

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ACTIVITY OF AHC DURING 2010

1. Greeting by AHC Executive Director Ms. Vjollca Meçaj

2. Vision and mission of the organization

- Vision

Albanian non-profit organizations, as important actors in a democratic society, have played and continue to play a significant role in the country's democratization process. They particularly sensitize citizens about their rights sanctioned in the Constitution and in international acts applicable in the Republic of Albania, monitor the activity of the public administration to evaluate its respect for human rights, and support and protect persons whose such rights have been violated.

As the country continues to take forward steps toward the democratization and European integration, the fulfillment of requirements for procedures for visa liberalization with the EU and the submission of the request to obtain the candidate country status, demonstrates a political situation that provides for greater guarantees also in terms of increasingly better implementation of human rights and freedoms. Nevertheless, various entities in the country as well as reports by international organizations that have monitored and assessed the sanctioning and respect for human rights in the country, have concluded that in spite of achievements, the country has still a lot to do in this regard.

In this context, as one of the country's oldest organizations,¹ the Albanian Helsinki Committee has continually made its marked contribution toward the sanctioning and protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms. This organizations believes that Albanian NPOs, and AHC as one of them, possess the necessary capacities and can play an important role in improving the standards of human rights and freedoms in Albania as well as in ensuring rigorous respect for them. It also believes that by combining the methods of work and types of activities, monitoring compliance with national and international obligations with regard to these rights, helping strengthen the rule of law and standing by vulnerable individuals or groups of individuals, excellent results are possible to achieve.

¹ AHC was founded on December 16, 1990

AHC is confident that through work and commitment, the Albanian society, staying loyal to the principles of a democratic state, can prosper and guarantee its citizens of a free, dignified, and discrimination-free life, whereby sanctioned rights are a live reality. In this context, AHC has set forth as its vision:

Civil society organizations can and should play an important role to improve the environment for respect for human rights in Albania and to improve respect for these rights.

As a result, AHC will continue to play in the future an active role in the Albanian society and by acting as:

- **a promoter and protector of human rights;**
- **a monitor of compliance with national and international obligations with regard to human rights and freedoms by Albanian state structures;**
- **a partner in dialogue with state authorities in order to enhance the effectiveness of respect for human rights;**
- **an expert organization that provides know-how, insights, and expertise with regard to human rights.**

- *Mission*

AHC's mission is: ***contribute to increasingly better respect for human rights and strengthened rule of law, in compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, according to standards of a democratic society, international acts applicable for the country, and legislation in force.***

AHC's mandate is ***to lobby and monitor, proactively and reactively***, and together with other civil society actors and international organizations, ***to support the fulfillment of standards*** for fundamental rights and freedoms; ***sensitize Albanian citizens and all relevant actors*** about these rights, by offering ***training and informative seminars, free legal aid for victims whose rights have been violated***; increase accountability of the public administration, ***through reporting publicly facts that speak to violations of human rights, press conferences, and public statements***; help the enforcement of laws through contributions to ***increase the capacities of the public administration***, by providing ***training and informative seminars***; and to offer ***legal critique and expertise on legal and institutional reforms***, for the ***improvement of legislation*** and its enforcement in practice; ***prepare reports or alternative reports regarding the enforcement of human rights***

in Albania and the region. AHC devotes significant effort to further strengthening its own internal institutional and human resources.

- Values of the organization

Pursuant to its mission, AHC remains loyal to the following principles and values:

- AHC is an organization that strives to realize the fulfillment of its mission through strategic programs, which pave the way for and enable the fulfillment of the organization's mission and vision.
- AHC is one of the organizations of marked values in respect for democratic principles, and in its ethical, principled, and politically impartial stance in promoting human rights, by assessing issues from the standpoint of the civil society.
- AHC is an organization that believes in values such as: impartiality; integrity; commitment; increasing professionalism; positive ambition; passion for work; transparency in its activity, achieved results and findings from its monitoring missions.
- AHC's human resources are completed by a network of seven pro-active correspondents based in different districts of the country. This network supplies the organization with information, experts, and monitors who report on a wide variety of issues and cases, in accordance with AHC objectives.
- The Albanian Helsinki Committee maintains strong relations with counterpart organizations, in the country and abroad, and together we lobby for and promote important human rights issues.



3. Focus of work during 2010

(Annual priorities selected on the basis of the organization's strategy for 2008-2010)

For the realization of objectives set forth in the AHC's missions and vision, the strategic goals for 2010 were:

1. Contribute to the development of legislation and institutional reforms with a view to the sanctioning and increasingly better respect for human rights and freedoms, in a society where vulnerable groups are not discriminated against.
2. Contribute to the improvement of the right to elect and be elected.
3. Promote free legal aid and increase citizens' access to the justice system.
4. Contribute to improving the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty, in accordance with sanctioned rights and accepted international standards.
5. Promote respect for the rights of Albanian emigrants and returned persons to Albania.
6. Expand cooperation with other NGOs active in the area of human rights, in and out of the country, to protect and better respect human rights in Albania and throughout the world.

