Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities in Sofia

Consolidated Final Report

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The implementation of this project would not have been possible without the voluntary work of 45 people who spared their time and devoted systematic and determined efforts to master the practice of custody visiting in police detention facilities. For ten months they made 223 visits in the Regional Police Departments of Sofia and took part in regular monthly meetings to receive training and exchange experience. Cordial gratitude to all of them for their contribution and volunteer enthusiasm!

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1. Presentation of the Project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities"

The project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities" is a joint initiative of the Open Society Institute – Sofia, the Chief Police Directorate, the Sofia Police Directorate and the Municipality of Sofia.

The project has been implemented in the course of one year (September 2005 – September 2006) in all nine Regional Police Departments (RPDs) on the territory of Sofia.

The project involved independent civil monitoring of police detention facilities and conditions and aimed at establishing the extent to which legal provisions are being implemented and human rights are being protected. In the long run the project should contribute to promoting the principles of transparency and accountability in police work, as well as enhancing the confidence of local communities in the police.

Custody visits were conducted entirely by volunteers. They all live in Sofia, have different age and level of education and represent different social strata: students, entrepreneurs, public servants.

The volunteers who wished to work as independent custody visitors went through a special selection process, which included pre-selection based on submitted documents, interview and background check in the police. Applicants who had successfully passed the interviews underwent training in several modules: "Introduction to Custody Visiting", "Introduction to Police Activities" and "Communication Skills". A total of 45 volunteers were involved in the project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities". They were selected out of more than 200 applicants.

Each custody visitor was issued an official identity card, which he or she had to carry at all times when visiting RPDs. Each month custody visitors attended meetings at which they addressed theoretical and practical aspects of independent custody visiting, shared experiences, and discussed problems.

Custody visitors conducted regular visits to RPDs on the territory of Sofia (no less than 2-3 times per month). The meetings had to be regular enough to ensure that the efficiency of the custody visiting practice would be maintained. Visits were made by teams consisting of two custody visitors. Teams decided independently on the time of the visit. Visits were conducted according to a pre-agreed schedule that was known only to the persons involved in the project; police officers were not informed in advance.

Volunteers examined detention facilities, service premises and the offices of operational officers. They conducted confidential interviews with detainees and police officers. Volunteers had access to non-classified documents and registers kept by the Ministry of luterior units that had a bearing on the purposes of custody visiting.

After each visit, custody visitors produced team reports, which documented facts established during the visits. Consolidated reports were compiled each month and a copy of them was submitted to the Director of the Sofia Police

Directorate, as well as to the custody visitors. Analytical reports were produced every three months and publicized through the website of the Open Society Institute – Sofia.

Statistical information on the project:

- 225 visits made to RPDs throughout the year
- 225 team reports produced
- 2 consolidated quarterly reports produced, detailing custody visiting results
- 1 final report with findings and recommendations produced
- 45 volunteers trained to conduct independent custody visiting in police departments
- 50 police officers from the nine RPDs on the territory of Sofia trained to cooperate with custody visitors
- 16,500 US dollars total budget

2. Legal Framework for Police Detention

Police detention is one form of restricting personal freedom that is admissible under Bulgarian law. Other such forms include the restrictive measure "pretrial detention" and the penalty "deprivation of liberty". Unlike the latter two, police detention is not necessarily associated with specific criminal proceedings. It is usually imposed as a provisional or extraordinary measure aimed to guarantee public order or the security of detained persons themselves.

Police detention is subject to the guarantees for protection of detainee rights, as prescribed in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR).

Particularly important with regard to police detention is the right to life (Art. 2 of the ECHR) and the prohibition of torture and inhuman or humiliating treatment (Art. 3 of the ECHR). In addition to these guarantees, Art. 5 of the ECHR regulates in detail the lawfulness of and the grounds for detention, as well as the fundamental rights of detained persons. The following important rights of detainees need to be emphasized:

- to be promptly informed about the reasons for his or her detention;
- to be brought promptly before a judge and entitled to trial within a reasonable time;
- to contest the lawfulness of his or her detention before a court;
- to have the right of compensation, if detained in contravention of Art. 5 of the ECHR.

The national legal framework for police detention comprises **the MoI Act, the Regulations on the Implementation of the MoI Act[1] and Instruction[2] No I-167 of July 23, 2003 on the Rules of Activities of Police Authorities in Connection with Detention of Persons at MoI Structural Units and on Equipment and Order at MoI Detention Facilities.** The national legal framework is enforceable along with the international human rights protection standards mentioned above. In case of antinomy, the ECHR supersedes the contradicting provisions of the national legislation.

The grounds for detention and the rights of detained persons are prescribed in Art. 70 of the MoI Act[3] (revoked). In addition to the abovementioned rights under Art. 5 of the ECHR, the Bulgarian law also recognizes the right of the detainee to legal defense from the moment of detention (Art. 70, Para 5 of the MoI Act – revoked). In the new wording of these provisions, contained in Art. 63, Para 5 of the current MoI Act, this right is verbalized as a "right to a defender", which covers both contracted defense provided by a lawyer and the possibility to use ex officio defense under the Legal Aid Act.

The term of police detention is limited to 24 hours – Art. 71 of the MoI Act[4] (revoked).

A written detention order has to be issued

[1] For the purposes of the current paper, the legal framework for police detention will be analyzed with reference to the provisions of the now revoked MoI Act. This Act was in force until May 1, 2006, i.e. throughout two-thirds of the project duration, and all project documentation is entirely based on its provisions. The regulations of the current MoI Act (in force since May 1, 2006) in no way differ from those of the revoked act, so the conclusions of the report remain valid.

[2] Promulgated in SG No 71/2003.

[3] Art. 63 of the current MoI Act.

[4] Art. 64 of the current MoI Act.

[5] Art. 65 of the current MoI Act.

(Art. 72 of the MoI Act[5], revoked), but the law does not prescribe when should this happen (before the detention or after the detention and within what time limit after). The essential elements of the detention order are specified in detail in Art. 54 of the Regulations on the Implementation of the MoI Act (revoked) and include the name and personal details of the officer that issued the order, the grounds for detention, the date and time of detention, the name and personal details of the detained person and a citation of his or her rights. The detention order is entered into a special register and a copy of the order is provided to the detained person.

