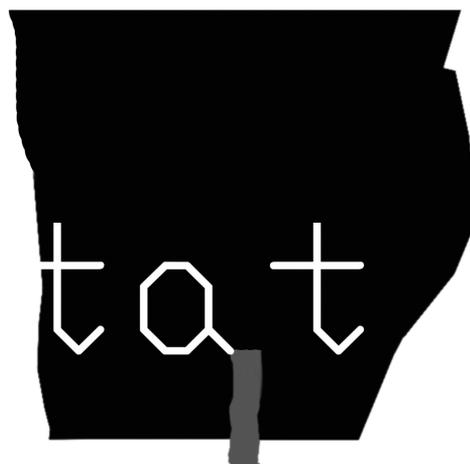


# Torture in the Basque Country



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**r e p o r t**

**Published by** Torturaren Aurkako Taldea

This report is based on the accounts of torture 46 Basque citizens sent to the TAT-Group Against Torture during part of 2004 and 2005.

The aim of this report is to denounce and spread knowledge of torture used by the Spanish state against the Basque Country. You can help us achieve this aim by taking this report and distributing it, photocopying it, uploading in onto the Net or broadcasting it. We would be grateful if you could do so.

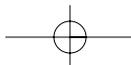
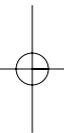
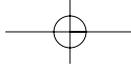
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# TESTIMONIES

## ARITZ TOTORIKA ESCANDON

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 25/10/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: GUADIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... The blows were constant... they hit me in the face and ribs, and whenever I fell over they would kick me to make me get up. The blows to the head were sharp, my whole body would move, but at the same time I could tell the instrument had been covered in something, it had a soft part, to avoid leaving marks. It could have been a big book with leather covers. I don't know how many times they hit me on the head, but I could feel the crown of my head getting hotter and hotter. After a while it was as if my head were about to burst. My neck, which had gone completely numb, felt as if it would not longer hold my head up; it hurt worse and worse. As the days passed, I suppose it was because of the fatigue and how sore my legs had become, the blows to the head even caused me pain in my knees. When they lowered the intensity of interrogation they would hit me with their hands, on the head or the back of my neck... they also kept hitting me on the ears with their hands. Some of these blows made me lose hearing. The sharp noise it caused increased with the buzzing inside my head; it was as if it were about to explode. This feeling wouldn't allow me to think or remember anything... that was when they shouted most in my ears, one of them on either side, asking different questions, and each one of them hitting me for not having answered his question... My heart beat at top speed, even my chest hurt. They also beat me constantly on my testicles. They would grab them and squash and pull and warn me not to scream. Sometimes my knees would buckle and they would hold me up and threaten to kick me until I stood up. When I did fall over they fulfilled their threat and kicked me twice in the back... I stood up instantly, whether it was reflexes or instinct, I do not know. The blows to the testicles came mostly when they stripped me naked. The fact that they had stripped me made me feel even more unprotected, humiliated, helpless... since my eyes were covered, I think those feelings were all amplified.

They would take advantage of the situation to insult me, to criticise my physical appearance and to make all kinds of sexual comments; from saying they were going to rape me by putting a broomstick up my arse to telling me they had arrested my girlfriend and they would rape her in front of me. I was humiliated and my rage just got worse, so I felt even more helpless. When they stripped me naked (during five interrogation sessions at the very least) they would take the opportunity to make sure I had no marks on my body... another thing they did all the time was to suffocate me by putting a plastic bag over my head. During the first session they threatened to use it... until they actually did. At first I would try to hold my breath, but they would beat me, elbow me in the ribs and the pit of my stomach to make me breathe out. Then I would try to breathe in or to get some air from the sides of the bag, but they would put their hands over my face to make the bag stick to my skin and prevent me from getting any air; then I would try to rip the bag with my teeth. When they saw this they would hit me over the head, both with what I think was the fat book I mentioned and with their hands. My heart would beat really fast, I was sweating... I would try to resist, to get the bag off me, to rip it... if it loosened at all, I could get a little breath, I was half choked. The very anxiety prevented me from breathing properly. They would tighten it again; grabbing me by the neck... they would keep the bag tight until I collapsed. Just before I passed out, they would let go of me. They would loosen the bag, but leave it over my head. With the anxiety, the sweat made the bag stick to my face, I couldn't get enough air, the air inside the bag was very heavy, I would get dizzy, my head hurt terribly and my legs would buckle under me. They made me pick the bag up, feel it and place it over my head. I was so nervous that when they made me pick the bag up I would get a choking feeling and my heartbeat would increase. When they used the bag on me they always held my hands against my legs. They also shouted in my ears...

They made me do stand ups to the point of exhaustion, until the pain in my legs was unbearable. Sometimes they would lean on my shoulders, increasing the effort and the pain; they would give me "little kicks" to one of my feet, making me lose my balance and rhythm... At the end of each session I was unable to stand by myself. My feet would slip in my own sweat. The sweat caused me to develop sores between my toes and on the soles of my feet. The forensic doctor justified this by saying that my trainers were not good quality. My feet were irritated; they were red, swollen and sore. I couldn't even bear to touch my legs because they were so congested and sore... just touching them with one finger caused awful pain. I couldn't bend my knees because of the pain. They made me do these stand-up exercises clothed, naked and even with a bag over my head (they wouldn't tighten it, but the heat was very uncomfortable and made it impossible for me to keep up the rhythm they demanded). While I did these stand ups they would hit me on the head for dripping sweat on the floor, for not keeping the

rhythm they wanted, for not going down as far as they had said, for having my legs spread too far or too close... They also constantly insulted me and shouted in my ears: "fat fuck, you are sweating like a pig"... or they would make ironic comments like saying I would have to thank them for getting me in fit... On the first day, since I hadn't drunk any liquid, I would come over all dizzy and felt as if I would fall over all the time. At first they told me to drink because I would not get through the five days otherwise, and at the end they just threatened me to beat me senseless if I fell over. Whenever I tried to hold on to something the blows to the head became worse. I think that because of all the stand ups I had a seizure in the sciatica. Once I got to the Audiencia Nacional the forensic doctor took a note of this but said it was not important. Because of the pain, the judge that took my statement ordered a more comfortable chair to be brought in and offered to have another chair put in front of me to get my feet up on it... when I got to jail the doctor already had information about my sciatica in the report... One time, after the stand ups, when I was naked and drenched in sweat, they wrapped me up in foam rubber or something similar and taped it round me. At first I felt hot, very hot. But suddenly I began to feel cold, the cold seeping into my bones even. The "foam rubber" went from the floor to just above my nose. The feeling of panic and suffocation was terrible. They pushed me around and laughed and hit (I think they used their hands) the foam rubber.

They often threatened me with the electrodes. They would switch something on and I could hear buzzing, like the sound you hear when you are close to a high voltage tower. I didn't see any machines (I was blindfolded) but sometimes, together with this buzzing sound, they would come near me with something that made my hair stand on end, the hairs on my arms too; and if I was naked, they would move this close to my body, all over. I don't know what it was, but I associated it to electricity and just the tension I felt left me exhausted. They always shouted "put it on three, put it on seven! This son of a bitch wants to try the electrodes!" They knew that the very mention of it made my body seize up, so they would ask me if I knew what it was, what you felt, who had suffered the electrodes... it was usual for them to threaten me with using the electrodes on my family and asking me whether I wanted to find out what they would feel... one time they took my clothes off and pretended to dab Vaseline on me to use the electrodes, but they didn't actually use them...

The shouting and blows to my ears with the flats of their hands were constant. My ears hurt... when I got to jail, I realised that upon swallowing, with certain movements of my tongue or raising an eyebrow, I could feel as if there were bubbles bursting inside my ears, especially in my right ear...

On the third day, more or less, I began to hear them interrogating/torturing a girl. I could sense they were following the same process as with me; this made me feel very nervous. It was

so real that I believed they were torturing someone, but since I could never hear other cell doors opening or closing I wanted to imagine it wasn't true...

### **IBON URRESTARRAZU ESNAOLA**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 16/11/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: ORDIZIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

(...) On the way to Madrid they said they had to stop for petrol and to have a bite to eat, and we stopped near Burgos. One of the policemen was alone with me and he told me that we had to make a deal. He also wanted to congratulate me on becoming a father; I knew nothing about this, so I didn't believe him. He explained what the deal was about: I was to tell him everything and he would be nice to me, he would let me see Alaitz, he wouldn't touch me... but if I didn't behave he would go directly to where Alaitz was and he'd beat her up. Then we resumed our journey and they didn't speak to me until we got to Madrid.

We arrived at the police station in Madrid; they removed my shoelaces and the string in my trousers and put me in a cell. It was about 2,5 metres long by 2 metres wide and it was about 2,5 metres high. By the door there was a toilet and a small basin and on the other side there was a mattress with two blankets, on a rise about half a metre above the floor.

They took me out of the cell, to the interrogation room. The room was approximately 2x2 metres. As you went in there was a kind of mirror on the wall, which took up almost the whole wall. Sometimes two policemen took part in the questioning, sometimes three or four. They would sometimes leave me alone with one of them, with the one who told me I had to fulfil the deal. They hit me mostly on the back of my neck, on my back, and on my head, with their hands and always when I was wearing my fleece jacket, always kneeling down. However, the worst times were when they didn't hit me at all, when they threatened to take me to the other side of the mirror and bring Alaitz in, saying I would see it all, telling me that she was pregnant and that if I really loved her I had to tell them everything I knew. They threatened me with this constantly, shouting that I was doing nothing for Alaitz and that I was a "son of a bitch" who only thought about himself. They also said I had been lucky to get them, because they could open the door and let other policemen in, who were itching to beat me and Alaitz up. When they opened the door I could hear the shouting and the cries from other interrogation sessions, especially female voices.

At the beginning they would leave more time in between interrogation sessions, but that margin became shorter and shorter. They would take me to the cell, a hooded man would threaten me, shouting and then, when I was in the cell, another hooded man would come by

making noise, opening the peep-hole and looking in.

When I said what they wanted me to say in the interrogation sessions, they would take me to the cell and when they had the statement written out, they made me memorise it: all the facts, etc.

I slept very little and anyway the nerves wouldn't have let me sleep if I'd been given the time. They'd bring food: juice and biscuits for breakfast, chick peas for lunch and ravioli for dinner. The food was usually cold, and I didn't eat much anyway.

The forensic doctor came to the police station every day. It was the same person every day but one. It was an older woman, who showed me ID. The room where she checked me was very small, about 2x2 metres. There was just a desk with two chairs, and the policemen would stay outside. I didn't complain about ill treatment to her and she always treated me correctly. She would examine me from top to bottom and note down what she saw. One of the days, as I said, another person came in; a man, who didn't show me any ID and didn't examine me at all. He just asked me my name and surname and whether I was OK or not. That was it.

After preparing my statement they took me to another room, telling me to relax because it was almost over, to declare what we had prepared and they would let me see Alaitz. The same policewoman asked the questions we had prepared and the court-appointed lawyer didn't even open his mouth; when it we finished, he signed his name and left.

When I finished giving my statement they said Alaitz was next and that if we didn't declare the same stuff they would give us a really tough time.

Quite a few hours went by until they came to get me again and the whole thing began right over, just like before. More threats, more blows and a new statement. This went on until I'd made a total of three statements; although the first and the third were very similar. They said that the third one was the one I had to make in the Audiencia Nacional, and threatened me. After I'd finished the second statement they took all the way back to Ordizia and searched my home inside out again, including the garage and my van. This search was very violent, they knocked the front door down, they left all the drawers out of the wardrobes, and I was subjected to terrible threats and pushed around all the time. They took me to and fro completely bent over, with the handcuffs very tight round my wrists. They kept saying that if they didn't find the material they were looking for (guns, explosive...) I was done for... and since they found nothing, the journey back to Madrid was very tense. However, I "got off" quite a bit, because they were in a big hurry to get back to the police station in Madrid. When we got there I suffered most of the blows. They said what I had told them was a pack of lies and did I not love Alaitz, because she was going to have a very tough time because of my fault... In the end I had to make a third statement, very similar to the first one, and then it all ended.

On the way to the Audiencia Nacional they kept repeating the same stuff again and again,

not to forget what I had to do and what I was not to do... and lots of threats again; saying if I didn't do it all exactly as they had told me they would come back to get me and then I'd really have a tough time.

In the Audiencia Nacional the treatment was "not bad"; they put me in a cell, on my own, and brought me a sandwich and a piece of fruit to eat. They took me to the forensic doctor, an obese man, forty something years old, who hardly spoke to me. His manner was very curt; he just asked me my name and surnames and whether I was OK. I didn't tell him about the ill treatment, I was very nervous, and my morale was really low, broken.

After that they took me to the judge and I admitted the statement the policemen had made me memorise with their threats, I was scared to death. The judge made it difficult for me to answer my own lawyer's questions (about the ill treatment), he said he hadn't threatened anyone and I was giving a statement of my own free will and under no pressure. They were hampering my lawyer's work all the time and the prosecutor practically prevented him from talking.

Then they took me to Soto del real jail; the doctor asked a few questions: did I have any illnesses, any injuries...

The ill treatment has left no "visible markings", but I often have nightmares and remembering what happened keeps me from sleeping. Other than that, I'm OK thanks to my friends in here. I am also more relaxed because I've been able to see Alaitz and knowing that she is well has helped me a lot.

### **IKER ARZELUS ANGIOZAR**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 02/11/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

(...) The floor of the interrogation room was different from the floor in other parts of the building; it was black, with little round bumps, like the floor of an elevator. In the first interrogation session, at the beginning, there were two guardia civil, they called one of them Garmendia... They told me there were two ways of spending your time there, one was "way A" and the other way was "B". Way A meant I would have a seat, like "a good gudari, like those who had deaths on their account did, and leisurely talk, smoking a cigarette". B just meant that they would "fucking beat all the information out of me"... At one point they sat me in a chair and started to walk round and round me, all asking different questions at the same time. It was during this session that they made me strip for the first time... This session seemed to last for ever. They took me back to the cell. After a while, I think they took me to the foren-

sic doctor. He was a strange guy...

Soon enough, they took me for the second interrogation session... I was blindfolded, as always, but I could see the floor out of the gap in the lower part... they made me strip. They also made me do stand-ups for a long time, while they asked uncountable questions. Every time I refused to reply or they didn't hear what they wanted to hear they would become more and more violent, they treated me worse and worse. I was made to do stand-ups during many of the interrogation sessions I suffered. They always made me strip if I was clothed and they kept me naked for the whole interrogation session. If they told me to drop my trousers and I refused, they would pull them off themselves and beat me in the process. There was one of them who told Garmendia he was going soft because I had only talked rubbish up to then.

One of the times when I was naked they wrapped my torso in a mattress while I was doing stand-ups. They asked if I wanted water and, if I said no, they would pour the water over me. I had the blindfold on the whole time. Then they began to suffocate me with the bag. Every time I managed to bite and rip the bag they would beat me. They suffocated me with the plastic bag both when they had me wrapped in the mattress and when I had no mattress. At one point, I fell over and one of them sat on me while he said things like "this son of a bitch has told us nothing, we have caught another twelve of you... did you think you would get away with it..."

The worst part was hearing the other detainees' screams. At one point, while I was in the cell, I heard another detainee, who, when they opened his cell door, shouted at the guardia civil officers, "leave me in peace, leave me in peace!" I could also hear screams when I was under interrogation. The interrogation sessions I suffered were very long. I spent very little time in the cell. I suffered many interrogation sessions with them doing the bag to me and using that mattress.

Most of the blows were to the head, with their hands and also with some other instrument; it seemed to be padded and after they beat me with this thing, when I was back in the cell, I would feel a kind of buzzing. During nearly all the interrogation sessions they made me stand the whole time, although after I made my first statement there were times when they let me sit. They would also kick my knees to make me fall over and when I did fall down, they would threaten me "if you fall over again, you'll really see..." They suffocated me with a plastic bag many times, always when I was on my feet. At times they also made me do stand-ups while the bag was over my head, which made me retch and feel like throwing up. Then they would threaten me with making me eat up all my vomit if I did throw up. Sometimes they used one bag, other times they would put them over my head in twos...

Every time there was a change of shift, they would threaten me, saying that the following shift would be even tougher, because they were just coming in and they were fresh. And it

was true. The new shift would begin by making me do stand-ups and do the bag over and over. They said they were "fucking sick" of me not talking and then they brought out a kind of black rod with two metal points. They touched these to my testicles and I felt a kind of very strong shock through all my body. I fell over. One of them grabbed me by the testicles and squeezed very hard, and while I was still on the ground they gave me more electric shocks. They lifted me up onto my feet and did the same again. These electric shocks left no marks on my body.

They took me down to the cell. I lay down but they didn't let me do this and shouted at me asking whether I still didn't know that I wasn't allowed to sit or lie down. So it was back to standing facing the wall, as usual. After a while they took me for another interrogation session. They said I was the only one who hadn't talked and they took me to another room. The floor was made of black plastic. I could see it under the blindfold. They made me kneel in a corner and tied my hands behind my back. They plunged my head into a bucket full of water. I couldn't take it any more and I told them I would make a statement...

They took me back down to the cell; this was one of the longest periods I spent there. But they took me out for another session. They said I hadn't made a statement to them, and asked whether I had been more afraid of the other shift... They made me do stand-ups again; this time I was clothed. They made me memorise another statement, with threats such as "if you don't sign it, you know what's coming..." when I had memorised it, they took me to the other room for me to give the statement...

After this second statement, the behaviour of the guardia civil towards me began to change; it was all more relaxed, they even let me sit down. One time they let me sit down (only on a corner) and removed my blindfold. They began to show me photographs and I had to put my signature on them. They made an offer for me to cooperate with them, they said they would give me money, but I said no, and the head officer said that he liked that, that he liked people who knew what their beliefs were...

I don't know whether the forensic doctor came in once a day or more than once a day... When I was in the Audiencia Nacional he also came in, but I can't remember whether I made a complaint about the treatment or not... The first two times I was taken to the forensic doctor I did tell him about what I was being put through. After that I told him nothing because they threatened me, telling me not to complain to the doctor. In addition, when I told the doctor that I had pain in a certain place because of the blows or whatever, they would use that information and hit me where I already had pain... He touched my neck and knee one of the times I told him they hurt, but he told me not to worry, because it was there was nothing wrong...

They made threats about my girlfriend and my mother, mostly. The head officer also said

stuff about the illness my mother's partner has, as if they had caused it with an injection to his back...

When they took me to the judge, Teresa Palacios, she paid no attention to me at all. I made a complaint about the torture, and she just told the secretary "he claims ill treatment". When I was before the judge, I was very tired, demoralised, I felt very unwell... Nowadays I have trouble getting to sleep, I hear a noise and get agitated, still, I'm calmer now than when I was first brought to jail.

### **IZASKUN VILLANUEVA ORTEGA**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 16/11/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: IRUÑA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

(...) As soon as I went in they made me remove my coat and jacket, they stood me facing the wall and, right from the beginning, they behaved very roughly, shouting. Then they made me take my trainers off and do stand-ups. It was a very long session, continuous questions and ill treatment, non stop, the threats and the humiliations increased; they said I was a whore, while they questioned me they said I'd either have to go to bed with all of them or do fellatio to each of them. Then the group changed, two women and a man came in, all of them wearing hoods. The humiliations and sexual abuse increased again, they said complete atrocities (...). They began feeling me up, all three of them at the same time. They made me remove my T-shirt and told me that if I didn't say what they wanted me to say they would gradually remove all my clothes. The man smelled of alcohol (as did most of them). They continued feeling me up, and they went even further; they began to pinch my nipples, the women felt my vagina, the man felt my backside and generally stood behind me. They made me drop my trousers and continued feeling me up... It was all very confusing, it was crazy; they were humiliating and trying to make me feel like a piece of shit.

They brought the electrodes in, they showed them to me; they'd already told me that they would use them on me. They placed the machine in front of me and began to test it; they made sure I could see all this. They pressed the button and threatened to use them on me. The threats became worse, they affected me psychologically, they continued trying to terrorise me. While they were testing the machine, they argued about what part of my body to place the electrodes on... In the end they decided on my left breast. They placed the electrodes on, but they didn't connect the electricity. At that point I didn't have my T-shirt on and my bra was half off because they had continued pinching my nipples. They said that it would leave no marks and that after giving me an electric shock I would develop cancer or another disease in

that part of my body; they said at the beginning I'd have a small bump, like a lentil, and continued to explain the process I'd suffer, using technical words. They said all this in my ear... It was mostly psychological, but I couldn't avoid imagining what they would do to me and this hurt me a lot. They said it would be a chronic illness and I'd need many operations. They said the illness would be difficult to cure because if they placed the electrodes on my left breast, since it was closer to my heart, it would make operations more complicated. Once I'd seen the machine and they'd produced a couple of shocks in front of me, they blindfolded me and continued to produce electric discharges very close to me, so that I could feel them, and I most certainly did feel the discharges and the sparks. They also placed it on my breasts and threatened to give me shocks. This lasted for a long time, I'd struggle and tell them not to put those things on me; I was crying and shouting, but they kept putting them on my breasts and continued to threaten me, saying I now knew what they'd do to me if I didn't answer their questions (...)

They continued interrogation. They shouted at me all the time; I'd insist that I knew nothing, but they didn't believe me and then they'd get even angrier and threaten me more. They brought a plastic bag in and showed it to me, then they continued with the questions. Then they made me go down on my knees. They put the bag over my head. It was a normal white plastic bag. They put it over my head and the policeman behind me grabbed me by the throat with his left hand, tightening the bag and squashing my throat; he used his right hand to hold my hands behind my back so that I couldn't free myself. I was twisting and struggling; I couldn't breathe, I was suffocating... Then I managed to get my right hand free and I was able to rip the bag with my nails. I made holes in the bag, next to my nose and mouth and I was able to breathe. When they realised this, they said they would bring another bag. Although they threatened me to use it, when they brought it in they only pulled it down to my eyes, but they still threatened to use the electrodes on me... If I refused to answer or I said something they didn't like, they would hit me over the head. Meanwhile, they continued pinching my nipples, feeling my breasts, my vagina, my backside... they continued with the abuse and humiliation and threats, saying that they would put the machine or the truncheon up my vagina "that leaves no marks..." and other similar stuff, "we're going to stick it up your arse, well, maybe better up your cunt, because that will leave no marks; because of course you are a whore, I'm sure your cunt is wide... fucking bitch"(...)

Then they put a gun to my neck. At that point I was on my feet, facing the wall, I couldn't see what it was, but when I felt something cold on my neck I instinctively shifted away (...), I was asking them not to come near me, but then he put it against my vagina and while he "stroked" me with the gun he said "so, you want me to shoot a couple of shots so that it warms up and then I can put it up you?" After he said that he brought the gun in front of my face

and loaded it (a few centimetres away from my face) and again passed it over my neck and vagina...

In the second interrogation session (...) I went in and they told me to remove my clothes; first my coat, then my jacket and if I didn't say what they wanted to hear I would have to take more things off. Since I didn't say what they wanted to hear they blindfolded me and began to hit me. They hit me on the head, very hard, with their hands, harder and harder. They made me take my T-shirt off. They began pinching my breasts and again threatened me with the bag and the electrodes while they carried on beating me, shouting all the time. I was very frightened; there were 4 or 5 of them in the room and each one asked something or issued threats, and I was afraid they would do the same as in the previous interrogation session (...)

(...) The torture and the threats continued; they hit me on the head. The threats increased. Almost at the beginning the one beside me pulled out a small gun from next to his ankle and stood facing me; he stood like this during the whole session, and when the chief got angry with my replies, he'd grab my throat and put the gun very close to my head, increasing the tension and the terror I felt. They also threatened to do the bag to me again, but they didn't; they lowered over my eyes or showed it to me. They also threatened to use "truth drugs". They showed me a water bottle full of a thick white liquid, with a latex glove over the top. They said they'd give me a little of that and I'd tell them everything because it had immediate effects. But they didn't use it, they left it on the table and they'd sometimes pick it up, move it... they used it psychologically. The one with the gun spoke in my ear, telling me to watch out and better not to annoy the boss... It was all psychological, but they managed to terrorise me with all the shouting, with the talking in my ear, the gun, the bag, the truth drug... I couldn't keep my leg still (I kept moving it the whole time, from the moment they came into my home, during interrogation...)

(...) For me, one of the worst things was feeling alone, I couldn't talk to anyone and this eroded me very much; I kept turning things over in my mind. I could hear another person being tortured; well, I mostly heard what they were telling him. I was in a room and suddenly, in the middle of the session I could hear shouting from the room next door...

### OSKAR PEREZ FERNANDEZ

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 02/11/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

I was asleep, at home with my girlfriend and at about 01.30 in the morning we were awoken by loud bangs on the door and someone shouting "Open up, police!" When I got to the door,

my dog was barking like mad. I tried to get my girlfriend not to open the door until I had managed to lock the dog out in the balcony. She was very nervous and didn't hear me and opened the door. They grabbed her by the hair and took her downstairs, to the landing below. I was holding the dog, so that he didn't bite any of the GEOs. They were shouting at me, saying that if they got bitten, they would kill the dog. They grabbed me and dragged me to the wall. I told the dog to lie down and he did. Then they handcuffed me behind my back while one of them stood on my neck. One of them kneeled down and shouted at me, asking where the weapons and the explosives were and whether there was anyone else in the flat. After carrying out a quick search, they told several plain-clothes Policía Nacional to come up. These officers took over and took us both into the flat.

My girlfriend asked for an explanation and they showed her, then me, the arrest warrant; I was able to read that they were arresting us both. She got very agitated and so did I, not all that worried about myself, as it was not the first time for me and I knew what was coming, but because I could foresee what them arresting her would be like. The secretary from the court in Bilbo came in and then the search began. While the search went on, some policemen spoke into my ear, asking questions about people. What hurt me most was to see what they were doing to my girlfriend.

I was so nervous that I had a nervous fit; part of my lips was paralysed, I could feel tingling in my face, my hand and legs, my chest was tight and I had great difficulty breathing. This lasted quite a while, until I made an effort to relax. After a three-hour search, they took us out of the flat, one by one, they put us into separate cars and took us to the station in Indautxu.

They took me straight to an office where they kept me for about three hours until they moved us to Madrid. In Indautxu they talked about politics and asked me questions about people. I could hear Nagore crying and this made me very nervous. They said we would not be beaten, but suddenly, the two policemen interrogating me left and sent in a policeman who was just watching me. He started talking about banal things and I replied, until he started asking questions I didn't want to answer. Then, when he was standing behind me, he punched me in the head, four consecutive times. I shut up. He was insulting me and calling me gudari, telling me to get ready for what was coming to me in Madrid. When he heard the previous two policemen coming, he went quiet and moved away from me.

After taking our data etc. they put us into separate cars and we left for Madrid. They stopped in Pancorbo for about half an hour, at a police station or something like that, where they left some backpacks of theirs. They drove very fast to Pancorbo. There were two policemen in front and two in the back seat, with me sitting in between them. There was very little room to move my legs and they went numb; the heating was suffocating. Halfway between Pancorbo and Madrid I began to feel dizzy and I passed out for a moment because of the heat,

the lack of space and the anxiety and the nerves. They stopped the car and I came to, but I was unable to get out of the car by myself. Two policemen helped me out in order to get some fresh air and when I was out of the car I had another fit. After about half an hour, when I had managed to relax a little, we resumed the journey to Madrid. After another hour I became dizzy again. They stopped the car and let me see Nagore so that I would calm down.

Then it was back on the road to Madrid. When we got to the police station I had another anxious fit. I asked them to take me to hospital and they said yes; they said we were about to arrive. In the end we arrived at a very large place. I couldn't see it because they blindfolded me. They said it was a hospital, but I thought there was something funny because they didn't remove the blindfold until the alleged doctors arrived. They practically had to drag me because I couldn't keep my legs straight. They lay me down on a stretcher and a woman and an older man arrived; they said they were doctors, but because of their manner I immediately realised they were police doctors. They shouted at me, telling me to co-operate, and I just became more and more agitated. She asked the policemen whether they had given me the walk or they had taken me for a stroll in the hills and I just got worse and worse. They held my hands and legs down and another one took hold of my head and they gave me a pill. At the beginning I felt nothing, but after ten minutes I felt very groggy and relaxed. They took me to the DGS (Dirección General de Seguridad) station at Canillas and, after handing in my personal effects, they put me in a cell.

During the four days I spent there, I was subjected to about 25 interrogation sessions. During the two first days I could hear Nagore crying. This was just too much for me. During interrogation, there were usually 3 to 5 policemen and one or another was always masked. They said they were not going to torture me physically because they had evidence against me and they didn't need to. They also told me I was a bastard because if I really loved my girlfriend I had to sign a confession, because otherwise they would frame her and put her in jail. I told them that I would not make a statement while she was in there. On the second day they took me to make a statement with a court-appointed lawyer, but I refused.

On the fourth day I said I would make a statement, but I would deny all charges, because they had told me they had released my girlfriend and I could not hear her crying any longer. At the beginning they said I was going to get the book thrown at me, but on the last day, on the way to the Audiencia Nacional, they said I would maybe be released and that if this was so, I'd better watch out, because they could re-arrest me or Nagore and then there would most certainly be physical torture.

The days I spent in custody seemed to last for ever, despite the fact that it was the eleventh time I was arrested and they had hardly hit me at all. Just hearing Nagore hurt me terribly.

The light was on in the cell during the four days and I was unable to eat anything solid. I

just drank juice and milkshakes. I felt very tired and I lost 7 kilos in four days. I sweated a lot because of the nerves.

After I was taken to Court N° 3 at the Audiencia Nacional, the judge said she was putting me in jail until the people the Guardia Civil had arrested were taken before the judge.

When I was in the cells at the Audiencia Nacional I was allowed to see my parents and my lawyer. Knowing that she was OK helped me to recover and I was much calmer when I was taken to jail. This time, I would rather have stayed in jail because now, on the street, I feel very anxious, thinking about when they will arrest me and take me back to jail. The Policía Nacional officers told me that neither they, nor the Guardia Civil, nor the Ertzaintza will stop until they see me behind bars.

This is the time I have come out worst, despite the fact that this was also the time I was physically abused the least. I continue to be unable to sleep and have to take pills to relax.

### MARGARI EIZAGIRRE

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 08/10/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: IRUÑA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

(...) They checked every book on my shelves, one by one. Notes, photographs, letters, magazines... the search took four hours. When they were putting things in the bag, at one point they said "ETA manual", or something like that. What had they put in the bag?

Aitor was still trembling, sitting on the edge of the bed. I was terrified. They took me to an underground car park. They put me in the car, with my head down, and told me we were going to the doctor. This didn't reassure me much.

