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#### **PREFACE**

In 2023 we began a large re-structure of the Trust. We had eleven programmes and over 400 grantees, too many for the Trustees to provide detailed scrutiny. Grant-making had been devolved to staff, and the Board was busy with strategic direction. We had already begun the work of implementing our new strategy, including reducing numbers of grantees and programmes, when the deeply shocking news that over a thousand people had been murdered in Israel by Hamas and other armed groups reached us.

The events that unfolded after the massacre made the work to re-structure the Trust far more urgent than it had been. A small number of grantees – five groups based in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Canada - quickly posted material which legitimised or even praised the Hamas atrocities. Celebrating massacres is obviously contrary to human rights values and principles, and we cut our ties with those groups. But the issue was not only one of promoting violence as a political strategy – it was, and is, also about using inaccurate and politically motivated language about any country – in this case Israel – or situation.

Truth is the implicit lodestar in the human rights endeavour – the patient and meticulous search for evidence; the gathering of facts and testimony; the work of courts and commissions to address crimes against humanity and reparative justice for victims are all based on the fundamental idea of sorting truth from untruth; fact from denial or exaggeration. If we lose respect for impartiality and truth we lose everything, and I was shocked by how casually those principles were abandoned by groups describing themselves as human

rights organisations in favour of slogans tacked together, as George Orwell wrote, like the sections of a pre-fabricated hen-house.

All of our grantees agree to not glorify or promote violence, or to use incendiary or discriminatory language – those clauses are part of our standard grant contract. Lauding violence is clearly a breach of that contract, and after we cancelled the grants in question we audited all grantees to make sure we were not inadvertently funding groups who in our view had departed from universal human rights norms and values.

It was a salutary lesson, but not an easy one. We have been working on the issue of corruption and state capture (especially in South Africa and the Balkans) for years, but the events of last year made clear that parts of the human rights field itself are at risk of being captured by a political movement. We do not, to be clear, support the Netanyahu government's actions in Gaza or its collusion with settler violence. There is a very legitimate critique of their actions framed in terms of war crimes and actions on the West Bank ranging from harassment to murder. My point is not made in support of Netanyahu's war – it is made in support of the human rights field itself, which, if it becomes politicised, loses legitimacy.

We have now fundamentally re-structured the Trust. We have gone from eleven programmes to three; Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Open Societies, and Environment. We will have reduced grantee numbers by nearly half within the next three years, retaining only the best groups, the partners

whose work has impact, and who are organised, effective and thoughtful. We will no longer give any grants on the basis of programme staff assessments of grantee needs, but focus only on the best people and organisations we can find.

We will run a number of special initiatives beyond our three programmes, addressing specific issues where we think change is possible. Decriminalising homosexuality in a number of jurisdictions is one; promoting cohesive communities in Britain will be another. We are interested in the issue of lawfare, and in supporting independent media in countries lacking investigative journalism. Other topics are under discussion. Our initiatives will include a number of different kinds of grantees from a wide range of fields. They will, we hope, constitute more sharply focused interventions, with outcomes that will at least be felt, if not always measurable.

It has not been an easy year, but we have learnt important lessons. It has, as ever, been a privilege to work with the SRT team, and to have access to the advice of our extraordinary Directors and Advisors. I want to thank everyone, especially director of the trust Duncan Wilson and all our Trustees for their support and the spirit of co-operation and constructive dialogue that has made these changes possible.

#### Sigrid Rausing

#### ABOUT THE SIGRID RAUSING TRUST

Sigrid Rausing Trust is a grant-making foundation established in 1995. We support the values and principles of human rights and the rule of law; promote cohesive, creative and open societies; and support the preservation of nature and the regulation of harmful chemicals. Our activities are governed by the law of England and Wales. By the end of 2023 the Trust had awarded approximately £575 million in grants to organisations all over the world.

We identify new grantees through recommendations and fieldwork. Only some of our grants are earmarked for specific projects. We believe that donors can best encourage innovation and imagination if they allow grantees to develop their own ideas. We are politically non-partisan, and expect the same of our grantees.