The law stipulates that detained persons should be accommodated in "special premises" (Art. 70, Para 2 of the MoI Act[6], revoked). The Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act (revoked) provide more clarity on this issue, specifying that detained persons are convoyed to MoI units or to other designated facilities (Art. 53, Para 2 of the Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act, revoked). Juvenile and minor detainees should be accommodated in special premises different from those used for adult detainees (Art. 53, Para 3 of the Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act, revoked).

The legal framework for police detention has been criticized by human rights organizations for three major deficits:

1) It does not contain a specific prohibition of torture or inhuman and humiliating treatment during detention. There is no doubt that the general prohibition under the ECHR is enforceable even without being reproduced in a specific provision of Bulgarian legislation, but since lawmakers have repeated some of the rights of detainees under the ECHR, they should have reproduced this fundamental right also.

2) It does not contain a specific provision obligating police authorities that make the detention to inform detained persons not only on the grounds for detention, but also on the rights they have with regard to detention. The Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act and Instruction I-167 somewhat rectify this omission, stipulating that the rights of the detainee should be specifically mentioned in the detention order (Art. 54, Para 2 of the Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act, revoked) and a declaration should be signed by the detainee, verifying that he or she had been informed of these rights (Art. 54, Para 3 of the Regulations on the Implementation of MoI Act, revoked). Awareness of detainee rights, however, is such an important issue that in needs to be incorporated in the general legal provisions regulating police detention.

3) The grounds for detention in effect could be stretched with no limits whatsoever. Sections 1 to 7 of Art. 70, Para 1 of the MoI Act[7] (revoked) create an impression that the permissible grounds for detention are exhaustively prescribed and determined in sufficient detail. However, section 8 of the same provisions extends the grounds for detention, making a reference to other cases determined by law. In practice, lawmakers have secured for themselves the freedom to revise and extend the grounds for detention with any other law.

[6] *Art. 63, Para 2 of the current MoI Act.*
[7] *Art. 63, Para 1, Sections 1-7 of the current MoI Act.*

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.1. Access to Legal Aid

The implementation of the project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities" coincided with significant changes in the legal framework that guarantees access to counsel. Before January 1, 2006, the right to legal defense by an assigned counsel or a special representative was regulated by three acts: the Penal Procedure Code (promulgated State Gazette (SG), No. 89 of 15.11.1974, revoked), the Civil Procedure Code (SG, No 12 of 8.02.1952) and the Public Health Act (SG, No 70 of 10.08.2004). Under the legal provisions in force at that time, the persons detained under Art. 70 of the MoI Act (SG, No 122 of 19.12.1997, revoked) had the right to a defense counsel but were not eligible for legal defense financed by the State. Art. 30, Para 4 of the Constitution (SG, No 56 of 13.07.1991) stipulates that everyone shall be entitled to legal counsel from the moment of detention or from the moment of being charged. In compliance with this constitutional provision, Art. 70, Para 5 of the MoI Act (revoked) guarantees to detained persons the right to legal defense. It should be noted that this right was established with the adoption of the now revoked MoI Act back in 1997, i.e. at the time the project was launched, this provision must have been quite familiar to lead to contradictory practices.

After January 1, 2006, the appointment of ex officio counsel was to a great extent dealt with in the Legal Aid Act (SG, No 79 of 4.10.2005). The Legal Aid Act contains two provisions with regard to police detention that change significantly the previously existing regime. First of all, Art. 28, Para 2 stipulates that any person detained by the police for 24 hours shall have the right to an assigned counsel when he or she cannot authorize an attorney by him/herself. Unlike other cases when an ex officio counsel is appointed, in the case of police detention the person is not required to prove the existence or non-existence of particular circumstances to receive legal aid. In civil and criminal procedure, for example, before assigning a counsel, the judge should be convinced that the interest of the person is critically threatened, that a possible conviction may result in imprisonment for a term exceeding 10 years, or that the person cannot afford to hire an attorney.

In the case of police detention, virtually every person can receive legal aid, if he or she has not authorized an attorney by him/herself. A strict interpretation of the provisions of Art. 28, Para 2 can even lead us to the conclusion that every detained person is *obligatorily* assigned a counsel! The current practice, however, shows that the legal provision is being interpreted quite restrictively, i.e. an ex officio counsel may be appointed, if the person requires to have one and has not authorized an attorney by him/herself.

Under the project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities" volunteers tried to document the access to assigned counsel, the mechanisms for informing detained persons of their right to legal aid, particularly legal aid that is financed by the State, as well as the procedures for appointing an ex officio counsel. Previous

research of the Open Society Institute – Sofia suggested that the right to an assigned counsel in case of police detention, though guaranteed by legal provisions, is seldom implemented in practice at detention facilities. Custody visiting helped collect objective data, which to a great extent corroborate this finding and allow drawing conclusions about the main deficits of the system.

In a total of 223 visits made, custody visitors have not registered a single meeting or conference between an attorney and a detained person. This could be attributed to the time when visits were made – mainly after normal working hours and on weekends, but one cannot exclude the possibility that persons detained for 24 hours seldom benefit from their right to legal defense. Research on this issue is further complicated by the fact that entries in the various registers required under Instruction No I-167, and the register of visitors in particular, are made in such a way that it is impossible to establish who of the visitors was a lawyer and came to the police station to confer with his or her client, and who was a relative or friend of the detainee.

Based on the reports submitted by the custody visiting teams, the problems that limit the access of detained persons to legal aid can be provisionally grouped into five categories:

- lack of knowledge of the Legal Aid Act among police officers and detained persons;
- lack of conviction among police officers that legal defense is really necessary;
- logistical difficulties, and
- lack of premises for confidential meetings between counselors and their clients.

Lack of knowledge of the Legal Aid Act among police officers and detained persons is documented in many team reports. Furthermore, secondary legislation dealing with the conditions for police detention is not harmonized with the new legislative provisions. The text of the declaration under Annex 2 of Instruction No I-167 reads: "I am aware that I have the right to legal defense and I do/do not want to benefit from this right". It is obvious that a person who is not lawyer can hardly conclude that a legal opportunity exists for him or her to have an attorney appointed whose fee would be paid by the State budget.