We got out of the car, and they put me in a room with a desk and a chair. I was very scared because they had ordered me to stand facing the wall. They told me not to look back and made me keep my head down. A policeman sat next to me and said "OK, we'll see each other in Madrid..." and "ondo ibili" (take care), he said he was saying goodbye. They began to tell me that it was better for me to say what I had to say as soon as possible; they said I knew why they had arrested me and so on... I thought I'd go through interrogation right there, but one of them came in and said, "come on, we're going". They took me outside, without covering my face and put me in a black VW Golf. They also spoke about torture. They said they didn't torture people; rather, they used other, more efficient methods. They said I'd find out about these methods in a while. They also went over the argentine torture methods, saying that was really torture...

The questions continued all the way to Madrid, "when we get there, behave yourself, becau-

se we won't beat around the bush, we're not going to play cat and mouse with you; you know fine well why we have arrested you". They put me in a cell, and there I began to get in a bad way, trembling, thinking "what will they do to me now?" I kept wondering when they would come for me; they'd told me that they "wouldn't fool around and it's best for you if you start talking right away".

I spent about an hour in the cell, in quite a state. I couldn't even shed tears, I was blocked, I held my head tight in my hands. I kept biting the inside of my mouth and gnashing my teeth, until I gave myself cuts. I couldn't stop shaking, because I was so scared. I felt a kind of blows from the inside. They took me for questioning, and spent about an hour laying into me with this thing and that thing, dates...

Then they took me again for revision. We had to go over the statement, because I would be taken to make a statement in the afternoon. Meanwhile, I spent the time in the cell, quite calm. But I didn't get any sleep. They said, "Now you have to really go over what you have said". Then they took me to the cell and spent all night thinking about how I'd give my statement, because they'd said "in the morning we'll bring you in and we will go over it all properly, so that in front of the lawyer, when we ask you the questions, you have to give the answers immediately, you're to show no doubts".

They asked all the questions exactly as I had memorised them. The lawyer wanted to ask a few questions, but the police didn't let her. So, how did Susper know where I worked, how he knew where I lived; she said she didn't understand how Susper had got in touch with me after so long and why I'd agreed to meet him; she said she couldn't understand that kind of relationship... and then the policeman told her: "well, it's just normal, the Basque Country is very small, they all know each other, it's all small villages, they knew each other at university, plus, Susper is very selfish, he'll go up to anyone demanding things..." When the statement was over, the lawyer told me "well, I'll see you tomorrow at the Audiencia Nacional, because you'll go up before the judge tomorrow". The lawyer showed me a red card and she took notes.

I was reassured; I told myself, "that's it, I'm leaving tomorrow morning, and that will be it all over". At night they called me again and said, "just be calm, you're going before the judge tomorrow, would you like a coffee?" and they were quite relaxed, "this is much better, now, with what you've said in the statement, they'll charge you with cooperating [with ETA], but there are levels, and this is the lowest, you'll get about four years... they'll probably take you to Avila". I fell into their game and asked "Avila? Is it a women's jail?" I fell in their game and I just talked away and calmed down. Then they took me to the cell.

Thursday was also very tough, because they brought me no food; I ate a yoghurt I'd saved from the day before. But they forgot lunch, they forgot dinner and then, very late, when I'd lain down to sleep, the policemen in charge of me came round and said "What, did you think

we'd forgotten about you?" I began to get agitated again, wondering what was next... They said "there are a lot of facts missing in your statement and we have to go over it all". That day I heard that girl crying and screaming again. I got pretty nervous; they told me to relax, they said we were just going to go over the statement. A whole lot of people stood around me again, all asking questions, saying they weren't very convinced by my statement, saying we had to go over it...

Friday morning also felt very long, I didn't know what time it was, they didn't call me until 12.30 or 13.00. And it was back to going over the statement. After going over it all, at about two, I made a statement with the second lawyer (a man this time). I asked him "so, I'm going before the judge today, aren't I?" and he said, "no, I'll see you at the Audiencia Nacional tomorrow". They asked their questions again, the same as before with a few changes in order to complete the previous statement.

Then it was out of that room and back to the cell. I was in despair, but calm, telling myself "they can't touch me any more". I felt sad, thinking about my parents and I started thinking about the people outside...

Then it was all the same stuff: I could hear people coughing, throwing up... I could hear a girl throwing up every day. On Friday I began hearing two names, Alaitz and Ibon. I knew I had Ibon in the cell next door and Alaitz in the cell opposite mine. I could also hear insults, "keep your head down you bitch" and similar stuff; I could hear what they were saying to the others, and this was very tough for me.

They would always take me to the forensic doctor at night. On the first day they took me at midday, but all the other days they took me more or less at dinner time. The doctor would say "are you OK? How have you been treated?" I'd say I'd been treated normal, I never said anything about the threats and the things they were saying to me. The doctor would take my blood pressure, ask if I wanted to take my clothes off and I'd say no. She'd ask if I wanted her to check for marks and I'd say no. the check up was very short. I'd have a worse time on the way back to the cell; they'd push me, I had to keep my head down... on the first three days the doctor was a woman, the other days a man saw me.

They issued threats regarding my ex-boyfriend, my sister and also a friend of mine, who has a little daughter. They also asked who my best friend was, they brought in a photograph of a friend of mine that they had taken from my home and questioned me about the kind of relationship I had with him, and said he was sure to know stuff. They always tried to use other people.

**RUBEN NIETO TORIO**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 16/11/2004 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested on November the sixteenth, at 00.40; when I was at home with my girlfriend. The only witness was the court secretary. I was arrested by the Policía Nacional and a group of GEO when they took me outside, in front of the court secretary.

The search of my home was very violent. I think they wanted to scare me (and my girlfriend too, of course). They wanted to show that this time "it was serious", for "a big thing" (because I have been arrested twice before). They buzzed the door, I jumped out of bed and went to open the door, and my girlfriend followed me. They were kicking the door and shouting and when I opened the door I saw three special operations policemen aiming special guns (with infrared beams) at us. We threw ourselves on the floor and they dragged us through the hall, they secured our hands behind our backs, tightly, with handcuffs that they called metal loops, and they left us on the floor unable not to move or raise our heads. This lasted for about five minutes, with policemen holding us down and immobilising us. I don't know how many policemen came in and out of the house during that time, but in the end, as an anecdote, I can tell you there was a big argument between the GEOs and the UCI policemen who carried out the search, all shouting at each other by the door. After the special operations officers left the house the UCI remained behind. They were all masked and they had the court secretary with them. They removed the metal loops from our wrists and took us inside the flat. By then the house was in a complete mess. The court secretary read out the search warrant for me to be present during the search. Meanwhile, they kept my girlfriend in the kitchen. From then on their manners calmed down a bit, considering the violent entry by the GEOs.

I was present during the search, together with the court secretary, and they behaved in a clam and composed manner. However, since there were about six policemen carrying out the search, I was unable to see everything they were doing and they took lots of things that belong to my girlfriend.

They took me from home to the police station in Indautxu at about 03.30. before we arrived, they put a black hood over my head, but they didn't tighten it. During the four days I was in custody, there were about six policemen with me in interrogation, and they took turns. These six did not wear a hood in Indautxu, in the car or in Madrid, and neither did I. that's why when I was alone with them they would remove the hood and when they were moving me from one place to another inside the police station they would put it back on me. We left Indautxu for Madrid at about 06.30, after they signed the documents and I'd seen the foren-

sic doctor.

In Madrid, I spent the four days in the same cell. It was very cold; there was a kind of mat, two blankets, a tap and a toilet. The cell would be approximately 5x3 metres. The interrogation rooms were small, with two or three chairs, and there was a desk in some of them.

The whole time, they had a special attitude, as if I were innocent to them. "They've dumped you in this and you didn't know. Your friends have fucked you over". They always worked on that theory. I had four or five interrogation sessions a day, some were in the night. They made offers for me to cooperate, in exchange for dropping the charges. They wanted to get me to believe that they would help me as long as I denounced other people. As the days passed, seeing my attitude (talkative, yes, but not stupid) they told me that the other detainees had denounced me. On the day of the statement to the police (on Thursday morning) I suffered the toughest interrogation session. They threatened to arrest my girlfriend; with giving my family a fright (my father has a health condition). Then they went back to a pally attitude.

In the cell there was a light on permanently. I was able to hear some other detainees. I slept very little during the four days.

In the police station in Indautxu I was seen by a forensic doctor. In Madrid, I was seen by the same doctor in the police station and at the Audiencia Nacional. I saw him every day. Both doctors identified themselves as such. In Indautxu he gave me a check up in a surgery, with proper means. In Madrid, on the other hand, the doctor saw me in the interrogation room. In Indautxu I told the doctor how violent the arrest had been and he took photographs of the marks.

During my statement to the police I maintained the line I had taken during interrogation. I said what I wanted to say. The policemen remained calm and the court-appointed lawyer was passive. The only threat I received was that if I stuck to that statement I would go to jail. Therefore, they told me that if I changed the statement I would avoid jail, and they would help me with this. After the statement they let me be.

In the Audiencia I gave my statement in the morning, they'd lifted the incommunicado order. Before that the forensic doctor saw me and after the statement, until they gave me my remand in custody order, I was bored. My statement to the judge was a calm affair; I ratified my statement to the police, the prosecutor asked a couple of questions and that was it.

When I arrived in jail they did the usual medical tests.

**ESTIBALIZ GOITIA**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: LEKEITIO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

In the street, they and told me I was under incommunicado arrest for cooperation and membership [with an armed group]. They said they had a search warrant and that the warrant lasted until ten at night. A 24 hour search, until ten o'clock the following night! They searched my room and there were two policemen, the court secretary and myself, as a witness. I would tell them, "this is over there, these papers are this and that..." and they said nothing, they didn't even tell me to shut up. They took my mobile phone, the phone bill, an old address of a friend in Barcelona, a bag with stickers and two pins, just like that... They also took the flag banner in support of the prisoners, but they didn't write it down on the form. They stole it.

Then they went to search the living room; they said they wouldn't search my parent's room in respect. This search lasted for an hour and five minutes. I asked permission to get changed and a policeman came into the bathroom with me and they let me change. They told me to remove any earrings, bracelets, everything. My parents were present throughout the search, they were allowed to move between two rooms and the bathroom, but they did not witness the search. The police behaved quite well towards my parents.

Then the noise in the street began, because people from the village had come in support. So they held me in the house for another hour.

My uncle and a councillor from Lekeitio came round but they didn't let them in. they also closed the shutters so that the people in the street couldn't see what was going on inside.

From there, they took me to Bilbo, from Gernika to Bilbo with my head covered. They also covered my head as we left the house. They took me in the car handcuffed and with my head covered. In the police station it was the same. They told me not to raise my head because there were people (policemen) nearby and I might "get fucking hit". They said people were "heated" and that "if you raise your head" they would beat me. They told me to respect "the people there". In the police station in Bilbo they took my photograph, but before that they had me crouch in a corner with my head covered for about fifteen minutes.

On the first night they took me to a lot of interrogation sessions. The number of sessions I suffered that night was incredible. They took me out of the cell seven times or more. They interrogated me until after three o'clock in the morning; they didn't let me sleep... they didn't allow me to sleep from two o'clock in the morning when they arrested me until after three the following morning, nearly 26 hours.

On the Thursday they took me for interrogation to a room with a translucent glass pane,

one of those ones where you can't see through but they can see you.

During interrogation they spoke loudly. They put me against the wall and asked "are you comfortable like this?" I would say no; "you've no idea what you've got coming" they said. They placed me with my legs spread as far as they would go and my arms outstretched to the limit. They also made me crouch. When they made me crouch they placed me facing them. When I became tired and they could see my arms beginning to drop, they would put me in another posture. They made me spread my legs pushing with their own legs. They did this to me three or four times during the first day.

They shouted at me and then told me to give them names and god knows what else... I would tell them I knew nothing. They told me I had no idea how well they were treating me, because during the following days I'd be interrogated by the chief and then I would really find out what was what "that one will really torture you, he will beat you..." Another one grabbed my throat, squeezed and said "tomorrow it will be worse, have a good think about what you are going to tell us". He said this and hit me over the head.

At that time only the policeman who was questioning me would shout, the others didn't and he would say "you know more, you have to tell me more... you are hiding something, my patience is running out..." They told me that Garzón would not believe whatever I told him in my statement in court and I'd better say whatever I had to say during interrogation... they kept saying I was lying. They told me all the other detainees were on their way home because they had said what they had to say and they were free. They told me to tell them stuff, like the others had done.

At one point they came in with a sheet of paper. They said it was the document extending my incommunicado detention up to five days. They made me sign the paper against my will. During interrogation there were calmer times and more violent times, when they shouted. Other times, they would say, "well, lets all calm down a little, if we don't cal down we won't sort anything out..." There would be no more than five policemen in the interrogation room and they all played the same role. One way or another they always ended up doing the same stuff. One of them was always asking questions, one or another, they always went on to ask questions.

I saw the forensic doctor every day, but he only took my blood pressure. He said "how are they treating you?" and I would tell him it was not good.

They always asked about the same stuff: about a prisoner from my village, what mi relationship with him was... always the same stuff. I had also made a request to visit another prisoner who is in jail in France, and they asked me why I wanted to go to France and not somewhere else. I would tell them that I had made the request long before and I hadn't gone to a visit yet. However, they know all that, but they asked anyway, why I had requested a visit

with that prisoner, why in France... They asked many questions about prisoners: how many times had I gone to Iparralde, what my relationship with certain prisoners was, for example, with a cousin of mine who is in jail...

During one of the sessions I asked for some water because my lips were dry, cracked and bleeding. They brought water and it was white. I asked what they had put in it and they said it was just me imagining things and that the water looked like that because of the pressure it came out with. I told them I wouldn't drink that water. After a while it became clearer and there were dregs in the bottom of the glass. They said they hadn't put anything in the water, not to worry. But I said no, I didn't trust them. They didn't bring more water. They drank from a bottle and they only offered me the water in that glass.

They said "you are in the movement". I was "in the movement" as far as they were concerned and then they would say "when you go back to Lekeitio they will prepare a welcome home ceremony... because you are a star in your village..." They laughed and taunted me with that kind of stuff. I think they did this because people from the village had gone to my house to show support. "See what a show you've caused..."

They said we Basques are a bunch of "sons of bitches" and that we'd see who would win the upcoming European elections, and that they would win.

"What newspapers do you read?" they would ask, and I would say, Gara and Egunkaria. "Those ones only tell lies; they say that we use electrodes, the bag... it's all lies, you've seen for yourself that we don't use those things". At one point they said they would arrest my sisters. They said that if I didn't talk they would arrest them and jail them. This made me very nervous and agitated. It got me in a bad way. Another thing they said was that my parents were very old and I would go to jail and they would be able to visit me.

### MIKEL CIAURRIZ MARCO

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 15/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: IRUÑA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... The journey from Iruñea to Madrid was an introduction to what was to come, terrible heat, the handcuffs hurting, blindfolded and sitting with a guardia civil either side of me; one asked questions non-stop and then the threats began ... he said he was from Iruñea and he wouldn't do anything to me, but the ones in Madrid, well, I knew about them... They asked me a thousand and one absurd questions, one right after the other, shouting and for every question I refused to answer, they hit me over the head. They also punched my sides two or three times. They managed to get me to Madrid with my head feeling as it would burst with the ques-

tions, the blows to the head, the heat and the lack of sleep...

After I had been with the forensic doctor, I suffered the first and worst torture. They put me in a room and began asking questions, they slapped me about a bit (although that wasn't too bad). I was standing, facing the wall and blindfolded with a mask and a buff. When they began to get tired, they made me do physical exercise, up and down, while they hit me over the head with their hands. I ended up exhausted, drenched in sweat. Then they sat me in a chair and began asking questions in my ear; one of them would shout and the other one pretended to be the "nice" one. When they saw I had recovered, they made me stand and told me what would happen next; "do you know who the txakurras are? they said, and I said yes. Immediately, they slapped me in the face, while they said "those are the txakurras. They continued, "and the pikoletos, do you know who they are?" and I said yes again. Right away they put a bag over my head and said, "this is the Guardia Civil and you are going to shit yourself". They carried on, after taking me down to the cells and bringing me back up, with another questioning session. The same stuff again, but this time, they placed the bag over my head while they had me doing the physical exercises, they asked questions, shouted, up and down, crouching and standing... and then was when they closed the bag, with their hands, and when I had no air left I started to struggle, they grabbed me, they took my pulse and when they saw I wasn't moving any more and I was about to fall over, they would lift the bag up over my nose, allow me to breathe three times, as fast as possible and then pull the bag back down again. They took me to the cell, to "reconsider". But after a short while they took me back up and the blows to the head and the exercise began again; they also got me believing that three other people, including a member of my family, were also under arrest...

... They took me back up and began suffocating me with the bag again. I don't know how many times they did this torture to me on that day. At one point, they opened a door into the next room and I could hear another detainee screaming. That day they would do the bag to me while I was sitting on a chair and because of the anguish I felt they couldn't hold me down properly. When I twisted around, I felt a terrible pain in my wrists, because of the handcuffs, I threw up when they removed the bag and they made me lick my own vomit.

On Wednesday they made me sing the "Cara al Sol", "Eusko Gudariak" and to run the "Korrika". They took me to the cell and made me remain on my feet again. When they take me up again, they make me memorise a confession. This took quite a long time. Every time I said something they didn't like, they would suffocate me with the bag and hit me on the head. On the Thursday I made my confession to the Guardia Civil and then they let me sleep for a while... They didn't take me back to the interrogation room until the following day. Then the threats against my family began, they threatened to put ice-picks in my ears, they told me I would end up like Iñaki Beaumont, bleeding from my ears... The worst part were

the threats about my relative. They made me sign another confession saying that I had killed two policemen, but then they ripped the sheets up. I got to the point where I believed the screams I could hear from the room next-door were coming from my relative. There was a point when they told me this relative of mine was right there, in front of me and I believed I could hear him sobbing...

They hit me while I was standing and it was mostly with the flat of their hands. They also punched me a few times, in the stomach and ribs. I reckon they used the bag on me about fifteen times. At the beginning they would use one bag, and then, since I would rip it with my teeth, they would use several at a time. I would try to defend myself any way I could, which is why they changed to using the bag when I was on the chair, handcuffed. I had never felt anguish like that in my entire life; I still don't know how a human being can humiliate another like that. The exercises they made me do was keeping my arms out to my sides in a cross-shape and go up and down, crouching and standing. I felt I couldn't carry on any more and even collapsed on the floor, drenched in sweat. I had very bad pins and needles... They also pricked me in the cuticles of my fingernails with a toothpick and although I received more threats with this, they only did it once. The pain was terrible.

I had the mask and the buff over my eyes permanently. Still, I was able to catch a glimpse of them a couple of times; they were hooded. Except for the time I spent in the cell, when I was taken to the toilet and the times I saw the forensic doctor, I was blindfolded the whole time. During interrogation, they constantly shouted in my ear. The light was kept on in my cell for the full five days.

They also threatened me. They made me believe a member of my family had been arrested; I could hear him screaming; they told me what they were doing to him and what they were going to do to him. They also made threats about my girlfriend, they threatened with torturing her... at the beginning you know it's not true, but you end up believing it and this is very tough. They also humiliated me because of my deafness; I have a hearing impediment and they laughed a lot about it. During interrogation, there was always a "bad" one and a "not-so-bad" one. The blows would come when I refused to reply or when I said something they didn't like. They would give me a rest, taking me down to the cell or letting me sit on a chair in the interrogation room. I was made to sign my confession under torture, but, the way I was, I would have signed anything they put in front of me...

The journey to the Audiencia Nacional was all right, they took me in a van with a guy I didn't know. When we got to the Audiencia Nacional they put me in a cell and I was able to calm down a little... I was still incommunicado when I made my statement to the judge. The judge said he was going to read out my confession to the Guardia Civil, but I said I would run through the whole thing myself, because I knew it by heart. I did, he said nothing, I

denied everything contained in the confession and I told him what I had been through; he noted everything down. The state prosecutor was there too. The state-appointed lawyer asked for me to be released on bail. Before I was taken to the Audiencia Nacional, the guardia civil threatened me, saying that if I denied my confession, they would go after my girlfriend and my brother; I very nearly did as I had been told.

The ongoing consequences of all that, in addition to a terrible fear of what might happen to my girlfriend and my brother, is that I keep having nightmares about the bag and the way they charged into my home...

On the Thursday, it even crossed my mind to grab the doctor's pen and stick it into my stomach. In the end I didn't do it. I felt extremely humiliated; they had pushed me through my psychological barrier and I just wanted it all to end, I didn't care how. As a final comment, I would also like to say that even if it is extremely violent, you must remember that it DOES finish, it's five days and then it is over. You must bare your teeth at them.

**M.C.**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: LUIANDO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

At 01.30 in the morning they buzzed the door; it took me quite a while to hear it because I was asleep, although I had the radio on. When I opened up I saw policemen with truncheons at the ready. They came in, flinging me on the floor and shouting, asking whether I had anyone hidden in the flat, because I had taken a long time to open the door, and they spread through the house like madmen, searching to see if there was anyone else. There were about ten policemen, three in plainclothes and the rest in uniform. They saw there was no one else and then the court secretary and the duty judge came in. The judge asked the police why I had to be handcuffed, they took my handcuffs off, and whether I could sit down. They began the search of the house. They searched the entire house, room by room: the living room, the kitchen, the study... they checked every paper, every book, making the odd comment. They took my computer and my girlfriend's computer, a few books and some leaflets and posters that were lying about, stuff that attracted their attention. Then we went downstairs and they searched the utility room and my van; they said they had been ordered to search it.

When they finished the search, they handcuffed me again and they put me in a car. Before they turned the engine on a policeman grabbed me by the neck and said, "you'd better start telling this guy all you know", there were two of them in the front and me in the back with another one. He said nothing on the way to Gasteiz, which is where they took me after the

search. They took me to the police station in Gasteiz, as we went inside one of them said, "You're nicked". They took my photos and then the forensic doctor and a nurse turned up. I asked them to take my blood pressure; I told them I had a bit of a high temperature because I had a cold, they asked whether I wanted to take an aspirin or something and I said that in principle, I didn't.

From there we went to Madrid. I made the journey with various policemen, two in the front and one in the back. I had my head down and my hands cuffed in front. The one in the back kept elbowing me and saying, "you will talk to us". When we stopped the previous guy turned up, he grabbed me by the neck again and slapped me a couple of times. I asked if I could go to the toilet and they said no, they told me to hold it in. The rest of the journey was similar.

When we got to Madrid they took me, with my head bent down and handcuffed, to a cell. It had a mattress with a blanket and a small toilet. While I was in the cell I could sit or even lie down, they didn't stop me from doing this.

After a while, they took me to the first interrogation session. There was an old man in a tie there and another three, not wearing hoods. The one in the tie explained what it was all about. He said they had come across my name in a list and I was to tell them whatever I knew. He behaved in a fatherly way, quite relaxed, "see this, it's because of this and that, see, you're going to ruin your life with this..." the other three said nothing. After a while in this fashion, they took me back to the cell.

During the following session the policeman in the tie was there and I had a hooded policeman behind me. The tone he used was the same. He pulled some photographs out and asked for explanations. He also asked questions about what I was doing on such a day in such a place and on such other day at such other place. This went on for a while. Then it was back to the cell.

During the next interrogation session we prepared my statement. The one in the tie and me. He told me what he was going to say and the questions he would ask and what I had to answer, "so that when we are in front of the lawyer and I ask you such and such, you reply this and that other thing" he said.

They took me to the cell for a while and then they took me to make a statement. The court appointed lawyer was there. We didn't exchange any words; she was there like a piece of furniture, she just signed the statements. There was also a person typing and the policeman in the tie. When we finished, he told me I would shortly be taken to the judge, because some of the detainees had already been taken to the judge. They took me to the cell.

In the next session there are different policemen. There was one in a hood, and another one. They would leave, then come back, I could hear doors opening and closing... I was sitting,

facing a desk. Suddenly a policeman came in, beating his fists on the table and pushing it about. He said "what the fuck are you doing talking to those ones, who have no balls? You and I are going to be face to face, you have to talk to me". He said, "Stand over here, with your legs spread". When I did, he hit me in the testicles and I fell towards him and he chucked me in a corner, beating me and kicking me. He shouted at me, saying I was being cynical and telling them a load of stories... Then he made me stand next to him, with my legs spread, for quite some time, while he asked lots of questions. After some time, he pretended to get nervous and to want to beat me; the others calmed him down. They took me to the cell. One of them did all this, but in the room there was a total of four policemen.

In the cell, they left me in peace for a while. The following day they took me for another session. The guy in the tie came in. he showed me a number of photos. He said he had the photograph of a friend of mine, who was my ex, and that the others had identified her. He threatened to go after her if I said nothing. He insisted on this for some time. There was a time when he became agitated, he started shouting and someone who was outside came in and told him not to make such a noise. While they took me to the cell they said they were going to arrest her and they made comments, "fuck, why did you stop me, I nearly had this one, he was about to collapse".

During the next session, they left me alone with a hooded interrogator who talked in a soft tone, I sat at a desk. But then another one came in and he beat me a load of times, just on the higher part of the nape of my neck. He hit me very hard. I had my forehead on the desk. He threatened me and said we were all a bunch of sons of bitches and that even if I hadn't done anything, since I supported the cause, they wouldn't stop until they finished all the sons of bitches... it was a mixture of threats, insults... he was a fascist bastard. After a while in this fashion, they took me to the cell.

The next session was with the same guy. He threatened to crack my skull, to skin me in strips; he said my father had had a heart attack and was in Txagorritxu Hospital... He also made me take my shoes and socks off and face the wall with my arms outstretched and continued to beat me on the nape of the neck. This lasted for a good while. Then they took me to the cell.

The following two interrogation sessions were with the same person and quite similar, threats... at the end of the second one some policemen came in and said I could relax because they were going to take me to the judge. They took me to the cell.

After some time, they took me back out of the cell and gave me my personal effects back. Then they took me straight to the Audiencia Nacional. There, I was taken to see the judge, who decreed my release on bail and an obligation for me to appear at the court every fifteen days. I left the Audiencia and I was free.

They took me to see the forensic doctor every day at about two in the afternoon. She would tell me the time and ask how I was, if I needed anything, if they had given me food -which they did, sort of pre-cooked chick peas and, for breakfast, some juice but there was no way to eat in there- and did I want an aspirin... the three times I saw the doctor it was the same woman and she said the same stuff.

### MIKELDI DIEZ ALDAMA

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ALTSASU >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested by the Policía Nacional, at home, on February 9, 2005, at about 9 o'clock in the morning. I was alone in the house but, after a short while, Zuzene arrived.

I opened the door and they came in with an arrest warrant for "membership of an armed group". The police officers behaved calmly. They searched the house with me and with the court secretary.

After about an hour, they handcuffed me and took me to the police station in Iruñea. Nothing untoward happened on the way there. When we arrived at the police stations, they took my fingerprints and a policeman tried to kick me.

Then they took me to Madrid. They had me handcuffed behind my back the whole journey and when there was not long left to arrive they began to threaten me. There was a phone call, the officers told me it was their boss and he'd said he wanted a story from me and they were going to beat it out of me. The whole journey I was blindfolded.

Once we got to the police station in Madrid, they took me to a cell. After a few hours, they took me to a room where there were two policemen. There were other rooms next door, because I could hear more people. One of the policemen was sitting at a computer and the other one was standing. They stood me facing the wall; I wasn't blindfolded, but they were wearing hoods. They started to ask questions which I couldn't answer and at one point one of them began hitting me on the head with the flat of his hands and slapping my face, saying that I was tiring him. At that point, I could clearly hear them beating someone else in the room next door. Then, the policeman made me stick my arms out, in across shape. The one who'd hit me left and the other one began playing the good cop. By the way, during my detention, several policemen told me that they knew I hadn't done anything, which affected me quite a bit because you realise they are going to hit you for no reason. When the policeman who'd hit me came back in, he ordered me to bring my arms down and sent me to the cells with a final message: "have a think about what you are going to tell us".

Several interrogation sessions continued in this form, although they took place in different rooms. I had about four interrogation sessions during that first night.

During the second session, a more aggressive policeman turned up; he had a knife in his hand and kept showing it to me, saying nothing... In another session, two different policemen turned up and one of them was not masked. The most aggressive policeman made me crouch and stick my arms out in front. Whenever I fell over, he would beat me. He would leave me alone, in this posture, facing the wall and when he came back he would order me to keep the posture.

I could hear the doors of the cells opening less often and the police told me that the other detainees had already "come up" with a story admitting to stuff.

In the morning (I supposed it was the morning because the uniformed officers who took us from the cells to the interrogation rooms looked sleepy) they took me to a room where there was a desk and several policemen. I couldn't take it any more and after they threatened me, saying the worst was still to come, I made up a story. But every time they didn't like what I said, they would stand up and come close to me, banging their fists on the desk. After telling them the story, they took me to the cell, but after a while they took me back to the same room, where now there were two chairs, the desk and policemen who were not masked. One of them seemed to be the boss. I had seen him in my home when they arrested me.

They said that they didn't like what I had made up and told them and they began to threaten to arrest my girlfriend, her brother, doing what they had done to my brother to me (he had been arrested and tortured previously), impounding my home, stuff like "getting the bad guys to come in"... At that point, I broke and told them what they wanted to hear; in other words, what they told me to say. The blows, the strange postures, the threats... it all piled up until I just collapsed.

Before the two policemen who were not masked turned up, they took me to the forensic doctor. I didn't tell her anything because I was afraid. The doctor came to give me a check up every morning, but until I was in the Audiencia Nacional I didn't say anything about how they had hit me, threatened me and made me remain in abnormal postures.

When I made my statement to the police, there were four of them: the last two who had threatened me, the boss, asking the questions, and another one, writing it all down. The court-appointed lawyer did not identify himself, but he seemed to be on very friendly terms with them.

After making my statement they left me in peace a while, but then they took me back to the same room and told me that I had lied to them... another policeman, who seemed to be higher in rank, turned up. They were angry. I broke down in tears and told them the truth: how it was all lies and I hadn't done anything and they had made me invent the whole story.

Then they left me in peace.

In the Audiencia Nacional, I complained about the ill treatment, but the doctor wasn't very concerned, the judge couldn't care less. I told him that my statement to the police was a pack of lies and said I had had to make it all up. But neither the judge nor the prosecutor listened to me. I denied everything in my statement to the police and then they sent me to jail.