#### Our guiding principles are:

- We seek to establish positive and long-term relationships with our grantees
- We take ethical breaches very seriously
- We recognise the value of unrestricted funding for trusted partners
- We look for moral clarity and excellent leadership from management and boards
- · We are flexible and responsive to needs and opportunities
- · We expect clarity and brevity in written communications

### In 2023 we had eleven main programmes under three broad themes:

#### **Human Rights**

- · Strengthening the Human Rights Field
- · Defending Civic Space
- Torture and Arbitrary Detention
- Truth, Justice and Memory

#### Fairness and Inclusion

- · Women's Rights
- LGBTI Rights
- Migration and Inclusion
- Arts

#### **Environment**

- Conservation
- Toxics and Pollution
- Transparency and Accountability

We also made grants that relate to our wider philanthropic remit under our Chair's Fund and Trustees Small Grants scheme.



#### STRENGTHENING THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD

This programme supports groups playing a foundational role in the human rights field, that collaborate widely and take innovative approaches to human rights work. We also support many regional and global groups that aim to build the capacity, technical expertise and sustainability of national organisations.

MACEDONIAN YOUNG LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION (MYLA)
Grant during 2023
£130,000

Macedonian Young Lawyers
Association, (MYLA), aims
to improve access to justice for
Macedonian citizens who are
disadvantaged or discriminated
against. It also seeks to support
stateless people, refugees, and
migrants. It uses legal advice,
strategic litigation, advocacy for legal
reform and training for lawyers to
advance standards.

In 2023 MYLA contributed to a legislative victory that worked to end statelessness in North Macedonia. After a decade of advocacy, Parliament passed amendments to the Civil Registry law, drafted by MYLA with support from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

These amendments ensure immediate birth registration for all children born in the country, regardless of their parents' legal status. It has already granted legal identity to over 700 people including children, giving access to a passport, social protection, healthcare, education and employment.

A 2023 UNHCR film featured Valentin Rakip, a stateless individual whom MYLA helped register at 15. After six more years of effort, Valentin received his Macedonian ID in 2023, granting him full legal rights.



North Macedonian children featured in the UNHCR film 'Do I Exist?

#### DEFENDING CIVIC SPACE

The Defending Civic Space programme focuses on freedoms of association, assembly and expression where public engagement in civic life is limited by state and non-state actors. We support groups taking a range of approaches to defend civic space, including advocacy and litigation, independent journalism, and protection and support for human rights defenders at risk.

#### GROUND UP Grant during 2023 £95.000

Ground Up, is a South African not-for-profit public interest news agency, with a focus of reporting on citizen protests and the work of civil society activists. Their content is freely available for general use and is regularly featured in other South African news publications such as the Daily Maverick and News24.

In 2023, Ground Up won various journalism awards, including one recognising the impact of their investigations of high-level corruption, theft and incompetence at the National Lotteries Commission (NLC). Over four years, Ground Up reported evidence of high-ranking officials within the NLC facilitating the diversion of millions of rand from grants meant for nonprofit organisations and community projects. These funds were reportedly funnelled to politically connected individuals. Several high-level resignations followed, including the Commissioner of the Lottery after Ground Up revealed Lottery funding meant to build a school had instead been used to pay for her luxury home. A tribunal froze assets connected to Lottery officials worth over R1.4 billion (£,58 million) mostly in the form of property and

luxury vehicles.

Another Ground Up report that received recognition in 2023 was an investigation into the prison escape of a serial rapist and murderer, which exposed corruption and a multi-system failure of the state prison system, and led to the prisoner's re-arrest. Ground Up was commended multiple times in a Parliamentary hearing on the failures within the justice system.



National Lotteries South Africa © Raymond Joseph Ground Up

#### TORTURE AND ARBITRARY DETENTION

The Torture and Arbitrary
Detention programme funds groups
that work with and for victims of
torture. Some organisations work
on the medical, psychological and
social rehabilitation for victims
of torture. Others seek to prevent
torture or pursue accountability of
perpetrators and states for inflicting
or condoning torture. We also fund
groups that aim to combat human
rights abuses in detention.