In a team report on a visit to 1st RPD custody visitors have registered a conversation they had with a detained person who said that he would like to have legal defense but could not afford to hire a lawyer. When he was told by the custody visitors that he had the right to an assigned counsel, the detainee was surprised and claimed that no one had informed him about this.

Interviews with police officers suggest that they continue to believe that an ex officio counsel is appointed only when formal charges are brought against a person (rather than from the moment when he or she is detained, as the constitutional provisions stipulate). The case of a police officer from 7th RPD is quite illustrative: asked to comment about the access to legal aid, he stated that "meetings with a lawyer are carried out when the investigation proceeds to a higher level", i.e. when criminal proceedings against the detainee are initiated. An officer of 3rd RPD shared with custody visitors that "no ex officio counsel is provided to detainees; they are only provided with an opportunity to meet their own lawyer, if they have one".

Another problem identified during the independent custody visits is the **unwillingness** of some police officers to give detainees access to legal counsel. A detained person in 2nd RPD told custody visitors that he had requested a meeting with a lawyer but police officers replied that "for such a short time there is really no point". Another indicative example can be found in a team report on visits to 1st RPD: asked why he had denied the services of a lawyer, one detainee explained that when he was filling in the declaration, the police officers told him "write that you don't want".

Quite often police officers are not convinced that legal defense is really appropriate in case of detention under Art. 63 of the MoI Act (SG, No 17 of 24.02.2006). It should be noted that the

majority of team reports are based on interviews with Security Police officers. Informal talks with Criminal Police officers suggest that for many of them the presence of a lawyer during the initial "work" with the detainee is undesirable because lawyers might advise detained persons not to give any statements or might explain certain rights to them. Such a mindset raises some serious concerns, especially in view of the fact that persons detained for 24 hours are deprived of many procedural guarantees that the Penal Procedure Code otherwise provides.

In addition to the lack of knowledge of the Legal Aid Act and the unwillingness to implement its provisions into practice, the access to assigned counsel is also limited by **logistical problems.** It is true that until March-April 2006 the legal aid system and the network of on duty lawyers did not exist in the country. Experience shows, however, that even after this period, the appointment of ex officio defense is impeded by financial and organizational problems. Custody visitors persistently find that RPDs cannot make calls to mobile phones, which limits their possibility to get in touch with lawyers or bar councils.

A quite illustrative case has been documented in 6th RPD: a detainee complained to the custody visitors that he had been detained for several hours and no one had informed his relatives or a lawyer. Hearing about this, a police investigator gave the detainee his personal mobile phone to make the call.

In many cases police officers complain about the lack of access to mobile phones and claim that they usually use their personal phones to make calls. There is also one documented case in which the appointment of an ex officio counsel was denied because the request was made on a non-working day.

Quite often problems arise with the choice of an ex officio counsel to be assigned to a particular case. Before 2006 the common practice was that at the time of indictment the police investigator would appoint and summon personally a lawyer he or she knows (usually a former colleague). After January 1, 2006 such a practice is inapplicable. It is unclear for police officials which lawyers they could appoint as ex officio counsels and how should they be summoned.

A positive practice has been documented in several RPDs, which have posted a list of on-duty lawyers provided by the Sofia Bar Association in the office of the police officer on duty. According to one team report, the on-duty lawyers on such lists have provided more than one fixed line telephone number, which means that the logistical obstacles to guaranteeing the right to legal defense are not that serious.

A particularly serious obstacle to the effective exercise of the right to legal defense is the **lack of premises** for confidential meetings between lawyers and detained persons. In most RPDs there are no designated premises for visits or meetings with a lawyer. Such meetings are usually held in premises that are normally used for other purposes: for example, in the document processing office, in the reception rooms for citizens, in instruction and training halls, etc. While interviewing police officers, custody visitors have documented cases in which meetings with lawyers have been held on the staircase or in the lobby of the RPD or even in the custody premises with the detainee talking behind the bars.

In 7th RPD a police officer told custody visitors that meetings with lawyers are held in the office of the police investigator!

The lack of designated premises for meetings between lawyers and detained persons raises not only issues about the access to legal aid, but also doubts as to the efficiency of the defense. In the cases mentioned above, it is obvious that the communication between a lawyer and his or her client may come to the knowledge of third parties, which creates conditions for violating the client-lawyer confidentiality (Art. 33 of the Bar Act).

To summarize, custody visiting in RPDs of Sofia Police Directorate showed that the access of per-

sons detained for 24 hours to legal aid is more of a formality than a reality. The implementation of the Legal Aid Act and the provision of ex officio defense to detainees are particularly problematic. During their visits, custody visitors have been unable to document a single case in which the right under Art. 28, Para 2 of the Legal Aid Act was effectively exercised. A report from September 20, 2006 lists a case in which a police officer declared that he would secure a lawyer only if the detainee gave him the telephone number of one. This example shows that 9 months after the entry into force of the Legal Aid Act, the right to ex officio defense does not apply to persons detained under Art. 63 of the MoI Act. The lack of effective mechanisms for appointing ex officio lawyers to a great extent diminishes the right to appeal the legality of detention – Art. 63, Para 4.

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.2. Access to Medical Assistance

Persons detained by the police under the MoI Act are entitled by law to have access to medical assistance. This is regulated in Art. 18, Para 1 of Instruction I-167 of 23.07.2003, which states: "Detained persons shall be acquainted with the legal grounds for their detention, as well as legal responsibilities and rights, immediately after the detention:", while subsection 1 of the same paragraph specifically mentions the "right to medical assistance".

In practice this means that when a person requests a medical examination, a doctor should be summoned immediately and it should not be up to the police officers to decide on their own discretion whether such request is justifiable or not. Moreover, the right to medical assistance should include the right of the detainee to be examined, if he or she so requires, by a doctor of his or her choice.

Under the project, the access of detained persons to medical assistance in the nine RPDs of Sofia was evaluated based on entries made in the **Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register**, as well as based on interviews with the detainees. It is difficult, however, to draw a reliable conclusion on the access to legal aid only by reviewing the respective registers because RPDs have different practices in keeping such documentation and sometimes registers do not contain all necessary data to allow for adequate inspection.