I want to make a formal complaint about how I was treated. We have to stop all these things from happening.

### G.D.C.

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 15/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: FORUA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... Among the torture methods I was subjected to, I have to say that they hit me while I was standing. One of the officers punched me in the stomach, while another one also punched me in the testicles. At the time I was handcuffed. I don't know how many times they hit me, but during the first three days they hit me for a while at a time; suddenly they would go into into "nice" mode and then become very aggressive. Sometimes they did this same thing while they were suffocating me with a plastic bag. They also hit me in the body, but always when I had my clothes on, although they once made me lift my top up. I didn't have any red marks or swelling; it seemed as if they took care not to leave any marks on me...

I don't know how many times they suffocated me with a plastic bag, which they would put over my head and tighten round my neck. They used it during two of the interrogation sessions I suffered, but it was frequent, during short periods: they put it over my head, take it off, on, off, and this went on for a while... At those times I would feel suffocated and in order to defend myself I would jump to try to get it off me. Although I tried to bite it and rip it they didn't let me. They also threatened with giving me electric shocks with electrodes, but they didn't go any further than the actual threat, I didn't see any machines for this.

Hey also made me do stand ups. I would be standing, and they made me bend my knees and go up and down. Once they made me do this while I was handcuffed and had a bag over my head. It was just the one time and for a short while, but at the time I felt suffocated because of the bag and fear, I don't know how to explain it; when I couldn't do any more of these stand ups and I fell over, they would manhandle me and make me go up and down. Because of these stand ups, I had pins and needles for about four days. They also made threats with sexual content.

Sometimes they would blindfold me to prevent me from seeing anything... after the second

or third day they didn't use the blindfold any more, but whenever they took me anywhere in the building, they would make me lower my head and keep my eyes on the floor. I don't know if they wore masks or not, because they never allowed me to lift my head or look at them.

During interrogation I was subjected to sound aggression, there were times when they shouted in my ear constantly and changed from ear to ear in between shouts. Although I don't think it was for a long time, I can't remember how long this lasted for. I also suffered light abuse, the light was on all the time in the cell, it was a spotlight; however, at the time, I would rather the light was on than being in the dark.

I was also subjected to threats. These were mostly against me, stuff they would do to me; it was stuff like "bring the gun in, I'm going to shoot him", "let's go and get the electrodes", they went on quite a bit about some kind of vibrator they had and said they were going to put it up my anus, I heard a tap running, as if they were filling a bathtub and I heard cries, but I don't know whether these came from other detainees or whether the interrogators simulated them. They didn't make threats about other people, family or friends, although they did make nasty jokes about them. It was all a complete humiliation. There was a guardia civil who played the "good cop" and another one who played the "bad cop", but both of them would hit me, so I don't know how good or bad they were. The blows came after certain answers of mine which they didn't like or when I refused to answer their questions. They would give me a little time to rest in between interrogation sessions, although some sessions were longer and more intense than others... I often heard cries from other detainees. I could feel sudden temperature changes; sometimes it was very hot and I kept sweating and other times it felt very cold. During the last days I was able to sleep a little, though not much. While I was in custody they gave me food, but I didn't eat anything until the last day... except for the odd pear I ate during the first days, because they would pressurise me to eat something.

There were times when I had a funny feeling, as if I had been drugged. I don't know whether they actually did drug me or whether it was because of the accumulated tiredness, but after they gave me water I would feel strange symptoms. When I looked at the wall, it seemed to move, I could see a sort of bubbles, as if the wall was liquid, and the lines on the wall seemed to move too, as if they were threads being moved by a breeze. I also felt that after drinking the water they gave me I felt drowsy, but I'm still in doubt as to whether it was because of the water they gave me or because I was so tired. These after effects wouldn't last long... and they always gave me water just before taking me back to the cell. And I don't know how long these effects lasted for, because I would try to keep my eyes shut so as not to see anything, but I don't "think" (I don't remember) they would last for more than an hour.

Once a day a forensic doctor would visit me. On the first day she identified herself, showing me her professional card. The check-ups took place upstairs, where the cells are. They would

put me into a very small room where there was only a table where she left her briefcase and a chair where I sat. She carried everything in that briefcase. The room was quite well lit, compared to the cell, at any rate. There were no curtains or windows or mirrors and the door was usually closed. But the officers outside could hear what we were saying, because the door was very thin and the forensic doctor would always let them know when she was going to open the door so that they could move their heads away from the door, where they were listening. I didn't tell the doctor how I was being treated; I told her I was being treated correctly. I just said that my stomach hurt, but I said it could be prior to my arrest. I got the feeling that she looked sorry, sort of saying that she knew something was going on and asking me to tell her (this is the feeling I got, but I don't know it for a fact) and she did note down what I told her. However, as I say, I didn't tell her what I was being put through because I thought she was in touch with the Guardia Civil and I was afraid of suffering reprisals...

Before being taken to the Audiencia Nacional they dared me to "behave with balls" and deny everything; they handcuffed me and put me in a van and drove there at top speed. Once I was in the Audiencia, time seemed to last for ever, although it was all quite calm and I wasn't interfered with at all. The forensic doctor gave me a check up again but, again, I didn't tell her about the ill treatment and torture I had been subjected to because she was the same doctor I had seen at the Guardia Civil station... I denied the statement I had made in custody and hardly let the judge talk; I told him how everything I had signed was because of the torture I had been subjected to and after that I was taken away.

### **PATRICIA PERALES HURTADO**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 18/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ZARAUTZ >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

... They sat me in the back seat of the car, with my head between my legs and the woman sitting next to me holding my head down the whole way, so that I couldn't lift it. They made me keep my head down by hitting me, they handcuffed and took me to Iruñea; at one point, out of the corner of my eye, I was able to see that we were at the toll barrier at Zuasti.

They took me to headquarters in Iruñea. They took my shoelaces, necklaces, rings etc. and left me in a cell, making me stand in a corner. They didn't let me sit down. This lasted for about three or four hours. Every so often a guardia civil would come and ask if I needed anything, but in a loud voice and a nasty tone; they were quite rude to me... In the cell, every time I heard steps I would become very agitated thinking about what they could do to me. After three or four hours they told me we were going to search my flat; we went there by car, with

my head down and handcuffed. Before getting there, we stopped off to see the forensic doctor. There was a female Guardia Civil who wanted to be present, inside the room, while the doctor saw me, but he said she was not to come in and she left. The forensic doctor asked me whether I had been beaten and whether I wanted him to have a look at me... He said that if I needed anything I was to ask them, because they had to give it to me, and he told me to calm down.

Then we went to the search at my home... Then we went back to the Guardia Civil headquarters, although they didn't hold me there for a long time. It must have been in the region of an hour. I spent that time in the cell. They let me sit down and brought me a blanket because I was so nervous I was trembling all over.

Then they took me to Madrid... every time they drove me anywhere, the same woman came with me; it was the woman who took part in the arrest, she was young and blonde. She had a mole under her eye and dressed informally, in jeans and so on. When we got to Madrid I thought I would die. All the stuff they could do to me kept going through my head and I got very nervous. They took me to a cell... As soon as they put me in the cell they told me I was to stand facing the wall and if they came in or knocked on the door, they were to find me in that position. After a while a man turned up and said, "You just made me leave my sofa and my wife and children", while he patted me on the shoulder, and this made me feel hysterical. Later on, they came into the cell, they put a hood over my head and took me to the first interrogation session. They stuck me in a room, and put me in a corner, standing, facing the wall and with my head down. Then the threats began. They threatened me and asked whether I'd heard what they do to you in detention... all this was shouted into my ear. They shouted stuff like "we're going to get you for a fucking big thing"... they kept telling me to cooperate with them, they made comments about my boyfriend... All this was in a very aggressive tone, it was all very intense. I was on my feet, facing the corner and they would stand behind me, very close, and shout at me; there were three or four guardia civil in the room... My lips were very dry and they brought Vaseline in and made a reference to Amaia Urizar and asked me if I knew what they used the Vaseline for... After quite a while with this kind of threats and the aggressive tone, suddenly, they took a 180 degree turn and their attitude changed, they said I had rights and even if I was an ETA member's girlfriend nothing need happen to me just for having been with him. They also laughed at me for the relaxed life I lead: studying and working. They made fun of my hobbies, because I like to go hiking and rock climbing... They also kept going on about how everyone who had claimed they were tortured had made it up because I could see for myself that they were not like that. After a few more hours they took me to the cell...

Several hours later they took me to see the forensic doctor, so I thought it must be morning.

The first thing the doctor asked was whether they had hit me; since I knew he wouldn't find any bruises, I told him not to bother having a look. I did ask him to check my blood pressure because I was rather dizzy. They took me back to the cell. After a while they took me for interrogation again. This session was quite formal. We prepared the statement they wanted me to make to them, in custody. They would ask the questions and we would "rehearse" my answers. After rehearsing my statement for hours, they took me back to the cell. Then they took me to make my statement in custody; it was Sunday morning. There were several people in the room, two of them sitting at a table, one asked the questions and the other wrote everything down, my court-appointed lawyer was there too; she never spoke a word to me. After the statement they took me to the cell again. This time I had no peace. Every half hour, a guardia civil outside would bang on the door; he would open and close the peep-hole in the door and switch the light in the cell on and off. He didn't let me go to the bathroom either, although I asked him lots of times. After a few hours they took me to see the forensic doctor again. Once again, the first thing he asked was whether they had hit me. I only spent a short while with him.

As they took me back to the cell they said they were going to release me, but after a bit they said I wasn't free to leave yet and this made my morale sink. On Saturday afternoon they had told me I would surely be released the following day and on Sunday, when they said they couldn't release me because they still had procedures to carry out, I got very agitated. They also said I would have another interrogation session, but it would be very relaxed, because some agents from Iruñea were coming to ask me a few questions... That's what happened. After a few hours they took me for the third interrogation session. They sat me in a chair facing the wall and they began to ask questions about people from Iruñea. Although they didn't shout at me, I could hear lots of people behind me, people coming in and out of the room and this made me very nervous. Then they went into my private life, hobbies, work... After a number of hours at this session, they took me back to the cell. They gave me my rucksack (when we were at the search of my flat they told me to take some clothes in a day pack) and told me to get ready to leave. While I waited, there was a guardia civil interested in talking to me...

When they finally released me, they walked me to the door of the station where they had held me and left me there, at the door, because although they had asked how I would get myself to Atocha train station, I had said I would make my own way there. They told me how to get there and left me at the door of their quarters, free.

**MIKEL ORBEGOZO ETXANIZ**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 12/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: VALENCIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

After a quick questioning they read me my rights and they took me to hospital for the doctor to see me; still, they manhandled me violently down the stairs. Two doctors came and I told them I wanted to be alone with them and to ask the policemen to go outside. This was apparently not possible, so I asked the doctor to write the fact that I had asked in his report. Then he looked at my mouth because I had swelling, but I didn't want to say where it hurt with the policemen in front. Then they took me back to the police station, upstairs, and every time we came across anyone they would hit me in the head, in the stomach... We got upstairs and they carried out another quick questioning session. Blows (especially to the head) and then it was back downstairs, all the way to the basement, where they took my fingerprints, photographs... and then back upstairs. The building had five or six floors. They took me downstairs to take my fingerprints twice, because apparently I wasn't cooperating. When we finished going up and down stairs they took me to an office. At the beginning I was sitting. A guy asked questions in quite a normal tone, but since I wasn't even making a face gesture he said, "you've wanted it to be this way". He left, two policemen came in and told me "look at me when I'm talking to you", because I kept my gaze fixed on a point in space and didn't pay them any attention. They opened the door and told someone outside, "bring me the phone book". They began hitting me, with their hands at first, then with the phone directory. I'd heard people say that receiving many blows to the head in succession gives you a headache, but it didn't happen to me. They had me on my feet the whole time, facing the wall, and at one point they ordered me to crouch down. "see how long you can take this posture, they said. They made me crouch and when they let go of me I stood up again. They threatened me, to make me crouch down again, but I would always stand back up, and after a while like this they got bored. I was on my feet and they asked questions and hit me, but sometimes they would stop questioning me and let me sit down. Since I said nothing, their questions were aimed at getting me talking, they were simple questions... but I continued to be silent.

In the afternoon, another two came to question me and they seemed to be having a great time with me. They laughed all the time and they said that they were itching to catch someone like me. They told me I had been very lucky at being arrested by them and not by the Guardia Civil, "those guys really know their stuff". They said they would use the electrodes on me and then they pretended to do it by placing a mobile phone on my neck. Then they grabbed my hair and took photos of me with the phone. Later on they placed me facing the

wall and made comments about the photos, "look what a face" or "look these are the ones we took of Sara sucking this guy's cock, "shall we show him? No, don't show him because you can see the girl is loving it". Then they would play the Spanish tunes they had in the phone very loud, right next to my ear; "you'll leave this place shouting Gibraltar belongs to Spain". Then they decided I was to stand with my legs together and they would kick my legs to make me keep them together. When I did, they asked, "do you smoke?" they held a lit cigarette an inch from my nose and they stood either side of me, "if you move to the left I will hit you, if you move to the right he will". I decided that standing still was playing their game, so I began to move to the sides and I got terrible blows to the head. Every now and then they made to hit me but didn't, or they would warm my hand with a lighter without actually burning me. These two laughed all the time. They held the magazine from their gun in front of my eyes for me to see the Spanish flag on it. Sometimes, when they heard footsteps in the corridor, they would stop hitting me...

They put me in a car to go to Madrid. There were three policemen in the car with me and more in another car. The whole time I had my head covered with my jacket and the policeman next to me kept hitting me, softly, in my thigh and ribs, so that I wouldn't fall asleep. When we arrived, at the beginning there were lots of policemen. They removed my handcuffs, they stripped me, they searched me, they put my clothes back on and took me for the first interrogation session. It was a small room, with a desk, two chairs and an telephone, and the policemen who would take part in the session were there, four or five of them. They came up to me and asked "what's your name?". since I didn't reply and kept my gaze vacant he asked the policemen from Valencia who had taken me there, "what's wrong with this one?". "I don't know, he's been like that since we nicked him". "Fuck". They all began sighing. It looked as if they had realised I wasn't going to talk. It was a long time since I had last seen my mother and they tried that path first, "I have spoken to your mother, do you want to know how she is? (my mother had been ill) She's in hospital, in a terminal phase. Do you want to see her?". I remained silent and they began to shout at me, saying I was selfish and I only thought about myself. They said they would arrest my sister and rape her if I didn't talk. Then the blows began, mostly to the head and stomach, with their hands, "you won't get off Scot free. We have five days to crush you and you'd better be sure that you'll talk, they all do. When you go and tell your friends that you haven't talked, they will tell you that nobody does that and that you're a sucker". They said they had five days, but I knew that they had three and a half days left at most. I kept close track of time, although sometimes I did become disoriented. Every day that passed with me remaining silent I would think one-nil to me, two-nil to me, three-nil to me... one of them told me he was going to stick his finger up my anus and put on a pair of latex gloves. He grabbed me by the testicles and when he began to pull my trou-

sers down I threw myself on the floor and curled up. They stood me up and left me in peace but they said, "if you don't talk we will do everything we were going to do to you to Sara". One of them said that Sara was in the room next door and told me to listen carefully because I would hear several blows. I heard nothing, just a voice that seemed to be from a woman, but nothing more. Then they said, "did you hear that? She said she hates you". They also told me she was suffering so much that her breasts hurt. They kept me on my feet for a while and then took me back to the cell. I urinated for the first time since I was arrested, in the toilet in the cell.

(...) From there they took me back to the cell and from the cell to another interrogation session, to the usual room. As soon as I went in they told me not to sit down and remain on my feet. I was alone with one of them who began to question me and hit me very violently in the head and stomach, "so, you talked to the forensic doctor all right, eh?" what did you tell him? Did you say we're beating you? Well, don't think that will save you, we are in a police station". He hit me many times in a short while and my body was shaking. At one point they called him from outside and he told me to sit down "have a bit of a rest; we'll carry on in a minute". My body began to shake out of control, my breathing became very fast and I began to retch. At the beginning they said, "don't kid yourself that you can fool us" but then they became worried. If they spoke to me or came close I got worse and had trouble breathing. They told me to stand up and go to the cell, but I didn't even try to get up, I knew I would have difficulty walking. In the end two of them grabbed me and took me to the cell. They left me of the bed and looked through the peephole until I recovered. In time, being left on my own, I recovered a normal breathing rhythm, and they left me there for a few hours...

**ANITZ ESKISABEL BARANDIARAN**

GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: LAZKAO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

(...) They put me in the car and told me they were taking me to Donostia. On the way there they asked about my studies, work... especially the policeman next to me. Then he said they would take me to Madrid; he'd come up close and say "you turn me on"...

Once we left the Audiencia they told me they were going to take me to Madrid, with six plainclothes policemen two cars. As soon as we left Donostia, the policeman sitting next to me in the car practically jumped on me and began to shout at me and pull my hair, and then he began to hit me, both with his hands and with his fists. He kept repeating my alleged alias while he hit me. He told me they would have to make a stop before getting to Madrid and I

would have to run in the dark (...) He pulled a folder out and read various questions over and over; at the same time he repeatedly threatened me, saying we would start right over from the beginning until they became tired of beating me. When they decide my confession was enough, they let me sleep and they also dozed off. They told me when we arrived in Madrid I would have to repeat what I had said in the car and then they would leave me in peace. When we went into the police station they took my watch, my ID card and my glasses.

They put me in a narrow, long room and two of the policemen sat in front of the computer. The court-appointed lawyer came in; I was unable to see his face. The policeman who'd been next to me in the car wasn't there; the three present at the statement were the ones that had taken part in the search of my home. The statement was exactly as we had prepared it in the car and once we'd finished, another two policemen took me to the cell. I was made to keep my head down during the whole time I was in the police station...

(..) I was interrogated in various rooms, in the large room where they had taken my statement on the first day, in another, smaller room and in another one with a mirror. I could hear the shouting coming from other interrogation sessions. The three policemen that spent the whole time with me were the ones who took part in the search of the house. During interrogation they threatened to beat me.

On Friday afternoon they said they had to take another statement from me. They told me they would only ask the same questions as during the previous statement. This time they didn't take my statement in any of the previous rooms; they took me through a door in the cell corridor, there were a lot of people there, panels... (It was all I could see, looking down). They put me in a small room with filing cabinets, a desk, a computer and four chairs. This time I was able to see the court-appointed lawyer, and the statement took for longer. They told me the Audiencia Nacional had ordered the seal on the computer to be removed, so they took me to witness this. Next, they took me back to the statement room and resumed it.

The lawyer spoke to the police quite naturally, as if he had often been in that police station. The statement-taking began at midday and finished at about five in the afternoon.

They told me they would take me to the judge the following day. After the statement was over they took me to the cell. They woke me up at four in the morning (I was able to see the time in one of their watches) and they took me to a room where, with my head down, I was able to see many pairs of feet, although the only one who spoke was the one I had been able to see from the first day, the one who'd sat next to me in the car on the way to Madrid. He asked me what I was going to tell the judge and whether I would need his help in the Audiencia Nacional (I didn't understand what he meant) and I said no, because I'd been on my own up to then anyway. They kept me for about twenty minutes in that room and then back to the cell. After about an hour, they came to take me to the room where the forensic

doctor usually was. In that room, the one who was in charge of interrogation and another one began to ask whether I was hiding anything, whether I had lied to them... I said I hadn't and then they said it was all over and all that was left was my statement to the judge.

They took me out of the cell at about 8 in the morning, there were lots of people in the corridors, and they gave my personal effects to the policeman standing next to me. There was a lot of movement of cars and people. They put me in a car and we waited for a while. The three policemen in the car wore hoods and caps. They drove at top speed. When we arrived at the Audiencia Nacional they left me with the police there and they took me to a cell. I became very agitated. It was a very small space, full of light. I couldn't sit down, my entire body hurt. I felt all the tiredness and pressure from the days in custody bearing down on me. I was very nervous.

When they took me before the judge I was disoriented, I remembered the statement I'd made the day before, so long, the small room and the terrible heat... and I thought I wouldn't be able to take another day.

When I went into the judge's office, I was told I would be allowed to have a lawyer I trusted, designated by my family, but this didn't help me in the least. When I was taken in front of Garzón I told him I was in no condition to make a statement and when he asked why, I said I was disorientated and feeling the consequences of the previous days in custody.

They took me out of the office and back to the cell, where they held us until two in the morning. In the afternoon I was allowed to see my family and lawyer and the time after that seemed to last for ever. In the evening they gave us our orders for remand in custody.

They took us to jail in a Guardia Civil van, at about two in the morning, two Colombian sisters, Ixone, Anuntzi from Santurtzi and me.

When we arrived in jail, they made us take a shower and they gave us a set of overalls, a T-shirt, underwear and socks. The next day they took us to see the doctor, but he didn't do any tests; he just asked if we were following any treatment.

We arrived in jail on Sunday the 13th at about three in the morning and we stayed in the arrivals block of Soto del Real until Saturday 23rd. although we left the cell on the first two days, the rest of the days we didn't leave the cell.

During the first month in jail I found it very difficult to get to sleep and to stay asleep; I'd wake up often, again and again. I'd get up feeling tired and with a headache. I'd try to read to help time pass, but I couldn't concentrate. I've made a big effort and now I can concentrate. As to sleeping, I have managed to sleep without waking up as often.

**ARKAITZ HORMAETXE BILBAO**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ZAMUDIO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested on 9 February at 00.10 hours. The Police came into my home with no permission. The Court Agent arrived 20 minutes later. I was my girlfriend's home, in her room. They took all the family out to the door and they held me in her room. One of the policemen came up to me and, while he held his gun aimed at my head, he carried out the arrest. They behaved with hatred upon coming into the house. The other policemen were spread out through the house and I could hear sounds of tension from the room, although I couldn't see anything. When the Court Agent arrived they proceeded to search the place, with my girlfriend as a witness. But I don't know why they searched that flat, as it was not my home. When they finished the search, they took me to Zamudio to carry out another search. My parents, the Court Agent and I were present during that search.

When we left my home they took me to the police station in Indautxu. They held me there for about three hours, the forensic doctor checked me up and they did the usual paperwork: photographs, fingerprints... When they finished all that, we left for Madrid. Three policemen went in the car with me and I was handcuffed. I must say that they drove at top speed, endangering all of our lives. I think we arrived at the police station in Madrid at about nine in the morning.

As soon as we arrived they put me in a cell. I was subjected to five interrogation sessions on that first day. Although I wasn't subjected to any physical torture, they used psychological torture, and a lot of it. They only threatened me with physical torture once, "you either cooperate or we will bring out our tools", everything else was psychological. During all the sessions there was one hooded policeman, the rest didn't wear hoods. They carried out each session in a different room, but the toughest sessions were in the same room. The room had a big mirror and two spotlights pointed at it; they were very harsh lights.

They pressured me the most about my girlfriend. They arrested her with me and they used this. She is ill and this made me very nervous and on top of that, if I had been arrested in my home they wouldn't have taken her... my head kept reeling thinking about that. They kept saying, "you either cooperate or she will have a very, very rough time..." and I would become increasingly agitated... They also pressurised me about my father, "we know your father has a good job; so if you don't cooperate we will ruin him". They also humiliated me, they said we Basques are nothing, that we are just terrorists and we will die if we get independence... During one of the sessions I hear a lot of noise from the room next door and they also used

this, saying "if you don't want that to happen to you, you'd better cooperate".

On that day a forensic doctor came in. he didn't do much, he took my blood pressure, and asked how I felt. He also told me the time and this helped me to know what day it was.

On the second day I suffered four interrogation sessions, all similar to the ones on the first day. On this second evening I signed a statement to the police. There was a court-appointed lawyer present. The statement was one they had got me to prepare during previous interrogation sessions. As they took me to make the statement, when they took me out of the cell and before putting me in the statement room, a policeman came up to me and said "watch out what you say, we've still got a whole night to look forward to".

After signing the statement I thought it was all over. But that evening I was subjected to another two pretty tough interrogation sessions. What they said right from the beginning and over and over again was, "before Garzón we want you to say what you said and signed in here, otherwise we'll be seeing you again".

The forensic doctor also saw me that day; it was the same as the day before.

On the following day I suffered no interrogation. In the afternoon they took me to the Audiencia Nacional. During the drive there they issued the same threats as the day before; telling me that if I didn't ratify what I'd signed in the police station I would be taken back into custody...

My statement to Garzón lasted 15 minutes more or less. The judge and the prosecutor's attitude was bad, as usual, but the lawyer there was good, he requested such hard measures not to be taken against us, because there were other ways to ensure we didn't abscond, other than remand in custody...

### ARKAITZ ORMAETXEA ETXEBARRI

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/05/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ZORNOTZA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

(...) On the way to Madrid, the guardia civil in the back seat next to me asked innumerable questions. I was handcuffed and blindfolded. They also began to threaten me, saying that if they didn't hear what they wanted to hear, "the party" would begin. If I refused to answer a question they would hit me on the head.

We arrived in Madrid. Straight away, they took me into a room. There, they made me strip and a guardia civil wearing gloves felt my body and asked if I had piercings, tattoos, contact lenses or if I took any form of medication... After a while they took me to see the forensic doctor, he told me it was six in the afternoon and advised me to "leave my mind blank" so that

time passed as quickly as possible. From there they took me to the cell. After an hour and a half they took me for the first interrogation session. I was standing, blindfolded. They asked a lot of questions and threatened me non stop, "you are a son of a bitch", "you are a crap rugby player, look what a piece of shit you are", "what an ugly bastard you are"... Every time I gave an answer they didn't like, they would slap me over the back of the head. They also made me do many stand-ups, while they asked questions. I sweated a lot. I had my jumper on. They slapped me over the head for the fourth time and all three began shouting, asking whether I had anything to say, and I said I did; I asked whether this was their whore of a democracy and that I could see what the "new attitude" of the government was and then they hit me in the head and the testicles. I fell over. They lifted me up and took me to the cell. There, I had to stand facing the wall. Whenever I heard a noise, my knees would buckle and I'd fall over. When I couldn't hear any guards I would crouch down. One time they caught me doing this and they said if I did it again they'd crack my skull open (...)

The day guard told me to eat some breakfast, otherwise he would get angry. He brought in a mug of chocolate and some fairy cakes. After a short while the forensic doctor saw me; it must have been around twelve. She asked what they had done to me. I said they had hit me a few times. She also asked how I was feeling in terms of morale and why I was so sad, and said "bear up, now there is less time to go, it will be over soon". Then it was back to the cell. They offered lunch but I refused. Shortly, they made me stand facing the wall with my hands behind my back and my legs spread. I spent a long time in that position, until they came in to get me again.

As soon as I went into the interrogation room they told me to "begin doing stand ups", "because you are a son of a bitch", "because you know something and you don't want to tell us", "I'm sure ETA has sounded you out", " we can't have made a mistake because the Guardia Civil never makes mistakes", "we're going to do the bag to you", "we're going to put the electrodes on you"... all the time. They made remove my jumper to do the stand ups. I did uncountable stand ups. Then they made me strip. They mocked me. "Look what little hair he's got on his balls" "do your testicles hurt?", "what did you tell the forensic doctor? Did you show her your balls so she can look for marks?" all this while I did stand ups non stop.

They put a plastic bag into my hands and said, "you know what this is, don't you? Carry on doing stand ups or we'll make you put it over your head!" They also insulted me because I was sweating, "you're making a mess on the floor", "you're a filthy pig"... They made me put the bag over my head. Even before I'd put it on I'd fallen over a couple of times or maybe three and they said "if anyone is going to crack your skull in here, it will be us, not you". They made me do stand ups with the bag over my head. I was very tired and they would hold my arms. They said I had found a trick in the bag and then said, "You're not going to feel like skiving

the bag, because the bath is next". They also poked fun at my girlfriend "she's cheated on you"... at one point they said, "Take the bag off and say hallelujah". I did and they took me to the cell. They flung me on the bed. I fell asleep and they came in and woke me up, "we're going for a little walk". They made me sit down and "we're going to ask you a few questions, for you to make a statement, see if you agree" and they asked lots of questions. They also asked if I wanted to do a calligraphy test and give a DNA sample, and although at the beginning I refused, in the end I agreed to do it. We went over my statement about three times.

They took me to give my statement (...) After eating something it was back to standing facing the wall and waiting for them to come. When I was in the cell I could hear doors, and this terrified me. I had no problems to go to the toilet, although there was a guardia civil with me. In the cell I was made to wear a blindfold.

They'd open the doors to other cells for me to hear other detainees. (...) The following morning I gave my statement before two guardia civil and with a court appointed lawyer behind me (I was not allowed to talk to him). At the end, they showed me a lot of photographs. After the statement they took me to the cell, from there to the forensic doctor and then in to make a statement about the photographs. They also asked about mobile telephones. Back to the cell. I was drowsy when they came in again and the officers who'd taken down my statement took me to another room where they began talking to me while I was blindfolded "I suppose you know me by now" (I recognised him by his voice) and he said "if you don't fuck up before the judge you'll be back out on the street", "you've either come in here with everything very well prepared or you're telling us the truth". He asked if I wanted to have a shower right then or before I was taken to the judge. They took me to the cell.

I had a chance to sleep in the cell, although they opened and closed the doors and switched the lights on and off all the time. They made noises. The following morning they said, "Right, wash your face; we're going to the judge". I asked if I could have a shower and they said "yes, but quickly". I had a shower, I put on the clothes they'd taken from my home and they put me back in the cell. Shortly, "come on, on the double!" and they quickly took me upstairs, sat me in the room where they take the statements and put a notebook in front of me for me to sign; I asked what it was for and they said "for your belongings". They were in a hurry for me to sign. I signed and they took me to a van; there was a guardia civil there who grabbed my shoulders and said "lasaitu, Arkaitz" (calm down, Arkaitz) in Basque. I got in the van and we headed for the Audiencia Nacional with the sirens on, handcuffed and with my head down. There, they took me to the basement, "yes, to the sixth underground floor, just watch how he shits himself". In there I heard the other detainees and people who were waiting for a trial. We cheered each other up. I was taken to the forensic doctor. This was where they told Igor that his grandmother had died.

I made my statement to the judge, still handcuffed, and he told me I was being released. They took me to the cell and I asked for my belongings; they gave them back to me on the way out.

### ENEKO OSTOLAZA IKARAN

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 29/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ARRASATE >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

At 10.00 in the morning, in the car park at work, two men and a woman came up to me. One of the men pulled out a Guardia Civil badge and told me I was under arrest for "cooperating with an armed group". At the time of my arrest I was on my own, there were no witnesses. They didn't show me the arrest warrant. After they searched me thoroughly, they put me in the car and there I was made to keep my eyes shut, my head between my legs and my hands behind my back. We left for Bilbao. The first time they hit me it was on the back of my head, for opening my eyes. They also said things like "five days and you'll be a gudari" or "you won't be cold with us".

