

# the storycloth

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## Executive Director Douglas A. Johnson Announces Resignation

After 23 years of dedicated service, Executive Director Douglas A. Johnson has announced his resignation from the Center for Victims of Torture. During his tenure Johnson has built an organization and an international movement that enables torture survivors to rebuild their lives. When he completes his work at CVT later this year, he will leave a legacy of tens of thousands of torture survivors healed, an international network of torture survivor rehabilitation centers and initiatives that have changed the

global response to torture and its effects. CVT's Board of Directors will launch a national search for Johnson's successor.

### Building a Healing Center

When Johnson was persuaded to take on the role of Executive Director of the fledgling Center for Victims of Torture in 1988, after managing the transnational boycott of the Nestlé Corporation and then earning a Master's Degree in Public and Private Management, he was only the second full-time employee.

*Executive Director Douglas A. Johnson is stepping down after 23 years of service. He leaves a legacy of hope and healing for torture survivors worldwide.*



PHOTO © STEPHANIE HYNES

Relocating to Minnesota, Johnson led a very small part-time and volunteer staff who cared for 15-20 survivors in a house on the University of Minnesota campus. "There were some Armenians, Chileans and a number of Guatemalans and Salvadorans," recalls Johnson. "And even then when I arrived, probably a third of our clients were from Ethiopia." In the very early years, Johnson led CVT through the development of healing services and staff. Together, the staff began to understand the devastating effects of torture and the key steps needed for survivors to rebuild their

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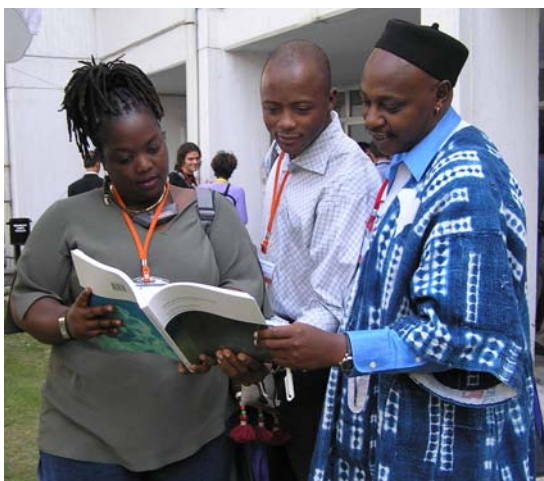


PHOTO © CVT

*Human rights activists admire the New Tactics workbook at the New Tactics International Symposium in Turkey in 2004. Over 400 human rights activists from 89 countries attended the training program.*

**Believing that the human rights movement requires a broad group of people and segments of the community, Johnson initiated the New Tactics in Human Rights project in 1999.**

*Our mission: To heal the wounds of torture on individuals, their families and their communities, and to stop torture worldwide.*



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## *Letter from the CVT Board of Directors*

Through his leadership at the Center for Victims of Torture these past 23 years, Doug Johnson has made a big difference in the world. We all owe him a debt of gratitude.

I recently travelled to Jordan and witnessed the impact CVT's work has on survivors who are rebuilding their lives after suffering unspeakable violence. CVT is not only helping hundreds of survivors, but it is also creating a network of highly skilled mental health counselors capable of continuing this work long into the future.

CVT Jordan is one example of Doug's vision for torture survivor rehabilitation put into action.

With over 500,000 torture survivors in the United States alone, Doug recognized early on our ability to extend care was overwhelmed by the need. So he created an organization that is constantly finding innovative and efficient ways to expand resources for survivors of torture.

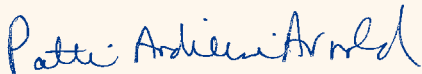
As a result, CVT has helped over 50 colleague organizations in the U.S. and abroad improve their services to survivors. Public policy efforts have resulted in the expansion of torture survivor rehabilitation, often in countries where it is most needed. Paraprofessional psychosocial counselors trained through CVT's international projects—like the one I visited in Jordan—continue to work with survivors in government and nonprofit organizations and at the International Criminal Court and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

At the same time, Doug has assembled an extraordinarily talented staff and will leave CVT with a strong foundation. Even in this difficult economy, CVT's financial position is solid.

This spring, the Board of Directors will begin a national search in consultation with an executive search firm. Doug will continue as Executive Director until his successor is chosen, which we expect will be at the end of the year.

We will keep you up-to-date on this process. In the meantime, please join me in thanking Doug for his extraordinary vision and his outstanding leadership. And watch for opportunities to share with Doug your appreciation for all he's done at the helm of CVT.

Sincerely,



Patti Andreini Arnold  
Chair, CVT Board of Directors

*Johnson built CVT into an organization that draws the respect and support of world leaders. Former Secretary of State Warren Christopher (center) and former Vice President Walter Mondale (left) greeted staff with Johnson in May 1993.*



**Patti Andreini Arnold**



PHOTO © CVT

# Executive Director Johnson Announces Resignation

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lives. Today, 250 survivors rebuild their lives each year at the St. Paul Healing Center.

## Healing Survivors Internationally

Building on our successful local work, Johnson led the launch of our international projects, beginning in the refugee camps in Guinea, West Africa in 1999. During Johnson's tenure, we have worked in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Jordan, and most recently in Uganda, Kenya and Cameroon. By hiring and training local counselors and working with local torture rehabilitation centers, we've helped 20,000 survivors rebuild their lives and communities.