4. Issues addressed and results during 2010

2010 was the year of the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the founding of AHC. This jubilee was an extra motive to increase the pace of work and for greater engagement of the organization to carry out its duties. AHC took upon itself and realized a series of projects, listed below, whose objective coincided with the objectives of its strategy but also kept in mind coherent developments in the political, economic, and social life of the country, as well as the priorities of donors that the organization collaborated with.

The outcome of AHC's activity for 2010 is satisfactory; the duties we took upon ourselves have been realized and financial spending for this purpose were conducted in compliance with the requirements of the projects, legislation in force, and the specific requirements of donors.

This annual report presents the issues that were the target of our work, the problems we found, the solutions that were offered, our successes and efforts to improve the situation and the results.

In its activity during 2010, AHC realized new achievements in terms of promoting and protecting the fundamental human rights and freedoms of citizens, particularly with regard to protection against discrimination, the protection of the right to access to justice, and the right for due legal process, the protection of the physical properties and moral integrity of persons. Our activities impacted the improvement of the situation of the protection and implementation of citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly those deprived of their liberty, and persons found in the most difficult of situations. We carried out all of our activity in the framework of close cooperation with other civil society organizations and various public structures, in and out of the country, which boosted the impact of AHC's action and reputation.

To this end, the following work methods and intervention tools were employed: proactive monitoring; study of the situation and reporting on encountered violations; their public denouncement; lobbying and advocacy for improvement and increasingly better respect for human rights and freedoms; training and qualifications for public structures working with persons deprived of their liberty; training of AHC's own staff and collaborators; legal critique and expertise; awareness activities; participation in dialogue round tables and networking with

civil society subjects, based on joint interests; addressing concrete cases for review in courts; etc.

The organization staff, our correspondent in the districts, experts and observers who have collaborated with the organization for years, were engaged in the implementation of the projects we have undertaken.

During 2010 as well, the organization showed care to ensure an increase in continued qualification of the staff, correspondents, and collaborators, in order to always improve the fulfillment of the organization's duties; we also paid attention to improving their work conditions. Several staff members participated in training programs and seminars, in and out of the country, to build their capacities in terms of planning, budgeting, and monitoring project results; increasing knowledge in the area of human rights; verifying situations and drawing conclusions with regard to the implementation of policies and strategies drafted by state structures, etc.

A budget of 206.647,12 Euro or 28.676.421 Lek, mainly donations by various donors who supported the implementation of our projects, was spent to carry out the organization's activities. At the end of this report, you may find detailed information about donations to AHC, actual spending, and evaluations of such spending upon conclusion of auditing.

Below please find summarized information about the projects and activities carried out by AHC during 2010. They are grouped according to the organization's strategic goals for this year.

► Strategic goal of the organization: *Contribute to the development of legislation and institutional reforms with a view to the sanctioning and increasingly better respect for human rights and freedoms, in a society where vulnerable groups are not discriminated against*

◀ Projects and activities carried out for this purpose:

I.
**“INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE NEW LAW ON
PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION”**

Purpose of the project

Improvement of legislation and other mechanisms for protection against discrimination.

Main objectives of the project

1. Lobbying and advocacy with the main actors responsible for the approval and implementation of the new law “On protection against discrimination;”
2. Increasing the awareness of public structures and citizens on the standards of the new law and creating the foundations for its correct implementation in practice.

Conducted activities:

1. Raising awareness on the need to draft and approve the law “On protection against discrimination,” offering direct expertise on the draft and active participation in the coalition for protection against discrimination, together with other civil society actors and international organizations.
2. Drafting and publishing an informative leaflet on the law “On protection against discrimination” called ‘*All equal before the law*’ and the manual ‘*On protection against discrimination*’ to help citizens.
3. Conducting 8 open awareness-raising seminars about the law “On protection against discrimination” with the participation of high school students and teachers, as well as students and lecturers of law and social sciences schools in Tiranë, Vlorë, Shkodër, and Korçë.
4. Organization of a regional conference “On protection against discrimination,” aiming at sensitizing state authorities and the public on the situation of discrimination in Albania and beyond in the region, as well as finding ways to improve the work of responsible structures for the enforcement of the law and a reduction of this phenomenon.

Results achieved in the context of this project include:

- Approval of the Law No. 10221, dated 04.02.2010 ‘On protection against discrimination’ and establishment of the Institution of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination;
- 756 students, teachers, and lecturers were sensitized about protection against discrimination and became familiar with three informative materials about the phenomenon of discrimination and legal standards for protection against it;

- Collaboration was established between AHC and the Institution of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination and there was successful interaction toward drafting the internal regulations of this institution.
- An interaction network was established among public institutions and non-profit organizations for protection against discrimination.

Implementation period: January 2010 - June 2010

Funded by: Civil Rights Defenders

Funding amount: **21,000 Euro**

II.

“IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW ON PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION”

Purpose of the project

Improvement of the situation for protection against discrimination in Albania.

Main objectives of the project

1. Increasing the awareness of students of social sciences and law schools, as well as of students and teachers of high schools regarding the law “On protection against discrimination;”
2. Further improvement of the functioning of the Institution of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination.