After four or five hours in Bilbao, a guardia civil came into the cell and said, in a threatening tone, "none of this waving your little hand at your family or shouting jo ta ke".

The search of the house was very violent. Although I had the keys in my hand they knocked the door down and four or five guardia civil dashed into the house.

When the search was over they took me out of the house and put me into a [Nissan] Patrol. As soon as I was in the car, the interrogation started. I wasn't answering and for every question I didn't answer they'd hit me on the back of the head. They carried on asking and they beat me more and more. This was what the beginning of the journey was like. About half way there they tried to undermine me psychologically, saying that it was better to talk before arriving in Madrid, because once we arrived it would be too late, because the other detainees would have talked... towards the end of the journey they mostly let me be.

When I got to Madrid, they ordered me to strip inside the cell, they began to feel up my backside and they also caressed my neck and head. Then they began to humiliate me, provoke me and threaten me, "do female guardia civil turn you on? Are you a virgin? Are you a queer? We'll bring the one with AIDS in here!" Then they ordered me to dress and made me stand for an hour. They took me to another room. Since the moment we left for Madrid and except for the time I was in the cell, I was blindfolded the whole time. I couldn't see, but it seemed like there were many people in that room, 8 or 10 people. A man began to question me and if I didn't answer, he'd hit me on the head. The situation got steadily worse, and the

shouting was incredible. While one was shouting incredibly loud in my ear, the other one spoke softly in my ear. After a while like this, the one asking the questions said: "I'm going to leave you alone with these ones, who are doing torture training!" It seemed like there were several people in the room, all laughing and shouting "You're going to end up like Lasa and Zabala!" They made me strip and just like earlier in the cell, they began touching me while they asked questions. Twice they elbowed me in the testicles and I'd drop to my knees in pain; they would immediately lift me up. Another time, they squashed my testicles, causing unbearable pain.

They did the bag to me because I wasn't saying what they wanted to hear. They put the bag over my head while they asked a whole lot of questions. I had three interrogators asking questions and each one asked a different question. They tightened the bag round my neck three or four times. I'd feel a terrible feeling of suffocation and every time I began to answer the questions they asked, they said: "we don't want you to talk! We just want to torture you!" and they'd tighten the bag again and ask the same question again and then tighten the bag again because I was silent. If I talked it was because I talked and if I was silent it was for being silent. I felt powerless and unable to do anything. Suddenly they said "the electrodes, bring the electrodes in!" And while I was naked, they poured water over me and said "plus, you're going to have to put them on yourself! We're going to do the clown to you; do you know what it is? It means putting the electrodes on your genitals! You may be left impotent, did you know that?" and they gave me cables which I had to put on my own genitals, mi nipples... they touched me with an object, but it didn't cause an electric shock, it was only an act. Then, suddenly, I heard a strange noise, "buzzzzzzz", a bit like the sound of electricity, and then the shouts and questions began again, suddenly I felt a sharp shock under my foot and then they said "turn it up to max, turn it up to max". They didn't use it on me again, but they would threaten me, bringing that "buzzzzz" thing closer to me. Then they told me to put my clothes on and they took me to the cell.

From that moment on, they used long interrogation sessions and increasingly shorter rest times, to make me lose track of time. At one point, they took me to the forensic doctor. But he hardly looked at me at all; he took my temperature, my blood pressure, and asked a couple of questions. It's true that I didn't dare to tell him what they'd done to me; because I was afraid the treatment would get even worse. Before going to the doctor they'd threatened me "watch out with what you say, eh! See, I will find out". Then they told me I had to make a statement and they made me repeat what I had to say over and over. They told me a lot of the things I had to say, threatening me, saying that if I didn't say those things in my statement, it would be back to the treatment like the night before. "Don't you fuck up when you go upstairs! It will be better for you to sign, otherwise..."

They took me to the cell to rest and as soon as I'd lain down on the mattress a guardia civil came in and said, "How's your mother with her heart? She's not 100% is she? She's been taken to hospital!" at that point I broke; I began to cry... My mother had been in hospital before, so, although I doubted them, I ended up believing it.

At night they told me that the following morning I'd be taken to the Audiencia Nacional.

Before the judge, I denied everything. The prosecutor paid no attention to what I was saying (he was half asleep), he talked on his mobile phone. Apart from that, I complained about the torture I'd suffered. They held me in the Audiencia Nacional cell from 9 in the morning until 10 at night.

### **GORKA AZTIRIA ETXEBERRIA**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 07/04/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ARRASATE >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL

>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested in Arrasate at about two in the morning; they began kicking the door and my mother opened up. My brother was also at home. When we opened the door, we saw it was the Policía Nacional. They asked for me, they read me my rights and, when my mother asked why I was being arrested, they said it was under investigation secret and the only thing they could say was that I only had the rights accepted under the antiterrorist law.

I was not worried in the least and I tried to make the search easy for them. There was no violence during my arrest. The surprise came when we went to the flat in Legazpi: the policías nacionales, the court secretary, the court-appointed lawyer and I. they turned the flat inside out. They would throw anything they weren't interested in onto the floor and they smoked in the house without my permission.

Once they had finished the search, they took me to the police station in Donostia, in other words, from Arrasate they took me to Legazpi and then to Donostia. We travelled by car. Later on, they took me to Madrid in the same car. Then the threats started; they said "you know how this goes" and banged the seats next to me and telling me to get ready for a rough time if I didn't confess. The questioning began and they asked whether I knew Gaizka and his cousin. I said I knew Gaizka but I wasn't sure I'd met his cousin, and since they didn't like this answer, they issued threats about my brother, all the way to Madrid.

I've forgotten to say that in Donostia, before they took me to the police station, a doctor gave me a check up.

In Madrid, the forensic doctor was waiting for me, but since I refused to see him, they took me to the cell. The cell was 2 by 3 metres and there was a rise against the wall one metre high

by one metre deep. There was a sort of leather mattress on this risen part. There was also tap and a toilet. It was very cold, but they didn't give me a blanket until the second day.

I refused to drink the water or eat the food they gave me. They asked whether I was afraid they would put truth drugs in the food or in the water. I said I wasn't afraid of that but I was afraid of them beating me. They had a good laugh and showed me they were in charge and I was just a piece of shit to be crushed during five days. I was beaten on the first two days. On the first day they pushed me around, one policeman pulled my hair and pulled me towards him provoking me and threatening me.

On the second day I agreed to make a statement with a lawyer. They didn't like the statement I made and then, at about ten at night, they took me out of the cell and placed me against the wall. The threats began and meanwhile they beat Gaizka in the room next door. I could hear everything. They asked if I wanted to get the same treatment, but I insisted that what I had told them was the truth. After ten minutes, a smartly dressed man came in and told me to kneel down. At the beginning I refused, but he grabbed my hair and forced me down. Then another two men came in; there were six policemen surrounding me, some issuing threats and another one hitting me on the head. Most of the blows were to parts where I have hair and he used the palms of his hands. He told me that in that very same place a legal member had given my name and that there was no way I was leaving without giving at least one name.

I don't know why, perhaps it was because of the blows or because I wasn't eating or drinking, I became dizzy. So at one point I was on the floor, swallowing my own vomit, because I had told them I felt like being sick and they said that I'd better not because if I puked they would kill me.

Then they left the room and for three days I only had two policemen with me; I ignored the threats and suffered the aloofness of the forensic doctor. The threats were the usual; my mum, my brother, all my friends, three days hearing how they beat Gaizka and listening to them telling me to denounce Gaizka because he "had betrayed" me, hearing their lies.

In my statement I admitted to having taken Gaizka, his cousin and a friend of his cousin's to Lekeitio; I told them they had nothing to do with ETA, or so I thought and that Gaizka had been in my home in Legazpia. The lawyer was OK, I think. They kept telling me to denounce Gaizka, repeating "because he has betrayed you", and at one point I believed this, when they said he had a copy of the keys to my home and he hid ETA cells in the flat and that they had evidence and I would spend 15 years in jail.

The attitude of the forensic doctor was awful, although he did help me to calm down; by the third day he made it very clear that I would not spend the whole five days in there. According to him the police did not use torture and, with a policeman by the door, how was

I going to complain I was being tortured. Apart from that, the drive to the Audiencia Nacional was OK. Before the judge, I was desperate, humiliated, wrecked and I had to stand the prosecutor's arrogance.

### **IELTXU LOPEZ DE ABERASTURI**

GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 12/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ALACANT >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested on February 13, 2005, in Alicante. At about 00.00 they came into my aunt's house, they woke everyone up and they asked where I was. I was in the other flat and they came in at about 00.30. I was with my two cousins. They rang the bell and when I asked who it was they said "Guardia Civil" and they barged in, kicking the door in. one of them asked if I was Ieltxu and by the time I'd replied I was already handcuffed and pressed against the wall. When everything calmed down a little, they showed me the arrest warrant, and according to it, they were investigating the possibility that I'd taken part in a bomb attack in Denia. While they were arresting me, they just shouted at me and at my relatives. One hour later, two men who must have been from the Court arrived and the search began. They didn't tell anyone else what was going on and they didn't let us call anyone; but as I've said, the entire family was awake in the flat above. After the search, uniformed guardia civil came into the flat and they put me in a car with four plain-clothes agents. We went through some procedures at the court and they put me in the car again. at that time the way they treated me began to change and the threats began, "you are with the guardia civil and everything you've heard about us is true, you will talk...", threats regarding the family, insults blows...

We left for Madrid, driving very fast. The co-driver turned the seta around. They mostly hit me in the head and testicles. They tried to do the bag to me with a supermarket bag but, since it had holes, they bunched it up and they stuck it in my mouth while they held my nose. While the co-driver and the one on my left hit me and threatened me the one on my right played the good cop. They pretended they were going to stop the car by a ditch, but they didn't actually do it. They pulled a gun out (it had no clip in; I was able to touch it with a finger, because I couldn't see) and threatened to shoot me. They said the gun was "hot" and it would be found in my home in Gasteiz. We arrived in Madrid very quickly; a doctor saw me there and then we got into a helicopter that was waiting for us and we left for Gasteiz. During this journey I wasn't subjected to blows but I was threatened. They searched the house in Gasteiz with me present and then left for the Guardia quarters (I think it was the one in Salsomendi). We got in the helicopter to go to Madrid again and this time I was beaten and

threatened. The blows were mostly to the head. That was what the journey to Madrid was like. I don't know where they took me because my head was covered.

Once I was in Guardia Civil premises, I was in two places during the five days I spent there. I had to imagine what the interrogation room was like because I spent the five days blindfolded and I was only able to see the cell. When we arrived in the room they blindfolded me and stood me against the wall. I know there were tables in the middle of the room and that there was a computer because there was always someone at the computer checking out information. The cell was about 2 X 3 metres and only had a coloured mattress and a blanket on a structure for the mattress. The tiles on the floor were reddish-brown and there was a light bulb behind a wire mesh.

The types of torture I was most subjected to were the bag and blows. They would hit me with the palms of their hands behind my ears. There were times when they hit me on the head with something that seemed to be a rolled up newspaper. All this happened at the same time as they were doing the bag to me. Sometimes they made me do stand ups while they had the bag over my head, and they tightened it every so often. They also put a blanket over me to make me break out in sweat, they made me do stand ups and end with the bag. You feel many things at the time. With the blows, for example, the first ones hurt, but then there comes a moment when they stop hurting. The bag is different. You can't control the feeling of running out of oxygen and you feel you are going to die. As an example, one time they tied my feet and hands and a guardia civil sat on my knees (I was sitting on a chair). Another one held one arm and another one held my other arm. Then another one would put the bag on me and still another agent was standing, hitting me with a rolled-up magazine and shouting "kill him, kill him!", "if you are left with no oxygen the damage is irreversible!" and stuff like that. Because of the suffocation feeling, I was able to lift up the guardia civil who were holding me down. In the beginning they would only put one bag on me, but, since I could rip it easily, they put another one over the first one, telling me that I wouldn't be able to rip it. They kept shouting in my ear, trying to scare me and make me nervous. They threatened me and my family, they insulted us...

You also have to take into account all the noises you hear when you are in the cell: metallic noises, footsteps above the cell, engines... all these noises keep you in a state of tension.

During the first three days they had the light in the cell on all the time. I ate and slept from the third day on (more or less).

At the beginning, when I was arrested, there were agents in the same group playing the good cop and bad cop roles. In the station, on the other hand, the group of the good ones (who gave me advice) and the group of the very bad ones (the ones torturing me) would come at different times. The ones who brought me from Valencia to Madrid played the good cop role.

When interrogation sessions dragged on they would take me to the cell "for you to have a think about what you're going to tell us"

We prepared the statements until I memorised it, in the cell, and if I refused they would threaten me, saying I'd be taken back to the interrogation room. Two lawyers came. I think the first one was surprised when he saw me give the answer even before they'd asked the question. I think that's why he asked the guardia civil if he could have five minutes alone with me. They nervously told him he couldn't, because I was under incommunicado detention. Later on, another lawyer turned up, and he was there until the end.

When I was in the cell, I could sometimes hear the others' screams, but I could hear them even more clearly when I was under interrogation. I had the feeling that they wanted me to hear those screams. I also heard Xabi crying, alone in his cell and I remember I felt powerless, really small because I couldn't do anything, not even open my mouth. The different temperature feelings inside the cell were also strange: at times I was sweating because of the heat and other times the dirty blanket wasn't enough to keep the cold out.

On the way to Madrid they'd told me "if you're not in ETA, say long live Spain", and they made me repeat it.

I made three statements. After the first and second statement I continued to be subjected to torture. After the third I didn't.

### IGOR GONZALEZ SOLA

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 25/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... They flung me on the floor and tied my hands behind my back with a kind of handcuffs made out of rope. While one stood on me and aimed his gun at me, 3 or 4 others searched the room; they turned the bed over and moved it out of the way. It was a five minute thing. Then they stood me up and one of them repeated 3 or 4 times that we were going to go to the mountains, just the both of us, and began punching me in the face and sides. He also said, "Now you can have a laugh in front of the cameras of the Audiencia Nacional"... The one in plain clothes (later described as "the boss") left, the GEO who'd punched me lifted me up and began to ask questions... he slung his gun over his back and did a karate arm lock to me (while I was handcuffed) and flung me on the floor. When I was on the floor, he and another two of them kicked me in my sides and head, repeating the kicks and the karate arm lock four or five times, until someone called them and told them something that made them stop. The GEO said, "Now you can say that you were arrested by a man", and flung me on the floor again and

held me there for a while, standing on my back...

We left for Madrid, but the "bad cop" was no longer sitting in the back with me; he was in the front passenger seat and the "good cop" (thus the name) sat next to me. As we were leaving Donostia he began to say that I should tell him everything, because otherwise the others would get me and I would spend 3 days in their hands, incommunicado, and these could be extended to 5 days, and if I told him everything I would be taken directly to the Audiencia, and otherwise I would spend 5 days in a bad way and end up confessing everything anyway, and if I told him everything I would save myself "a big fucking hiding" and not to be stupid because I was under arrest and there was no point in playing it tough as I'd end up confessing everything one way or another and I wouldn't get this chance again... The driver and the "good cop" left to get a coffee and the "bad cop" got in the back next to me. I hadn't opened my mouth up until then. He told me not to play the tough guy, because he knew what we were like and every time I lied to him or refused to answer he would "fucking hit me", and added that he already knew the answer to certain questions so I'd better tell the truth. Then the questions began. The first was what my name was, I said nothing and he began to hit me over the head while he told me that he knew that my name was Igor but he wanted to hear me say it...

They took me to a large room with a desk and a computer at the back and I don't know how many chairs, six at least. The "good cop" and the "bad cop" were there. The "bad cop" said that if I refused to answer or if I lied he would hit me; the questions began and quite soon the blows to the head and the slaps came too. I continued to remain silent and then the threats about the bag came and also threats about sending the GEO to get my mum, my nieces and my sister. He said that a few months earlier the "civila" had been there (meaning the Guardia Civil) and that now they would send the GEO. I was still silent, so they made me remain in certain postures. First, they made me keep my arms up and since I was only answering questions about my work, they made me crouch. Then the "arrogant cop" and the "bad cop" came in. they started to question me and since I was still refusing to reply, the "bad cop" said, "Right, I'm off to get the bag" and he and the "good cop" left. Only the "arrogant cop" remained. I was kneeling and had my arms up above my head... every time I refused to answer one of his questions, he would hit me on the back of my head. I became tired and every time I shifted my arms or legs he would also hit me. Since I still was refusing to answer, he asked his questions more loudly and since I still wouldn't answer, he said "I swear by my daughter, whom I love most in this world, that you will talk; you are disrespecting me". I told him I was tired and I wouldn't be able to last much longer in that posture. He replied that I still had four days to go and what I'd seen up to then was the mildest treatment I would get, because there were others around who were itching to get their hands on me; he said they

would take it in shifts for the remaining four days. I couldn't bear it any longer, and he continued asking questions and hitting me...

In the night they took me for questioning again... The "bad cop" began to slap me and ask whether I would talk. I didn't answer and he made me lift my arms up. He went into a reel of questions that I didn't answer. Every time I refused to answer he would slap me once or twice... the only answers I gave were negative so he slapped me again and again until he left the room and left me alone with the "good cop", who began to go through the same stuff he had told me in the car; he said that I had a chance to talk and the blows would cease, that if I talked he would take me to the Audiencia... The "bad cop" came back with a number of photographs and went into another reel of questions, the slapping began again...

They took me to the large room again. The "good cop" was sitting at the computer with the papers he'd been writing during the interrogation session the previous night. The "bad cop" asked whether I was ready; I said I was, and they called the lawyer in. She sat behind me, they told me she was my court-appointed lawyer but I was not allowed to talk to her because I was incommunicado. The "bad cop" began by asking me my personal details, then he asked about how I'd been treated, about the food, why I wasn't eating, I answered everything until he said that I didn't have to make a statement if I didn't want to and I could wait to make a statement to the judge. I still don't know why I did this, but it just came out of my mouth, "I don't want to give a statement"; the torturers looked shocked, white, and the "bad cop" asked me why I didn't want to make a statement. I said I would rather talk directly to the judge. He told the "good cop" to write that I had refused to make a statement, that the proceeding had lasted for ten minutes and that the time was 19.45 hours. He asked whether I was going to sign the document and I refused. The torturers and the lawyer signed the document and I was taken to the cell. I began to realise what I had done and started to get very agitated. I started walking round and round in the cell. At night they came to get me and took me to the large room. There were four torturers there: the "bad cop", the "good cop", the "boss" and the "arrogant cop". They sat me on a chair and the "bad cop" started shouting at me and beating me non-stop. He said I had tricked him and he still had two days left so I would pay for it. Then, while the "bad cop" was slapping me, the "boss" began to punch me in the head and shout "who do you think you are; you've no idea what you've done, someone like you does not trick us like that..." He didn't stop until he hurt himself and he was so frustrated that he started hitting me in the testicles while he looked around as if he were trying to find something to beat me with and not hurt himself. Since he didn't find anything, he told the "bad cop" and the "arrogant cop" to leave the room with him. I was left alone with the "good cop" again and he said that I had fucked up and since I hadn't listened to him now I would have such a tough time that I would confess everything and he couldn't do anything for me any more

because they were all so pissed off with me. The "bad cop" came in, made me stand with my hands up and began a battery of questions, slapping me and punching me in the head. He didn't care what I answered. After that, another battery of questions about the people the Guardia Civil had arrested in Bilbo and more slaps and punches. Then he asked questions about my private life; I answered them all and he told me to sit down...

From the moment when I refused to give a statement to my arrival in jail I was unable to sleep. I spent two days in the cell, terrified, scared to death, wondering when they would come back to get me, walking round and round... every time I heard a sound or when they brought me food or my medication I was seized by panic...

### IGOR ZEARRETA GARAI

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/05/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ZORNOTZA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL

>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

At 9.30 in the morning the doorbell rang. I looked through the peephole but I saw no one. I asked my other to wait a little and as soon as she opened the door a guardia civil jumped on me, grabbed me by the neck and asked "are you Igor?" The search began. They searched every room; I was present. They took quite a few things. About nine guardia civil, the court secretary and a court-appointed lawyer took part in the search. They told me I was being arrested for "suspected cooperation and membership" and they read my rights and made me sign a list of all the things they'd taken. There were another three guardia civil outside. When they finished they let me say goodbye to my mother, who was very nervous, and they took me down to the car.

In the street there were lots of people demonstrating solidarity and, because I lifted my hand to them, when they put me in the car they asked a lot of questions "why did you lift your fist? What do you think you are, a gudari?" They asked lots of questions and said that that was nothing, "this is just warming up for us" "you're not telling us anything" "it will be worse later" "you know there are three ways of getting out of this, in a van to jail, in an ambulance, and in a car with quicklime". I asked what "car with quicklime?" meant, and they said "do you not remember Lasa and Zabala?" "This is just to pass time, it will be worse later" they began to laugh and I asked what "T-group" meant and they said "the Torturer group". "Just you wait until so-and-so comes in with his lab coat on..." They asked questions and issued threats for the whole journey. I had a black hood over my head and my hands tied. I could see through the hood. I saw how they stopped at the toll-barrier and the driver and the co-driver exchanged places. Later on they asked if I could see them; I said I could see a little and they

said "well, when we stopped, two more people got in the car and now this is where the illegal stuff starts" I knew this was a lie because I'd seen what they had done, but I said nothing. We arrived in Madrid.

They took me for interrogation. They put me in a room, blindfolded, and there they began to ask questions about various matters. They made me do sit-ups. I sweated a great deal and then they made me take up another posture: sitting on the floor with my legs stretched out, without touching the floor and my hands behind my back. I complained about my arm, because it was very painful. After a while in this position they told me to shout, because it would help me to relax; when they said this I noticed they opened the door for the others to hear me, I suppose. They gave me a choice between the bag, the bath and the electrodes. I said I didn't want any of them. While I was doing the sit-ups they put a plastic bag over my head. When the bag stuck over my mouth I'd complain. I'd fall over to one side and I felt how they held me. I pretended to get dizzy and they shouted "you can't take the smallest thing!" "This is level one and there are six" "you will go to the third level". I told them I had a bad pain in my arm. Because of this, they stopped the postures and the bag and continued with the questions. They mad a lot of noise and if they didn't like an answer they would shout "don't lie to us!" they made me do sit-ups again. This time I was made to put the bag on my head. I became dizzy again and they asked if I had pain in my arm. I said I had a bad pain. I kept telling them I didn't know the answer to their questions and they'd say "you're useless!" "I'm sure if you go to plant a bomb you'd lose it on the way". They ended up yawning. They said "let's go for a drink" and they took me to the cell.

During the following session they placed me facing the wall. They asked a whole lot of questions and when they didn't like answer they hit me. They threatened me, shouted at me and asked questions all the time. When it was over, they put me back in the cell. I was able to rest.

Back for interrogation. "The fooling around is over, you're leaving this place dead" "you're going to have to answer our questions" They put me in the same position as before, for a good long while. When I couldn't take it any more and I moved my legs or touched the floor with my hands they'd say "don't move or touch the floor or we'll kick you in the balls" and they'd immediately put me in the position. I touched the floor three or four times and they hit me in the testicles. When I was in this position, they tried to frame me and since I couldn't take it any more, I said that if that was what they wanted me to say in my statement, I would. He asked, "But, is it true?" and I said "no, but if that's what you want me to say, I will". An older man came in and said "there are two ways of sorting this out: this is one way, and the other way is to cooperate with the Guardia Civil" and they proposed I cooperated with them.

We went over and over the statement; they would ask if I was clear about what I had to say.

We went upstairs to do the statement in police custody. When we finished they gave it to me to read, I changed a few things and I signed it. They took me back to the cell.

The following morning, after breakfast, they took me to the forensic doctor. He asked the usual questions. Then I was in the cell until the afternoon. I had two more interrogation sessions, but they were quite calm; "these are just to fill time in" they said. They asked a series of questions. At one point an older guy came in and asked if I could recognise his voice. He told me he was the same one I'd spoken to earlier and he brought up the business of cooperating with the security forces. From there they took me to the cell.

I had an apple for dinner in the cell and that was it until the following day. The following morning they let me have a shower. They took me to the Audiencia Nacional. They offered an interpreter, but I said no. the forensic doctor saw me there. Then I was taken before the judge.

### IKER LEGARRA GOSOTOLA

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 24/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: EIBAR >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I began to suffer psychological torture from moment I was arrested. Even so in that moment I didn't suffer excessively over what they said about the charges against me or my situation, what hurt me was what they said about my friend. From the start they searched the car and then they questioned us separately. At one point, I was outside of the car and he was inside, it started to rain and they had me outside in the rain without letting me in the car. I don't know why they did it, so that we weren't together, so he would feel upset about me, I don't know, but they had me there for fifteen minutes aiming sawed-off shotguns at me.

A guardia civil came up and threatened me, saying they had received information on the mobile and that if I didn't tell them the truth they would smash my face. They said I had lied to them, that I was going down a dangerous path, that I didn't know who I was dealing with. .. Then they told me I was detained, they handcuffed me with cords and as they read me my rights they put me in the [Nissan] Patrol. I kept looking at Mikeldi. He said to me "eusti, la ostia!" (hang in there!). I didn't say a word. That was the last time I saw him.

The interrogation was constant, they bombarded me with questions, they hit me around the head (I think they used the flats of their hands) and from time to time they hit me in the testicles. After that they left me alone for a moment (very brief) in the cell, but they didn't let me sit down or move. I had to stand against the wall until they returned. Then it was questions, shouts, threats, blows to the head and at times the testicles. That continued for the

entire night, time after time, and of course, I was standing the whole time. My legs ached, my back hurt and I couldn't take it any more, but he came back again to repeat his particular litany. I thought that night would never end; I was very agitated, on the lookout all the time for his return, expecting him to hit me again. In one of the interrogation sessions they stripped me and made me bend over. A guardia civil put his finger into my anus, not that far, but enough to cause pain, and they told me that was nothing, that in Madrid they would use a stick, and push it in until I was bleeding. They laughed. I didn't want to believe what they said and tried not to think about it, but however hard you try, it's frightening, and you gradually realise what's happening.

In one of these interrogation sessions they told me that I would see a forensic doctor, but that if I said anything they'd thrash me. On one of these occasions they took me out of the cell and left me in a room for a long time until a person without a hood appeared. He took my fingerprints, weighed me, measured me... then I told him that they had beaten me. Then he began to laugh, he said I'd made a mistake, he wasn't the forensic doctor. I didn't know who he was, but in desperation I'd thought he was the doctor, or I wanted to think that. But I'd made a big mistake. They took me to the cell and the first thing they said was that I had told their friend that they had hit me, and they began to taunt me because I had confused him with the forensic doctor.

For some time on the freeway we travelled quietly, in silence, but as they had warned me, it soon became hell. They covered my eyes with a mask (which remained in place until I was at the Audiencia Nacional, only being removed in the cell, with the forensic doctor and when I made statements) and they put me in a car with leather seats in which three people easily fitted in the back seat. As soon as I got in, the two in the back with me gave me a little lecture. It was immediately clear that one of them was going to take on the role of "good cop" and the other, "The Commissar", as he called himself, said he was "better known as The Torturer". The guy playing good cop began with a psychological chat, saying if I behaved they would behave well too, that they knew how to treat people properly, but if I rubbed them up the wrong way they would behave very badly. He asked me if I had read the Gara newspaper recently, if I had read the testimony of Amaia Urizar and others. He said they were all true, and that I should get ready for what awaited me. When this lecture was over he began to interrogate me, at first it was okay, but it wasn't long before he began to hit me. He started shouting, totally demented, yelling "So you think you won't talk, eh, gudari? Well, you're in for it". And he began hitting me harder, it was as if he was possessed. There was still a long way to go before we reached Madrid. The blows I received in the car were incredible. Even though there was so little room in the car, they managed to really get stuck into me. That continued for a good while, then he settled down; the "good cop" said that in Madrid I

would surely speak, and told him to calm down for a while. He did calm down insofar as the beatings went, but made terrible threats to me about what would happen in Madrid in the next five days and what he would do to Mikieldi...

Then more shouts, questions, shouts, threats, and they began to tighten the bag more and more, so that I felt that I was suffocating, I couldn't take any more. I tried to break the bag and they hit me a couple of times in the head, saying "What the hell's wrong with you?" But I couldn't take any more, I couldn't breathe, I was losing strength in my legs, and in that moment they loosened the bag a little bit and I could breathe. The seconds were like days, and I wondered if it was ever going to end. I didn't cry, I felt anger, fear, many feelings at once, mixed up, my mind was blank, my legs trembled... and they kept it up, "Give it to him", slowly tightening the bag, shouting making threats, questions, yelling, then suddenly they blew smoke into the bag. I began to gasp, the dirty smoke was unbearable. At the same time I felt that I was suffocating and that my throat was burning. That third session was criminal. It was physically brutal and psychologically I was finished. They used the bag on me four times. I can't find the words to say how I felt, you have to experience it to understand what it's like, it's very difficult to explain, forgive me. Afterwards they let me recover a little, but as we drove on they said that that was nothing, and that they would have a lot of fun with me.

They left me for a while in the cell. This time they let me sit down - it was heaven. Psychologically I was very bad, my head was swimming. Had others been detained? At least Mikieldi had, if no one else. Would they do these things to him? I felt responsible for him, I couldn't bear to think that what had happened to me was happening to him. I was crying, broken ... I couldn't get on top of the situation, they had beaten me, my heart beating hell for leather, I was gasping for breath. Even so, in that moment my mind was filled with the shouts I heard as I left the house, the family, my friends, my comrades ... this gave me a little strength to try to get on top of things.

### **IKER OLABARRIETA COLORADO**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 25/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested on March 25, at five in the morning, in a flat on Zarautz Avenue, in Donostia. Karmelo and I were in one room and Igor was in another room. There were no witnesses. The arrests were carried out by the Policía Nacional and we weren't informed of anything.

The arrest was very violent, when they flung me on the floor, they handcuffed me and stood

a boot on my head; they only lifted my head to hit me and they also beat me all over my body, they punched me and kicked me. I was naked and until the Court Secretary mentioned it (she arrived after the police) they didn't let me put any clothes on, despite the fact that I was shivering from the cold. The threats also began then, there were quite a few threats and they repeated one most "now you will really get it, when you get to the Audiencia Nacional, you will smile, but until that time you are really going to find out what's what" after a while, one of the GEOs asked the one who'd told me that, "have you said the sentence?". They also shouted at me "raise your head, I want to kill you!" often.

