Announcements"
- The *pages "Help the victims", "Our supporters", "Our partners" and "About us"* present statistical information giving a general picture of the Foundation's work.
- The *section "Cases"* describe the cases which are or were executed by the foundation. The information is updated following the development of the situation.
- The *section "Research"* provides analytical data and results of the studies conducted by the Foundation. In addition, in the top right hand side corner there are links to the three latest analytical papers of the Foundation.

"Rehabilitation" and "Victims' stories" are sections launched in 2008, which at first glance do not correspond to our declared objectives. However, they are to reflect the process of reintegration of the victims back into the society, because we are involved both in the prevention of arbitrariness and the rehabilitation of victims. The *section "Rehabilitation"* contains recommendations of psychologists working with the victims of arbitrariness. The *section "Victims' stories"* gives the floor to victims themselves.

#### Quantification of the information

We do not quantify the information on the web-site, however on average about 5-7 pieces of news are published there daily, 1-2 of which are the Foundation's news. Hence, as a result of 5 years' work we have created and are maintaining a unique data base on arbitrariness in the law-enforcement bodies, which can be segmented in accordance to one's demands. This database could be useful for both field journalists and analysts. In the Yandex citation index the Foundation's web-site remains in the ten top human rights web-sites.

#### Visiting statistics

Thanks to the promotional campaign held at the beginning of the year, in the first 6 months of 2008 our web-site's visiting statistics had significantly improved. Later it gradually went down to its normal level seasonally adjusted.

The second half of the year saw a decline of the number of web-site's visitors due to the end of the promotion campaign and both technical and seasonal reasons.

Here are the visiting statistics provided by Rambler.

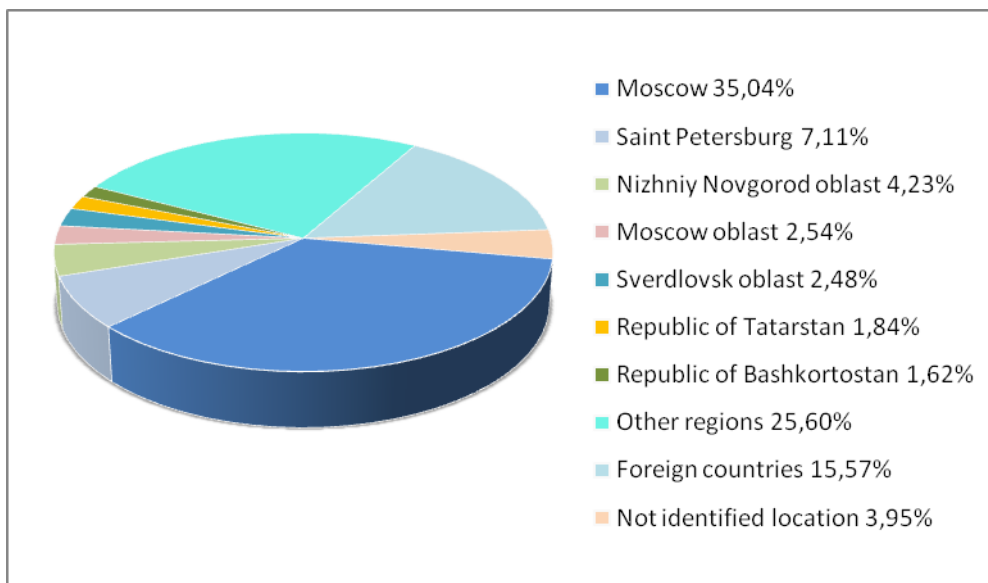
Statistics on visiting of the web-site in 2008			
Period	Unique Addresses (hosts)	Visitors	Page views (hits)
January	7612	7679	16411
February	10176	10242	20292
March	13701	13840	27732
April	4666	4823	11383
May	3819	3829	9999
June	2763	2798	7417

July	2671	2720	7899
August	3571	3550	8305
September	2225	2245	5515
October	2883	2950	7346
November	2824	2867	6373
December	3463	3495	7293

### Visitors

The number of regular visitors to the web-site's main page, i.e. "core audience", over the period under review amounted to about 600 users, which is slightly more than before.

Geographically our audience is spread as follows



### Where do they come from?

The majority of the visitors find the web-site through search engines as was the case before. Yandex tops the list, followed by Google. Mail.ru and Rambler share third and fourth place. Yahoo and MSN complete the top list.

### What are they interested in?

Usually visitors look for information on the Public Verdict Foundation and high-profile cases executed by the Foundation and its partners. A much smaller share of visitors come to our page as a result of search for topical issues, which makes a good sign in our opinion, because it proves that most of our visitors are not casual ones looking randomly for information on hot topics publicized by media, but those taking a personal interest in it.

- **Contribution to the strengthening of the regional partner human rights organisations: seminars, internships, consultations**

Experience shows that the regional presence of an organization working on the problems of law enforcement agencies' arbitrariness promotes more efficient investigation of such cases and decrease in the level of abusive practices. The

Foundation continues to pay high attention to strengthening of partner organizations and future improving the professional level of their representatives.