For example, in 4th RPD the dates on which medical examinations were performed are written down in the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register, although there is no separate column for that purpose. In 4th and 8th RPD the medical referrals issued by the emergency units or the MoI Hospital are attached to the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register or are kept in a separate folder to the register. Such practices make finding the necessary information on a particular person easier and are recognized by custody visitors as a good example that could be adopted by other RPDs.

On the whole, it could be noted that emergency medical assistance, when needed, is provided to detained persons according to the general procedure applicable to all citizens. Emergency medical assistance is free of charge, cannot be denied by the hospital ER departments, and there is a developed infrastructure in Sofia for the provision of such services.

A serious problem however occurs with the provision of non-urgent medical assistance. The majority of detainees have no health insurance and there are no legal provisions, stipulating which doctor should be summoned in such cases and who should pay for the examination. RPDs have not established a common practice in this respect.

Custody visitors have identified three major deficiencies with regard to the access of detainees to medical assistance.

There are many cases in which detained persons had specifically requested to be seen by a doctor when they filled in their declarations under Annex 2 of Instruction No I-167, but no medical examinations were arranged because police officers decided upon their own judgment that this was not necessary.

The second problem identified by custody visitors has to do with the unjustifiable delay in the provision of medical assistance.

In 2nd RPD, for example, one detainee had requested in his declaration to be examined by a doctor, stating that he had kidney problems. However, no such examination was recorded in the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register. Asked to provide some explanation, the officer on duty said that "a detainee has the right to medical assistance, but a doctor is called only if it is judged that he or she really needs a medical examination".

For instance, in 4th RPD one detainee had requested to be seen by a doctor at 1.30 p.m. At 5.35 p.m. when the custody visiting team came to the RDP, no doctor had yet arrived. At the insistence of custody visitors a phone call was made to the emergency unit and 10 min. later a medical team came to examine the detainee.

The third group of problems relate to the fact that quite often police officers detain persons who are addicted to drugs, have withdrawal symptoms and/or suffer from communicable diseases. Custody visitors have found that such persons are often placed in the same detention premises with other detainees, which undoubtedly sets conditions for spreading viral diseases or creating a high stress environment, given that people in withdrawal are often prone to violent behavior. Custody visitors have also established that police officers are not specifically trained to work with people with withdrawal symptoms.

In another case in 4th RPD the detainee M. A. was found to have heroin withdrawal symptoms and Hepatitis B. The related documentation on his condition was attached to the detention order and the findings were entered into the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register. Nevertheless, the detainee was kept in the cell and had spent the night in premises together with other detainees.

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.3. Reported Cases Involving Abuse of Force on Behalf of the Police

In their interviews with detained persons custody visitors have documented a number of complaints about the behavior of police officers. The majority of them have to do with refusal to provide food or blankets, failure to communicate with relatives or lawyers, refusal to provide access to medical assistance. The specifics of these problems are discussed in the relevant sections of this report.

Here we will focus only on reported cases that involve abuse of force on behalf of the police, while discussing the misuse of police detention powers from a broader perspective. The most significant problems in this respect have to do not so much with the number and frequency of documented cases of police abuse, but rather with the established lack of reliable mechanisms for conducting internal investigations of reported cases.

Throughout the duration of the project, there were only five cases (in a total of 223 visits) in which detained persons have shared with custody visitors that they had been beaten at the time of detention or at the RPD premises. In two other cases the handcuffs of the detainees were attached to a bar that was placed too high on the wall and the position of the body caused pain and swelling.

When compared to reports of human rights organizations from the late 1990s, these findings, albeit with a high degree of conditionality, may lead to the conclusion that police abuse has since reduced. However, such conclusion is compromised for several reasons:

- According to custody visitors detained persons are afraid to report cases of violence against them because they see no guarantees that their case will be investigated in a fair and unbiased manner.
- Quite often interviews with detainees are held close enough for a police officer to hear the complaints and this compromises the confidentiality of communication.
- The practice of independent custody visiting is quite new and has not become popular enough. Detained persons are not aware of the volunteers' role and mission and are not sure whether it would make any sense to talk about the violence they had suffered. In most cases it is difficult to establish trust in these talks.

Hence, despite the small number of documented complaints alleging abuse of force, we believe that no conclusion can be drawn that this practice has been eliminated in the Bulgarian police.

Documented allegations for battery at the time of detention or after

S. G. S. who had been detained in 1st RPD (report of July 2006) told custody visitors that he had been beaten "upstairs", referring probably to the offices of operational officer where he was interrogated. According to the volunteers he bore no visible signs of trauma.

D. K., who had been detained in 1st RPD (report of February 2006) claimed that he had been beaten at the time of detention; he had a plaster above his eyebrow.

According to a report submitted in April 2006, A. N. S. detained in 5th RPD claimed that he had been beaten and there had been a total of 6 police officers in the interrogation room.

According to same report a person detained in 5th RPD under order No 196 of April 19, 2006 had received a bruise to the eye at the time of detention.

In 7th RPD a detainee claimed that he had been beaten (report of April 2006) but according to the volunteers he had no visible signs of violence whatsoever.

Documented cases of detainee handcuffs being locked to a bar in violation of legal provisions

Two isolated cases of detainees being handcuffed to a bar were documented. In one of the cases (report of March 2006) A. A. detained in 2nd RPD claimed that he had been taken out of the detention premises and handcuffed to the bar for one hour as a punishment for requesting a lawyer.

In the second case, D. A. A., detained in 2nd RPD, was found by the custody visitors outside the detention premises (a cell in the hallway) with his hand being handcuffed to a rail placed more than 2 m. high on the wall (report of March 2006). By the time the case was documented, the detainee had been in this position for approximately 2 hours, according to his own statement. His feet were visibly bloated and his hand was swollen. Custody visitors found that there is another bar in the hallway, placed lower on the wall, but it was not used by the police officers.

Extension of the established maximum term of detention

Custody visitors have documented one case in which a detained person was transferred from one RPD to another and a new detention order was issued with the time of entry to the second RPD being registered as time of detention (report of September 2006, P. P. detained in 4th RPD and transferred to 6th RPD).

The custody visiting methodology does not allow drawing unconditional conclusions on the spread of such practices.

Use of police detention as a form of punishment

Several cases have been documented in which detained persons were kept in the RPD for the night, although no operational activities are performed with them. The consolidated report of August 2006, for example, mentions a case in 9th RPD where a juvenile detainee was meant to spend the entire night in custody; his parents were informed but no operational activities were performed with him.