During the search all three of us were present, and at that time there was no violence, although they did threaten us, and my handcuffs were tightened to the maximum. We left the flat and they took us to the station in Donostia. When we were going down the stairs the threats began again "try to run away, go on, the ones downstairs want to kill you". From there they took me to the court, for the forensic doctor to see me (he took photographs), and then to hospital. They did some tests and they gave me medicine to take.

On the way to Madrid, the threats were non stop, and I suffered the first interrogation session in the car. I was in two different police stations, the one in Donostia and then in Madrid: the cells in Madrid were very small, there were several blankets, it had a wash basin and a toilet, separated from the rest of the cell by a barred door, which stayed open all the time. They'd take me for interrogation, out of the cell and left, down the corridor. I was in four or five interrogation rooms. They were all similar in size, but in the last one there was a glass pane and in all of them there were at least a table and two chairs.

I ate nothing and hardly drank at all during the five days. Some time ago I had a kidney operation and two months before my arrest I'd had a pretty bad infection, which was why they'd taken me to hospital, because during my arrest they'd kicked me and punched me terribly in the kidneys. During the five days I was held I had very bad pain in my left kidney; at times I could hardly walk, they knew it and that's why every time they hit me (with their hands, and kicks and punches) it was on the head. They would hit me with their hands when I was sitting down and when they made me kneel on the floor they would kick me in the head and pull my hair. When they were beating me, they didn't cover me with anything. During those times I would feel powerless. I would end up with a bad headache because of the blows and all the questions. I can hardly see without my glasses, and they would only give them to me for me to look at the photographs they brought in and if there were no photographs, they'd say "take your glasses off" and they would start beating me.

They'd also switch the lights in the room off and begin shouting and banging the door and the table. Then they'd also issue threats regarding my sisters and my friends. They'd tell me they were going to arrest my sisters and they wouldn't be as nice to them as they were being

to me; and if I behaved towards them they would also behave towards my family. A few days earlier my girlfriend had been arrested in France, and they said that although she had no charges here, if they wanted they could charge her with anything so that I would never be able to see her again, also saying "plus, we'll get you to incriminate her, so that she will hate you".

During interrogation they played the good cop and bad cop role. The bad one would only come in to beat me (he was the only one who beat me). During the early days, they hardly left any time between interrogation sessions, but later they left more time between interrogation sessions and each session was also longer. The last session I suffered went on for 9 or 10 hours, without a break; the boss, the one with the moustache and the instructor took turns; at times I also had another three or four policemen interrogating me.

I had to sign two "statements", the first one happened on the third day. The following days were the worst and on the fifth day they made me sign the second statement. I wasn't able to see my friends, although I occasionally heard cell door opening (I don't know if these were their doors or not).

I slept little, and although they offered me food every day, as I said, I didn't eat. I had to take my medicine every 8 hours, but all in all they gave no more than 7 or 8 pills.

I don't know for sure, but one time, after drinking a little water, I saw things crawling up the walls of the cell; they were some kind of brown bugs, two or three centimetres long. It might have been the tiredness (I wasn't wearing my glasses either) but I saw them once. They did no analyses on me and, since I smoke, sometimes the "good ones" would offer me a cigarette.

In Donostia, two forensic doctors saw me (a man and a woman) and they did it quite well; they took photographs, and it was these doctors who said I was to be taken to hospital. I told these doctors about the blows and the violence of the arrest.

I only told the "doctor" who came to the station in Madrid that I was having trouble with my kidney and she'd just say "make sure you eat and drink lots of water" and didn't give me any kind of check up. I would tell her I'd take my T-shirt off and she'd say there was no need. She was a short woman, slightly overweight. She was also at the Audiencia Nacional, she wore glasses and she was blonde. This "doctor" played the role of a policewoman, or otherwise, just did as the police told her.

As I've said, the doctors in Donostia, on the other hand, had me taken to the hospital where I had analysis done and they had a look at my urinary system, although the police was present all the time.

The two statements I gave contained what the police wanted me to say; they'd been prepared beforehand, but I was treated worse after the first, they said "well, now that you have a statement which doesn't incriminate you, you're going to tell us the truth". That was despi-

te the fact that I'd said what they'd told me to say. Two hours after making my second statement I was taken to the Audiencia Nacional. The lawyer (the one who'd been at my first statement and later at the Audiencia Nacional) was court-appointed, but at least he did ask a few questions. The lawyer who was at the second statement fell asleep while I was making my statement. On the way to the Audiencia Nacional I suffered the last threats. Once I was in the Audiencia Nacional I complained I had suffered ill treatment and threats and the attitude of the judge and the prosecutor was directed at establishing that my compliant was a lie.

When I arrived in jail they didn't give me a medical check up, they just weighed me: I weighed 79 kilos. In early March I weighed 89 kilos. I have trouble getting to sleep and when everything is quiet and silent and I hear a noise my heartbeat increases...

### **IXONE FERNANDEZ BUSTILLO**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: CADIZ >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested in Cadiz. I went to the cinema on my bicycle and when the film ended I headed home. I left the cinema at 23.50; I walked a few steps and, suddenly, about 10 people jumped on me. I didn't know what was going on and nobody bothered to give me an explanation. Some of them grabbed me by my arm and took me to one side of the square. They held me very tight and while they made me look down, one of them grabbed my neck. They said it would be better for my safety not to shout or make a fuss.

We were on one side of the square; I could hardly move because they were all on top of me. They put me beside the car and told me I was under arrest. One of them was a woman and she frisked me before they put me in the car. Another one took my bag. They handcuffed me and drove to my home.

Once I raised my head and saw a man in uniform. He was a Policía Nacional. Then I realised they were all nacionales. I also saw a young guy who'd been strolling close to me by the beach that very day, but I hadn't thought anything of it.

At home, as well as court secretary, there were three more policewomen; one was at my arrest (black hair) and two blondes. These two began the search. They searched in depth and while these two took everything out, a man recorded it with a video camera. I could only raise my head when they asked something, to read some things they didn't understand... There was a bald man who'd come up really close to me and shout in my ear, asking whether I hadn't understood what he'd asked, was I deaf... and shouting at me to keep my head down or the next time he'd hit me.

When they finished searching the room, they took me upstairs, room by room, they made me sit in a corner and always keep my head down. A man would sit next to me and in a "friendly" manner, he'd ask about my degree, my journeys, scuba diving... all kinds of things, trying to get close to me. They were putting things in boxes, but they didn't let me see what was going on. They took a folder from my room and they all went into a room for a while. When they finished with the upstairs floor, they took me down to the kitchen. The bald one threatened me constantly. The dog wasn't in the house. I didn't know where they'd taken him. At the beginning they said they'd take him to the dog pound; I told them to leave him with a neighbour and they began to blackmail me. They agreed to give the dog to a neighbour. They said they would when they finished. That was what I wanted, so that someone would know I had been arrested... but at 5.30 in the morning they told me they would take the dog to the police station and my neighbour would be called to collect him the following day, because I was being held incommunicado and I couldn't talk to anyone.

They put me in the kitchen and said I had to wait, but we'd leave soon.

Suddenly the bald one came in, asking how to switch the camera on and shouting at me to give him the rolls of film. "I'd love to fucking hit you" he said.

With the excuse of it being very late, they said nothing to my neighbours and they took me out to the car. They were carrying boxes, but I didn't know what was in them.

The guy who'd tried to get me to trust him said that if I behaved he wouldn't handcuff me. We went downstairs and they asked if I had a utility room or a garage. I said no and one of them said he'd seen me come out of the house with my bike. I didn't know how long I'd been followed for.

They put me into an unmarked car and we went to the police station. They put a jacket over my head and left me in a room. There was a person there; he said he was a forensic doctor, but he didn't show me any ID.

They put me in a room, facing the wall, and told me to wait. I waited for a very long time. Meanwhile they were in another room, talking. There was always someone behind me, I couldn't see, but I could feel them and hear their breathing...

At seven in the morning they came to get me; they asked what I'd rather have: handcuffs or ropes; they tied my hands with rope. The one that seemed to be the boss (he had a pierced nose) said I'd better start thinking, because we had a long journey ahead of us, so for my own good... He said they were doing a lot of things for me and that didn't happen often, so I'd better respond in kind, or I'd really get what for.

We arrived in Madrid at about 11.30 or 11.45 and we went into the station. They took me to a big room to frisk me and then to the cell. Before going in the policewoman with the dark

hair said I was very lucky because her boss was very good and I shouldn't misuse the opportunity, so they would give me a few hours to think about what I was going to do.

They put e in the cell. It was very cold. I spent many hours in there; I'd say it was all day. I didn't know what time it was. The cell was very small, all brown and with the light always on. I tried to orientate myself with mealtimes and, some time that night they took me out for the first time. There were 3 or 4 rooms for interrogation. The room was small; there was a desk and a few chairs, nothing more.

They asked a lot of questions, but I didn't know anything. They started to threaten me, saying this was not what they expected from me and to bear in mind what they had done for me. They said it was for my own good and I had to talk if I was to regain my freedom... they didn't want to get angry... they took me back to the cell. There was a policeman who grabbed my neck very roughly and practically made me run down the corridor.

I don't know how long I spent in the cell, maybe all night. I can't place everything correctly because I couldn't keep track of time.

During the days I was there I was taken for interrogation 5 or 6 times. There were four rooms: the first one was the doctor's, sometimes they would put me in the second room and other times in the third one. There was a mirror in this room. They'd stand me facing the wall and I had to keep my hands visible. The policemen didn't wear hoods. Sometimes all four of them were there, other times they took turns. All four of them had been in Cadiz.

### **KARMELO LAUZIRIKA ORIBE**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 25/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL

>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... When the GEO came into the flat, their attitude was very violent; they dragged us out of bed, hitting us, and they kicked and punched us while we were on the floor. At that point I was beside another detainee. The officers beat us while they shouted at us, they handcuffed us behind our backs, they placed us face down on the floor; they didn't let us open our eyes and they stood on our backs and hands. Then they searched the flat and all three of us were present; the court secretary witnessed the search... In the car they made us keep our heads between our knees. Halfway there they stopped at the services. The driver came in and sat in the back of the car, alone with me. He started asking questions and making threats about what a tough time they were going to give me, and saying he would break my knees if I didn't tell him what I wanted to hear. Meanwhile he punched me in my chest and head...

Whenever they hit me during interrogation, it happened while I was in a variety of postu-

res. One time they made me kneel for a long time, until my legs went to sleep and hurt. Then they grabbed hold of my hair and pulled me backwards. At the same time they crushed my testicles with their hand and another officer slapped me in the face; he would do it in bouts of about twenty slaps. Sometimes they punched the top or the back of my head (this policeman wore a ring). This came in bursts of about ten punches. Other times, they would hit me on the ears with the palms of their hands. The officer doing this stood behind me, so I couldn't see when he was going to hit me. These blows came in a slower rhythm, with about forty seconds in between blows. They also punched me in the stomach and back sometimes. I didn't have any bruising, although my lower back hurt a lot, especially on the left side.

There were periods when they made me stand facing the wall. They also made me remain in various postures during interrogation; they made me kneel, with all my body weight on my knees until they would go numb and hurt. It was unbearable pain, as if you were being pierced with a long needle. For every hour they made me kneel they would let me stand about five minutes. After that, my whole body would hurt; I don't know if it was pins and needles or why this happened. They also abused me, feeling my testicles through my trousers...

During interrogation I was subjected to sound abuse, when they shouted in my ears and slapped them. I had to kneel in a small room and the shouting would come both from a distance and from right next to my ears. They slapped my ears, standing behind me. These bouts lasted for about five minutes, three or four times over. I remember I felt a piercing pain, as if my inner ear were going to explode. I don't remember hearing buzzing sounds or losing hearing after that. I was also subjected to light aggression. There were three spotlights in the interrogation room; these were pointed at a mirror, which reflected the light everywhere. In the cell there were two large fluorescent bulbs, which were on the whole time I was there.

The officers made threats about using other torture methods, like suffocating me with a plastic bag which they would close round my neck (they called this the bag) doing the bath to me, which consisted in submerging my head in a bathtub full of water, also in order to suffocate me, raping me with a stick up my anus; they even pretended to go off to get the said broomstick. They constantly abused me verbally, saying things like "you are a piece of shit", "it would have been better for your mother to have an abortion, rather than you being born"...

I was subjected to three illegal interrogation sessions which involved these forms of torture. I reckon the first one lasted for about four hours; the second for another four and the third lasted for six or eight hours. During all these sessions there were two policemen questioning me. They would always begin the session in a "nice" manner, but when I didn't answer or they didn't like what I said they would start to threaten me or shout at me, until a third policeman would arrive (the shortest of the three) and he began hitting me. At the beginning only the shorter policeman would beat me, but later one of the other two would join in. whenever

I gave a reply they liked they would stop beating me and continue questioning me. However, if I went quiet or gave any answers they didn't like they would begin again...

They made me sign a confession. The first time they took me to make a statement I refused, so I got a good helping of blows and kicks for this. During the days I was held in custody I saw no one else and I didn't hear any other detainees. When they took me to the cell I would sometimes feel warm air and other times this jet of air was cold...

When I made my statement to the police the court appointed lawyer seemed interested and demanded the policemen read me my rights and explained what they meant. The police behaved in a calm and correct manner, but when the time for me to sign came, they gave me looks telling me to sign. They had previously made me prepare and learn my confession off by heart. They threatened me, saying that if I didn't sign the confession we had prepared the treatment would get much worse. After signing the confession the way they treated me changed and they left me in peace.

When they took me to the Audiencia Nacional, I was handcuffed in front and they covered my head and stuck it between my legs. There was a policeman on either side of me, telling me that before the judge I was to make the same confession I had made in police custody; plus, there were several uniformed policemen at the door... Before we left for the Audiencia they threatened me by saying that if I didn't tell the judge the same things I'd said in my statement to them, I would be taken back to them. I was more or less calm, but physically I was very tired and I just wanted it all to end so that I could get a rest.

Once I was in jail (I am currently in Soto del Real prison) I was seen by a doctor who asked me about my medical history; she listened to my chest, weighed me, took my blood pressure and did other things I can't remember. Twenty days later, more or less, they vaccinated me against tetanus and hepatitis. To date, I have had no medical tests. Nowadays, whenever I do any sport (jogging) I feel pain in my ribs and the left side of my back.

### JEAN MATTIN BILBAO LEON

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 01/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BERA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested by the Guardia Civil when I was standing next to the car with my wife and my two sons. They made me put my hands on the van and spread my legs; they stood on my feet and showed me a piece of paper while they told me I was being arrested and I knew why.

They put me in a car, sitting between two men, blindfolded and handcuffed behind my back. They kept my head down and removed my shoelaces. They stopped and put me in a van

and then a long journey began. I was cold, my shoulders hurt because of the position they kept me in. two or three hours later we arrived. They locked me in a cell in the basement. The guardia civil in this place were much more violent and aggressive.

(...) They came back to get me and the questions and shouting began: "who are you? Tell us everything about your cooperation with ETA. This is the Guardia Civil! You are on your own, incommunicado for at least five days, or more, and, as you know, the Guardia Civil torture people! You are going to die!" The interpreter translated this for me. Slaps in the face, blows and punches to the neck, to the testicles, blows to the head with a truncheon wrapped in something. I can't see anything. They keep going and I wonder, how far will they go?

"You've taken the wrong path", "you deserve the bath, electrodes, the bag over your head, and you won't resist it, you're going to die!" They tie my hands behind my back; they put my feet together and tie them. They put armbands made of polystyrene on me and tape round them. They put a blanket on the floor, place me face down on it and put another blanket on me. A guardia civil sits on me. They put one, two, three, four plastic bags over my head. I don't know how many, but I can't breathe and I shout for them to stop. I'm suffocating. I feel I can't breathe any more, I struggle, ball up, I can't take it any more.

Anything you want, but just stop this. The questions continue and when they don't like the answers they start hitting me. They take me back to the cell. The light in the cell is on all the time. They come and go all the time, making noises with the door. Anxiety takes over me, my heart is racing and I can't sleep.

(..) They take me upstairs, where the interrogation rooms are, always blindfolded. In one room a doctor saw me. She took my blood pressure and pulse. She told me my heart was beating very fast and asked if I had markings, from blows, to show her. I say I don't, but I am certain that she knows what is going on. They take me back to the cell and then right back to the room with the blankets. The nightmare is back, like the first time, with slaps, punches, the truncheon and the bag.

Under the blindfold, I can see there is a suitcase on the floor. "You deserve us to use the electrodes on you". Everything becomes confused, the threats, the blows; I lose track of time. They take me to and from the cell to the interrogation room constantly. I no longer know whether it is night or day. I can't remember when they begin to use the bag again. I don't know what to do in order to end this. They lift me up and continue beating me; they want me to lie back down on the floor and then I suffer a fit of hysteria. I scream, I struggle. My hear beat and my breathing become faster. I can't hear them any longer. (...) They take me to make a statement. They've suddenly become more agreeable. The situation changes. I breath. I try to find a way to negotiate. I feel I'm I've been trapped, but there is no other option.

I learn the lesson once, twice, twenty times. I don't know who all the people in the photo-

graphs they show me are, but they make me say I do. They take me to and from the cell to the interrogation room constantly, with my head down and the blindfold over my eyes. It's two or three o'clock in the morning; I'm standing in a room. There is a guardia civil asking the questions, an interpreter, a typist, a lawyer (male or female), and a witness. I know the time because they've mentioned it during the statement. I repeat my answers exactly as they have made me memorise them.

Back to the interrogation room. The boss is happy. It's all worked out well, as expected. He gives me his word that today I'll go to the court. They put me to one side of the entrance to the station and I hear them saying, in Spanish, that the car hasn't arrived; there is some kind of a problem.

They take me to a room and the boss who'd given me his word that I'd be taken to the court today tells me I have fooled them. He says the French police say I can speak Spanish perfectly. They shout in my ears, insulting me and telling me now I'm really going to find out what's what. I tell myself "this can't be true". I'm crying with rage, I'm desperate.

They take me back to the cell. I don't want to go downstairs because I know what's coming. I shout and struggle. There are two, three, four of them. I become very nervous, I'm exhausted, I just can't manage to calm down.

(...) All of them are in this room with the blankets. They tell me to strip, naked, and I do. They look all over my body; I suppose it is to see if I have any marks. I dress again and they tape my hands and legs together. They begin to beat me, increasingly harder, in the face, neck, testicles... they hit me on the head with the wrapped truncheons. I hear only hear words in Spanish, but I realise I'm in for a tough time. They are there for pleasure, for the torture; they like it. One of the torturers tells me, "you will remember me; they call me The Nightmare, you won't be able to forget me and, on top of that, later your wife will be brought in" and I believe them, I see how they would find it even more pleasurable with a woman, and I keep thinking about all this while the blows rain on me.

They have humiliated me, they've made me obey them like a dog and be quiet. They said they would teach me to be submissive and to say "yes sir" in Spanish. Lying face down, sandwiched in between the blankets, my head under a constant beating, the plastic bags come one after another; suddenly I'm slowly suffocating and when I'm at the limit, I rip the bag with my teeth and then I'm suffocating very fast. This is hellish. It seems it will never end. I can't count how many times they've done the bag to me. In between bags, they threaten me constantly. One of the threats is about Russian roulette. They take a revolver; I can hear them and see them. In any case, a bullet in the head just means I will be in peace for ever.

When I recover the ability to breathe normally, I feel a lot of pain in my shoulders. I tell them and then they squash my arms and shoulders, sitting on my back and jumping up and

down. They lift me up. I can't feel my arms. They tell me to move them to get the blood flow going. They resume interrogation.

Towards the end, they want me to talk about a thing I know nothing of. I don't know any of the people they ask about and I don't know anyone in the photos they show me. They want to know, but what can I tell them? I'm lost, I don't know what to do. They keep insisting and they put the polystyrene bracelets on me again, telling me the party is about to recommence. I collapse. I'm scared. I have no fight left in me. I can't take it any more, I collapse completely and beg them to believe me. Why on earth would I lie to them?

In the cell, I'm a wreck. I cry. Time passes, an hour, a day, I don't know.

They take me back to the interrogation room after letting me wash my head in the wash-basin. They explain how they see things and say it is their job; the guardia civil who tortured me explains that he doesn't hate us Basques, because if he did, he wouldn't even think about it, he'd just kill us. Surprisingly, at the end of the speech they propose I collaborate with them; they say I will be set free and it's not worth the trouble to spend ten or fifteen years in jail.

I am a man, and I don't even want to imagine what they are capable of doing to women. Reality beats fiction. Spain is a country that calls itself a democracy; they say Spain defends human rights; what happened to me is proof of all that.

### MIKELDI ZENIGAONAINDIA ARITZAGA

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 24/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: EIBAR >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested on March 23, at about six in the evening, at the motorway exit in Ermua. I was in a car with a friend and the Guardia Civil arrested the two of us. Although the arrest itself was not violent, the journey in the car was. They took me the whole way to the station at La Salve with my head between my feet while they hit me on the head. Once I was there, they stripped me and took my belongings (shoelaces, earrings, bracelets, necklace, etc.) and the shouting and the threats began. After a couple of hours we went to search my house in Aulesti, it must have been seven o'clock more or less. I was able to say goodbye to my aunt and because of that, once I was back in the [Nissan] Patrol, they punched me in the ribs, the stomach and hit me over the head, as well as threatening me constantly.

From there, they took me to Bilbo, to the student flat where I live. Later I signed a paper in the Court in Bilbao and they put me into an unmarked car and we left for Madrid. They made me keep my head between my feet for the entire journey, which lasted about four hours; it was hellish, the questions were constant, all the way, until we arrived in Madrid. In Madrid,

I spent two whole days on my feet, and two or three days without eating. The cell was very small, there was only a bed in it, and it was 4 metres long by 2 metres wide.

Among the tortures I suffered I can say: punches in the ribs and the stomach. Although the areas where they hit me would go red, this colouring would disappear within an hour. They also hit me in the testicles. I was threatened with being subjected to the bath, the bag, the electrodes; they even showed me a stick and threatened me with it. Although they didn't actually give me electric shocks, they switched the electrodes on to make a noise and scare me. On the third day they stripped me completely, they wet my skin and they put the electrodes on my back and testicles, although they didn't give me shocks. I was also touched...

But the bulk of it was psychological torture, and this was the worst. I was subjected to all kinds of threats; they said my brother had also been arrested and that they were beating him black and blue; they told me to cooperate with them or they'd subject me to all the kinds of torture they'd shown me; they said there were more than two of us under arrest... The whole time I was subjected to visual deprivation with a blindfold. The shouts, the slaps and the threats about torturing me were constant.

I suffered two interrogation sessions a day and each one lasted for more or less three hours. They took place in the afternoon and at night. During the morning they would take statements from us upstairs (there was a guardia civil, the instructor, the court-appointed lawyer and another person typing at the computer). I think I didn't sleep during the three days I spent in there; I didn't eat either, although they brought some food in.

I saw the forensic doctor every day, and although he told me his name, he didn't show me any ID. The place where I saw him looked like a surgery, but I didn't tell him anything about how I was being treated, because I thought he would later tell the guardia civil and they would beat me worse. He took my blood pressure every day, he asked the odd question, but that was it.

At the statement, the court-appointed lawyer didn't speak to me, although the guardia civil told me that if I made a statement I'd walk free and stuff like that. I believed them and I'm in jail.

When I arrived at the Audiencia Nacional I was in a terrible mental state... we spent three or four hours in the cells before seeing the judge, and then another short while after our statements to the judge. The judge ordered me to be remanded in custody; first they took me to Soto del Real prison, but I spent five minutes there and then I was taken to Alcal\* Meco...

**SARA MAJARENAS IBARRETA**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 12/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: VALENCIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

They handcuffed me very tightly right from the beginning and I would also complain about this. They always replied, "Just you wait and see what you've got in store! You'd better start cooperating right away, because you've got five very long days before you..."

(...) Since I didn't answer, they grabbed me and took me violently down the Hostel stairs; they hit me on the way down, blows to the head, they pulled my hair and forced my neck. I remember nearly falling down the stairs. While they continued asking questions non-stop, they began issuing this kind of threats: "if you don't talk the nice way, you'll talk the hard way".

When we arrived at the Valencia Police Station, they frogmarched me, violently holding my head way down. We had to go up a whole load of stairs, about five floors. I felt I was becoming dizzy; I suppose it was because of the nerves and the position of my head. At one point I fell over and they just dragged me along. More policemen turned up and took me, some holding my arms and others holding my legs, to the only office I saw in Valencia. They flung me on the floor.

In that office, a policeman who at the beginning played the bad cop turned up. He started to beat me, mostly in the head. In order to get me to give my name, he made me bend over and face a desk. They pulled my hair and I thought they were going to smash me against the desk. They were shouting loudly in my ears, it was crazy. They left me alone with the one who beat me and, in the same posture, he twisted my arm backwards. Since I couldn't take the pain, I tried to compensate with my legs and body. Then, while he told me not to move at all, he kicked me in the legs and kneed me in my backside.

They constantly try to scare you by threatening you with how much worse the next stuff will be, and they achieve this.

They mainly did things to frighten me and get me mixed up. Sometimes they told me not to look at them and if I raised my head they would hit me (always with their hands) and suddenly it would be the opposite: they would shout at me and beat me to make me raise my head. Therefore, they always create stressing situations in order to disorientate you.

On the way up, the same one who beat me started to say terrible stuff, "you are a bunch of sons of bitches, the very fact that you exist is a disgrace, I can't fucking stand you lot..." he would leave me alone in the office, saying "I just can't hold it in" to his mates, he would come up to me and beat me. The handcuffs were terribly tight. Every time I refused to answer a

question, he would tighten them further, until I had no blood flow to my hands.

The time I spent in Valencia was all like this; threats about beating me interspersed with conversations with the "good cop". As the "good cops" usually do, he would let me sit in a comfortable position, talk in a different tone, reassuring me, he would remove my handcuffs; offer me food, water and tobacco...

Little by little they all became more like the "good cop". They quickly realised that when they mistreated me physically I became very stubborn and didn't open my mouth. On the other hand, when we talked about other things, I found it very difficult to remain silent.

It must have been 4 in the morning when we left for Madrid. I felt very tired. In the car, the questioning continued. The policeman who had violently dragged me out of the hostel when I was arrested kept asking me questions in the car (that policeman was with me right until the last minute in Madrid). The worst part was that he treated me as if he were my father. In the end, spending so much time with the same person makes you "trust" him. It is very humiliating. You end up by appreciating his friendly gestures (feeling his hand on your back, his "friendly" words...) This shows you to what an extent they mess your head up. It's incredible. I would never have understood this if I hadn't been through it.

When we got to Madrid another group took over me and they said the fooling around was over: they started to punch me in the stomach. An old man with a grey beard and hair punched me in the pit of the stomach and since I would double up in pain, he would hit me on the head, telling me to get back up. He went on and on about how gudarís nowadays were so soft, trying to humiliate me. He also said that the organisation had given me up in order to get rid of me because I was useless, etc. They often asked about how many people in the organisation I had had sex with.

I expected the worst again. I told myself, "well, Sara, now you will face torture", but despite the fear, despite the pain from the punches, I have to say that I managed to get a hold of myself. I returned to remaining silent. I would "pull my armour on" and I preferred the enemy to behave like an enemy instead of like a friend. This helped me to keep my mind clear. I preferred this to the eternal questioning by the "good cop". I don't know if I am explaining this well enough, but this was the feeling I had. When they were beating me I became focused.

However, the hard punches and blows stopped soon enough. From that moment, they threatened, they humiliated me, they made me remain in forced postures, but the mostly used the figure of the "good cop". They always try to get you talking about anything. They get you used to talking to them, in order to get other information from you. The threats were constant. They used all sorts, even if they were playing the "good cop", even if their tone was friendly, the threat was always there.

For a couple of days they also made me remain in certain postures. Since I refused to do as

they told me they would hit me on the head and, in the end, they would place me in the position I refused to take up: with my legs spread and my arms out in a cross-shape, telling me that if I gave answers to their questions they would let me sit down. They also made me crouch. I would lean on my hands so that my legs wouldn't get so tired and they would hit me on the head. They said they would make me do thousands of different exercises: sit ups, push ups... but it didn't happen.

**SONIA MARIN VESGA**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 09/05/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ARRIGORRIAGA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

... They put me in a car, tied my hands, put a blindfold over my eyes and pushed my head down. There was one on either side of me. During the journey they asked a whole lot of questions and made threats: what had I done that Sunday, they said we were going down to the sewers, they said my physical safety was up to them and I would have none so I had to tell them everything I knew, I was not to lie; they would leave the gun next to me... and they hit me on the head now and again. The entire journey was the same.

When we got to Madrid they took me to the cell, issuing threats all the time. As soon as I arrived, a female officer told me to strip; she looked at me and then ordered me to dress again. From this point onwards, I had no bra. In the cell, I was ordered to stand facing the wall, with my hands behind my back. The whole time in that position; I would totter, but they didn't let me lean on the wall... after a while they took me for interrogation. During interrogation I was on my feet, blindfolded. Two of them talked, but I could hear other people around. I could also hear the sound of computer keys. Every so often a guy would come in and he was very direct. They asked questions, many questions, and they threatened me. They asked what I would do if I were to hear their voices in a bar; they said they would wait for me outside work and we would go for a drink... this went on all the time. After a while, they would take me for another interrogation session. They continued to ask questions; I was sitting on a chair (except when the direct guy came in and I had to stand up). There were also two officers during this session although I could hear lots of people coming in and out. They talked about what they were going to make for dinner while I was talking, and they told me to carry on talking because they were listening...

In the cell, they allowed me to sit down and lie down, but it was very difficult to rest because I could hear lots of noises. They banged on the doors, I could hear them breathing, making a heavy sound as they breathed in through their noses... When they ordered me to stand,

facing the wall, with my hands behind my back, it meant they were about to take me for interrogation.