Conducted activities:

1. Lobbying and sensitization of the main actors responsible for the approval of sublegal acts in support of the Institution of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination.
2. Reprint and dissemination of the leaflet “*All equal before the law*” and the manual “*On protection against discrimination;*”
3. Conduct of 6 awareness-raising seminars with high school students and teachers as well as students and lecturers of law and social sciences faculties in Fier, Korçë, Elbasan regarding the phenomenon of discrimination and legal standards for protection against it.

Achieved results:

- Further sensitization of public institutions and the society in general on issues related to discrimination;
- 300 students, teachers, and lecturers were informed about protection against discrimination;
- Reprint of the informative leaflet “*All equal before the law*” and the manual “*Understanding and better implementing the law ‘On protection against discrimination,’*” and their dissemination to interested subjects.

Implementation period: October 2010 - December 2010

Funded by: Civil Rights Defenders

Funding amount: 22,000 Euro

III.**INCREASING NPO’S CAPACITIES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND REPRESENTATION OF DISCRIMINATION CASES****Purpose of the project:**

Promotion of respect for the right to non-discrimination, in accordance with the legal framework in force, through increasing the capacities of organizations offering free legal services in this area.

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Increasing the professional capacities of 4 NPOs and the Institution of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination on the identification and representation of cases before relevant structures, judicial and administrative, according to law.
- 2) Increasing the capacities of jurists, representatives of public institutions and the civil society on understanding and addressing cases of violations of the right to non-discrimination.

Conducted activities:

- 1) Training of trainers with employees of 4 organizations offering free legal services in Tirana, on “Identifying discrimination cases and their representation in front of administrative and judicial bodies.”
- 2) Four training courses organized in Tiranë, Vlorë, Shkodër and Korçë, to build civil society capacities regarding the legal framework on protection against discrimination and practical skills on addressing discrimination cases.
- 3) Organization of a visit to Stockholm, Sweden, with the participation of 4 organizations offering free legal services and the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination to obtain positive experiences on legal protection for victims of discrimination and the organization of work in this regard. During the visit, an informative meeting was held in the CRD offices in Stockholm with Swedish civil society representatives to discuss about “The situation of human rights and the rule of law in Albania,” where the AHC Executive Director presented an overview of the human rights situation in Albania.

Achieved results:

- Raised professional capacities of 17 jurists of NPOs and the staff of the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination, which work on offering free legal services, with regard to practical and theoretical issues of the identification and address of discrimination cases.
- Increased knowledge of 77 representatives of the civil society in Shkodër, Korçë, Vlorë and Tiranë on the legal framework on non-discrimination and practical knowledge regarding the identification of discrimination cases.
- The civil society and Swedish media were familiarized with the situation of human rights in Albania.

Implementation period October 2010 – March 2011
Funded by: Civil Rights Defenders
Funding amount: 15,000 Euro

IV.

IMPROVING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE RULE OF LAW (Legal Clinic IV)

Main purpose of the project

Further improvement of the functioning of the rule of law and the situation of human rights in Albania.

Objectives:

1. Conduct of lobbying and advocacy activities and offering legal expertise on the improvement of legislation that guarantees better respect for human rights.

Achieved results:

- Offering remarks and concrete suggestions for the improvement of draft laws and various by-laws such as the Law “*On social welfare and services,*” “*On pardons,*” “*On public financial inspections,*” “*On protection of the rights of the child,*” “*On pre-university educational system in Albania,*” and by-laws “*On the general regulations of prisons,*” submitted for review and approval in the Council of Ministers, and their presentation to the Government and relevant Parliamentary Committees.

► Strategic objective of the organization: *Promote free legal aid and increase citizens’ access to the justice system.*

◄ Projects implemented for this purpose:

I.**IMPROVING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE RULE OF LAW (Legal Clinic IV)****Main purpose of the project**

Further improvement of the functioning of the rule of law and the situation of human rights in Albania.

Objectives of the project:

2. Identification of needs in the framework of reform in the justice system and using pressure to improve the functioning of this system, with a view to improving the situation of human rights.
3. Increase of citizens’ access to benefit free legal aid and increase of awareness among state institutions about respect for human rights.

Conducted activities:

- Preparation and publication of the organization's strategic plan for the period 2011 – 2012.
- Training of 16 AHC observers on the methodology of monitoring the judicial process and monitoring 310 hearing sessions at the Serious Crimes Court of First Instance, the Tirana Judicial District Court, the Appeals Court of Tiranë and Durrës, the High Court, and the Constitutional Court, for the purpose of observing aspects of the regularity of judicial processes.
- Conduct of a round table discussion with parties interested in the findings, conclusions, and recommendations prepared by AHC following the monitoring carried out in the mentioned courts.
- Organization of a press conference and public reaction, through 6 statements and press releases, on the malfunctioning of the justice system and the need for improvement in this regard.
- Informing citizens about their rights and the legal services offered by AHC, through the publication and dissemination of 5,000 pocket calendars, the production and dissemination of pins with the AHC logo, and other advertising materials.
- Handling 410 complaints administered by AHC's legal services; AHC provided 191 legal counsels, 378 interventions with various state institutions, 248 cases of on-site verifications of complaints. The district correspondents' network also addressed a considerable number of complaints.
- Conduct of 27 sporadic monitoring missions in prison and pre-trial detention institutions. The encountered violations, as well as AHC recommendations on improving the situation were addressed to responsible institutions and their superior bodies.
- Reaction through 6 press statements to cases of serious human rights violations.²
- We have represented 3 judicial cases at the Constitutional Court, through which we have requested that the constitutionality of the following laws be examined, "*On the cleanliness of the figure of senior state administration functionaries and elected persons,*"³ "*On the prevention of and fight against*

² Refer to the list of statements issued by AHC during 2010, attached to this report.

