



Firenze- 27 maggio 1993
Piazza Santa Croce,1
50122 Firenze

**2007 OSCE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON VICTIMS OF TERRORISM
13 - 14 September 2007
SESSION I: The Victim**

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 ghot 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 attack at the Italian State began the 5th of November 1992. A bullet was collocated in the gardens of Boboli in Florence. It was the first message to who was doing the investigation on the mafia in half of the Prosecutor's Offices of Italy.

The 14th of May 1993, after that the bullet of Boboli did not give any effect, 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". Maybe the trinitrotoluene had a more complicated message that has to be discovered in legal seat.

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The 27th of May 1993 the messages from the mafia continued in Florence, in Via dei Georgofili. This time they attacked the Uffizi Gallery. An attack directed at the arts, like the trails said; more investigations would be necessary.

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 Palestro, under the Pavilion of Contemporary Art.

Still art or was there anything else under these attacks? Because the churches were dear to the Pope that had spoken against the mafia at Agrigento. Today we know that the “Church” did nothing to annul the art. 41 bis and the mafia did not like this. Instead the priests in the prisons were appreciated by the mafia because they did not want the art. 41 bis and complained about the inhuman conditions of the prisoners under it.

We still have to ask ourselves if the third bomb in Milan was directed just at the art, or at the building of the press and at the banks?

The Mafia wanted its own laws, it told the persons interested with all that trinitrotoluene and obtained what it wanted. The attempt to suppress the life imprisonment for the massacres done by the mafia are dated 1998, April 2000 and so on. It was not just the benefit of the mafia that the massacres were committed...

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 too much trinitrotoluene on innocent people.

We are very sorry to see that “mafia” has reached Germany. It is years that we have been saying that Provenzano and Riina have exported mafia crimes from Sicily to Florence, Rome and Milan.

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:

- ✓ The question of the identification of the victim of terrorism in contrast with the victims of violent crimes.
- ✓ The measures that every State has used to assist the victims.
- ✓ The participation of the victim at the penal trial. The victims of via Georgofili have been supported even with a recent statement about

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investigating the “under caver instigators” that are responsible with the mafia of the massacres.

✓ At the end, the roll of society in terms of consultancy and psychological support.

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 hopping 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 trails at the gotha of “cosa nostra” responsible of the massacre of 1993 began the 12th June 1996.

The Public Prosecutor was Gabriele Chelazzi, the magistrate that dedicated his life to find the truth on mafia and the rest; the evening of the 6th of May 2002 saw his efforts rewarded when for the trails against mafia, the Supreme Court of Rome sent 15 people, of the mafia corleonese, for life imprisonment. Especially at this moment, the justice began for the victims and their families.

At the beginning of the trail 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 trail 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 trail 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 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”.

One of us is no longer with us, sorry if I underline this but it is important for me. 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.

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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 injuries 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.

When I use the word terrorism I mean the terrorism of the Mafia and we won't forget and we want that the Governments give us high compensation, because even like that you fight terrorism paying the victims and not the ransoms the mafia ask.

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.

When in March 2001 Europe imposed the member states to uniform the laws supporting the victims, we have contributed a law, not yet approved, where you can find the victims "of particular social alarm", that means the victims of terrorism or massacres, because in Italy in the last 60 years of the Republic there have been many.

With the arrival of international terrorism, like in Spain or England, we wanted to meet the countries hit; so the town of Cologne in Germany last 24th and 25th of May has organized with the city of Bologna in Italy a meeting.

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 has 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.

Giovanna Maggiani Chelli

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