During interrogation they carried on asking questions. When that guy came in he told me I'd had enough not answering and saying that I knew nothing; he said that if I wasn't going to say anything I was to take my trousers off. I held on for a bit without taking them off, but then they shouted, "I said take them off!" I did, "now your knickers!" I took them off. They also made me lift my jumper up. Then he told me to spread my legs and put my arms out in a cross shape, "yes, like that, like Christ!", "How did Jesus Christ die? On a cross!" he insulted me because I hadn't shaved my legs and he said he was repulsed by me and he couldn't stand my BO. He told me there were about seven people looking at me. At one point he pinched my nipples. He also told me that he had a certain tool which, if he "stuck it up my cunt" would leave me barren for life and that he would do me that favour, as I would be unable to have children... He told me people didn't like me and made a reference to a friend of mine, "you must have done something to her for her to say that about you!" he said "what is it, did you shag his boyfriend and now she wants to take revenge?", "what will you say to her when you bump into her in jail?". And they also used to call me by her name, as if they'd got mixed up. After a while, he told me to put my trousers back on, although, during that session, there were times when he made me drop them again. When this interrogation session finished they took me for another session. This time, they sat me in a chair and showed me a lot of photographs...

In the cell, they asked if I wanted anything to eat or drink. They let me sit down and lie down. They left me in peace. The following morning they took me to the forensic doctor. She asked me whether I had had a rest, whether I'd had anything hot to eat, whether they had done anything to me... I told her I hadn't been beaten, but I had been stripped naked. They took me back to the cell. Before they put me inside, they asked whether I was afraid of bugs. I didn't understand the question, but when I went into the cell I saw there was a bottle of water and I thought it was strange, because they always removed all the stuff they brought to my cell. I saw a cockroach next to the bottle, but I said nothing. Nothing happened. After a while in the cell they took me for interrogation. This time they asked me whether I remembered that they had told me that I had been in London and how they had a videotape of me there, and they put a small TV-video on a chair by the wall. They put a tape they had taken from my home, with a friend's journey to London on it; I wasn't in the images at all. When they showed me the TV there was a gun beside it, "Fuck! We're so absent-minded!" they said. When it ended, they took me back to the cell... During another session, we prepared my statement. I had to repeat the answers they wanted me to give loads of times, until I memorised them. After that they took me upstairs to make my statement. In the room there was a court-

appointed lawyer, another person next to her, they were behind me; there was a desk with a computer and a guy typing everything in and one of the policemen who had interrogated me asking the questions. When I finished, they gave it to me to read and sign...

They took me back to the cell and left me in peace. The next morning, as usual, back to see the forensic doctor. They took me down to the cell and I had a bite to eat and then they took me to take my photographs and fingerprints. Then it was back to the cell and from there to another interrogation session. They asked a whole load of questions again. They asked whether I remembered the police operative during my arrest and said that you don't get that just for putting posters up, it must be for something bigger; they asked why was I there, then, and said that I passed information on... They proposed I collaborate with them. They said that since I had bought a flat I must need money and asked whether I would collaborate. After a while they took me back to the cell.

The following day was similar, back and forth from interrogation to the cell and back again. They kept asking lots of questions, telling me a friend of mine had talked on me and telling me to talk. Question upon question...

The following morning, very early, they took me to the Audiencia Nacional. They made me sign the paper saying I'd got my belongings back and took me to the van, all in a big hurry. The policewoman from the cells wished me good luck and ended up walking with me to the van. At the Audiencia, they put me in a cell. Here, a girl who would later also be upstairs read me my rights and made me sign below. Then they took me to the forensic doctor; she reassured me, telling me that now I was in the Audiencia and I could relax. Later they took me before the judge.

### ZAINE REKONDO RODRIGUEZ

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 17/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BERA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... The journey was horrifying. Interrogation began as soon as I was in the car... They shouted in my ear again and again, and if I didn't answer or they didn't like my answer, the woman would hit me on the head; on the lower right side of my head... The man would get very angry and shout very loud. He ordered the driver to stop the car. They told me they would kill me; they said I'd get the same as Lasa and Zabala or Zabalza, adding that nowadays they had perfected their methods, making it impossible to tell that they had done it. More shouting, blows, being shaken about and more orders to stop the car. They stopped... after a while they stopped the car again and the man sitting next to me got out of the car, pushing me. I tried

to stay in the car. He got back in and we resumed the journey, but a little further on the same happened again... they pushed me to get me out of the car... every so often the man sitting next to me opened the door of the car while it was moving, threatening to throw me out. I wished we had an accident for the nightmare to end...

As soon as I was in the station they put me in a room and ordered me to do stand ups non stop, up and down, up and down... I couldn't do them any more but they didn't care, they pushed me up and down. They put a bag over my head and told me to keep doing the stand ups. With the bag over my head I couldn't breathe. They told me to lift my arm when I decided to answer their questions, but they never liked any of my answers, so I had to give my answer with the bag tight over my head, and they would decide whether they were interested in the answer or not. At the beginning I would resist; I'd make holes in the bag with my teeth or with my hands, and I tried to throw kicks and pinches around me. I managed to make a small hole in the bag and they said they would eave it on me (the bag with the small hole) so that I could get a little air. But they put another bag over the first one. From then on they held my arms against the wall and one of them put his knee between my legs, lifting me up off the floor. In that position, they suffocated me again. I couldn't defend myself and even if I left my body lax, they had me in the air against the wall. I don't know how many times they did the bag to me, it was never ending. As soon as I got my breath bag they did it again. Meanwhile, they made me do stand ups with the bag over my head...

They started another torture session, similar to the previous one: threats, the bag, stand ups... I had to reply with the bag over my head, and they would decide whether my answer was "correct". If they decided it was, they'd slacken the bag a little, but they never took it entirely off me, they'd slacken it to understand what I was saying and if they didn't like it, they'd tighten it again. I fainted more than once; I could feel my legs shaking, I couldn't control them; but they'd lift me back up and carry on just the same. They were never satisfied, even if they liked my answer, they always wanted more. When I just couldn't carry on any more they would take me to the cell, but they wouldn't let me sit or lie down; I had to stand facing the wall... They gave me no peace. They'd come to get me and do never-ending interrogation sessions, they were preparing my statement. They made me answer the same questions over and over, all the time issuing threats, shouting at me and mocking me. They said they had arrested my mother and that they would do the same to her. They shook bags and came towards me. They said they were going to put electrodes on me and wet my fingers and head. They put a stick in my hands; they made me hold it, and asked if I knew what it was for. They said they would use it to rape me. They gave me the stick many times; one time they made me touch something that resembled a penis, it was wet; they laughed at me and told me to touch it and not to be afraid... This continued until I learnt the answers to all the questions.

In the cell I was made to stay on my feet. I couldn't take it any more, standing in the cell, facing the wall, I started to sway. They didn't let me lean on the wall; I wasn't allowed to touch it. My eyes rolled, I was losing control of my head and my body. In the end one of them said I could sit on the bed. I couldn't hold my head up and my body slumped. I had hallucinations. The walls were moving, they were collapsing into each other, the floor was rising up, moving, up to different heights... This terrorised me. I saw white worms, spiders... on the floor and crawling up the walls... Until then, when I was in the cell and in all the interrogation sessions, there was a man who breathed heavily. When I was in the cell he'd call me and breathe heavily, noisily. I felt the panic in the marrow of my bones; I would have preferred him to shout at me. This same man was in front of me during my statement, breathing noisily... They began to take my statement, although I didn't want to give one; I was declaring against my will. They said that if I made the statement they would leave me in peace. I wanted nothing else. We finished the statement and they took me downstairs again. "Very well" they said "now we'll bring you a coffee and a croissant and you'll have a rest". They put me in the cell, ordered me to stand facing the wall and closed the door. It was all a lie. As soon as they closed the door, they opened it up again and came in violently. They didn't have enough with my statement; they wanted more. They took me out of the cell, blindfolded, through the corridors to a room. On the way I heard many sounds, they'd stop and pretend to fling me on the floor... They stood me in the middle of the room; I was surrounded. One of them ordered me to strip. I refused. They removed my jacket and pulled at my shirt and trousers. They tried to put the stick into my hands. I flung myself at the wall, screaming and trying to hold my clothes. They laughed at my screams and wails. I thought they were going to rape me. Suddenly one of them said I was cold and ordered a blanket to be brought in. they brought the blanket and wrapped it tightly around me. From the neck to below my knees. They tightened the blanket round my throat and I had difficulty breathing, I was choking. I couldn't defend myself; my arms were tightly held to my sides. They said one blanket wasn't enough and wrapped another one around me. Then they wrapped me in a third one. When I was wrapped in three blankets, they put the bag over my head. They stuck the edges of the bag under the top of the blankets and tightened them. They brought a couch in and placed me on it, semi-reclined. They prised my legs apart and put a stick between my legs. In that position, I had to answer their questions. Sometimes they slackened the blankets a little so that they could understand my replies, but they'd immediately tighten them again. They poured something warm over my front. I could feel it, lukewarm, through the three blankets. I didn't know what it was, but it repulsed me. I couldn't control my body, my legs moved of their own accord. Even they couldn't tell if I was breathing or not. I thought I wouldn't survive. I needed to go to the toilet; I thought I would have a bowel movement right there; then they

said that if I puked or shat myself, they'd make me eat it up... They came to get me from the cell again. They took me to the same room. There were blankets on the floor. They placed me in the middle of the room, I felt like I was surrounded. In this session they were all "bad"... the breath of one of them smelled of alcohol. I felt like throwing up. Continuous threats, they shook the bags around me and they told me they'd use the blankets again. It was terrifying. It was a nightmare, I was trapped at the end of a black tunnel and I could see no way out... Back to the cell. I could tell there was someone in the cell next door, but I didn't want to hear anything. I could sometimes hear screams; I didn't want to believe that they were doing the same things to another person. I'd press my hands against my ears and sing. They violently came in to get me again. I had no strength to stand and I felt faint. I didn't want to leave the cell. Sitting on the bed, I held on tightly to the wall. I was crying and screaming. I didn't feel well at all and I was scared. They interrogated me right there, on my feet, facing the wall. They threatened me non stop, especially regarding my mother... They took me to the bathroom; I was completely out of it. Then it was back to the cell and they left me alone.

From then on they carried out very long interrogation sessions, with hardly any rest in between. Interrogation sessions full of threats, shouting, insults... if I didn't answer they would shout in my ear or toss me around... I hardly had any strength left to answer, I just spoke in a tiny voice and they got very angry, making me reply more loudly... They often caressed me. This was repulsive, I'd rather they shook me around or hit me...

### **IÑAKI PEÑA GONZALEZ**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/05/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL

>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

... During the journey to Madrid they didn't stop asking questions related to what they knew about me. When we arrived, four of them put me in a cell and made me stand facing the wall, with my head down and my eyes closed. They stripped me naked and looked over me and asked whether I had any tattoos, earrings or birthmarks... From there they took me to another cell, blindfolded, with my head lowered and with my hands in front, while they held my arms and pushed me. In the cell, I had to stand, facing the wall and with my hands behind my back. When they left I was to remain in the same position, but I could open my eyes. After a while they took me for the first interrogation session... As soon as I entered the room (I was blindfolded) they told me to start doing sit-ups and at that point an officer came in and explained in detail what it was all about. He told me very clearly and very graphically that, as I had doubtless heard, the Guardia Civil torture people, and until I said what they

wanted me to say they would torture me and he told me how in there you said what you were told to say and I was to speak only when they told me to; I could only lift my head when they told me to do so and I could only open my eyes when they told me... They explained all this while I was doing sit ups; the questions too. During this session they showed me a packet of cigarettes and a lighter on a table and they said that, if they wanted, they could spend the five days smoking the cigarettes, sitting down and having a relaxed chat with me, but it was up to me; it was my responsibility whether we just sat and chatted or I got tortured all the time. They explained that if I didn't answer a question it was because I had something to hide; if I didn't tell them something the way they expected to hear it, they would think I was trying to hide something... in the end they told me to stop doing sit-ups and took me to the cell, blindfolded and with my head down. In the cell, I stood facing the wall with my hands behind my back. I had to remain in this position for quite a long time and I would totter, I was sleepy and I was tired. As soon as I shifted a little they were onto of me. There was a guardia civil constantly watching me from the door...

They took me for another interrogation session. This time we also prepared my statement. They gave me a set of questions and answers; we went over them time and time again. While we did this he told me what would happen if I didn't declare the contents of the statement we were preparing. Then they took me for my statement. There was a court-appointed lawyer (you can't talk to her) an officer and a secretary. When they asked me the questions I didn't give the exact answer we had prepared but the guy corrected it by writing what the other interrogator had told me to say. I realised this when they gave me the statement for me to sign...

After a while they took me for another session. They had me standing against the wall, with the blindfold over my eyes and every now and then they would hit me on the head with the flat of their hands. It's a non-stop bombardment of questions and, if my answers didn't coincide with the information they had, they would hit me on the back of the head. They constantly threatened me with what was coming next: electrodes, the bath, the bag... They asked questions about stuff I knew other detainees had talked about. This session was very long and there were a whole lot of them (I was able to see their legs by shifting my blindfold up with my cheeks) There were about eight people talking amongst themselves the whole time; I was always questioned by two of them...

In this session I received more threats and another load of questions. Question upon question. It was exactly like the previous one. They took me back to the cell.

This session was more strained. The threats were worse, they shouted an awful lot. One of them said that his friend was "coked up" and then he would come at me shouting like a maniac. They also made me listen to the screams from the rooms next door while they banged on stuff and pretended to interrogate other people. They took me close to the courtyard

window and let me listen to other people being interrogated. They ask whether I know who the other detainees are. They insinuate they are friends of mine, saying that a friend of mine is being interrogated and they are feeling her up everywhere; they say they have done the bag to her...

In the cell I was still on my feet, with my hands behind my back and facing the wall. This lasted until the morning, when they took me to see the forensic doctor. Every time they took me out of the cell they would blindfold me. Before getting to where the doctor was they would remove it...

They took me for questioning again. They threatened me and sent me back to the cell to think about the answers I had to give. They took me to the cell, allowed me to sit down and after a while I called the guy at the door for him to call the guy upstairs. When he arrived I told him I had thought about it and I was going to say the same thing: that I knew nothing. He got annoyed and he stood me facing the wall, with my hands behind my back. This lasted for the whole day. At night they took me for questioning again. As soon as I went into the room they put a bag over my head and began asking questions. Meanwhile they threatened me, telling me what they would do to me and that what they had done to my friends was nothing next to what they would put me through. When the third guy who usually came in arrived, he tried to convince me that communism is not the way for the Basque Country and that the Basque Country had to continue being part of Spain, that the Spaniards and the Europeans pay for the harbour at Bilbao and make us Biscayans very rich and that the future lies with Europe and the USA... this guy was much more direct with his questions, much more serious and impressive than the other two. He said he had been doing this for many years... When it ended they took me back to the cell.

In the cell, again, it was back to standing facing the wall with my hands behind my back. They said that I could sit down if I wanted to have some dinner. I refused. They took me for another session. This time they put me on a mattress on the floor. They told me to put my hands in my pockets; they put another mattress on top of me and one of them stood over me with one foot on either side and another one kneeled behind me and put my head onto his legs. In this position, they put a bag over my head and tightened it. The one with the bag explained that he had been through it, so he had trained and he knew how to do it. Meanwhile, the one above me asked questions. Every time I managed to rip a bag they would put another one on top. The one with the bags explained that I could rip the bags but I couldn't do the same thing in the bath, and he told someone else to fill it up. I could hear an open tap splashing. All this took place while the one above me asked questions and I could hear cries, other people being interrogated... They also told me that if they did the bag and the bath to me it because I had wanted it so, because I wasn't telling them anything ... The

following morning they took me to make another statement.

After a short while in the cell they took me to the forensic doctor. She asked me how I was. When I left they blindfolded me and as they took me towards the cell they whispered "What did you tell her? What did that bitch ask you?" They took me from the cell to the interrogation room. This time they sat me down and one of them spoke to me very calmly. He asked and asked, he asked a load of questions and he was also very offensive about my sexuality. In other words, questions and abuse, humiliation...

### **XABIER FLORES BENGOETXEA**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 09/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: ALTSASU >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

I left for work at 07.30 and three men came up to me, they said they were policemen and asked if I was Xabier Flores. They told me I was under arrest and they handcuffed me.

When they took me to my home, in the car, they sat me in the centre of the back seat, with my head covered and lowered. On the way from the search of my home to Pamplona, they made me sit in the middle again and they put a hood on top of the jacket that was over my head. They put me in a room in the police station and I was made to stand facing the wall with my head down for I don't know how long; until they took me to see the forensic doctor. He did a thorough check up, with few questions, but he asked me to strip and he looked over my body in detail. He asked me if I had any illnesses.

Later on, they took me back down to the cell, with my head down. They took me out to open my record and back to the cell. They took me to the car again. I was wearing a hood over my head. There, they made comments like they would "open the door and throw me out" and other similar stuff.

When we arrived in Madrid I noticed that the tone of the policemen was different. As soon as I walked in one of them said, "I was itching for you to be brought here..." He took me directly to the cell, the thirteenth cell.

Late at night I suffered the first interrogation session. When I was there a policeman came in and said they would do all kinds of things to us, until we talked, and when he put his hand round my neck, I collapsed on the floor, unconscious. He made me sit on a chair. During that session he made me stand, facing the wall in a corner, while they stood behind me. In this police station I had to spend the whole time with my head down; I wasn't allowed to raise it, and, to tell the truth, I didn't make any attempts. During this session they asked a whole load of questions before I collapsed, and after that they asked a few. They took me to the cell and

brought some dinner. I ate some of it; I was quite hungry.

The following morning they asked a load of questions. I would go in the door and they placed me on the left, in a corner and began to ask a lot of questions. There were two policemen at interrogation. Sometimes one would go out or come in... One of them didn't use a very violent tone, but he hurt me a lot with what he said. The policemen in the other shift were young. One played the good cop and the other one was very violent when he asked his questions. He kept repeating "I'm going to hit you, I'm going to hit you..." This was the one that made me do physical exercises the most.

They went on and on, exerting psychological pressure about several people. They talked about my partner a lot. She was pregnant and they used this very much. They said she could lose the baby and laughed... They said I wasn't talking and maybe she was the one who knew stuff so they should bring her in and put her in the same situation as me and maybe she would lose the baby... They also went on about my family, but they threatened me and pressurised me the most with my partner and her pregnancy. They also insulted my feelings.

During interrogation they made me stand, facing the wall in a corner with my head down. If I shifted in the least, because my neck became stiff, they would shout at me not to move my head. They also made me go barefoot; I had to lean my head on the wall with my hands behind my back. The whole weight of my body was on my head, because I was made to move my feet further and further away from the wall. In this position, they made me go on the tips of my toes. They made me do press-ups until I was breathless too. They also made me put my hands behind my head and do stand-ups many times, fifty times, and the another fifty... except in the first session, I think, they made me do physical exercises in every session.

When I was facing the wall, they were behind me all the time. There was one who said that I wasn't giving them anything and he was getting nervous and when he got nervous anything could happen, while he made a noise with a plastic bag; I wondered when he would put it over my head. They also threatened to use electrodes, but they didn't take it any further. They kept saying that I had friends in jail and therefore they would have told me what happens in those places and if I didn't talk I knew what to expect (...) One time they made me sing; they made me sing in Basque and I came up with "Furra-furra". After singing it, they made me translate it.

When they took me to the cell, I was hurt by all the stuff they had told me and I kept turning it around in my head. It was almost worse when I was in the cell than when I was at interrogation.

They used things like saying that the other detainees were putting me in the dock and that I should also tell them something.

Depending on what you tell them they use it to say you are a sneak. They put that feeling

into your head and you end up believing you are a sneak...

There was one guy who said that if I didn't give them anything and gave stuff to the others they would be shown up in front of their boss... and that kind of stuff.

The worst session, in physical terms, was the last one. I told them I would make a confession and they left me alone. In the afternoon they took my statement. They took me to a room where there were two policemen and a court-appointed lawyer.

The following day, in the morning, they took me to the Audiencia Nacional. There, they lifted my incommunicado status. I wanted it all to end as soon as possible. When I was able to see my own lawyer it was a great boost. However, my lawyer told me I didn't look good and I was "all messed up". My statement to the judge was uneventful. The judge asked if I had been well treated and I said they had made me do physical exercises to the point of exhaustion and that I had been subjected to threats. After the statement and having seen that the prosecutor requested my remand in custody I assumed I was going to jail. In the afternoon they allowed me to see my partner and my father. At eleven at night the guard came down and told me I was being released.

### XABIER PEREZ ALDUNATE

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 12/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BASAURI >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I was arrested by the entrance to the Basauri sports centre. I was about to leave the sports centre when I saw two suspicious men behind me, watching the street and another four watching me. Suddenly, ten people jumped on me; they put a gun to my stomach and, removed all my stuff while they threatened me: they took my day-pack, my polar jacket... Meanwhile I asked what was going on. Their answer was: "you know what's going on, son of a bitch. If you shout, we'll kill you". They quickly took me away, making me keep my head down, and they put me in a car. Once in the car, I was subjected to the first blows to the head, in the testicles, the first threats, pulling my hair, blows to the face...

It was all the same during the journey to Madrid. Since I wasn't answering the questions they asked, they'd lift my head up and kick me in the neck, and when they put my head down, they'd hit me in the head. When it looked like I was going to throw up they'd put a gun to my head and tell me they were going to kill me. They threatened me with thousands of things; with what they would do to me, what they'd do with my body... for example: "we're going to kill you like Lasa and Zabala"; "we're going to stick the gun up your arse". While they said this they'd put the gun to my testicles. "Just you wait and see what a welcoming

we've prepared in Madrid" and it was true. "Don't start to shake, we haven't even touched you yet" and I couldn't stop shaking, "if you don't stop I'll shoot you right here, son of a bitch". And I couldn't stop, so I'd get another round of kicks. This continued until we got to Madrid. They often said "my boss is going to have me for your fault; I can't arrive in Madrid and tell him you haven't said anything, you're leaving me in a bad position, they'll think I'm going soft..." Usually, the one who made this kind of comment spoke to me in a "friendly way", "stop hitting him, he's going to talk" and the other one would say "talk, my arse! He's a son of a bitch", "we're the good ones, wait 'till you meet the ones in Madrid, wait 'till The Elephant gets you...". I don't know, they said a lot of stuff, and none of it was good.

When I arrived in the torture room, they took my hands; they put some kind of sponge in them and taped my hands tight. They put me on the floor, face down, and making sure all my body was on the blanket. Two guardia civil got on top of me and another one stood in front, telling me "now we'll stop your anxiety" and, standing on my back, he put a bag over my head. How can I explain what I felt? At the beginning you try to retain air, but in time you realise that it's better to die just to end the agony. In my case, at least, that's what it was like. I kept trying to breathe air out, to see if with any luck I'd die and end the suffering. But it's not easy, your body doesn't work according to your wishes and keeps asking for air, again and again, and without realising it, you're struggling to breathe. You kick around, try to move. But of course, they know all this and that's why they get on top of you. While they did all this to me, they laughed, "look, this guy's got lungs" or "come on gudari see how long you can hold your breath!" At the same time I was being subjected to blows and humiliations. As I've said, I had three guardia civil on top of me, but when I'd run out of air, I was able to lift all three of them. I suppose in normal conditions I wouldn't be strong enough to lift three men, but when you're out of air, even with your hands and feet tied, you are capable of anything. They asked for help and I felt increasingly weaker. In the end I was unable to lift anyone up. I find it very difficult to explain what the bag causes, not just physically, but also psychologically. To all this you have to add the fact that you know fine well that you can't do anything to end that situation, to wake up from the nightmare. You know that even if you say what they want to hear, they will continue to torture you, just in case you've held anything back. And knowing that, knowing that you will be with them for 120 hours, is very, very tough. The helplessness takes over you and all you think about is dying and ending the agony. I think they also got tired, and when someone left, another one would come back, of course. And they tell you that you are the only one responsible for them being there; they say it's your fault and you're paying for it. But I wasn't lucky enough to die. When you think you're about to die, the one in front of you sticks a finger into the bag and rips it, letting air in. at that moment all you want is to breathe or to die. This thing about wishing for death is

not an exaggeration, you know that the only thing that can make it all end is death, but your body doesn't agree and continues to fight.

The rectangular room the forensic doctor used was small, but quite clean. Before I went into this room there were usually a couple of very smart guys, in suits, who'd tell me to raise my head. Still, the guardia civil who walk me upstairs stood outside the door and listened to everything I said. Later, when I was back in their hands, they'd say "so, we've tortured you, have we? Well, now that you've reported us we can hit you all we want" The first time I saw the doctor I told her, in these words "they are killing me" and "get me out of here, I get anxiety fits and I can't stop them". The woman paid no attention to the first sentence and, in response to the second bit, she said "that's normal, it's the nerves" And I don't know if it's normal or not, but nothing like that had ever happened to me, not before, and it hasn't happened since. Right there and then I realised the doctor doesn't care in the least about your situation; they're just there to fulfil the procedure.

They told me what I had to tell the judge, what I had to do in jail and they also told me to make a complaint for torture, "when you get to jail you should report us; say that we've beaten you and tortured you. Don't tell Garzón, but in jail do say it, and tell your friends; that way we will maintain fear of us among people and when they're in here we don't even have to hit them for them to blurt everything out. When you're before Garzón you say yes to everything, you confirm everything we've agreed in here, OK?" "If you behave we won't arrest your girlfriend; you know women give us more possibilities than you men do, ha, ha, ha..." they laughed. "If you don't do as we've told you, we'll go after your girlfriend, but we won't arrest her, we'll take her to the hills and you know what will happen..." These last hours were very strange. On the one hand you know, or you want to believe, that everything they tell you is untrue; but on the other had, you believe what they say and you begin to believe they will arrest her for your fault.

**MAITE ORUE BENGOA**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 27/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: GERNIKA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

...They soon took me too a room for the first interrogation ... the attitude of the inspector was very violent, he said "if you don't want to answer, stand up". I stood at a corner of the table, while they asked questions... I continued to respond that no, that they had made a mistake. Then they ordered me to cross my arms. I don't know how long they forced me to stay in that position... in the second interrogation session there were three policemen. They made

me stand for long periods. Saying "if you behave like a little girl, you'll be punished like a little girl". The third time they forced me to stand they made me do it against the wall, my arms crossed and raised. I had to stay in that position for a long time, standing facing the wall, and one of the policemen stood between the wall and me, forcing me to look into his eyes. Each time that I failed to answer one of their questions one of them would come up behind me and hit me in the head. They constantly made remarks like "you're very tough, but you'll see, you won't last". They made me stay like that for ages, it seemed endless. My whole body trembled, I couldn't keep my arms raised and crossed any longer and they gradually slipped downwards, and each time this happened, one of them would hit me in the head. Meanwhile another one made me lift them up again, shouting out "raise your arms, raise your arms" and insults "you're an idiot, you're not answering because you're an idiot". .. during that night I experienced numerous interrogation sessions, constantly, in which different people took part. One began to hit me ... They started to talk about my private life, they taunted me with remarks like "anxiety's unpleasant, right?" and things like that. I told them that I hardly went out and they said "I don't give a damn about your private life, it's all the same to me, tell me what you have to tell me" - accompanied by shouts and blows to the head.

In another interrogation session there were a lot of policemen. One of them started to pull my hair, he hit me very hard around the head, he pulled my hair and pushed me around... in that interrogation session, they destroyed me - I was completely demoralised. They took me out of the cell, but almost immediately they came to get me for another session. Three policemen took part. They began playing "good cop" saying "you have to be good because you've got to tell us things, and then you'll see how well everything works out". They constantly pressured me to talk about my boyfriend, I was sitting down, one was in front of me and another behind. The one in front was the good guy, saying "Don't worry, you'll be fine, nothing will happen, we won't hit you" but then he made a sign to the one behind me who started hitting me. I continued to remain silent and the one behind me put his mouth close to my ear and said "some very tough people have come this way, people who had done a lot of things, and no one can put up with it, in the end everyone talks, so you might as well start now so it doesn't get any worse for you". In another interrogation session they had said "start talking because otherwise things will get bad, we'll show you some implements, so that you can go round telling people like you used to about electrodes, okay? We'll show you, so that you can talk about them". Meanwhile the one behind me began to say "We all know what happens to the girls in the police stations". I tried to block out their words, so that I wouldn't feel worse, and while the guy behind me was saying this kind of stuff, the one in front began to stroke my leg, higher and higher, and I became more and more frightened. ... in this session I was very frightened, and it was a very long session.

They took me back to the cell again, then straight to another interrogation session. The big tough cop took part in this session, and began speaking calmly although he went on to beat me. Another asked me constant questions, not even giving me time to answer. It didn't matter whether I answered him or not, he constantly hit me around the head. This day was very hard.

But if the interrogation sessions of the first days were hard, those of the second day were much worse. They no longer made me assume postures, but they hit me, time and time again, from the first moment. They pressured me a lot talking about Gorka ... They took turns, passing me from one to the other ... Once again the older policeman appeared . Once more, one of them played "good cop" while the other threatened me "We're going to the next level, we're going to strip you, we'll throw out everything you're wearing". He grabbed me and continued "There won't be an empty orifice in your entire body". By then I was broken and terrified, so at the end of that interrogation session when they took me to the cell, I made a wound in my left wrist. In the cell there was a brick which protruded from the wall, and I used it to cut my wrist... in the hope that they would take me out of there.

When they took me to the next interrogation session, I tried to cover the wound. They continued as before, hitting me constantly. They had me on my knees, and while they pulled my hair they pushed me around. And they kept hitting my head. The blows were so hard that each time they hit me my head almost struck the floor. By then I was broken. Since the forensic doctor left I had been in interrogation sessions constantly, with five minutes in the cell before the next group arrived to take me out again. My head ached terribly, I was extremely tired, I had very little strength. Sometimes when I was forced to stand next to the table I'd try to lean against it in order to rest, but they'd shout "Move your foot away". When they forced me to kneel, I'd try to rest by tilting my body backwards a little, but when they noticed they would hit me again. .. The worst session was the one with the bearded policeman and the other one. One began to grab at my clothes, telling me to strip. I was alone with him on two occasions when he ordered me to strip. I refused, but he grabbed me by the hair and shouted "I give the orders here, and you will do what I say! And you've got some holes that need to be filled." Again he told me to strip, and I refused. It was crazy, while one of them spoke to me calmly, the other hit me constantly around the head and whispered in my ear... I don't know what he was saying because I tried not to hear him, but it was constant sexual humiliation, and while he humiliated me sexually, the other talked to me calmly, at one point one of them spoke to the one who humiliated me and told him to go outside. Before leaving he said "I'm going out for five minutes, when I come back I don't want to find you've told my friend anything. I'll run out of patience, we've been too patient with you so far, you're behaving like a fuckwit, you've been a smartarse, we won't have any more silly business, we'll get

serious..." I was left with the other, who talked more calmly but stroked my legs while he spoke... for me the worst interrogation sessions were the ones with those two... The sessions carried on all night, that day and that night seemed eternal... that second day and night were very tough.