# FREEDOM FROM TORTURE Grant during 2023 £320,000

Freedom from Torture provides therapies to improve physical and mental health of torture survivors, medically documents torture, and provides legal and welfare help. It exposes torture globally to hold torturing states to account and campaigns for fairer treatment of torture survivors in the UK.

In November 2023 the UK Supreme Court ruled that the government's Rwanda scheme was unlawful. Freedom from Torture had spent two years campaigning and providing legal support, witness evidence and expertise throughout the proceedings, as well as undertaking an intervention at the Court of Appeal. They had also commissioned a legal opinion from Raza Husain KC, setting out the underlying problems with the UK's determination to circumvent its obligations under the Refugee Convention.

Additionally in 2023, the organisation won the overall prize at the UK 2023 Charity Awards for its campaign #StopTheFlights. It was launched in 2022, and in a year had convinced four of six commercial airlines to pull out of government agreements to fly people to Rwanda.



Freedom from Torture at the UK Charity Awards © Freedom from Torture

#### TRUTH, JUSTICE AND MEMORY

This programme supports truth-seeking, justice and memorialisation initiatives in the aftermath of grave and systematic human rights abuses. This includes efforts to achieve accountability as well as reparations and other remedies for survivors. We also fund groups engaged in peacebuilding and reconciliation, that focus on social cohesion and coexistence.

#### MNEMONIC Grant during 2023 £175,000

Mnemonic promotes the use of digital documentation of human rights violations and international crimes to support advocacy, justice and accountability. The organisation emerged from the Syrian Archive, which began in 2014 to preserve and analyse digital content related to human rights violations committed during the conflict and enable its use for legal accountability. Mnemonic's

activities include the collection and archiving of digital information, the training of human rights defenders and the development of open-source tools and methods. Mnemonic engages in advocacy with social media platforms to promote clearer policies around the removal of online content deemed harmful but that may still constitute critical evidence of human rights abuses.

In 2023 a French court issued an international arrest warrant for the Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, and three senior officials, for complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity. This was in relation to the use of banned chemical weapons in attacks on civilians in 2013 in Ghouta, Syria. The attacks using sarin gas killed over 1,000 people, including hundreds of children.

Syrian Archive, (now Mnemonic), along with two other organisations, instigated the investigation by filing a legal complaint under the principle of universal jurisdiction. Additionally, Syrian Archive helped identify the chain of command, which was particularly important to the case.

Hadi al-Khatib, founder of Syrian Archive, and Managing Director of Mnemonic noted that: "We see France, and hopefully other countries soon, taking the strong evidence that we have gathered over years and finally demanding criminal responsibility from the highest-level officials."



Ghouta Arbin © Creative Commons 3.0



#### **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

The Women's Rights Programme funds organisations working to end gender-based violence and uphold sexual and reproductive rights. We also support initiatives working to strengthen and connect feminist movements, including women's funds and groups bringing innovation to the field.

KENYA LEGAL & ETHICAL ISSUES
NETWORK ON HIV AND AIDS
(KELIN)
Grant during 2023
£160,000

Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues
Network on HIV and AIDS,
(KELIN), advocates for the
promotion and protection of
health-related human rights. The
organisation advocates for laws and
policies that protect and fulfil sexual
and reproductive rights, undertakes
strategic litigation, strengthens the
capacities of community-based
organisations, and provides legal

support for medical providers and women affected by penal provisions on abortion

In 2023, the Kenyan High Court had just ruled that the forced sterilisation of a woman living with HIV is a violation of her human rights. The landmark case was filed in Nairobi in 2014, and she was supported by KELIN as one of the petitioners.

After eight years of litigation, Hon. Justice Mrima delivered the historic judgment at the end of 2022, when he declared that the tubal ligation of a woman living with HIV, without her consent, violated her rights to dignity, freedom from discrimination, right to health and her right to found a family. The judge awarded the petitioner 3,000,000 Kenyan shillings.