## Advocating for Change

After Paul Wellstone was elected to the United States Senate in 1990, Johnson invited him to visit CVT. On the day of his visit, 20 clients came to tell the Senator their stories of torture in their home countries and the healing they experienced at CVT. It was the first step in creating legislation to support torture survivor centers.

Through Johnson's work with Senators Wellstone, Dave Durenberger (MN) and Rod Grams (MN) and Representatives Chris Smith (NJ) and Tom Lantos (CA), Congress passed the Torture Victims Relief Act in 1998. It is because of Johnson's leadership that the U.S. is the largest international donor to torture survivor rehabilitation. Johnson's legacy also includes the historic *Campaign to Ban Torture*, a partnership with senior military, national security, foreign policy and faith leaders that contributed to ending the U.S. use of torture post-9/11.

"Doug is an internationally



PHOTO © CVT

*Doug Johnson with former Senator Norm Coleman, Dr. Inge Genefke and former Senator Mark Dayton at a 2003 Washington, D.C., reception honoring International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.*

**Throughout his career, Johnson has collaborated with policy makers and other torture rehabilitation leaders to develop resources to end torture and to bring healing to more survivors.**

respected leader in torture rehabilitation," said Congressman Smith, a leading human rights lawmaker. "His input and expertise were invaluable in helping victims of torture recover physically and emotionally throughout the world. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with Doug over the years, helping repair the broken lives of torture victims."

## Nurturing the Torture Survivor Rehabilitation Movement

Under Johnson's leadership, CVT staff became experts in understanding the devastation of torture and contributing to the development of best practices in caring for survivors. We have brought that knowledge and expertise to the world through training projects in the United States and Africa. Through workshops, consultations, partnerships and training, CVT now builds the capacity of more than 50 colleague organizations in the U.S. and abroad.

"Doug's leadership in human rights is exemplified by his many contributions to fostering the significant growth of the torture rehabilitation movement throughout

the world," said Elisa Massimino, President and CEO, Human Rights First. "He has helped so many of us better understand torture rehabilitation's role in overcoming human rights abuses."

## Sharing New Tactics for Human Rights

Believing that solving complex human rights problems, including torture, requires a broad application of tactics, Johnson initiated the New Tactics in Human Rights project. This project promotes enhanced strategic thinking through research and dissemination of innovative approaches to human rights work, development of tools and resource materials, and in-person and online training opportunities. Today human rights activists worldwide participate in the project, learning from each other new ways to build just and respectful civil societies.

While Johnson will be leaving the day-to-day operations of CVT, the effects of his work will continue to ripple throughout the world. We are deeply grateful for his long-time commitment and tireless work in healing survivors and working for a world without torture.



# Human Rights Leader Honors CVT's 25th Year

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, paid a visit to CVT this fall in honor of our 25th anniversary. Moreno-Ocampo spoke to a gathering of human rights advocates, CVT supporters, staff and donors about his work with the ICC. As a prosecutor in Argentina, Moreno-Ocampo was involved in precedent-setting prosecutions of top military commanders for mass killings and other large-scale human rights abuses. In 2003, he was appointed

as first Prosecutor of the ICC. The ICC is an independent, international organization and not a part of the United Nations.

CVT thanks Thomson Reuters, Legal for sponsoring the event.

*Luis Moreno-Ocampo speaks at a reception honoring CVT.*



*ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo and former Vice President Walter Mondale.*

PHOTOS © LARRY MARCUS

## Your Annual Renewal Brings Healing and Hope

At the beginning of each year we ask our supporters to renew their financial support of the Center for Victims of Torture. Annual renewal gifts received early in the year have a big impact because they provide a financial foundation for our work throughout the year.

Thanks to your generosity, CVT cared for over 2,000 torture survivors last year—giving them both hope and healing as they sought to rebuild their lives. In 2011, we anticipate being called upon to care for even more torture survivors—here in the United States, in Africa and in the Middle East.

CVT's Annual Renewal Campaign will provide essential support for our on-going projects in Jordan and the Democratic Republic of Congo and help us establish our latest healing initiative in Kenya where we're caring for Somali and

Ethiopian refugees. And it will support our efforts to secure an investigation into the torture that was committed by U.S. personnel post-9/11—and accountability for those who ordered, authorized, or failed in their duty to prevent it.

So when you receive your renewal request, please respond generously. If you wish to renew your annual support online via our secure server, please visit [www.cvt.org](http://www.cvt.org) and click "DONATE NOW." Our website also makes it easy for you to become a member of CVT's monthly giving program, the Circle of Hope.

As always, you may call us toll-free at 1-877-265-8775 if you wish to use your credit card or if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued partnership in restoring the dignity of the human spirit.

## Make a Difference in the Life of a Survivor

Your generous support brings healing to torture survivors worldwide. CVT welcomes all types of donations.

- **Monthly Sustainers** allow for ongoing planning and delivery of healing services.
- **Planned Giving** continues your legacy of support.
- **Gifts of Stock** support survivors while offering tax benefits to donors.
- **In-Kind Donations** of specific items improve the lives of survivors.
- **Tribute Gifts** celebrate events or memorialize loved ones.

Donate online at [www.cvt.org](http://www.cvt.org), send a check to 649 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, or call 1-877-265-8775 for other ways to give. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to healing the wounds of torture.