When on the third day the forensic doctor came I asked her to attend to the wound on my wrist. When I showed it to her she was uninterested. She just asked how I'd done it and that was all. While I was with the forensic doctor the police were at the door and I had to ask them for Betadine and a bandaid, because she had nothing. She asked me why I had done it and I told her that it was because they were beating me and I was psychologically distraught, I wanted to get out of there and it was the only thing I could think of. She said "But that's not the best way, you relax and tomorrow you'll surely be gone". And she took no more notice.

### **ALBERTO GIL ROSADO**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 27/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

At about twelve at night on Wednesday, someone knocked on the door. I opened up and the police was there with a warrant saying I was under arrest. They immediately began the search of the house. They began by my room. They looked at my notes, clothes... they didn't take anything. We went to another room. Here they looked at everything and they took a few diaries, floppy disks, photos and a mobile phone. They didn't make a big noise. Once the search was over, they let me change and we left. There were photographers in the street, I noticed the flashes. They put me in a car and took me to Indautxu. There they took my fingerprints, they took photographs and they told me they were taking me to Madrid. It must have been around four in the morning. After I asked them they called my sister to tell her I was under arrest.

In Indautxu they told me various bits and pieces about my life, so I knew I'd been under surveillance.

Later, they took me to Madrid. I was handcuffed in front. On the way to Madrid I asked them to stop for me to go to the toilet and they did. On the way there they didn't treat me violently. They made the typical comments they always make in that situation.

We arrived in Madrid at around ten in the morning. They gave me breakfast in the cell. Then interrogation started.

They said all kind of things in interrogation; they said I was in big trouble; they said I'd serve a long sentence... They asked a load of questions about my brother, who is in jail. They

also asked lots of questions about many subjects... the questions were constant. I was sitting in front of a table and I had the policemen facing me. The policemen would take turns, sometimes a new one would turn up, but usually it was the same ones. They said they knew lots of thing about me and asked what story I would try to feed them now. They called me "lori-to" (little parrot). They said I was holding back a lot of stuff and I wasn't telling them all the truth. This was because they said they knew I'd said some untrue things; they'd checked them... in this attempt to make me nervous.

On the second day they said perhaps I'd get lucky and maybe they could do something... trying to earn my trust; somehow asking me to cooperate.

I made two statements to the police. In the first one they told me what they would ask and what I had to answer, and we prepared it. In the second one, on the other hand, we didn't prepare anything and suddenly they were saying I'd taken part in operations in Madrid, in the attack on the power plant in Boroa... they also brought out some photos.

It must have been morning when they took me to the judge in the Audiencia Nacional. He read out my police statement and asked if I was going to ratify it.

I saw the forensic doctor every day, at around midday. She asked a few questions. She was an older, calm woman.

The food was terrible, so I said I wouldn't eat and they brought juice and biscuits.

It was terribly hot in the cell.

### UNAI GOROSTIAGA ARBIDE

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 26/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: MEDIGORRIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL

>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

Was arrested in a village in Navarre when I was at a summer camp. It must have been 10.30 at night and I was preparing dinner. One of the kids came in and told me some men were asking for me and I went outside; the child was with me. I asked what they wanted and they said I had to go with them. I began shouting, mainly to let the others know that one of the kids was with me. People came downstairs and they took the kid. The men showed me their badges and that was when I began to realise what I had in store. Everyone was trying to encourage me and the men let my girlfriend say goodbye to me; she gave me a kiss.

They handcuffed me and took me to Bilbao. I asked them to remove the handcuffs, telling them I wouldn't try to escape, and they did. I spent just over an hour at the police station in Bilbo. They put me in a corner with a sweater over my head. I could hear them, but they didn't speak to me at all. I suppose they were dealing with the bureaucracy.

They told me we were leaving. They put me in the [Nissan] Patrol and we left for Ugao. They opened the door of my home in Ugao with my keys, in the most normal way, with no fuss or noise. I was present. It was an in-depth search, but it was ordered, and they didn't leave anything out of its place. They took photos, the CDs from the computer, the music CDs, the old laptop and the one I'd just bought. The court secretary, a court appointed lawyer, and seven or eight policemen who were wearing hoods (except for two or three of them) were all there. At the beginning, they treated me correctly. The scientific police came in and strolled through the house at they leisure. I wasn't able to see what they did exactly; I know they took a pair of socks and a toothbrush and that they did stuff around my bed, but I only know this because I saw it, not because anyone told me what was going on. It was different with the others, every item they took, they would show it to the secretary and he would show it to me.

In the end, worried about my parents, I asked if I could see them, and they said, "Your father is downstairs". People had mobilised by then, and when we went downstairs I was unable to see them, but I could hear the shouts of encouragement.

They took me back to Bilbao. They put me in a corner with my head down. I spent a good while there, about three hours. I ended up with a pain in the neck. I had to raise my head very slowly. When I'd raised it fully, I saw there was an A3 sized Spanish flag, stuck on the wall with pins. They paid no attention to me there; I asked for water and they let me sit on the only chair there. At about six they put me in a van and we left for Madrid.

The journey seemed to go on forever. They spoke about my life, about common things, what I did, my hobbies, personal stuff, journeys... they wanted to show me that they knew a lot about me. When we were close to Madrid, there was a long silence, about 40 minutes, and when they saw I was dozing off, they began to ask me questions and to get to the point.

We arrived in Madrid at about 10, I had my watch. They took my belongings and wrote down my data. Then they took me to a cell. It was a small cell; it wasn't particularly dirty. It had a small mattress with a blanket, although it was very hot.

The first day and night were very tough. They interrogated me and when they thought I was lying to them or when I refused to answer, they said "we're going nowhere like this. Come on, go get a rest" and they'd take me to the cell. The light in the cell was always on.

The first interrogation session began smoothly. I was sitting down; I had a desk in front of me with three policemen facing me. They didn't cover their faces. They were young and sometimes an older one would come in. a woman would also occasionally come in. they continued talking about me. But pretty soon they asked about a friend of mine who's on the run. Before I realised they were laying down enormous accusations against me. Therefore, I began to deny it all, but reasoning, giving explanations. I kept having to give my version over and over again, because they would twist my word completely: "yesterday you said this" and I'd say,

"No, I said this other thing", all the time. When the interrogation session finished they would take me back to the cell and after a short time, back for interrogation. All the sessions were the same.

This was what it was like between Wednesday and Thursday morning, at about 5, they left me in peace a while, until the following morning. I slept; I remember I fell onto the mattress in the cell.

On Thursday they continued putting me under pressure with the questions. They said I was hiding something, and especially, that I wasn't telling the truth regarding two issues. They pressurised me quite a lot on that. One of them said "I would rather hit him; anyway, they leave this place and they all report having been tortured" and the other one would say "well, but our force has a very low percentage". One of them was trying to make me nervous and the other one was trying to reassure me.

They said I'd probably be taken to make a statement on Thursday afternoon and then we would go over the things we'd talked about until then. And on Thursday night I made my statement to the police. They chose the questions and the answers. The court appointed lawyer was there. One of the policemen there told me I'd be taken to the Audiencia Nacional the following day, but I didn't believe him because on Thursday I'd received the order extending my incommunicado detention for a further 48 hours.

There came a time when I noticed they had relaxed. On Thursday night they sent me to the cell and they left me alone.

The following day they continued with the questioning. After talking about all the stuff we'd talked about I could tell now they wanted some free information. A lot of questions about friends, acquaintances...

After that the court appointed lawyer came in and they took a second statement. The questions had nothing to do with what we'd been talking about; suddenly they asked if I'd taken part in a whole load of actions. When they asked if I wanted to add anything, I said "yes, I want to say I am totally surprised and bewildered by all these things you are asking me about". They also showed me a load of photographs.

They left me in peace until Saturday morning. I was able to sleep. The following day we went to the Audiencia Nacional.

The drive to the Audiencia was spectacular; they drove at high speed and with the siren on. When we got there they wouldn't open the door for them, and there were a lot of Basque people outside shouting encouragement for me and the policemen said "we're looking fucking ridiculous here, these arseholes aren't opening the door!!" I felt myself becoming stronger thanks to that.

We went inside and after spending about two hours in the cell, they took me to a room

where they showed me the hard drive of my computer and my other belongings. Then they took me back to the cell.

I declared before investigation judge Grande-Marlaska; he asked the same questions as the police had. After telling me I'd have to go to the court to sign my name every month and that now I'd be allowed to call home, he released me.

I saw the forensic doctor every day. She was an older woman. She'd ask silly questions. One time I asked for an aspirin and she gave me one.

The food was disgusting, so I told them I wouldn't eat that and asked for yoghurt and biscuits. I drank a lot of water from the tap in the bathroom.

### **EGOITZ MARTITEGI ALBIZU**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 30/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: GERNIKA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

(...) these policemen didn't wear a hood. They put me in the car and took me from Indautxu at high speed. The phone kept ringing and I could hear terrible shouting from the other end. They talked among themselves "the boss is super-angry" and things like that. This made me very nervous.

We arrived in Madrid, it was growing light. They took me to a police station and into one of the cells.

They took me to another room; three of the policemen stayed outside, but the door remained open. A woman turned up, but she wasn't a forensic doctor. I am a doctor, my spleen is larger than normal and the createnene in my kidneys is high; I told her and she asked me if I was a doctor. I said I was and she went quiet. I asked her if she wasn't going to examine me and she said "you want me to have a look at you?" I said I did "of course, I'd like you to objectively..." I spoke to her in medical terms and she didn't do anything like a medical examination; she was just pretended. She left the room and I heard her talking to the policemen. They took me to another police station. The policemen were angry with me and kept shouting "you're very clever aren't you? We know you do a lot of sport and now it turns out you have something wrong with your spleen" and I said my kidney didn't work as well as it should, and they laughed... More shouting and the phone ringing all the time; they were angry, they put the siren on and we arrived at the other police station in no time. It was more or less eight in the morning.

We parked in a garage; there was a kind of booth and a policeman in it. Six hooded policemen turned up. I got scared with this "welcome". They frisked me. The policemen also see-

med nervous. They said "sign here" and as soon as I'd signed, they grabbed me and rushed me to the first interrogation session, with my head down by my knees and even lifting me up off the floor at times. They put me in a small room with a desk. There must have been nine or ten policemen; there was hardly any room left. They sat me before the boss, he didn't wear a hood, he had white hair and beard "Egoitz, you know why you're here" and he began shouting at me "lots of people have gone through this place. We'll get everything out of you, son of a bitch! Start telling us all you know!" I couldn't talk; I was terrified and about to cry. They were all shouting at me and insulting me. They made me stand, then down on my knees "son of a bitch, bastard!" I began to cry. This session was long and strange; when I was going to say something, they wouldn't let me speak; I realised they didn't really want me to say anything...

They took me to the cell and shortly they came back to take me for another interrogation session. More non stop shouting and threats; they threatened me and pressurised me regarding Maite and Oihana... they made me kneel again, I don't know how long they had me in this position. The boss came in, threatening me "we know everything, this has only just begun, we have five days ahead of us, I haven't slept for four days, I'm fucking sick of being here and I've no patience and you are breaking my balls..."

Now for the third interrogation session. As soon as I was in the room the shouts and the insults that most hurt me began "you're up to your neck in shit! You are a son of a bitch! You are going to get fucked and you want to fuck your girlfriend!" They began pulling papers out "here we have Maite's statement" and several photographs of Maite, of my girlfriend, of my mother... The situation made no sense, it was crazy; one shouted, another pretended to be nice... By then I'd lost track of time, I was completely disoriented.

All the interrogation sessions were quite similar, they'd come to get me and as soon as I was in the room the shouts would begin. They always repeated the same stuff, always trying to hurt me. They got me believing everything they said, like that they had Maite in there and she was suffering a very violent treatment because of my fault and that they also had my girlfriend in there. When they took me to the cell I could hear cries, sobbing... I began to get paranoid; I didn't know if it was them or whether they were really there or if they were playing recordings for me to hear them... I think that was when I began to lose control, I completely lost track of time (...) They began to pressurise me regarding my mother, saying they were going to arrest her... at the time I believed everything completely. I think they tried to find my weak spots and they realised that they could hurt me using my mother. I was broken. I began thinking about hitting myself on the wall...

(...) I don't know how many sessions I suffered, lots. They got increasingly violent; they left me less and less time in the cell... there came a point when I didn't even know what I was saying, my head was completely gone. It was even worse in the cell; I couldn't get a hold of

myself, and realising this made it even more painful. I think they took me to the cell so that I would turn things over and over in my mind. They kept telling me that I had to say what they wanted me to say in my statement, because otherwise they would incriminate my girlfriend...

So in the end I agreed to give a statement to them. They brought a written text and they told me that was what I had to say. They made me memorise it. We rehearsed it about three times and they continued threatening me, saying the court appointed lawyer would turn up and that the text said what I had to say in my statement. The lawyer came and the statement-taking began. They asked the first question and I remained silent. One of the policemen began to shout at me and the lawyer said something to them. Then, one of the policemen told the lawyer "what! Do you have a problem?" and I think they scared him; he looked more terrified than me. I told them I couldn't remember and they shouted at me, saying "what do you mean you don't remember, just a minute ago you said this and that..." and the lawyer said "he's said he's not sure..." and then they said, to the lawyer "what do you mean, not sure, he's already said who they were three times!" the lawyer protested and then they took him outside to talk to him.

I signed the statement and they took me to the cell. They threatened me, saying that I was to give the same statement before the judge. By then I was a wreck; I couldn't stop crying in the cell... After a couple of hours or so they came back and said "have a wash, comb your hair, you have to get cleaned up" and they took me to the Audiencia Nacional. On the way there, in the car, they said "you have to say the same as you did in the station, otherwise, you know what will happen, don't you?" They repeated that same threat five or six times. They also told me to watch out what I said about how they'd treated me "you won't see us, but we will be there, and otherwise the prosecutor will tell us, so watch out what you say about the treatment".

(...) Now I feel pain in one of my ears, probably because of the blows. They would hit me when I was on my feet, facing the wall. They also hit me when we were preparing my statement in custody. But the worst part was the psychological pressure. They made me believe Maite was suffering for my fault, plus, I could hear sobs. They kept repeating "Susper's papers give us a lot of leeway and we can arrest whomever we want". They tried to make me believe that they could do whatever they wanted with whomever they wanted, and I believed it; I believed they could do whatever they wanted to people close to me. "In five years time you will both be in jail, and you will be banned from seeing each other", "you'll spend at least ten years in jail..." After the statement, I felt that I'd go to jail but at least my girlfriend would be released.

(...) at times I only thought about injuring myself; in the cell I kept looking what to hit my head on, to give myself an injury and make them have to take me to hospital. During inte-

rogation they would mess my head up more and more and then take me to the cell. Each time I was taken for interrogation I felt worse and weaker. Realising this was very tough.

**SUE LORENZO GOMEZ**

>GENDER: F >DATE OF ARREST: 27/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: BILBAO >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

I told them I would remain silent; I said it was my right. Every now and then they would come to the cell to interrogate me. I could hear sobbing in another cell. I tried to sleep (I was unable to sleep during the journey, because of the fear and the nerves) but I couldn't. Heat; all the time with the light on and constant noise (was it a machine in there?) also, in the interrogation rooms (except for the last day). I think I was in four different rooms: one was small, another one was larger (that was where I gave my statement, it had a desk and a computer) another room was the forensic doctor's room and another one had a mirror. The cell had two parts, one of them with the bed, and the other, separated by a door with bars, had a toilet and a washbasin. The door had a "porthole". It was more or less 9 square metres.

Although in the beginning I thought it would be a calm stay, I soon realised I was going to have a bad time. The fear increased; fear for me, for my friends and for my family. In the morning they began with specific questions, and then they went on to my family, asking whether I get on with my brothers, my parents...

They mixed everything, they sought out my weak points, and when they found them, they used them to their advantage. Very often, I'd break out in tears (because of the situation, because of the pressure, because of tiredness, because I didn't know what to do...)Then they would get tougher or ask "what are you thinking about, your amama (grandma)?" and then I'd begin to think about my grandmother and I'd cry even harder. They told me to look in their eyes and to tell them why I was crying. I didn't want to look, I was crying and I was very hurt. In those moments I felt fear and rage. If they calmed the situation down, they'd casually start over from the beginning, or they would go quiet and suddenly say "you love your nephews very much, don't you?" and they'd tell me their names. Then they'd tell me there were police cars outside my sister's house, with an arrest warrant for her (they were talking about my sister in Andorra) and that they would take the children to an institution.

One time they reminded me that the people on the night shift were different (during the days the two women and the man who took me to Madrid were there). They said that the shift change would come during the following sessions, although they'd try to stay as late as possible. In the end, one of the women said, "You can tell me about it tomorrow".

They also threatened to arrest my sister, the one who lives with me; saying that I seemed tough, but maybe she wouldn't be so tough, and since she had stickers in her room, they could use that as evidence against her.

At one point an older man came in. "Tell him something!" I can't remember what he was asking; I wasn't answering and he began to beat me, on the head, hard, with the flat of his hand. He told the young man to leave. With this man, I had to stand.

He shouted "get going! Get going, I said!" very angrily, and he hit me on the head several times, very angrily and shouting at me. It was always the same stories and the same questions. While he questioned me he would shake me by the shoulders for me to suffer and to keep me alert. Always shouting "eh, eh!" and hitting me cockily, with an air of superiority. When I told him I had a right not to talk, he got angry and in the end, since he began hitting me again, I had to answer. Then he calmed down a little. But he got furious again because I wasn't answering any more. The previous guy came in again (the younger man) and the older one left. The young guy said that the one who'd hit me wasn't the worst; he said there were other worse ones, who even enjoyed hitting people. But that he, with his report, was able to hurt me much more, because the prosecutor's sentence request depended on his report; so I should tell him everything and perhaps, since I'd have cooperated, I would be released until the date of the trial and otherwise they would increase the charges against me. He asked if I would make a statement to the judge (I was still saying I had the right to remain silent and that I wouldn't answer their questions). I said I would, possibly, although I would want to do it assisted by my own lawyer. Then he said I wouldn't be with my lawyer and I'd have to declare with a court appointed lawyer, and that making a statement was mandatory, because not doing it was a crime. "You will talk even if I have to destroy you" he said, and he left (leaving me in a state of complete terror).

After lunch, more interrogation sessions. "You'll tell me about it in the morning" the girl had said. She asked "how did the night go?" I said she should know; they had beat me (she didn't seem very concerned). The usual questions. Threats about the family and friends. They tried (and succeeded) to soften me up with questions about my family how did I get on with my parents, was anyone ill, about my older nephews; they said I'd never see my little nephews again... Between lunchtime and dinnertime I suffered fewer interrogations sessions than the day before, but they carried on in the same vein: my friends, they said they were ready to arrest my relatives; they would be able to get some information out of them. They tried to scare me: "watch out or the ones from the night will come back; they've got no patience... we don't, but others do hit you..."

Another one told me that they'd left me in peace during the night because they had a lot of work, because they'd arrested more people (things were going well) and that the doors, the

noises of coming and going I could hear came from other detainees being taken for interrogation, but when things calmed down a bit and they had less work... They tried to highlight the differences between the younger ones and the older ones: the older ones were from another time, from the toughest years; they did things differently because in their time there were more murders... The young ones, on the other hand, didn't beat people; they carried out interrogation differently...

Sometimes they tried to make me fear for my sister in Andorra; other times they said I'd be unable to keep the pace: with no sleep, with physical pain or without it, many days incomunicado...

On Friday the 29th, I think it was the afternoon; the time for the statement came. I said I wouldn't answer and all I wanted to say was that they had hit me. The guy doing the reports said "so, the usual". I told him it was true, he had been there too. The court appointed lawyer made a note, to put in a complaint the following day. He gestured at me not to answer. I was very scared because I'd said they had hit me. Plus, they took me to the room with the mirror twice after the procedure of the statement.

#### IKER OTAMENDI OTAMENDI

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 24/07/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: ERTZAINZA  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

On July 24, 2005, at about half past two in the afternoon, as I was going home after the tribute to Imanol Gómez, the Ertzaintza arrested me. I was on my own. Suddenly a blue car crossed my path and four hooded men got out. One of them had a shotgun, another one had a handgun and another one held an extendable rod.

When I realised they were coming towards me, I raised my hands and told them to calm down. Nevertheless, the first one kicked me and threw me on the ground. I tried to get up, but one of them put the shotgun to my head and shouted at me not to move. Then, without removing the barrel of the shotgun from my head, they began beating me up: punches, kicks, with the rod...

There was no lack of insults either. I think I heard the words "son of a bitch" 10,000 times that day. They must have been beating me for five minutes, until they saw people in the street and they stopped. Then, grabbing me by the hair, they lay me face down on the pavement opposite. I was like this for about an hour. During that time more ertzainas came and they handcuffed me. During that time I was insulted and threatened too; they said they were going to kill me...

All this was witnessed by people in a car with Navarre registration plates, a couple who were worried for me and a young guy, whom I later met at the Audiencia, Iñaki.

Later, they put me in a car and they took me to the station in Donostia. There, more insults and threats, as usual.

Once I was in their base, things calmed down. During the two days I spent there I had minimum contact with the ertzainas. I told them I wanted nothing from them and to leave me alone. They allowed me the possibility of letting someone know I was under arrest, they told me the reason for my arrest and they read me my rights. I refused to eat or drink. I slept little because the light was always on and the ertzainas would bang on the door every so often.

Although they offered the possibility of seeing a doctor, I refused it. Even though I wasn't being held incommunicado, they didn't let me see my family or anyone else. I didn't make a statement in custody.

When they took me to the Audiencia they put me in a narrow cage, handcuffed.

Before I was taken to the judge I was able to see the lawyer, although communication was difficult. I made statement to the judge, but I got the impression the judge wasn't paying much attention. When I arrived in jail, the doctor gave me a check up and made a report with my injuries, but he didn't include all of them.

### UNAI SAIZAR ARRETXE

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 14/08/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: ERTZAINZA  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

I was arrested on August 14, 2005, on the Boulevard in Donostia. At the time of my arrest I was alone and a couple of plainclothes ertzainas attacked me from behind, hitting me and throwing me on the ground.

It was the Ertzaintza who arrested me, but they didn't inform me of anything or show me anything. The arrest itself was very violent. While one plainclothes ertzaina held me down on the ground, the other one beat me with a metal rod. At that point the "anti-riot" (the beltzas) turned up and kicked me a few times.

Two of the anti-riot policemen lifted me up off the ground and put me in a van, next to the ertzainas who'd arrested me. One of these plainclothes ones told me to keep my head down and hit me with his hand on my head and back. Then they put me in the van where they transported detainees, next to the plainclothes ertzainas. When I was in the van, another ertzaina came in and put my hands behind my back and handcuffed me. This one didn't let me sit down; he told me to kneel on the floor: "you will not travel comfortably". They took me

to the station on my knees and on the way there, the plainclothes one would kick me every so often. They informed of my arrest.

After my arrest they took me to their station in the neighbourhood of the Antiguu, and I wasn't moved anywhere else. They put me in a cell and told me to strip. They didn't give me anything to cover myself with while I was naked. They searched all my clothing and threw it on the floor. Then they told me to put my clothes back on and sat me in a cell. They asked a few questions and I replied in Basque; they didn't like this so one of the ertzainas forbade me to speak Basque. If they didn't like what I said, they'd hit me on the head, face and neck with their hands.

Later they ordered me to stand and they had me facing the wall for an hour or so. When in was standing facing the wall, they'd knock on the door and tell me to turn around. When I did I could see hooded ertzainas threatening me and insulting me. The cell was approximately 3X3 metres and as well as the door, it had a concrete platform that was used as a bed. There was also a mat and a blanket.

They hit me when I was sitting or bending over, with my head lowered towards the floor at all times. They hit me on the head, back, face, backside, and waist. At the time of arrest they hit me with a metal rod and they also kicked me. In the van they hit me with the flat of their hands, with their fists and with their feet. Apart from the blows to the head I received hard blows on parts of my body covered by my clothes. At the time I felt like a sack. As the days passed, I developed bruises due to the blows.

The whole time I was in the cell the light was on. I was subjected to threats. They said they would come into the cell and beat me up. Every time they left they would insult me. Sometimes they asked questions, and if they didn't like the answers they would hit me.

The temperature in the cell wasn't too cold, but it was chilly enough. I hardly slept, in the cell, because of the light and the threats. They offered me food but I refused to eat or drink. Only one doctor saw me. They said he was a forensic doctor and I only saw him once. He didn't say who he was or show me any ID. The room where he examined me had good lighting and curtains. The door to that room stayed open the whole time and he examined me right next to the ertzainas. Before going into the room, the ertzainas threatened me, "Watch out with what you tell the doctor". I didn't report any kind of ill treatment to the doctor. The way the doctor treated me was correct. He asked about illnesses and also how I'd got the injuries on elbows and knees. He just looked at these. I asked to be examined and he treated me OK.

They took me to investigation court N°1 in Donostia. I refused to make a statement in court. The judge ordered remand in custody and the prosecutor had requested the same. When they took me to jail they first took me to see the doctor. He asked a few questions, for

example, if I was allergic to anything, any serious illnesses... he took my blood pressure, he listened to my chest, he looked at my injuries and finally, he weighed me.

### JOSETXO LUCAS ARZA

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 14/08/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: ERTZAINZA  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

I was arrested on August 14 in Donostia, on the beach, after being chased by both plainclothes agents and uniformed agents. The people on the beach saw my arrest. The ertzainas who arrested me didn't show me any warrants or explain anything.

The arrest was violent, they grabbed me and threw me on the floor, and they twisted my arm violently, hurting me a lot. When I opened the mouth to shout, a plainclothes ertzaina put a fistful of sand in my mouth; he yanked my hair and stuck my head in the sand. It was awful, I was suffocating with the sand, my eyes, ears, nose and mouth full of sand and they stayed like that until they lifted me up. Since I was handcuffed I was unable to get rid of the sand. They informed my family of my arrest by calling a number I gave them.

They took me to the station in the Antiguo neighbourhood, and the journey there was quite calm. They put me in a cell and shortly two hooded ertzainas came in: one of them wore a black hood; the other one wore a grey hood. The one with the black hood threw a blanket and a mat on the floor and then the one with the grey hood asked in Spanish "do you want anything else or need anything else?" I replied in Basque, "No, I don't want anything else". The, the one with the grey hood came up to me, he pulled my hair with his left hand and with his right, he punched me in the head, saying "in here you will speak Spanish, understand?" I replied in Basque, saying "no, I will speak in Basque". Then he slapped me really hard, with his gloved hand, "you will speak Spanish or I will fucking well hammer you". Again, I said "no, I will continue to speak Basque because it is my right". Again, while he continued yanking my hair all the time, he slapped me "you will fucking speak to me in Spanish!" And I just continued "no, no..." Then he let go and shouted "fucking gudari, murderer!" as he left and slammed the door hard; it remained closed.

Throughout the night they kept opening the peephole in the door, again and again, and shouting "son of a bitch, murderer, it's going to be a very long night, just wait until they take you to Madrid" and other similar stuff again and again, as they violently beat on the door.

I was unable to sleep all night. Whenever they saw I was dozing off they'd bang on the door even harder. This was on the first night. The night shift spent the whole night insulting me in Spanish and banging on the door. The day shift was calmer; they spoke to me in Basque,

they didn't wear hoods...

The cell was 3X3 metres and the only thing in it was a concrete platform for sleeping on. The light was on the whole time, at night too. They offered me food but I refused to eat or drink. When I arrived in jail they did a basic medical check up: they took my pulse, they weighed me and they asked me a few questions.

During the two days we were incommunicado we had no lawyers and we were not allowed to talk to our families. No doctor came to see me either.

### EDER ARIZ LIZASO

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 15/03/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: LIZARRA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

... At the moment of arrest they hit me a few times and the threats also started right from the beginning, saying they would do this thing or that thing to my girlfriend...`while some of them made comments like "now is when the fun starts, you're going to shit yourself..." They searched the house with me present. There was also a woman from the court there. They searched the house in Lizarra, my parents' house and my girlfriend's car. When they arrested me, first they took me to Zizur, then to the Guardia Civil headquarters in Iruñea, and then to Madrid. They hit me during the journey; on my head, my ears... and the threats were also constant, regarding my girlfriend, my parents... They said I had two options, A and B: A was if I talked, and everything would go OK, and B was when I talked because of the beating they'd give me.

When we arrived in their quarters, they took me directly to a cell. During the first twelve hours, more or less, they made me stand facing the wall... Whenever they took me out of the cell, it was to take me to another room, where they interrogated me. I was beaten during interrogation. Most of the times they beat me I was sitting down, although sometimes I was standing, facing the wall. They sometimes made me do stand-ups. They would hit me on my head, ears, stomach, testicles, back... The blows to the head were with their fists, on the ears, with the flats of their hands, in the stomach and other places they hit me with their fists. Aside from my head and ears, the rest of the blows were on clothed parts of my body. They left no marks.

They also suffocated me with a bag. How often? Many, sometimes they wouldn't remove the bag for the entire interrogation session. It was over my head and I was drenched in sweat, and every time I refused to answer their questions or I gave an answer they didn't like, they'd tighten it. The feeling of suffocating, the retching... at one point I was sick and I threw up

bile. Also, one time I managed to rip the bag, but then they put two bags on my head, one over the other. Although I didn't see the electrode machine, they threatened to use them on me. They said they'd put them on me any minute.

As well as the physical torture, I suffered psychological torture. Every time they took me out of the cell they would blindfold me. During interrogation I was blindfolded and they made me keep my head down; if I raised it, they'd hit me. I also suffered sound aggression; they would hit me on my ears and shout at me. During interrogation, there was a guardia civil who shouted in my ear; sometimes at the same time as one was hitting me and another one was doing the bag to me, one asked questions in my other ear in a soft tone. I could feel my ears popping, like when you dive into water. As I said, the light in the cell was on all the time and every time I left the cell they would blindfold me, preventing me from seeing anything.

Amongst the threats they issued, many were regarding my girlfriend: they said she had also been arrested and they were torturing her; they said she was being raped, suffering electrodes, the bag, blows, etc. They also made threats about my parents. My father has had heart problems and they knew he'd already had one heart attack and he'd been in hospital. They also threatened me constantly: they said they were going to kill me, and then they'd say I'd jumped out of the window... Among the humiliations I was made to suffer, they made me tell them about sex with my girlfriend...

They played the good cop and bad cop roles. They would hit me regardless; my answers didn't have any bearing on this. After an interrogation session, they'd take me to the cell, and after a while they'd take for another session, back to the cell... I could hear them torturing other detainees, although the guardia civil said they were recordings...