The plaintiff noted that; "This win is not just for me but for each woman living with HIV who has been subjected to forced sterilization. I am happy that the violations against us have been acknowledged and hope my story will be a tool for the protection of the right to health for other women living with HIV."



Allan Maleche, Executive Director of KELIN, with campaigners outside court @ Regina Mwanza / KELIN

#### LGBTI RIGHTS

The LGBTI Rights programme aims to improve the legal standing and social acceptance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people. We support organisations working to address discriminatory laws, homophobia and violence.

#### HUMAN DIGNITY TRUST Grant during 2023 £300,000

#### The Human Dignity Trust

helps to challenge the legality of laws around the world which criminalise private consensual sexual activity between adults of the same sex. Working with local groups and lawyers, the organisation uses litigation in national and regional courts to ensure that national criminal laws conform with international human rights obligations, as well as with constitutional law norms.

In 2023, Mauritius' Supreme Court declared a law that criminalised same-sex intimacy between men unconstitutional. Human Dignity Trust began supporting this legal effort in 2015. In 2019 they supported the plaintiff Abdool Ridwan (Ryan) Firaas Ah Seek, his local legal team and a leading local NGO to file a case, on the basis that the law breached his basic rights, including the right to liberty.

They stated that; "This momentous decision finally topples 185 years of state-sanctioned stigma against LGBTI people in Mauritius and sends yet another important message to the remaining criminalising countries in Africa and beyond: these laws must go."

On receiving the judgement, Ryan noted that, "It means that the next generations can fully and freely embrace their sexuality without fear of being arrested. This victory is undoubtedly a major step towards the full inclusion of our community in Mauritian society."



Tim Otty KC, (Human Dignity Trust founder), Abdool Ridwan Firaas Ah Seek and Gavin Glover SC, outside court © Human Dignity Trust

#### MIGRATION AND INCLUSION

The Migration and Inclusion
Programme focuses primarily on
the human rights of stateless people,
refugees and migrants in Europe. It
supports organisations that address
the structural barriers faced by
migrants, as well as organisations
defending those subject to
discrimination based on their
refugee or stateless status.

#### ASYLOS Grant during 2023 £60,000

Asylos is an international network of volunteers delivering research for asylum claims. It was founded in 2010 to provide case-specific evidence, free of charge, and aims to ensure that every refugee has the evidence they need to claim their right to asylum and live in safety.

In 2023 the UK Supreme Court ruled that the government's Rwanda scheme was unlawful, and cited Asylos in its judgement. Under this proposed scheme, people deemed to have arrived in the UK unlawfully - including individuals fleeing persecution and war - would have been transported to Rwanda to have their asylum claims processed there, with no return to the UK. In the judgment, the Supreme Court found substantial grounds to believe that people sent to Rwanda would be at risk of refoulement – in other words, of being sent to another country where their life or freedom would be threatened.

In 2022, Asylos had published a commentary on the inconsistencies between the Country-of-Origin Information on the Rwanda asylum system and the Home Office's assessment, identifying several areas of concern. Asylos' report included information about the Rwandan

asylum system that had not been cited in the Home Office's research. One serious issue was the failure to consider refoulement that had occurred under a similar agreement between Israel and Rwanda. Sophie Kloos, Asylos' Director, affirmed: "The Supreme Court judgment highlights the importance of Country-of-Origin Information research not only for fair and

evidence-based asylum decisions in individual cases, but also for ensuring that asylum policies are grounded in thorough research."



Immigrantion march for Rwanda policy © Creative Commons alisdare1

#### ARTS

The Trust supports artist-led organisations whose work expands, challenges, and comments on areas of concern to the Trust, including human rights, corruption, and conservation. The groups we support bring together artists and activists and create bridges between local groups and international creative networks.

#### BOOK BUNK Grant during 2023 £50.000

Book Bunk was set up as a charitable trust in 2017 to restore some of the iconic public libraries in Nairobi, Kenya and animate the spaces with dynamic programming including talks, debates, gigs and children's workshops.

