

# Global Transition Programme - Implications for Europe

## Background

At the outset, I would like to thank Lars for his leadership in coordinating the process resulting in the document produced by colleagues in Europe (sections, EIO and ECA) in November 2011: *Moving Closer to the Ground: European Regional Space Roadmap until 2014*. This process has created much greater synergies between all the different stakeholders within Amnesty working in and on Europe and Central Asia and the document offers a useful point of departure to move forward.

## Why now?

It is important for us to use the coming months to understand and agree the implications of the Global Transition Programme for Europe. There are many reasons why the timing is appropriate:

1. Europe is, and will continue to remain, the strongest part of AI in the foreseeable future. The EU and key governments in Europe have strong leverage over global decision making. The influence we have over decision makers in Europe is a powerful asset for AI globally that we should strengthen;
2. It is clear that at least for the next decade Central Asia (Russia-linked) and (to a lesser extent) CEE will be a hotspot for human rights violations;
3. Given our long track record of working on these countries, we have the ability to make an even bigger difference in improving the human rights conditions of this region;
4. There are many reasons for this but with some notable exceptions, our success in building a public constituency of support in CEE (members, activists, supporters) has been limited. At the same time, there is a likelihood of a resurgence of people power in many of these countries;
5. We have just completed a review of our Russia work and it doesn't make sense to implement the recommendations in isolation of our work in the wider region;
6. This is also true for our Turkey expansion plan which is at an advanced stage;
7. In Western Europe, where the strongest and oldest sections of AI are located, some of them are carrying out research. We need to be clear why we are not doing this more evenly; equally we need to establish a system of having stronger coherence and quality control with the IS;
8. As we put the Resource Allocation Mechanism and country prioritisation into place, it is essential that we align all our resources within a single framework. The current ERS arrangement will have to be factored into this;
9. We would not like to delay the new global model/IS structure coming into effect; once the Operations Directors and Regional (Hub) Directors are hired, all staff working on a region across campaigns, communications, research and advocacy should operate within the commonly agreed system of accountability.

## Process:

If we don't agree that we can do much better in terms of both supporting rights-holders in their struggle and in building Amnesty International's public constituency in CEE/Central Asia, then we don't have a common starting point. If we do agree, then while the ERS paper has some very useful analysis and options that merit attention, I believe we need a much deeper consideration of the issues before making any decisions. The discussions so far have been constrained by an excessive focus on hub location without going back to the drawing board on the fundamentals. We are all of one mind that the CEE work will have great benefits in working in close collaboration with the Brussels office and the stronger sections in Europe and some form of a Regional Management Team for Europe will be very beneficial. But we also need to acknowledge that CEE and Central Asia have specific needs which are quite different. This does not in any way undermine the very valuable work done to date by teams in EIO, ECA and ERS in creating an integrated European approach.

I am therefore proposing that we take a more critical look at the challenges facing AI in the region and come up with an integrated and ambitious set of recommendations on the way forward which is also validated by independent external expert/s. In doing this, it is crucial that we don't allow the views of rights holders to be drowned out by our most vocal current stakeholders.

The May 2012 EDF could be the kick off point for this process with an update to the Chairs Forum in June. A draft report should be ready by July for discussion at the GMT and the final report by October 2012 for the EDF.

The questions that need to be addressed are:

1. What is our projection of the human rights situation in Europe/Central Asia (broken down by sub-region if possible) for the next five years? Where are the major human rights hotspots likely to be and what is Amnesty International's comparative advantage?
2. What do we want to achieve as Amnesty International in the region to meet the ISP deliverables by December 2015? The IS ECA and Movement Building teams, and the EIO, will provide their inputs in advance.
3. Amnesty International is currently investing approximately £4 m. a year in Europe (£2 m. in London, £1.5 m. in Brussels and £1 m. in the sections and structures in CEE), internationally in different ways. If we had a zero-based budgeting approach to invest this £20 m. for the next five years to have greatest sustainable impact through campaigning, research, media/communications, movement building and advocacy in CEE, how should we allocate our resources?
4. What kind of capabilities do we need to deliver the best impact, and how should they be organised? Could Moscow be used as a location to build up regional capacity to support our work in its sphere of influence? How are our key comparators organised in CEE/Central Asia? Is the regional hub model the best way to proceed in order to have:
  - Faster response (including in crisis)

- Stronger partnerships with rights-holders and people's organizations
  - Improved quantity and quality of research outputs
  - Better support to sections and structures in line with our strategic goals
  - Cross-programme working
  - Improved credibility, legitimacy and public constituency of support
  - Increased capacity for research, campaigning, media, advocacy and movement building
5. How should we move forward in terms of sequencing and phasing of the implementation of the new model?

**Salil**

**16 April 2012**

***This note has been substantially revised based on discussions with the ERS Steering Committee on April 13, 2012.***