³ The Constitutional Court, by means of decision no. 9 (March 2010) accepted AHC's request to invalidate this law as incompatible with the Constitution.

organized crime through preventive measures on assets,”⁴ “On some amendments to the law on the return and compensation of property.”

- We have legally represented some sensitive cases in the context of the implementation of standards ratified by the Republic of Albania of decisions of the Court of Strasbourg, or in cases when the change of judicial practices created in contravention of the law has been requested, such as: the case of juvenile E.H. to request respect for his right as a victim of the civilian aspect of the international abduction of the juvenile and his return to his mother in the United Kingdom; the case Lika & Laska in order to push for the execution of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights; the judicial case of citizen V.R. at the Elbasan Judicial District Court, with regard to objecting to the unjust cessation of the penal case in which she was the damaged party; the case of citizen L.L on the revocation and change of the medical remand measure issued by the court “Compulsory Medication” and compensation for his unjust imprisonment.
- Assisting the English Law Firm in defending Albanian citizen F.K. to object to the request for his extradition to Albania.
- Conduct of monitoring in 8 municipalities (Tiranë, Shkodër, Kukës, Elbasan, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastër and Korçë) to assess citizens’ access to local government bodies (right to information, freedom of speech, participation in municipal council meetings, addressing citizens’ complaints, etc.). At the conclusion of the monitoring, the conclusions and relevant recommendations were presented to the local government bodies and reflected in a report of AHC.
- Monitoring mental health institutions in Vlorë, Elbasan, Shkodër, Tiranë, Korçë, Berat, Gjirokastër and Kukës, to assess the situation of respect for the patients’ rights and the general conditions in these institutions. After completion of the monitoring, conclusions and relevant recommendations were submitted to representatives of the monitored institutions and reflected in an AHC report.
- Initiation of joint initiatives with civil society actors such as addressing an open letter to the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination to vote in favor of including LGBT persons in the resolution on extra-judicial executions.
- Conduct of 6 sensitizing events on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the European Convention of Human Rights, the International Day of Children’s Rights, and the International Day in support of Victims of Torture.

⁴ By means of decision no. 4 (February 2011), the Constitutional Court rejected AHC’s request to invalidate this law as incompatible with the Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights.

- Conduct of 5 forums in cooperation with the Film and Multimedia Academy “Marubi” on the occasion of the Annual Human Rights Film Festival. The forums were organized in some high schools and in prison no. 313.
- Commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the AHC and the award of prizes to human rights activists.

Results of the Project:

1. The media and the domestic and international public opinion have been sensitized about concrete cases of human rights violations through 14 press statements and releases, on the situation of human rights in Albania and concrete violations in this regard.
2. There is greater transparency in the activity of the courts and the review of cases submitted by citizens has been improved through:
 - Monitoring their activity (310 hearing sessions in the Serious Crimes Court of First Instance, the Tirana Judicial District Court, the Appeals Court of Tiranë and Durrës, the High Court, and the Constitutional Court)
 - Making public the conclusions of the monitoring of court activity and issues related to their malfunctioning as resulting from the monitoring
 - Increasing pressure on competent state authorities regarding issues found in the judicial system.
3. The situation of citizens’ fundamental human rights and freedoms has improved through:
 - Increasing citizens’ access to legal services offered by AHC;
 - Better awareness of public authorities regarding democratic standards and issues in respect for human rights;
 - Increased cases represented by us in the courts of all levels, domestic and international, and cases of addressing complaints about human rights violations by the public administration;
 - Cases filed with the Constitutional Court to request the review of the constitutionality of laws related directly with the citizens’ fundamental freedoms.
 - Enhancing the legal capacities and expertise offered by AHC’s legal service in legal representations before the domestic and international courts;
 - Improving the legal framework also through the legal expertise offered by AHC to adapt to basic constitutional and international standards;
 - Increasing AHC’s watchdog and advocacy activity, particularly in the penitentiary area, the activity of local government, and handling mental health;

- Increasing the awareness of various citizens, particularly students about various human rights issues through forums, the dissemination of informative materials, etc.;
 - Increasing the number of cases of interventions at state institutions for the reinstatement of citizens' violated rights;
 - 27 sporadic monitoring missions at prison and pre-trial detention institutions and direct reaction to encountered violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms;
 - Monitoring mental health institutions in Vlorë, Elbasan, Shkodër, Tiranë, Korçë, Berat, Gjirokastrë and Kukës and addressing encountered violations of patients' rights to the responsible bodies;
 - Organizing awareness activities on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the ECHR.
 - Organizing 5 forums to discuss about human rights in the context of the Human Rights Film Festival.
4. Citizens' access to local government has improved through:
- Monitoring in 8 municipalities (Tiranë, Shkodër, Kukës, Elbasan, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastrë and Korçë) to assess citizens' access to local government bodies.
5. AHC's organizational and functional capacities and public relations have been improved through:
- Approval of the organization's new strategy for 2010-2013
 - Expanding the capacities of the staff, correspondents, and observers, particularly toward understanding the right to non-discrimination, monitoring the judicial system, writing and managing projects
 - Commemorating the 20th anniversary of AHC.