2023 saw a culmination of Book Bunk's efforts to improve the accessibility of books to those with disabilities. As well as continuing to compile data and research for their upcoming report, Accessibility and the Inclusive Future of Libraries, they also established their first-ever Braille collection. The organisation translated ten popular titles by African authors to Braille and acquired large print books for visually impaired library patrons. Additionally, Book Bunk secured an agreement with Accessible Books Consortium, an international online catalogue that enables libraries serving visually impaired users to search and request accessible digital books.



Library in Nairobi © Book Bunk



#### CONSERVATION

The Conservation programme supports the restoration and protection of ecosystems. We support long-term initiatives that engage with or are led by local communities, and which have proven track records of conservation success. We are interested in approaches that recognise the interdependency of people and nature and that lead to systemic change.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY OF KAZAKHSTAN (ACBK)

Grant during 2023

£85,000

The Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan, (ACBK) works on conservation of biodiversity across Kazakhstan's expansive grasslands, through local initiatives, building national capacity and expertise. Its remit includes large-scale

ecosystem restoration; research and policy advocacy; protected area management and ecotourism development.

In December of 2023 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) reclassified the saiga antelope, a keystone species of the Central Asian steppe grasslands, from 'Critically Endangered' to 'Near Threatened.' This triumph comes after nearly two decades of collaborative conservation efforts from ACBK, the wider Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative, the Saiga Conservation Alliance, and the Kazakh government.

The saiga antelope population in Kazakhstan has surged from 48,000 in 2005, to 1.9 million today. Dating back to the last Ice Age and outliving extinct species like woolly mammoths, they are crucial to the ecosystem. Their selective grazing

influences vegetation structures, distributes nutrients, and supports biodiversity across Kazakhstan's steppe landscapes, which are a globally important carbon store.

Vera Voronova, Executive Director of ACBK, noted that: "As one of the most successful recoveries of a terrestrial mammal ever recorded, this is a significant milestone and illustrates how conservation can be effective if all parties collaborate with a strong mission and

appropriate resourcing."

The overall success was also recognised when ACBK's Albert Salemgareyev was awarded the prestigious Whitley Award in April 2023. His research contributed to the creation of the five million hectares of protected land across Kazakhstan.



Female saiga antelope grazing with her calves, Kazakhstan.  $\ \odot$  Daniel Rosengren / ACBK

#### TOXICS AND POLLUTION

In this programme the Trust addresses the impact of toxic substances on the environment and human health. We fund groups that use a range of strategies from strengthening regulation and management of chemicals to restoration and rehabilitation of polluted ecosystems.

# INTERNATIONAL POLLUTANTS ELIMINATION NETWORK IPEN Grant during 2023 £270.000

## International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)

is a network of over 600 nonprofits in 120 countries seeking to shape chemical safety and waste policies to limit the harm caused by toxic chemicals to people and the environment. The network supports local groups who are deciding on global priorities and pushing for unified policy goals at forums including the United Nations Plastics Treaty and Stockholm Convention. IPEN identifies key research gaps and undertakes data gathering to strengthen the scientific basis for its advocacy and raise public awareness on priority issues. IPEN also helps build the technical and organisational capacity of member organisations.

Throughout the 2023 UN Plastics Treaty negotiations, IPEN and its members were successful in transforming the discussions from an initial focus on plastic litter and recycling, to the core plastic crisis issues: addressing plastic's harm to human health and the human right to a healthy environment.

IPEN's campaign to ensure the Plastics Treaty is a global health agreement has included generating and providing original scientific evidence on the health impacts of plastics pollution, highlighting the impact of plastic pollution on

marginalised communities and engaging the media. They have also advocated for a treaty that addresses the need for global controls on toxic plastic chemicals, plastic overproduction, and the industry's aim to rapidly escalate the production of toxic chemicals and plastic.



Plastic Pollution in Ghana © cretive commons Muntaka Chasant

#### TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Transparency and Accountability programme supports organisations seeking to hold governments and corporations accountable for corruption, human rights abuses and environmental harms. We support organisations whose work includes investigative journalism and strategic litigation as well as groups seeking to strengthen national and global standards and access to redress.