A similar case was registered in 1st RPD where two women detainees claimed that they had been told they should spend the night on the bench in the hallway where they had been held in custody (consolidated report of June 2006).

Specifics regarding the investigation of such cases

The abovementioned cases were reported to the Sofia Police Directorate. Information on the measures taken is scarce and fragmentary. In one of the cases the Sofia Police Directorate refused to take action because the person in question was not identified in the report (report of January 2006 on a case in 9th RPD).

With regard to the case of D. A. A., no information exists in 2nd RPD on any inspection being made. The reply received from the Sofia Police Directorate describes in detail the specifics of the case - why was the person detained, what kind of police investigation activities were performed and what progress has been made on them – but this information is not relevant to the findings of the report.

The Sofia Police Directorate has informed custody visitors about several random tests performed with police officers to establish whether

they are aware of the legal framework, as well as about three targeted inspections made to establish the facts regarding allegations for violations. On July 7, 2006 an inspection was made with regard to the handcuff bar placed too high on the wall in 2nd RPD. No details were provided as to what did the inspection involve. Inspectors established that there is a bar placed 1 m. high on the wall, which is irrelevant to the findings of the report. It remains unclear whether any other facts were established.

Inspections have been made in 1st and 5th RPD with regard to allegations for violence against D. K. and A. N. S. It was established that police officers from 1st RPD did use force and auxiliary devices (handcuffs) but no mention is made whether this was done lawfully or not. The inspection in 5th RPD established that when asked to make a written statement, the detained persons no longer sustained their allegations that violence was exercised against them.

In conclusion it could be noted that information on such inspections and their outcomes are extremely scarce and generally unsatisfactory. It is true that reports need time to prepare and hence, information on any violations documented by the volunteers reach the relevant MoI units approximately 2 months after the events, which probably makes inspections difficult.

However, available data suggest that the units of the police lack a clearly established mechanism for verifying and responding to allegations for breach of conduct. The lack or the inaccessibility and non-transparency of such mechanism make people reluctant to report cases of abuse and generally undermine confidence in the police.

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.4. Provision of food to Detainees

The provision of food to detained persons is regulated in Art. 44 of Instruction I-167 of 23.07.2003, which states:

(1) Every detainee shall be supplied with meals during the generally accepted time for breakfast, lunch and dinner in accordance with the Regulation for internal order in detention premises.

(2) Control shall be maintained while supplying meals for detained persons, observing the health, possible diets or medical prescriptions.

(3) Meal supplied shall not be in controversy with detainees' religion.

Visits under the project established that Art. 44 of Instruction I-167 is violated in all RPDs on the territory of Sofia. The detainees themselves do not even expect that they are entitled to food; police officers do not inform them about this right and are themselves unaware whether there is an established mechanism for implementing that right. In most cases police officers told custody visitors that there are no special budget allocations to cover the provision of food to detainees.

It is a common practice to give food to detained persons only if they can pay for it with their own money or if their relatives can bring in some for them. Food for juvenile and minor detainees is also secured through parents or legal guardians. Custody visitors have also documented several cases in which police officers bought some snack for the detained minors, paying with their own money.

For example, in 2nd RPD a team of custody visitors interviewed the detainee A. A. who had been held in custody for more than 18 hours and was not offered food or the opportunity to pay for a snack with his own money.

In 7th RPD custody visitors interviewed a person who had been detained for 23.5 hours. For all this time he had not been offered food and had not eaten because he had no money. Similar cases were registered in 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th and 9th RPDs, where detained persons had no money and no relatives in Sofia.

After the first monthly reports under the project, in which this problem was specifically underlined, some positive developments occurred. In June custody visitors established that RPDs had received directions with regard to the provision of food to detained persons, but the procedure was yet to be clarified and hence, Art. 44 of Instruction I-167 was still not being implemented in practice.

In an effort to help refine the procedure, custody visitors recommended in their consolidated monthly report that a tender be organized under the Public Procurement Act to purchase centrally some provisions (snacks, soft drinks and sugar products) and distribute them among all RPDs on the territory of Sofia. According to the proposal, provisions (in standard rations) would be documented within RPDs through special receipts signed by the detainees, while at the central level a weekly report would be complied by the provisions officer based on information submitted by police officers on duty at the end of each day or after the daily briefing. The proposal was adopted by the General Police Directorate and the Sofia Police Directorate and was essentially implemented.

In July the directions with regard to the provision of food to detained persons were brought into practice, but were implemented chaotically without clear rules.

For example, in 1st RPD food is provided only to detainees who would spend the night in custody because, as the officer on duty explained, "the packages will not be enough for everybody".

In 3rd RPD juvenile detainees R. N. T. and D. N. O. and M. G. P., who were interviewed by custody visitors, had not been offered or provided food under Instruction I-167, although two of them had been held in custody from midnight, while the third had been detained since the morning. The officer on duty explained that "the detainees will be given food but because the package is only one, for the entire day, it will be provided in the evening."

This runs contrary to Art. 44, Para 1 of Instruction I-167, according to which each detained person should be provided food at "the generally accepted time for breakfast, lunch and dinner".

In order to solve this problem, custody visitors again proposed in their consolidated monthly report that food be divided into three smaller rations – for breakfast, lunch and dinner, rather than be provided in one package for the entire day. This proposal was also accepted and implemented into practice in most RPDs.

However, until the end of the project food provision practices were not standardized in all RPDs and there were still problems.

A case was registered in 1st RPD where detainee K. Y. was held in custody for more that 10 hours and no food was offered to him. The officer on duty stated that "food is given only in the evening and only to detained persons who are going to spend the night in the RPD." Another detainee in 1st RPD, S. G. C. was left without food. Talking to custody visitors, the officer on duty commented that "detainees are offered food packages but they refuse to eat them because they have health problems or are choosy".

Custody visitors have indeed documented cases in which detainees had refused to eat the food they had been offered. The reasons for this are that the food in the packages is not appropriate for the health condition of the detainees or the packages are not provided at the normal breakfast, lunch and dinner hours. Some detainees also claim that the portions are too small or the quality of the food is not good enough.