Implementation period: March 2010 – February 2011
Funded by: Civil Rights Defenders
Total budget: 69 400 Euro

II.

INCREASING POSSIBILITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS BY THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ALBANIA.

Purpose of the project:

Improvement of legal room for the execution of decisions by the European Court of Human Rights and making efficient use of them for the fulfillment of citizens' rights. (*Implementation of the project continues during 2011*)

Objectives of the project:

1. Execution by the Albanian state of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights in favor of citizens A.Lika and V.Laska regarding the payment of compensation ruled by the latter.
2. Initiation of the request to review the penal judicial case against the two mentioned citizens.
3. Contribution to improving the legal basis and practices enabling the immediate enforcement of final decisions by the ECHR and improving existing legal provisions for the purpose of reviewing cases, including the restart of investigations, in the case of finding serious violations of due legal process.
4. Enhancing NPOs action for the practical realization of rights sanctioned by law.

Conducted activities:

- Preparation of the case for the High Court and filing the request for review with the High Court for V.L and A.L on November 19, 2010.
- Legal representation of V.L in the Court of Appeals for the application of alternative sentence and recourse with the High Court.
- Monitoring the execution of ECHR's decision on these citizens with regard to the compensation established in this decision.
- Review of the possibility to amend domestic legislation to sanction the immediate enforcement of ECHR decisions or the review of cases, including the restart of investigations when encountering serious violations of due legal process, and finding the best practices from the region for this purpose.
- Conduct of the preliminary phase for the preparation of the draft law on the immediate execution of ECHR decisions on penal rulings. Both these draft laws will be accompanied with a report that will contain the summary of a "better practice" to be identified by experts regarding the enforcement of ECHR rulings.

Project results:

1. Realization of remuneration in favor of A.L and V. L with Albanian state funds of the amount set forth in the Human Rights Court's ruling.
2. Filing the request for review with the High Court in the context of enforcement of the ECHR ruling to restart or re-adjudicate the case and offering free legal aid for citizens A.L and V.L, in the context of realizing their rights.

Period of implementation:

November 1, 2010 – June 2011

Funded by:

Soros Foundation and Civil Rights Defenders

Total budget:

14170 USD (9900 USD from Soros and 4270 USD from CRD)

► Strategic objective of the organization: *Contribute to improving the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in accordance with sanctioned rights and accepted international standards.*

◀ Projects implemented for this purpose:

I.**“TOGETHER FOR BETTER RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY”****Purpose of the project**

Promotion and protection of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty in general and of vulnerable groups in particular, as well as guaranteeing their treatment in a dignified and humane treatment by state police structures and the personnel of pre-trial detention/prison personnel.

Objectives of the project:

1. Improve accountability and law enforcement by the public administration, police commissariats, pre-trial detention/prison institutions, regarding better respect for and treatment of persons under the care of these institutions;

2. Increase awareness and familiarization with human rights and the correct enforcement of the law by police officers in police commissariats and penal institutions;
3. Provide assistance by psychologists and social care employees to make possible the provision of special treatment for persons deprived of their liberty, with a special focus on vulnerable groups in penal institutions.

Conducted activities:

1. Planned and sporadic monitoring missions in some pre-trial detention and prison institutions;
2. Drafting and publication of the final report of the monitoring missions;
3. Training 147 mid-level managers to create a safe environment for persons deprived of their liberty in penal institutions in Tepelenë, Burrel, Lezhë and Tropojë;
4. Enabling psychologists and social care employees to provide differentiated treatment for persons deprived of their liberty that have mental issues or are addicted to drugs;
5. 25 trainers of penal institutions – trained on the treatment of persons with mental health problems in penitentiary institutions;
6. Processing the expertise to be offered to personnel working in special care sectors with persons with mental disorders;
7. Evaluation mission on the situation in special care sectors created in some pilot prisons;
8. Working sessions to improve pre-release programs for inmates in penal institutions in Vlorë, Lezhë, and Korçë.

Project results

- Suspension of the entry into effect of some amendments to the General Regulations of Prisons of March 25, 2010, because they violated the rights and treatment of detainees and convicts.
- The Ministry of Justice and authorities of penal institutions are more sensitized with regard to respect for the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, particularly the rights and treatment of minors in conflict with the law and inmates with mental health and drug addiction issues.
- Over 40% of police commissariats and penitentiary institutions were monitored and the findings were incorporated into a report that was published and submitted to responsible state authorities, which, in many cases, reacted on the issues we raised.