ORGANIZED CRIME AND
CORRUPTION REPORTING
PROJECT (OCCRP)
Grant during 2023
£275.000

Organized Crime and Corruption reporting Project (OCCRP), is an international network of more than 24 nonprofit investigative centres, over 160 journalists and several major regional news organisations. OCCRP publishes in-depth investigative stories and news on organised crime and corruption activities. It also trains partners in advanced journalism techniques, and builds practical, high-use tools used to improve the efficiency of reporting and publishing.

In 2023 OCCRP and four other SRT grantees, were among the consortium of journalists that uncovered extensive evidence of corruption and money laundering in Cyprus. The global collaboration investigated files from the largest ever financial data leak. Partners analysed a cache of 3.6 million files, dating from the mid-1990's to 2022, which included confidential background checks, organisational charts, financial statements, bank account applications and emails.

The documents revealed evidence that hundreds of millions of Euros in assets belonging to anti-democratic actors, had been transferred through six Cypriot financial service providers. This includes evidence of some funds originating from sanctioned Russian oligarchs at a time when sanctions were in place across Europe in the wake of Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and their full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.



Cyprus Confidential graphic © James O'Brien - OCCRP



#### **CHAIR'S FUND**

Our Chair's Fund provides the Chair the flexibility to support a small number of charitable organisations whose work is outside the focus of our thematic programmes, but which meets the Trust's wider philanthropic remit.

#### ONE SMALL THING Grant during 2023 £100.000

One Small Thing is a charity dedicated to redesigning the justice system for women. It was set up in 2014 in response to high levels of suicide and self-harm across women's prisons in England.

In 2023, the organisation opened Hope Street, a specifically designed residential community in Hampshire for women within the justice system and their children, preventing family separation. Here they have access to a safe, 24-hour staffed residential Hub where there are also play and support services for children.

Described as a "pioneering facility offering alternative to women's prisons" by the Guardian, Hope Street also provides residents with a range of individually tailored support programmes to encourage rehabilitation. Finally, there are eleven supported 'Hope Houses' for those leaving the Hub in preparation for return to their own homes, as well as ongoing community-based support for women and their families once they have left.

Hope Street went on to win the 2024 RIBA MacEwen Award, where the RIBA journal described it as, "architecture that is healing people", and "a safe home for rehabilitation".



Hope Street © Craig Auckland, Fotohaus





#### TRUSTEES AND STAFF

Grants Administrator

As of 31st December 2023

Trustees	Staff	Tim Cahill	Kapil Gupta	Sheetal Patel
Signid Douging	Duncan Wilson	Senior Programme Officer,	Senior Programme Officer	Senior Finance Officer
Sigrid Rausing	Executive Director	Human Rights	Joey Hasson	Comfort Osilaja
Andrew Puddephatt		Bethan Cansfield	Senior Programme Officer	Grants Manager
Hosh Ibrahim	Beth Fernandez  Deputy Executive Director	Programme Manager	for Human Rights	Anna Shea
Jeffery Jowell	Jane Pickering	Laura Cools  Programme Officer,	Tom Lee Acting Programme Manager	Senior Programme Officer, Human Rights
Joshua Mailman	Chief Operating Officer	Human Rights	Janek Lasocki	Rob Shore
Chris Stone	Maha Abushama Programme Manager,	Chiara De Luca Senior Programme Officer	Programme Officer, Human Rights	Senior Programme Officer for Conservation
Baroness Helena Kennedy	Human Rights	Senioi I rogramme Officer	11uman Rights	Bethany Simpkin
KC	C. 1' A1 '1	Teresa Drace-Francis	Fabien Maitre-Muhl	Office Manager
	Sophie Adwick Programme Manager	Senior Programme Officer, Arts	Programme Manager, Human Rights	Angela Todd-Drake Operations Administrator
	Rachel Aveyard	Olivia Eckersley	Robin Nobel	operation 12amment and
	Programme Officer, Conservation and Transparency	Communications Officer	Senior Programme Officer for Chair's Fund	
	and Accountability	Bénédicte Goderiaux		
	Harriet Baker	Senior Programme Officer for Human Rights		