



2007 OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON VICTIMS OF TERRORISM
13 - 14 September 2007
1st SESSION
SHORT VERSION

I

Meeting, 13th – 14th September 2007, Vienna

I am Giovanna Maggiani Chelli and I represent the Association of the victims' families of Via dei Georgofili massacre. The Association was born in the month of July 2001 with the purpose of finding the judicial truth for the massacres of 1993 and in the specific the one that happened on 27th May 2001 in Florence, Italy, in Georgofili Street. This street is situated in the hart of Florence, adjacent the Gallery of the Uffizi but above all next to the street where is situated the historical

“Academy of the lovers of the rural life”, the Georgofili. The massacre was by hand of “cosa nostra”, a “mafia – type” criminal organization, very powerful in Italy and in the world, in 1993 during a phase of weakness of the institutions and while the State thought it had weaken the organisation mafiosa, after the homicide of the judges Falcone and Borsellino and of their guards. In reality it was not like this: because after a short period, between November 1992 and April 1994, “cosa nostra” attacked again. In this period “cosa nostra” become a political subject, like the sentences of the criminal trial, which developed in Florence from the 12th June 1996 to the 6th May 2002, said. This year saw the ghota of “cosa nostra” condemned to life imprisonment for terroristic massacre, helped by the mafia, and where the instigator inside the organization were Bernardo Provenzano, Salvatore Riina, the brothers Graviano, Leoluca Bagarella and Matteo Messina Denaro still fugitive today. In the trails of Florence there is no trace of an outside “cosa nostra” instigator for the massacre of 1993, that means no one that associated with the mafia at a political and institutional level. “Cosa nostra” tried to undermined the constitutional order of the State with the promulgation of its laws that try to change the detention for the boss of the Mafia with the nullification of the life imprisonment and of the art. 41 bis – referring to the changes made on art. 41 bis of act n. 354 in 1975 regarding law relating to prisons – a strict but necessary measure in order to prevent the jailed mafia from getting in contact with the outside members. It tried to keep the goods accumulated during the illegal activity, to review the trials and to keep out of Mafia and terroristic trials the justice collaborators. To do all this it attacked the State using 1000 kg of the 2600 kg of trinitrotoluene that it possessed. The 14th of May 1993 in Via Fauro in Rome “cosa nostra” blow up 100 kg of trinitrotoluene. It was said that the attacked was directed at the TV presenter Maurizio Costanzo, that in this period was talking badly about “cosa nostra”. The 27th of May 1993 the messages from the mafia continued in Florence, in Via dei Georgofili. The 27th of July 1994 in the meantime three bombes exploded: two in Rome attacking San Giovanni in Laterano and San Giorgio al Velabro, one in Milan, via

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II

Palestro, under the Pavilion of Contemporary Art. Today we know that mafiosi like Cosimo Lo Nigro are not under art. 41 bis anymore and have had the reduction of the life imprisonment sentence. It has been impossible to carry back the killers to art. 41 bis despite the legal instruments that the Magistracy and the Minister of Justice have. It is the second time in Europe we talk about these events, the first time was the 13th of May 2006 in Cologne, this because Europe, like us, doesn't like when the victims became vindictive, but we know that with mafia you can't joke.

We have experienced its ferocity on our skin and we want Europe to understand that art. 41 bis and life imprisonment is necessary for mafia criminal organisations, because it is for this motive that from 1992 to 1994 the "mafia corleonese" has used to much trinitrotoluene on innocent people. I will now go to the specific theme of the meeting and I am sorry if I have spoken too long about the events that happened in my country, but for me it is indispensable that you understand what we are going to talk about. These events make it necessary, even for the OSCE, the benefit of human rights and of the introduction and reinforcement of measures of assistance, also financial, for the victims of terrorism and their families. These two days meeting are important to analyse the approach that the States, here present, have when we talk about the four points the meeting is constructed. Now I will talk about the support of terrorism massacre victims respect the other kind of crime victims. I will describe the ways we have to confront this problem hoping to help other countries. I hope we can arrive at a reinforcement of our laws on the terrorism victim support, that are quite good in Italy respect the rest of Europe, like our Prosecutor Pietro Grasso, Chief of the National Anti-Mafia Prosecutor's Office declares. He would like a unified Super National Prosecutor's Office against mafia and terrorism. Idea that we share. The trials at the gothic of "cosa nostra" responsible of the massacre of 1993 began the 12th June 1996. At the beginning of the trial the Region Tuscany, the City of Florence, the Province of Florence, the Georgofili Academy, all the others boards of the city involved in the massacre, the families and the victims were civil party. Being a civil party in the penal trial has been very important for us, because "cosa nostra" arrived with its terrorist arrogance from Florence, Rome and Milan, our answer had to be adapt. Being a civil party in the penal trial gave a result because the State gave birth to a Fund, that we can find in the act 512 of 1999 for the victims of mafia and organised crimes. This law has the task to denounce, condemn and obtain compensation after the sentence of a judge. Here we need to precise that in Italy doesn't exist a Fund for the terroristic crimes not Mafiosi. We, victims of the Massacre of Florence 1993, have been refunded

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III

because the massacre had a terroristic aim, like that it is written in the sentence of the Court of Cassation: “MASSACRE actuated with a terrorist purposes and oversetting of the constitutional order (Art. 1 Law decree n. 625, December 15, 1979), also aimed at favouring the activities of the “mafia-type” association referred to as “cosa nostra” (Art. 7 Law decree n. 152, May 13, 1991)”. To follow all the procedure legislative about victim support but mostly to find the truth of the 1993 massacre, as the Judge made its own investigations against “cosa nostra” and was

convinced that there were other instigators, in 2001 six of us created an association called: “Association of the victims’ families of via dei Georgofili massacre”. We have spent many years of our life and will spend more for the Association we represent. More than a 100 people are involved in the massacre of Florence 27th May 1993, everyone has a story and we have the task keep it alive not to forget. Obviously every one of us has different interests that in the end are in the interest of everybody. My daughter, for example, was in Florence with her boyfriend, he died, she assisted at that death and reported injures that have made her invalid and a little while after the massacre she developed a neurological illness, caused by the massacre itself. It is normal that I fight for my daughter but believe me at the same time I fight for all the others, for all the people that terrorism has touched. Our engagement to follow the events of the “cosa nostra” trials has been constant. We have always felt the need of supporting the victims with a reinforcement and promulgation of new laws. Today we are here. We can inform the victims that there is the possibility of being supported. Prosecutor Pietro Grasso, Chief of the National Anti-Mafia Prosecutor’s Office, has often remarked how the Italian Legislation supporting crime victims stands out all over Europe for its effectiveness, I hope this is the truth and maybe today from what we will listen to we can understand if that is true. One thing it is certain, the Italian laws for the victims of terrorism are quite a few, not always applied in the correct way, like it is been proved by the law 206 of August the 26th 2004 born from the unification of the associations against terrorism in Italy but not yet applied because written badly... it is being rewritten. What costs effort to us it is not to redo or to improve existing laws against terrorism, but the realization that after so many terrorist actions in Europe and mainly in Italy, we are still here begging for protection. Thank you.

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