- Police officers of the commissariats of the counties of Tiranë and Durrës were trained on the effective implementation of national and international standards in their work, as well as on broader knowledge regarding best practices from some European countries on the treatment of vulnerable groups.
- We produced and made available to relevant institutions three strategic documents, respectively on the treatment of persons with drug addiction, sectors of special care for persons with mental disorders, and infective diseases.
- Special care sectors were established in four pilot institutions for persons with mental health and drug addiction problems.
- We drafted and made available to the relevant institutions four basic documents regarding job descriptions, daily program, different protocols, and the reporting system at the institutions where the special care sectors for persons with mental disorders were opened.

Period of implementation: January 2009 - October 2010

Funded by: European Commission

Funding amount: 79.926.40 Euro (donation)

Total budget: 124.652 Euro

II.

“BUILDIGN THE PROFESSIONAL CAPACITIES AT THE KAVAJË REINTEGRATION INSTITUTION”

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this project is to offer a new approach and philosophy in the treatment of juveniles in conflict with the law in order to guarantee that their human dignity and personal safety are ensured as well as to prepare them for reintegration into the society upon release.

Objective of the project

The main objective of this project is to provide contemporary methods in the work of personnel working with juveniles in the special institution for juveniles in Kavajë.

Conducted activities:

1. A working mission with the high-level and mid-level managers of the Kavajë institution for the identification of personnel needs to train them on working with juveniles.

Concrete results:

1. The project has identified the needs of the Kavajë juvenile institution personnel regarding their professional training in working with juveniles; the relevant work program has been drafted in cooperation with the institution and the GDP. *(The implementation of the project continues in 2011)*

Period of implementation: July 2010 - December 2010

Funded by: UNICEF Albania

Funding amount: 1.491.188 Lekë

Total budget: 1.861.088 Lekë

III.

“FOR A PROFESSIONAL PRISON PERSONNEL AND CIVIL MANAGEMENT OF THE ALBANIAN PRISON SYSTEM”

Project purpose

Improve the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in accordance with human rights standards.

Conducted activities

- Consultation meetings regarding the drafting of the curriculum structure for the training of mid-level managers in prisons;
- Approval of the teaching curriculum and its incorporation into the sustainable system of training for mid-level managers in prisons;
- Drafting the training manual for mid-level managers in the Albanian prison system.

Main results of the project:

- Introduction of good practices for continued specialized training for mid-level managers in Albanian penitentiary institutions;
- A full training program focusing on mid-level managers is ready for use in further training of mid-level managers in prisons.
- Approval of the teaching curriculum for mid-level managers by high level managers of the prison system (*The project is ongoing during 2011*)

Period of implementation: July 2010 - July 2011

Funded by: Embassy, Kingdom of the Netherlands in Albania

Funding amount: 58.365 Euro

Total budget: 79.565 Euro

► Strategic objective of the organization: ***Expand cooperation with other NPOs active in the area of human rights, in and out of the country, for better protection of and respect for human rights in Albania and elsewhere in the world.***

◀ Activities carried out for this purpose:

As before, AHC has carried out part of its activity in cooperation with other non-profit organizations, or public institutions, which our mission or common interest unites us with. During 2010, we preserved satisfactory cooperation with the People's Advocate, particularly in activities related to monitoring the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, as well as cooperation with the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, cooperation with other organizations whose focus is on human rights, such as CLCI, TILAS, CRCA, etc., which we exchanged experiences with and participated reciprocally in activities carried out during this period. We may mention here cooperation with NPOs of Tirana and Shkodër in the context of the flooding in the Shkodër district in January 2010, to help affected citizens, following the discrimination case of K.C. due to different sexual orientation. AHC was the initiator for this purpose. We also continued successful cooperation with the organization of the Human Rights Film Festival; besides offering contributions to fund the event, AHC is also part of the Decision Making Board of the festival, together with other international structures and Albanian civil society actors.

In the context of international cooperation, we may also mention lobbying by NPOs from different countries to support the European Court of Human Rights, in February 2010.

On an international front, the committee enhanced cooperation with CRD (former Swedish Helsinki Committee), the Greek Helsinki Monitor, and the Macedonian Helsinki Committee, which we exchanged experience and documentation with. It is still our duty to further expand cooperation with other organizations in and out of the country.

- **Lawmaking initiatives.**

The study and drafting of remarks and suggestions on the draft law "*On public financial inspections*," was conducted in the context of cooperation by all Tirana-based non-profit organizations, which were engaged by the initiative of the Soros Foundation and TACSO.

- **Cooperation with the print and broadcast media.**

AHC continued during 2010 to enhance and consolidate its reports with the print and broadcast media, considering them powerful partners for informing the public

about human rights and for sanctioning and implementing these rights. The Committee regularly shared with the media its statements, open letters, and other products of AHC.

AHC representatives were often invited to TV programs or interviewed by them to address issues related to human rights. The media publicized articles prepared by AHC staff on issues of public interest. During 2010, AHC statements and releases were covered in TV news editions in 9 cases and published in the print media in 35 cases.