Custody visitors find that activities under the project, as well as the proactiveness and flexibility of the General Police Directorate and the Sofia Police Directorate, have led to some progress in introducing a methodology for providing food to detained persons and these developments are seen as very positive.

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.5. Organization and Management of Detention Facilities

Instruction I-167 accords particular attention to the organization and equipment of the premises where detained persons are held in custody and where all related activities of police officers and detainees are performed. Art. 63, Para 1 of the MoI Act specifies the grounds on which a person may be detained by the police, while Art. 63, Para 2 stipulates that a person's freedom of movement may be restricted for no more than 24 hours by accommodating him or her in "special premises". The MoI Act does not specify in further detail what should be considered "special premises" and thus delegates to the Minister of the Interior the powers to regulate in detail the matter regarding the organization and management of police detention facilities.

The provisions of Instruction I-167 should be analyzed in view of the protection of fundamental human rights. The MoI Act provides for imposing temporary restrictions on one such right – the right to free movement – as an exception of the general principle proclaimed in Art. 30, Para 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria. Although there are specific legal grounds for restricting the rights of citizens, it should be kept in mind that police detention does not constitute a punitive measure and should not be regarded as a sanction.

This is precisely the purpose of Instruction I-167: to regulate the organization of police detention facilities so that the protection of the fundamental rights of detained persons might be guaranteed. For this particular reason the Instruction stipulates that there shall be two types of premises: detention premises and service premises. Art. 5 of the Instruction further specifies four types of service premises:

- interrogation premises;
- premises for visits and meetings with lawyers;
- sanitation and hygiene premises;
- reception and document processing premises.

Chapter III of the Instruction regulates in detail the organization of detention premises and of all types of service premises. It deserves a notice that the provisions are extremely precise and set extremely high standards for the organization of premises. Probably because of the obvious discrepancies between the objective reality and the regulatory standards § 3 of the Transitory and Final Provisions contain the unusual stipulation that any inconsistencies with regard to the required equipment of the premises shall be eliminated by January 1, 2009.

An example of the high regulatory requirements are the provisions, which stipulate that detention premises should have direct access to sunlight, temperature should be no less than 18 degrees C, and there should be a video monitoring system in place. The Instruction sets even higher standards for the detention premises used to hold juvenile and minor persons in custody, although the MoI Act does not specifically provide for such a distinction. The service premises are also regulated in detail. Thus, for example, the interrogation premises should be soundproofed, not threatening in appearance, the chairs and table should be steadily fixed to the floor and/or to the walls.

The high regulatory standards for the detention and service premises are in sharp contrast with the facts established by the custody visitors.

A positive finding that should be mentioned is that no RPD uses detention premises located underground.

In all other aspects however the detention and service premises are far from meeting the requirements set in Instruction I-167. It should be noted that deviations from the regulatory standard vary significantly among different RPDs. In RPDs located in relatively newer buildings (mainly 6th and 9th RPDs) the conditions are much better, but this does not mean to suggest that all the requirements of the Instruction have been met.

Custody visitors found that not all RPDs have detention premises for juvenile and minor persons. Interviewed police officers claim that the material conditions do not depend on them and "there is simply no way to allocate" detention premises for juvenile and minor persons. That is why it is a common practice to transport detained children for the night to RPDs, which have designated premises for such detainees.

Some reports however indicate that during the day children are kept outside the designated premises, usually around staircases, in corridors or in lobbies where there is much traffic, the stress is considerable, it is cold and draughty.

The situation with women detainees is quite similar. Given that the greatest majority of detained persons are men, women are considered to be somewhat of an exception.

Asked where do detained women stay, a police officer from 2nd RPD replied: "For the women, there is a bench with a handcuff bar in the hallway where they also spend the night".

Virtually every report submitted by custody visitors raises issues with regard to the hygiene in detention premises and sanitary facilities. The ventilation and heating of the premises is in most cases left to circumstances. Some team reports document the existence of dangerous objects in sanitary facilities, which is strictly prohibited under Art. 67 of Instruction I-167. In one RPD custody visitors have found two detention premises located on different floors. As a rule, on weekends the detention and service premises are not being cleaned.

Many reports submitted by custody visitors note the extremely poor material conditions in which police activities are being carried out. Police officials themselves have often expressed resentment over the quality of material facilities. A number of reports document cases in which police investigators or operational officers work under primitive conditions, sharing an office with several colleagues. On the whole, the hygiene and the work environment is depressing and stressful in all RPD units. One should mention again the good example of 6th and 9th RPDs where detention facilities offer far better conditions than the average.

No RPD on the territory of the capital has all the service premises required under the Instruction. The problem is particularly serious with regard to interrogation premises. In 2nd RPD there are in fact no reception and document processing premises. In many RPDs there are no premises for visits and meetings with lawyers. The negative consequences of this are analyzed in the section 3.1. of the report.

What stands out as particularly alarming among all problems identified by custody visitors is the lack of special interrogation premises. The provisions of Instruction I-167 stipulate that each RPD should have separate premises for interrogation of detained persons. This is implied in Art. 80 of the Instruction, which regulates in detail the requirements for interrogation premises: soundproofing, basic and emergency lighting, recording equipment, a one-way mirror, if necessary. It is obvious that in issuing Instruction I-167, the Minister of Interior did not envisage that interrogations could be held in all premises within the RPD, but only in those that are specially equipped for this purpose.

The findings of the project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities" show that in all visited RPDs interrogation of detained persons is held in randomly chosen premises, usually the offices of police investigators. Quite often when the detainee was not present in the detention facility, the explanation of the officer on duty was that "the person was summoned to the offices" of operational officers or police investigators. The practice of interrogating detained persons in different premises within the RPD disables much of the guarantee mechanisms, which Instruction I-167 is meant to establish. In 7th RPD interrogations are even held in a different building (the department is accommodated in several adjacent buildings).

The fact that detained persons can be interrogated in different premises within the RPD raises doubts as to the ability to effectively control the protection of human rights or guarantee the legality of crime investigation activities. This practice makes both civil and institutional monitoring of human rights protection quite pointless.

There is no entry in the registers that could help trace where exactly the interrogation of a detainee is held. Under such circumstances allegations for physical abuse during interrogation are unavoidable rather than occasional.