In 2008 the cooperation with regional partner organisations on legal and informational support to the cases on arbitrariness of law enforcement officers was continued. Regular cooperation comprises consultations and participation in the preparation of the procedural documents. We have the most efficient cooperation with such organisations as "Person and Law" (Yoshkar-Ola, Republic of Mari El), Interregional Committee against Torture (the Nizhny Novgorod), the Ryazan Society "Memorial", the South Siberian Human Rights Center, Komi republic human rights commission "Memorial", Human rights movement "Osa" and human rights organisation "Committee 29" (Abakan, Republic of Khakassia), Novorossiysk human rights center. The Foundation also cooperates with the Perm regional human rights center, the Krasnoyarsk committee for the protection of human rights and the organisation "Mothers for the protection of the rights of the detained, suspects and convicts" (Krasnodar).

Apart from consultations the Foundation kept on providing the opportunities for **internships and educational seminars** for representatives of regional partner NGOs.

**On April 3-5, 2008** the Foundation conducted the training on practical aspects of work with the European court of Human Rights. Main stages for consideration of applications in the Court and procedures of implementation of the Court's decisions were analyzed during the training. The training participants were got to know about experience on work on cases under different articles of the European Convention. Discussed material aspects of the protection from torture and cruel treatment, effective investigations of death and torture cases, practical aspects of preparation an application and accompanying a case in the European Court. Olga Shepeleva, the Foundation's expert, lawyer and Oleg Anischik, barrister became the trainers of this event.

The representatives of 8 organizations from 7 Russian regions took part in the training: The Republic of Khakassia (Osa Human Rights Movement); Mariy-El Republic (*Man and Law* Organization in Yoshkar-Ola); Krasnodarsky region (Krasnodar Organization "Mothers in Defense of the Rights of Those Arrested, Under Investigation and Convicted", Novorossiysk Human Rights Committee); Kemerovo region (South Siberian Human Rights Center); Nizhny Novgorod region (Interregional Committee against Torture); Ryazan region (*Memorial Society*); Chita region (Chita Human Rights Center).

**In May 2008** a senior specialist of the Department participated as a convenor in the seminar "Particularities of the work of a PR-specialist in a human rights organisation". Seminar was held in Kemerovo oblast in association with a partner organisation of the Foundation. Participants were specialists of informational and PR-departments of organisations from Novokuznetsk, Kemerovo, Prokopyevsk, Kisilyovsk and Myski.

**In December 2008** the Foundation held two seminars. The first seminar was devoted to "The most acute problems of the appliance of the current legislation and ways to solve them". Seminar training specialists present in the form of professors of one of the Moscow institution of higher education, practicing advocates. Participants of the seminar included lawyers of the partner organisations and associated advocates. During the seminar the trainers gave an analysis of the Instructions for the procedure of the consideration of citizens' petitions and their reception in the system of the RF prosecution office and its investigative committee and gave practical advice on their usage. In addition, they discussed a number of terms of the Constitutional court of the RF, the usage of which can raise the efficiency of the restoration of infringed rights when appealing to prosecution offices, investigative bodies and court.

The second seminar was organised for the directors and specialists of the informational and PR departments of non-partisan and human rights organisations of Russia. The seminar was devoted to the acute problem of all NGOs, that of a secure distribution of information. The seminar was conducted by a director of the Russian office of the International centre for non-commercial law Daria Miloslavskaya. The seminar gathered representatives of the following organisations: Human rights organisation "Committee of 29", Human rights movement "Osa" (Republic of Khakassia), Organisation "The Individual and the Law" (Republic of Mari El), Chita human rights centre (Zabaikalskiy krai), Committee for the protection of human rights (Krasnoyarsk krai), Perm regional human rights centre (Perm krai), Ryazan society "Memorial"

(Ryazan oblast) and organisation "Mothers for the protection of the rights of the detained, suspects and convicts" (Krasnodar krai). The participants had two days to study the particularities of the work of the informational and PR departments of human rights organisations. The seminar focused on the following questions:

- Changes in the Russian legislature which have an impact on the work of the media;
- Possibilities of protecting the source of information from a legal and ethical point of view;
- Defense in the court of the right for information, honor, dignity and private life.

Apart from the consultation work, the Foundation continued the program of internships. In July-October the Foundation hosted five interns from regional partner organisations: the South Siberian human rights center (Novokuznetsk, Kemerovo oblast), the Human Rights movement "Osa" (Abakan, Republic of Khakassia), the organisation "Committee of 29" (Abakan, Republic of Khakassia), the organisation "Person and Law" (Yoshkar-Ola, Republic of Mari El). The interns learned the methods and techniques of the defence of victims and principles of analytical work on cases (as a part of the internship in the legal department of the Foundation), as well as how to prepare informational materials and communicate with journalists, learned the techniques necessary for a human rights organisation's informational work (as a part of the internship in the PR department of the Foundation).