- **Cooperation with public and international structures on drafting reports and evaluating the human rights situation in the country.**

During 2010 too, AHC was one of the NPOs whose opinion was solicited in the context of drafting reports that the country prepares in the context of engagements through ratified international acts, related to human rights. In this regard, it is worth mentioning AHC's cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

AHC representatives have held numerous meetings and shared their views with EU, CoE delegations, MPs and functionaries from various countries visiting Albania and wishing to become familiar with the human rights situation as presented by politically independent subjects. Among these, we may mention meetings with MEPs, the delegation of Canadian MPs, the CoE delegation, etc.

5. Organization's institutional development

According to the statute, the General Assembly is the organization's highest decision making body, while the Board is an advisory body. These bodies continued to function normally during 2010 and, through their decision making, helped orient all of the organization's activity in accordance with its mission.

- **Organizational life**

During 2010, the General Assembly convened 4 times to discuss various organizational issues and important issues of fundamental human rights and freedoms in the country. During 2010, AHC's Assembly took its decision no. 1, 21.01.2010, on the indispensability of submitting a request to the Constitutional Court on the unconstitutionality of the law *"On the prevention and fight against*

organized crime, trafficking, and corruption, through preventive measures on assets,” and decision no. 2 “On the approval of AHC’s annual report on its activity in 2009.”

The Advisory Board and particularly its chairperson Ms. Aurela Anastasi was informed regularly by the Executive Director on developments in the organization and received advice from this body on approaching various legal and organizational issues arising during the organization’s activity.

- Strengthening the network of correspondents

The correspondents are part of AHC’s structure and they function part-time; yet, their role is very important. They supply the organization with information on the situation of human rights in their districts or other issues related to AHC’s mission. Their capacities, enhanced with each passing year, provide the organization the opportunity to verify, monitor, and intervene in real time on events or situations of human rights violations. The correspondents are also a strong base on which the organization relies to organize events in the areas they cover. They have cooperated on projects to monitor and observe situations that have been the target of the organization’s work this year.

The network of correspondents (7 persons in the cities of Shkodër, Kukës, Elbasan, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastër, Korçë) and observers has been instructed and trained continuously, both on concrete issues they’ve been asked to work on, and on basic human rights issues. During 2010, we paid special attention to increasing the number of specialized observers and collaborators, selecting from the areas of health, justice, and psychology. The system of hiring them for the needs of various projects has been improved and accompanied with clear terms of reference.

6. Financial resources and correctness in spending funds from donors

For the organization’s book-keeping, we use the programmed accounting “ALPHA Platinum,” version for NPOs. This program employs the system of maintaining ‘double-entry’ accounts and allows reporting of Projects in different currencies according to donations, budgets and currency accounts (EURO, USD,

ALL) as well as indicators of the Balance sheet of the entire Organization in one single currency, ALL.

Below is a table of “Incomes and Spending” as of 31.12.2010. All AHC spending is in the context of Project activities. They are covered by donors’ budgets according to contracts signed with them.

Albanian Helsinki Committee

Table of incomes and spending

For 2010

Currency: Lekë

*For Internal use
According to
international
standards*

Account no.		2010	2009
	Incomes		
7,668 7661 & 7662 & 7666 & 7667 & 7681	Funds by donors	28,676,421	41,455,910
	Other sources of income		
		28,676,421	41,455,910
	Expenses		
641 & 644 & 621 6001-6009 & 6270,619 606 604 & 613 & 614 & 615 626 & 6260 & 6261 & 6262 & 6263 & & 6264 627 629 630 633,638 628	1 Personnel	12,620,660	14,541,124
	2 Direct costs of activities	11,861,202	20,846,699
	3 Photocopies and office materials	90,725	224,844
	4 Rent and third-party services	1,586,793	1,576,715
	5 Telecommunications	699,617	1,601,284
	6 Transportation	108,814	39,214
	7 Translations	150,810	61,147
	8 Audit/External financial evaluation	709,121	1,360,023
	9 Legal services and taxes	66,120	12,500
	10 Bank fees	59,045	99,429

6811	11	Depreciation	394,854	328,679
618 & 624	12	Various	328,661	764,254
			28,676,421	41,455,910
Annual result			0	0

Spending in the context of projects has been covered by donations. Financial balance sheets for AHC’s activity for 2010, and for most of the Projects, according to international standards, have been audited and certified as “within standards and demonstrating satisfactory indicators.” Balance sheets and financial statements prepared in accordance with national standards have been submitted to the Regional Directory of Taxes in Tirana.

Annex 1

Public statements and releases during 2010

- March 17, 2010** **All equal before the law**
- March 17, 2010** **Civil society in Albania welcomes entry into force of the Law Against Discrimination**
- April 21, 2010** **Unlawful and inhuman act**
- May 11, 2010** **The situation is serious, but not without a way out**
- May 14, 2010** **Political will is needed for quick and constructive dialogue**
- May 25, 2010** **Comedy of justice: ‘Secret’ release of police officer accused of murdering Albanian emigrant!**
- May 28, 2010** **A brutal act that must be punished**
- June 23, 2010** **A disputable and disturbing decision**
- August 18, 2010** **Leave justice bodies alone**
- September 24, 2010** **Priority to people’s health**
- October 10, 2010** **Translation of statement by the Greek Helsinki Monitor “Greece: (Semi)-judicial international punishments for torture, maltreatment, and expulsion of Roma**
- October 18, 2010** **Prevent “the Bad” and state bodies react**
- October 21, 2010** **Press release on refusing the DP invitation for AHC’s participation in the round table discussion on amendments to the electoral framework**
- November 19, 2010** **Joint press release on preventing the import of waste to Albania (together with other NPOs)**