Talking to custody visitors, one detainee in 1st RPD claimed that he was beaten up in "the rooms upstairs".

With the current organization of interrogation activities, it is impossible to verify whether such allegations are true. Even with the best of will, the police cannot prove that nothing has happened in "the rooms upstairs". When there are no designated interrogation premises, custody visits cannot serve a mechanism to eliminate such occurrences.

The practice of interrogating detainees in different premises not only interferes with the rights of interrogated persons, but can also compromise the quality of investigation.

As it was already mentioned, police investigators share their offices with 3-4 or more colleagues. Given the nature of the work performed, it is virtually impossible to create an environment consistent with the requirements of Instruction I-167, i.e. non-threatening and non-stressful for the interrogated person. In such conditions, it is doubtful how one would be able to collect quality evidence for a crime.

The negative effect of this practice is multiplied by the lack of regulations on interrogation during police detention. The Penal Procedure Code contains a number of procedural guarantees that interrogations would be held in a lawful manner and possibilities for involuntary statements or testimony would be limited. These rules however do not apply to interrogations conducted by the police before the initiation of criminal proceedings. So there are no formal criteria whatsoever to judge whether an interrogation technique or method applied is lawful or ethical. There are many indications that the Bulgarian police uses in its investigation activities some controversial methods to persuade persons to provide explanations or statements. **The lack of specific regulations on interrogation, as well as the practice of interrogating detained persons in different premises within the RPD raises doubts as to the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of detained persons.**

The lack of designated premises for conducting interrogations is usually explained with insufficient financial resources, limited material facilities and other objective reasons. It strikes as odd, however, that designated premises for interrogation do not exist even in RPDs, which have all other premises required under Instruction I-167. So it is not just a matter of resources. These findings suggest that there is probably not enough will to implement the provisions of Instruction I-167 with regard to the organization of interrogation activities.

3. Main Findings of Custody Visitors

3.6. Maintenance of Detention Documentation and registers

Custody visitors under the project "Independent Custody Visiting in Police Detention Facilities" have access to the Register of Persons Detained by MoI Units, to detention orders and declarations confirming the awareness of detainees of their rights, to the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities, the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register, as well as to other documents.

Visits made under the project between December 2005 and September 2006 found **the following weaknesses with regard to keeping detention documentation in order:**

- **discrepancy between documents and detention registers;**
- **use of registers whose pages have not been numbered and bound with a string;**
- **existence of old registers or registers kept in violation of Instruction I-167;**
- **additions or deletions in detention registers that have not been verified with the signature of the officer who made the correction;**
- **irregularly or improperly kept detention registers, missing entries in some sections of the registers.**

At the start of the project custody visitors documented the existence of detention **registers with unnumbered pages, not bound with a string and with no opening date entered.**

Team reports from January 2006 list the following shortcomings: "in 4th RPD the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities and the Inspections Register are not bound with a string", "in 3rd RPD no opening date is entered in the Register of Visits and Received Food and Non-food Items", while in 7th RPD the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register, the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities, the Register of Confiscated, Received and Spent Amounts from/for Detained Persons and the Register of Visits and Received Food and Non-food Items all have no opening date entered. In 2nd RPD the register that was given to the team for inspection was old and not in compliance with Instruction I/167.

These shortcomings in documentation management were corrected, as recorded in the April monthly report, which states: "Custody visitor teams identify a positive trend: in most RPDs all registers and books under examination now have they pages numbered and bound with a string".

In **detention registers** custody visitors found discrepancies in the time of detention listed in detention orders and that entered in the register, corrections to the time of detention with no signature of the officer that made them, missing entries in some sections of the register.

The discrepancies between detention orders and entries in the detention register can be illustrated with examples from many team reports submitted by custody visitors. A team report from February, for instance, states: "Some of the teams that visited 2nd and 6th RPD found discrepancies in the time of detention listed in detention orders and that entered in the Register of Persons Detained by MoI Units. At the time of the visit to 6th RPD such discrepancies were found in the documentation on four out of six detainees".

Corrections with no signature of the officer that made them were documented in a team report on a July visit to 5th RPD: "There are corrections made with correction fluid with no signature of the person that made them". A team report on a September visit to 4th RPD mentions the same problem: "The Register of Persons Detained by MoI Units contains corrections to entries No 243, 245, 271, 273, 274, 275 that have not been verified with the signature of the officer that made them".

Having examined a number of **detention orders**, custody visitors found that **the grounds for detention were not written in full text but were entered only as a reference to some article of the MoI Act or were not entered at all.** In such cases, if the police officer presenting the detention order fails to explain to the detainee why he or she is being detained, there is a great chance that they would not understand on what grounds they are being held in custody.

Custody visitors have also seen orders, in which **no mention has been made of the fact that the detained person had been released.**

Quite often custody visitors have come across copies of **orders that had been written on carbon paper** and are therefore illegible with indiscernible date, time and grounds of detention.

Typical omissions in detention orders have been documented in a team report from 4th RPD, which states:

"In the detention order for N. I. issued in July, the time of detention has been changed several times with no signature of the officer that made the correction; the legal provision under which the person was detained has not been entered; there is also no verbal description of the grounds for detention, i. e. there is no information whatsoever to suggest why was the person detained".

Lack of verbal description of the grounds for detention was also found in detention orders examined in 4th and 6th RPD in September. In 1st and 3rd RPD detention orders contained no information on the legal provision under which the person was detained. Some of the copies of detention orders provided to custody visitors in 4th RPD were written on carbon paper and were almost illegible.

The most common finding with regard to the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities is that **entries in this register are made only when the detainee is taken outside the RPD building, while other exits such as for using sanitary facilities, meeting with a relative or a lawyer, seeing the police investigator or having a medical examination are not registered at all.** This is documented in many team reports.

A report from April 2006 states: "In 1st RPD entries in the register are made only when the person leaves the RPD building". A report from May 2006 reads: "In 3rd RPD the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities is kept by the guarding officer and all instances in which a detained person is taken out to use sanitary facilities or to have a meal are diligently recorded. There is no practice, however, to register instances in which the detainee is taken out for an interrogation, a medical examination, etc.

The findings of custody visitors suggest that by August the Register of Detained Persons Convoyed away from Detention Facilities was regularly and accurately kept in most RPDs but some sections of the register were still left empty.

