



## OMCT and GMEDIA<sup>1</sup>:

### Launch of new initiative on media empowerment and torture

Geneva, 29 October 2012

Today the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) and GMedia are launching a new initiative of empowering journalists to report on torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

*'Journalists play a vital role in fostering the global rejection of torture. Reaching out to them is essential if we want to bring UN anti-torture standards home', said **Gerald Staberock**, Secretary General of the OMCT. 'For too long processes such as those before the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) have been the province of a selected few. We need to make them more accessible, understood and raise the interest of journalists in them from countries around the world that are examined by the Committee', he added.*

*'We are supporting journalists to understand human rights standards and mechanisms, including on torture. This partnership brings media and human rights expertise together in order to build successively a community of journalists committed against torture and serious human rights violations', said **Francesco Mochetta**, Co-founder and President of Gmedia.*

Over the coming years both organizations will reach out to journalists reporting on the issue of torture. As part of this initiative they will invite and train journalists on international human rights standards in parallel to the hearings of UN human rights mechanisms, notably the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT).

The first training of this sort will take place from October 29-November 3, 2012 including journalists from Mexico. The Committee Against Torture, the UN's authoritative body against torture, will examine Mexico's anti-torture policies this week. The OMCT and members of the SOS torture network (Human Rights Centre Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights and the National Network of Human Rights Civil Society Organisations "All the rights for all") submitted three reports to the Committee documenting the increasing escalation of violence, including acts of torture, that are committed in a climate of impunity. A public briefing of these reports will also take place on Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, at 6.30, at the Maison des Associations (Café-Resto les Savoie), Geneva.

#### **For further information please contact:**

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<sup>1</sup> Gmedia is a Geneva based NGO whose mission is to empower media in furthering civil society goals on human rights and democracy including torture. To learn more about Gmedia visit [www.gmediacenter.net](http://www.gmediacenter.net).