Annex 2

List of AHC publications during 2010

1. Leaflet ‘All equal before the law’⁵
2. Manual ‘Better understanding and implementation of the law “On protection against discrimination”’⁶
3. Report on the situation of human rights in police directories and commissariats, in pre-trial detention institutions, and institutions for the execution of penal decisions⁷
4. Awareness calendars⁸

⁵ This publication was realized in the context of the project “Increasing public awareness on the new law against discrimination,’ funded by Civil Rights Defenders

⁶ This publication was realized in the context of the project “Increasing public awareness on the new law against discrimination,’ funded by Civil Rights Defenders

⁷ This publication was realized in the context of the project ‘Together for respectful treatment of the human rights of persons convicted to deprivation of liberty,’ funded by the European Union Delegation

⁸ The calendars were published in the context of the project “Improving human rights in Albania through the empowerment of the rule of law – Legal Clinic IV”

Annex 3

LIST OF IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS – 2010

Project Title	Donor	Implementation period
IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ALBANIA THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE RULE OF LAW (Legal Clinic IV)	Civil Rights Defenders	Mars – February 2011
TOGETHER FOR BETTER RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY	European Commission Delegation	November 2009 - October 2010
INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS ON THE NEW LAW ON PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION	Civil Rights Defenders	January - June 2010
IMPROVING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW LAW ON PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION	Civil Rights Defenders	October - December 2010
INCREASING NPO'S CAPACITIES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND REPRESENTATION OF DISCRIMINATION CASES	Civil Rights Defenders	October – March 2011
INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ALBANIA AND USING THEM TO REALIZE CITIZENS' RIGHTS	Soros Foundation and Civil Rights Defenders	1 November 2010 – June 2011
BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITIES OF THE REINTEGRATION INSTITUTION IN KAVAJË	UNICEF Albania	July - December 2010
ENSURING A PROFESSIONAL PRISON PERSONEL AND CIVIL MANAGEMENT OF THE ALBANIAN PRISON SYSTEM	Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Albania	July 2010 - July 2011

Annex 4

Statistics on provided legal services

COMPLAINTS BY CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES (January - December 2010)

Category	Sub-category	Number of complaints
<i>Prison/Pre-trial detention</i>	Violation of correspondence (phone wiretapping / opening of letters / meetings with families)	1
	Violence (physical or psychological) used in prison by personnel / other inmates	8
	Poor conditions in prisons and pre-trial detention sites	5
	Failure to provide health services and social care in prison	12
	Lack of information from the prison administration on amnesty / pardons	3
	Inmates' work	44
	Violation of rights in pre-trial detention sites / prisons	48
	Other	49
	Transfer / non-transfer to another institution / within the same institution	27
<i>Various civil</i>	Complaints regarding property conflicts	15
	Complaints about violations of the right to information	1
	Complaints related to domestic violence / dissolution of marriage / registration of children	5
	Complaints about non-transparent procedures by central and local administration bodies	18
	Other	12
<i>Judiciary</i>	Complaints about failure to benefit from shortened sentences / release on bail	4
	Courts' failure to provide information	3
	Undue legal process	26
	Procedural violations during adjudication	2

	Violation of pre-trial detention deadlines	2
	Unjust court decisions / claims of innocence	22
	Procrastination of judicial process	4
<i>Labor relations</i>	Complaints about discrimination at work	1
	Complaints about unjust dismissal from work	6
<i>Police</i>	Complaints about use of physical / psychological violence by police	3
	Other	2
	Unjust acts by police	8
<i>Prosecution</i>	Unjust and arbitrary acts by prosecutor's office	19
<i>Advocacy Service</i>	Complaints about self-initiated / selected advocacy service	1
	Assistance with completing documentation for submitting cases to the ECHR	1
	Assistance about completion of documentation	9
	Requests to submit cases to Strasbourg	4
	Requests for free advocacy service (representation in court)	23
	Free legal counseling	30
<i>Other (justice system)</i>	Complaints about non-execution of judicial decisions by the Bailiff's Office	5
	Requests for extradition	1
Total of received complaints		424

COMPLAINTS BY VIOLATED RIGHTS (January - December 2011)

RIGHT	Number of complaints
Right to information	13
Right to effective redress	1
Right to non-discrimination and equality of citizens	5
Prohibition of torture	50
Right to freedom and safety	11
Right to due legal process	74
Right to privacy	4
Right to ownership	15
Other	251
Total	424

Legal Services Offered for Received Complaints (January - December 2011)

PROVIDED SERVICE	NUMBER OF SERVICES
Assistance to complete documentation	5
Legal counseling	256
Monitoring of judicial process	27
Intervention of state institutions	397
Representation in court	15

Public reactions	6
Addressing complaints	519
Verification	210
Total	1,435