The most common finding with regard to the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register is that **there are a lot of discrepancies and mistakes in this register because it is being kept by the doctors and not by the police officers.** A typical case is to have a detailed diagnosis entered but no name of the person who was examined.

A positive development with regard to the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register was documented in 5th RPD where recent entries have been made by police officers and only undersigned by the doctors. Thus, the name of the officer who attended the medical examination is also recorded.

In 2nd, 6th, 8th and 7th RPD the teams still come across faults in filling in the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register. Sometimes the hospital from which the medical team came is not entered. In 7th RPD there are cases in which the name of the police officer present during the medical examination at the time of detention or later on is not recorded. In 1st, 2nd and 6th RPD the number and date of the detention order against the examined person is not registered. In 6th and 9th RPD there are missing diagnoses in the register.

A typical problem with most detention registers is that not all sections are filled in. Custody visitors have documented such cases with **the Register of Visits and Received Food and Non-food Items and the Register of Confiscated, Received and Spent Amounts from/for Detained Persons** where the most common omission is that the Citizen Identification Number of the detainees is not entered. Other shortcomings in keeping detention documentation can also be found in these two registers. There are also registers that are not kept in compliance with Instruction I-167 or are kept irregularly.

Reports from the first months after the start of the project testify to the fact that detention registers were not kept regularly. This is documented in a team report from August, which states: "The general impression of the teams that visited 7th RPD is that Register of Confiscated, Received and Spent Amounts from/for Detained Persons is not kept regularly. It has been opened on January 3, 2006 and contains only 16 entries."

The Register of Confiscated, Received and Spent Amounts from/for Detained Persons and the Register of Visits and Received Food and Non-food Items can serve as an example of registers kept in violation of Instruction I-167. In December 2005, at the start of the project, custody visitors found that in 1st RPD **the Register of Confiscated, Received and Spent Amounts from/for Detained Persons and the Register of Visits and Received Food and Non-food Items** are in fact one register in which both kinds of data are entered. Police officers explained that the form is different and is not being filled in because detained persons usually keep their money with themselves and this is documented in the search protocol. These findings were repeatedly mentioned in the monthly reports under the project. However, as of July 2006 the situation remained unchanged.

Another violation of the Instruction is that no receipts are written for the personal items and money taken from or recovered to the detained person. This is documented in team reports on visits to 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 4th, 7th and 8th RPD. Police officers explain that this is not necessary because such information is recorded in the search protocol.

In most RPDs the **Inspection Registers** have been regularly kept since the start of the project. In most cases they contain only entries made by custody visitors. In 3rd RPD there are two inspection registers, one of which is provisional, which is again in breach of Instruction I-167.

In most cases custody visitors have not identified any discrepancies or omissions in filling in the **declarations on the rights of the detainees.** Problems with the protection of detainees' rights rather exist with regard to the format and the content of the declaration. For example, the right to a medical examination can be realized only if the detained person names a doctor of his or her choice and covers the cost at his or her expense, but there is no section in the declaration form where the name of the doctor or any contact information could be entered. The right to ex officio defense still does not exist in the declaration, which means that if police officers do not inform detainees of their rights but just point to them the place where they should sign, the purpose of the declaration would be defeated. Many detainees are partially or totally illiterate and do not understand where and why they place their signatures. Thus, from a formal point of view, the documentation is filled in accurately but in fact the persons are not aware of their rights.

Faults in filling in the declarations on the rights of the detainees have been documented in several cases. For example, in examining declarations in 2nd RPD, custody visitors found that although the detainee K. P. has requested in his declaration that he would like to have a medical examination, no such examination was recorded in the Medical Examination and Prescriptions Register. The declaration filed by N.A. contains no information on any health problems of the detainee and there is no signature of the person. In the declaration filed by K. G. there is no mention whether the person would like to benefit from the services of a lawyer or not.

Since the start of the custody visiting project, there have been some positive developments with regard to the detention documentation kept in RPDs. The registers, which at the beginning of the project were not kept regularly, now contain more entries. Some of the good practices, which custody visitors identified, were multiplied in all RPDs to optimize the work of police officers[8].

However, there are still some systematic omissions and discrepancies in the detention documents and registers. In most cases police officers explain these faults with the shortage of staff and the great workload in RPDs. They also mention that the documentation required under Instruction I-167 is too extensive to be managed with the existing number of staff.

[8] *See Letter from the Sofia Police Directorate dated 07.09.2006.*

4. Recommendations

Legal Framework for Police Detention

1. Introduce specific provisions in the MoI Act prohibiting torture or inhumane or humiliating treatment during detention.
2. Impose a specific obligation on police authorities to inform detained persons of their rights in a comprehensible language.
3. Regulate interrogation activities during detention.

Access to Legal Aid

4. Modify the text of the declaration under Annex 2 of Instruction I-167, so that detained persons might be informed in a comprehensible language of their right to ex officio defense.
5. Establish an institutional mechanism for communication between the structural units of the Police, the bar councils and the National Legal Aid Bureau in order to guarantee equal access to justice by providing legal defense.

Access to Medical Assistance

6. Improve the legal framework with regard to the access of detained persons to medical assistance.
7. Introduce an effective mechanism to cover with public funds the cost of medical assistance provided to persons detained under the MoI Act.
8. Adopt regulations establishing specific procedures with regard to detainees suffering from contagious or chronic diseases and dependencies (place of sojourn, provision of medical assistance, police activities performed with them, etc.)

Reported Cases Involving Abuse of Force on Behalf of the Police

9. Modernize the system for considering and investigating citizens' claims regarding abuses or violations on behalf of police officers.
10. Ensure that investigations are transparent and open.
11. Introduce effective internal control mechanisms to guarantee the implementation of MoI regulations.

Provision of Food to Detainees

12. Adopt a regulation with specific guidelines as to when and how food should be provided to detained persons

Organization and Management of Detention Facilities

13. Improve the control over the management and appropriation of budget resources within the MoI.
14. Develop a comprehensive program for improving RPD material and technical facilities.

Maintenance of Detention Documentation and Registers

15. Modernize and computerize document management at RPDs.
16. Reduce and simplify the registers kept.
17. Train designated police officers to work with registers.