Sometimes it was very hot in the cell, and next it would be very cold; maybe it was because of my situation, I don't know...

I don't know for sure, but perhaps they gave me some kind of drug in the water. When they took me to the toilet I'd try to drink water, but they wouldn't let me. One day they gave me a small water bottle. I opened it and took a small sip. After half an hour or so, while I was standing facing the wall, I began to see strange things; the wall was moving, I could see sort of bubbles... and then they took me for another session. As I said, I don't know whether they'd drugged me or it was the situation that caused it. The guardia civil, however, were on drugs; I could often hear them sniffing and comments about it.

I saw a forensic doctor, I think he came every day, and it was always the same person. He identified himself showing me a card. The room where he saw me was small and didn't look like a surgery. Although the agents were not inside the room, they'd stay outside. I didn't tell the doctor anything about how I was being treated, although he asked me about illnesses and how they were treating me. I wouldn't let him check me up; all he did was take my blood

pressure every day. I maintained this attitude because right after, I was taken back to the guardia civil and I didn't trust anyone.

I gave two statements in custody, both of them in a small room. In front of me there were two agents and while one of them asked questions, the other one wrote down my answers. Behind me there were two people, one was the court appointed lawyer (that's what they said) and I don't know who the other person was... I gave the statement we'd prepared beforehand. They told me what I had to say and how I had to say it, and they made me repeat it innumerable times, until I memorised it. While we prepared the statements, the blows and threats were constant; they kept saying that if I didn't declare what we'd prepared the treatment would get much worse, but after I made the statement it all continued the same, bad.

On the fifth day they took me to the Audiencia Nacional... before going there, they made threats about my girlfriend and my family, if I didn't ratify what I'd said in custody. My state of mind was very bad, I was completely terrified, terrified, and physically very, very tired.

The judge ordered remand for me and at the beginning I had nightmares. Nowadays, if I'm asleep and I hear a loud noise, I get very nervous and I wake up with a high heartbeat.

### AITOR LARRETA ARRUTI

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 02/11/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: DONOSTIA >POLICE FORCE: GUARDIA CIVIL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: PRISON

They arrested me and took me to the base in Intxaurreondo, with four guardia civil in a normal car. They also moved me to Madrid in the same way. During the journey, they spoke to me about torture; asking what my friends who had been arrested had told me, had I read the TAT reports, and so on. They said that most of the testimonials began with "it all began on the way to Madrid" and that we were precisely on our way to Madrid...

We arrived at the General Headquarters of the Guardia Civil, they put me into a small cell where I spent a few minutes and then they took me for the first interrogation session. Except when I was in the cell, the rest of the time I was made to keep my head lowered, with my eyes shut; they moved me from one place to another, holding me by an arm and threatened to beat me up if I dared to open my eyes. The cell was about four metres square, in a corner there was a concrete bed, about a metre high, with three blankets, and there was a light above the door. The door had a small peep hole.

When I was in the interrogation room, if I didn't say what they wanted to hear, they would make me do stand ups (crouch down, stand up, crouch down...) with my arms held outstretched upwards and they said if I stopped they would put a stick up my anus. I said I couldn't

carry on and then they pulled my trousers down. since I was doing the stand ups very slowly, they told me to stand still and then they began to feel round my anus with a bottle full of dirty water and they told me that if I stopped again, they would put it up my arse. They made me do stand ups again; after a while they made me drop my trousers again and began to hit me on the testicles with one of my trainers. After this session they took me to the cell.

In the following session, they made me crouch down, telling me they would beat me to a pulp if I touched the wall or fell over. After remaining in this position for a long time, my legs trembled and I was covered in sweat, and then they offered me a chair and told me to sit down comfortably. Interrogation continued and they tied me to the chair. They protected my wrists and ankles with foam rubber and taped me to the chair. Tied down like this, they suffocated me with a plastic bag they put over my head. They did this during two sessions, putting the bag over my head many times. I felt I was suffocating. I couldn't get back to normal, because I'm asthmatic and they would put the bag over my head even though they could see I couldn't breathe normally even when they removed it. They would hit me in the testicles to make me exhale all the air I was trying to keep in my lungs. I ripped the bag twice; once by biting it and the other time moving my head down to my hand. All this time they left my inhaler nearby for me to see it, but they only gave me one dose (which is very little)

As I said, I spent my time incommunicado blindfolded. During interrogation I was only able to open my eyes once, but I was facing the wall. I could only see the guardia civil's feet, at times.

When interrogation was "not going well" and at the beginning, they wouldn't stop shouting, questions, insults... When they calmed down, I could hear the shouting from other interrogation rooms.

They threatened me all the time, saying they would beat me black and blue, saying that if they wanted they could arrest people I knew...

Humiliation was also constant; when they made me do physical exercise, if I said I couldn't carry on, they said I was a piece of shit; I was no gudari and similar stuff.

During interrogation, they would play "good cop, bad cop". The good one asked questions and then told the bad one ("he says he doesn't know anything...") Then, if the bad one didn't like this, he'd make me do stand ups, he'd put the bag over my head... If he didn't disagree with what I said, I would get to continue talking to the good one and the bad one would leave. If the bad one thought I was lying (about names, etc.) he'd say he would investigate it (with the other people allegedly arrested) and add that if they told him something different "we'd see".

The light was constantly on and I was hardly able to sleep (they'd give me very little time, the nerves, the light...)

I saw the forensic doctor twice: in the station and in the Audiencia Nacional. They took me to a room where there was a stretcher, there were no windows (or I have no memory of them). The forensic doctor showed me his card.

He asked a few questions and wrote down my answers. I didn't tell him about the ill treatment. He asked about my condition, he took my blood pressure and asked how I was being treated. He wrote everything down and said he would come to see me every day.

When they took me to make my statement, the guardia civil asked questions. We had prepared the questions and the answers previously. The "bad one" had told me he would get very angry if my statement didn't come out right and what I'd suffered until then was nothing, but if I did well they would leave me alone. During the statement only the members of the Guardia Civil and I spoke; the other people were silent throughout.

After the statement, the "bad" guardia civil congratulated me, because he'd been told that everything had gone well. He said he would do me a favour; I would be taken to the judge on condition that I repeated what I'd said in my statement in there before the judge. If I told the judge anything different, if I "tricked him", he said I'd be taken back to the headquarters, he said I still had three days to go and I wouldn't be able to take it. He said that I was not prepared for all that, I would shit myself, piss myself, be cold, hot and all I'd suffered up until then had been nothing compared to what would come. They took me to the judge; I was convinced of what I'd been told.

We arrived in the Audiencia Nacional, they put me in a cell and then they took me to the forensic doctor. I didn't report the ill treatment because I was afraid of being taken back to the Guardia Civil headquarters.

The judge asked me if I ratified my previous words. The prosecutor and the lawyer didn't ask any questions.

When I arrived in jail I was taken to the doctor. He just asked a few questions (illnesses, allergies...) and didn't do any tests.

For a week I was unable to walk properly (I limped) and I could only go up flights of stairs with great difficulty.

### **IGOR ALVAREZ ZUBELDIA**

>GENDER: >DATE OF ARREST: >PLACE OF ARREST: >POLICE FORCE:  
>CURRENT SITUATION:

I was arrested on October 31, 2005, at 21:48 at night, in Donostia. When I was close to the door to my building, I saw a young man and woman by the shop window next to the entran-

ce door. I passed by them and as soon as I'd stopped at the door, eight people jumped on me, some of them armed with handguns. They threw my bike aside and made me lie face down on the ground; they handcuffed me and ordered me not to look up.

They didn't tell anyone I'd been arrested, not even my parents. My parents found out the following day, when my initials were mentioned on the radio, by then they'd got worried and were looking for me.

(...) Barefoot again, they took me to another room. There were three guardia civil in there. They put me in a corner, with my eyes closed, and ordered me to keep my head lowered. They began asking questions. My feet were freezing. They shouted all the time. They spoke to me about my condition, "celiac disease", which I'd told the doctor about earlier. My digestive system doesn't admit gluten. I told the guardia civil I could have convulsions and even die.

During interrogation, if I didn't say what they wanted to hear, they threatened to make me eat biscuits with gluten. They made me stand for hours with my arms outstretched upwards, while they asked questions.

The threats were constant, "what you've suffered up to now is nothing, just you wait until you get to Madrid..." I didn't get any sleep all night. I was made to stand the whole time, barefoot.

They made me put my trainers back on and get into a car, a Peugeot 406-407. The journey to Madrid began. There four guardia civil and myself in the car. I was on the back seat, in the middle. I was handcuffed behind my back. My waist hurt badly and they made me keep my body bent over forwards, with my head between my legs. I couldn't raise my head and on top of that they pushed my head down even further; it hurt my back and neck. I began sweating early on. They continued asking questions and if I didn't answer or didn't say what they wanted to hear they would hit me on the head. I was beaten during the entire journey, mainly on the head, but sometimes the ones sitting either side of me would grab my hair and lifted me up a bit so that they could hit me in the testicles. I don't know if this left any marks, but when they got me out of the car I was able to see there were a lot of hairs on the floor and that it was wet.

(...) as soon as we left Donostia I told them I needed to go to the toilet and they said if I urinated in the car they'd make me clean it up with my tongue. They said if I talked they would stop the car, but when I answered one of their questions I saw what their attitude was (they didn't stop the car) and I had to go all the way to Madrid without going to the toilet. They also threatened me during the journey; they said they'd stop the car and make me run away from it (...)

In Madrid, when I got out of the car and stood up, I noticed pain my back and neck. They put me in a cell; it was small, about 2x3 metres. There was a mattress, but they didn't allow

me to sleep. The one who looked through the peep-hole always wore a hood. They offered me food and I accepted it.

Then they took me to an interrogation room. They began asking questions. They made me stand in a corner the whole time.

I suffered different types of torture. They made me so physical exercises, with my legs and arms. I was made to do innumerable stand ups, I had to keep my arms stretched upwards and they'd tell me to go faster. I couldn't keep it up; I'd stand up, tottering, my arms and legs were sore, I would fall over, but they'd lift me up and make me continue. When I was taken to jail I was unable to bend my knees for nearly a week.

When I was doing these exercises, when I noticed I was out of air and my entire body was in pain, they told me to sit down. As soon as I'd sat down they tied my hands and legs to the chair; I couldn't move. I heard the sound of plastic behind me. I knew what was coming; I became very nervous, my pulse sped up and when I still hadn't got my breath back after the stand-ups, they put the bag over my head. They put it on me again and again. I felt an unbearable smothering, I was trying to breathe and I couldn't. The plastic stuck to my face and didn't allow me to breathe. When I managed to make a small hole in the plastic with my teeth they would realise immediately and move the bag round to prevent me from breathing again.

With the bag over my head, but not tight, they issued threats against my family; they said lost of stuff, and you never know with these people... I was terrified, really, really scared they would do something to my family. They would tighten the bag again and I'd suffocate. The interrogation sessions continued. I didn't lose consciousness. They made me stand facing the wall. Sometimes, regardless of whether I answered or not, they would hit me on the head with their hands. This lasted for a very long time, while we prepared my statement.

I made a statement in custody. The court appointed lawyer remained silent the whole time, and the guardia civil kept adding stuff to my statement. I'd say whatever it was in a certain way and they would write it down differently, they did what they wanted. Before the statement they had warned me that if things went as they wished, everything would be OK, otherwise everything would get worse...

However, after the statement things didn't get better, they wanted more from me. They continued asking questions, they said they had attached electrodes onto the back of my chair; they shouted at me to sit down, I just kept repeating I knew nothing. In the end I sat down and realised it was a normal chair; I calmed down a little.

They took me to the Audiencia Nacional threatening me; they never stopped putting pressure on me with the issue of my family and also saying they'd take me back to the station.

**UNAI LIZASO SANZ**

>GENDER: M >DATE OF ARREST: 11/02/2005 >PLACE OF ARREST: AZPEITIA >POLICE FORCE: POLICIA NACIONAL  
>CURRENT SITUATION: FREE

(...) They took me to another room. It was very dirty and there were black rubbish bags on the floor. They immediately put me against the wall and left me there while they did all the paperwork. I didn't know what was going to happen and I was terrified.

Then they put me in a room with another three guys and they started saying I was involved with this person or that person... I don't know if it was to scare me but they began talking about a person I know, telling me this person had talked and had said I was on Susper's list and so on. I was very scared; I kept looking at the bags on the floor and I was wondering what they would do.

They put me in the car again and drove to Azpeitia, to search my parents' house. My father got nervous and although I was being held incommunicado and therefore I couldn't talk to my parents, I was able to tell my father no calm down. They just took some old papers.

By the time we went downstairs a whole lot of people had congregated in the street; they cheered me and the policemen got angry; they didn't like this at all.

On the way to Madrid, I was sitting between two of them, with my head down between my legs. The tone they used was very rough; they were angry, they were violent. I talked with one of the policemen, Ibon, in a practically friendly manner; it was like a game: he told me stuff, I told him stuff. When we were about to arrive in Madrid, the attitude completely changed. His tone of voice got violent and he hit me on the head. Then, I said "well, if you're going to be like this, then I won't behave like up to now"

As soon as we got to Madrid they took all my personal effects (watch, money...) and put me in a cell, but just for a moment, because they took me for interrogation very soon. I was sitting down. This, so-called Ibon was next to me; another one stood on my other side and they said: "the party is over!" The policemen didn't wear hoods and wore civilian clothing; they were very normal men too, not too tall, not too short... One of them placed himself right next to my ear, very close, and as he asked the first question, he began hitting me on the head, non stop. He grabbed me by the hair with both hands and pulled downwards; he would hang all his weight on my hair and put his face against mine. He'd fling me on the floor; I spent quite some time sprawled on the floor. And back to the chair, he'd hang from my hair again, hit me on the head non stop and meanwhile they didn't stop shouting at me like mad, they were beside themselves, "fucking gudari! You all start off like this, but you'll end up talking! I don't know who would lie about you!" hitting me all the time, and hit me again and again... I could

see tufts of my own hair on the floor. Meanwhile, Ibon watched.

They took me back to the cell and told me to reflect, they'd be back for me in half an hour. When I was in the cell, any small sound would frighten me and make me very nervous. Plus, you could hear all kinds of noises. I'd get a fright every time the policeman with the keys to the cells moved. I think I was in the cell for about half an hour.

They took me to the next interrogation session. They insulted me "you are a retard, retard!" and they threatened me all the time. They said I'd better talk, or they'd call the policeman from the previous session.

During interrogation, there was always someone watching. Sometimes it was "Ibon", other times the girl from the day of my arrest... they just watched; it was as if they were learning.

In another session, I was with a policeman who spoke differently. He said he was from Zestoa and he had been with me in the Txoko Bar and stuff like that... Suddenly, they made me stand up and began beating me, they got very violent, they shouted at me and hit me on the head. I don't know if it was because I was weak or why, by I got dizzy and began retching.

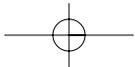
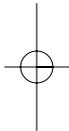
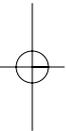
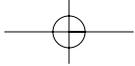
They began again, saying if I didn't talk they'd call the policeman from the previous session, who was waiting and itching to get in...

Then that policeman turned up and said "hello, merry Christmas!" and began hitting me, tremendous blows; he made me kneel down and didn't stop hitting me. I always ended up on the floor. He hit me on the head and pulled my hair. He grabbed my hair and grabbed my testicles tight. I tried to resist, but they all jumped on me.

In all the sessions they said the same kind of things. They threatened me, said that they were torturers and I couldn't expect anything else but to be tortured, I might be a gudari, but if I didn't talk all I would achieve would be to draw out my suffering, because in the end everyone talked. They also threatened to incriminate me in a whole load of things: a bomb against a court building, another one against a transport company, saying it would be very easy for them... I became very scared, and they played with the threats.

In one of the sessions, one of the ones when they beat me, they told me to go to the cell and reflect, and when I wanted to talk all I had to do was knock on the cell door and they would come to get me. I did this, because they'd told me they had arrested my girlfriend and if I talked they would release her. So I said we could do a deal; I would say whatever they wanted in exchange for them releasing her. It seemed that during the last days they were working against the clock; they did innumerable interrogation sessions and in each one they asked very many questions. They wanted information. So, an old policeman with a moustache would come up and say, "This doesn't work like this". He said the organisation [ETA] didn't work like I was saying, so what I was saying couldn't be true. The three days ended and they took me to the Audiencia Nacional.

When they took me to the forensic doctor inside police premises I was terrified. I had tufts of hair all over the place. The forensic doctor was a woman and she shocked me big time: I told her they were mistreating me and her reply was to say she'd see how I was the following day. My head was completely swollen; it was as if I was wearing a helmet, but she just gave me paracetamol and that was it. She didn't make any notes or check me properly. She took my temperature. When I was taken to the forensic doctor the second time, I was calmer and they hadn't beaten me, and she said "see, I told you they wouldn't hit you". (...)



# METHODS OF TORTURE

**T**HE FOLLOWING ARE THE TORTURE METHODS THAT COMPLAINANTS HAVE REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO DURING THE YEAR 2005. When we talk about torture, we mean any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person by a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. This is part of the definition set out in the first article of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Whereas the aim of torture in other times was to obtain information and a confession from the victims, torture used currently has a variety of aims in addition to these mentioned. The aims of torture encompass, therefore, both individual and social aspects. On an individual level, generally speaking, in addition to obtaining information quickly, for use by the security forces, there is also an attempt to break the will of the victims, to psychologically destroy them. Torture is often used while no demand for information is made, which shows that the use of torture seeks to psychologically crush the victim; it is about destroying a person, humiliating and degrading people. To this end, torture is not solely based on physical pain, rather, it includes a set of techniques amongst which physical pain may or may not be employed. It is a struggle to overcome the person being tortured, attempting to cause maximum psychological disruption. However, torture is not limited solely to the person tortured; it impregnates the person's environment, and, by extension, the entire population. It is aimed at spre-

ading terror and paralysing society. It involves a process of questioning one's own identity, insofar as it attacks the tortured person's personality and his or her membership of a group (friends, family, society...) Torture methods are directed at this aim. And, in order achieve it, methods have changed over the years. The methods currently used are more sophisticated, attempting not to leave any marks on the surface of the body, and the use of so-called psychological techniques is on the increase. This is why we no longer find the bodies of those coming out of police custody covered in bruises, as we did years ago. This is because, as we said above, the aim of torture is to break the person, but in such a way so as not to leave visible marks. In other words, no physical marks, even if the person is completely broken on the inside. Torture is designed not to leave markings that could be seen by a forensic doctor, and therefore make it even more difficult for those working with torture victims to prove that during three, four or five days, they were beaten, humiliated, suffocated with the bag innumerable times, sexually abused, not allowed to rest or sleep, etc. All of which will have been done in ways that do not leave visible markings.

The methods of torture used by the various security forces operating in the Basque Country have traditionally been classified into physical methods and psychological methods. Within this classification, physical methods are those inflicted by physical means, causing physical pain, severe physical exhaustion, expectation of immediate death, asphyxia... Psychological methods, on the other hand, are those that, without physical aggression, result in an alteration of the state of mind of the person. Thus, many techniques of psychological torture might be more effective as they pull the victim into a situation of total loss of control that enable the achievement of what is needed.

However, it must be noted that all physical suffering implies psychological suffering, and that many methods of torture may be understood as combined methods. Therefore, despite the theoretical distinction between physical and psychological methods, in practice, and based on the accounts of the people who have been in these situations, we can see that combination is the main technique, because several methods are often used at once and because any physical suffering involves psychological damage, as we pointed out above.

## PHYSICAL METHODS

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1. **BLOWS.** The most used form of aggression by all the security forces. The instrument used varies in relation to the part of the body that is beaten: hand, truncheons, phonebooks, rolled-up newspapers, wooden sticks... the parts of the body beaten also vary: head, face, stomach, ribs, genitals, pushing and knocking against the wall... "I was beaten during interrogation. Most of the times they beat me I was sitting down, although sometimes I was standing, facing the wall... They would hit me on my head, ears, stomach, testicles, back... The blows to the head were with their fists, on the ears, with the flats of their hands, in the stomach and other places they hit me with their fists."

2. **ASPHYXIA TECHNNIQUES.** Oxygen deprivation for a period of time, reaching loss of consciousness, which causes a feeling of being close to death. Generally inflicted with a plastic bag, placed over the person's head and tightened round the neck (method known as **THE BAG**) "...they put the bag over my head; they gradually tightened it, meanwhile they shouted at me, asked questions, threatened me... everything was confusion; I was crying but they still tightened the bag more and more and I had difficulty breathing, the bag got in my mouth; I was increasingly nervous, I was crying, they continued tightening the bag; I couldn't breathe, my physical situation was didn't help because I had increasing difficulty breathing and I gradually got worse; I couldn't stay still, I couldn't breathe... they tightened the bag again, tighter and tighter, asphyxia increased every second, I couldn't take it any more; I tried to rip the bag but that caused them to hit me on the head... but I just couldn't take it any more, my legs wouldn't support my weight and at that point they slackened the bag a little and allowed me to calm down and breathe..."

3. **PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION TECNNIQUES.** Aimed at causing the physical exhaustion of the victim. A method repeated with greater intensity each time, through forcing the victim to remain standing for long periods of time without leaning anywhere, with bent knees, forcing the victim to perform physical exertion to the point of exhaustion (sit-ups, press-ups, stand-ups...) forcing the victim to remain in awkward postures... "...they ordered me to do stand-ups. Non-stop, up and down, up and down. Meanwhile, the questions continued, always the same. I couldn't keep it

up, but they didn't care, they pushed me down, and pulled me up. They put a bag over my head and ordered me to continue doing stand-ups"

4. RAPE, SEXUAL ABUSE. Sexual abuse and humiliation are on the increase, year by year, in cases of both men and women. It is usual for people to be made to endure interrogation partially or fully naked, and at times, to remain in humiliating postures. Humiliations are constant; these include oral abuse –threats, insults, rape threats- violence exerted on sexual organs –blows, touching, rape simulation... "...One of them ordered me to strip. I refused. They removed my jacket and pulled at my shirt and trousers. They tried to put the stick into my hands. I flung myself at the wall, screaming and trying to hold my clothes. They laughed at my screams and wails. I thought they were going to rape me..."

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#### PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS

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5. HINDRANCE OF VISION. A form of sensory deprivation. It involves hindering the victims' vision, thereby increasing their insecurity and disorientation, by putting on hoods, masks, forcing them to keep their eyes shut, or head bent down facing the floor. "Every time they took me out of the cell they would blindfold me. I was blindfolded throughout interrogation, and I had to keep my head down, if I raised it at all, they'd hit me."

6. THREATS. The use of threats is constant and commonplace. These can be against the victim (death threats, "of going to a second stage" -meaning a harder phase- of more tortures...) against the family (detentions of close ones, torture of close ones...), friends/girlfriends... "...They said they had arrested my mother and that they would do the same to her. They shook bags and came towards me. They said they were going to put electrodes on me and wet my fingers and head. They put a stick in my hands; they made me hold it, and asked if I knew what it was for. They said they would use it to rape me..."

7. HUMILIATIONS, INSULTS. Personal and political degradation: Forcing victims to sing fascist hymns, to cheer the police force that carried out the detention, humiliations of a sexual nature... "... They made me sing

the “Cara al Sol”, “Eusko Gudariak” and run the “Korrika”...”, “... with my head between my knees, as usual, they told me to sing “Eusko Gudariak”. I refused. They said I had to choose between singing “Eusko Gudariak” or the anthem of the Guardia Civil. I ended up singing “Eusko Gudariak” and translating it into Spanish, verse by verse”

8. GOOD COP-BAD COP. A technique used very often by all the police forces. With this method they try to confuse the victim by going from a phase of extreme violence to a semi-relaxed phase with another agent, thus succeeding in psychologically breaking victims, taking advantage of the fact that when they are with the “good cop” their defences are lowered. “... the one in front of me played the good cop and said “you just be calm, nothing will happen to you, we will not hit you” but as he said this, I could see how he nodded to the one behind me, who’d hit me. I was still not saying anything; the policeman behind me would threaten me, talking in my ear... while the one behind me told me that stuff, the one in front of me also began saying things along the lines of “you have to talk...”

9. LONG AND CONSTANT INTERROGATION. Detainees report that questioning sessions are long and constant (they can last an entire night or day with no rest), with hardly any time to rest or sleep. Thus the victim is also disorientated. “...this first session lasted, according to my estimation, from two until ten in the morning, they left me in the cell for a short while before seeing the forensic doctor ... there was a moment when they took me to the cell for a short period and before they put me in, they threatened me... they took me back out and torture recommenced...”

10. APPEALING TO THE VICTIM’S IMAGINATION. It is based on creating fear of the unknown, of what is still to come “... they said something along the lines of “you’ve wanted it this way” and took me to the cell. I think that with that last threat and leaving me in the cell, they were trying to psychologically destroy me and get me to be constantly terrified, in those moments I didn’t want to think about anything, but it was impossible not to turn things over in your head, a thousand times, in that situation”

11. CREATING FEELINGS OF GUILT. Seeking to transfer all the respon-

sibility of what is happening onto the tortured person "...They mixed everything, they sought out my weak points, and when they found them, they used them to their advantage. Then they would get tougher or ask "what are you thinking about, your amama (grandma)?" and then I'd begin to think about my grandmother and I'd cry even harder. They told me to look in their eyes and to tell them why I was crying. I didn't want to look, I was crying and I was very hurt. In those moments I felt fear and rage... they would go quiet and suddenly say "you love your nephews very much, don't you?" and they'd tell me their names. Then they'd tell me there were police cars outside my sister's house, with an arrest warrant for her and that they would take the children to an institution..."

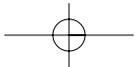
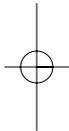
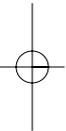
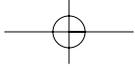
12. SIMULATION OF OTHER TORTURE METHODS OR EXECUTION: Such as simulation of use of different methods of torture, like electric shocks: handing the victim wires while they are told they will use electrodes on them; putting a bag over the head without asphyxiating them or putting a gun to their heads, face or other body parts and pulling the trigger... "Suddenly they said: "the electrodes, bring the electrodes in" and while I was naked, they poured water over my body saying, "We're going to get you to place them on yourself! We'll do "the clown" to you. Do you know what "the clown is? it's putting electrodes on your genitals!! You can be left impotent, did you know?" They gave me cables for me to hold, and they touched me with an object of my testicles, on my nipples... but they didn't give me any electric shocks, it was all staged..."

13. HEARING OTHER PEOPLES' SCREAMS: Making the victim listen to cries of pain, sobbing... from other detainees. "...I could tell there was someone in the cell next door; they'd ask them their names, but I didn't want to hear anything. I could sometimes hear screams; I didn't want to believe that they were doing the same things to another person. I'd press my hands against my ears and sing..."

14. SUDDEN CHANGES OF TEMPERATURE: This method combines the cold of the cell with the heat of the interrogation room or vice versa... and may include soaking the detainee with water or their own sweat to achieve a feeling of complete bewilderment. "...one of them said I was cold

and ordered a blanket to be brought in. they brought the blanket and wrapped it tightly around me. From the neck to below my knees. They said one blanket wasn't enough and wrapped another one around me. Then they wrapped me in a third one...Sometimes they slackened the blankets a little so that they could understand my replies, but they'd immediately tighten them again. They poured something warm over my front. I could feel it, lukewarm, through the three blankets. I didn't know what it was, but it repulsed me..."

15. **USE OF DRUGS:** Some accounts refer to sensory hallucinations, induced, perhaps, by the use of drugs. The threat of the use of this method of torture is widespread and has a very important role in mentally influencing the victim. "I couldn't take it any more, standing in the cell, facing the wall, I started to sway. I couldn't hold my head up and my body slumped. I had hallucinations. The walls were moving, they were collapsing into each other; the floor was rising up, moving, up to different heights... I saw the corner between two walls opening, into the living room in my home, it was very light. On the wall, I saw sort of slides of my mother, my family and friends, and they were in colours. I could see the silhouette of a man superimposed on them. This terrorised me. I saw white worms, spiders... on the floor and crawling up the walls..." ■



# DEFICIENCIES OF THE FORENSIC-MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION OF TORTURE IN THE AUDIENCIA NACIONAL: Recommendations and possible solutions

**B**OTH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE UN COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE HAVE ARGUED THAT INCOMMUNICADO DETENTION FACILITATES THE OCCURRENCE OF ACTS OF TORTURE AND ILL TREATMENT. Referring to this type of detention, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Question of Torture, following his latest report on a visit to Spain, stated that the occurrence of ill treatment and torture is not systematic; but it is more than sporadic or incidental. According to the experts on human rights issues, a prompt independent medical examination, such as one jointly carried out by a forensic doctor and a doctor chosen by the detainee, is among the guarantees that should be available to people deprived of their freedom.

In recent years, in Spain, the Audiencia Nacional has applied daily forensic examinations of detainees as a theoretical guarantee for people held under incommunicado detention. These examinations are mainly carried out by Audiencia Nacional doctors. Nevertheless, in practice, the medical-forensic work of the Audiencia Nacional has been considered deficient and/or insufficient by international human rights experts (UN Committee against Torture; European Commission Committee for the Prevention of Torture –CPT–Amnesty International, etc.) and these organisations have made various suggestions towards improving their quality. Occasionally, examinations of detai-

nees have been carried out by forensic doctors from the Basque Country, and, to date, their work has not been questioned by international experts.

A group of Danish doctors, experts in torture prevention mechanisms, together with Basque doctors, carried out a joint assessment of the quality of the forensic medical reports at the Audiencia Nacional. The results of this assessment were published in the Journal of Forensic Science in 2002. As a continuation of that work, we presented a paper entitled "Preventive medical examination in police stations in Spain. A quality assessment" at the workshop on Medical Documentation of torture in detention centres at the "Preventing Torture in Places of Detention through Systems of Regular Visits - Monitoring, Documentation and Research" conference, organised in Copenhagen in 2005 by the RCT (Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims). This paper included an overview of the data on Audiencia Nacional forensic medical reports and put forward the following conclusions:

- The doctors were deficiently trained.
- The doctors did not follow a protocol or use a form to examine detainees.
- The doctors were not supervised.
- The information in the medical documents was biased.
- There was no external control of the quality of the doctors' work.
- The number of examinations carried out indicated that at times the workload was excessive if they were to carry out their work with guarantees.

In view of this, there was a recommendation that the doctors in charge of upholding the detainees' rights should be independent and impartial and should not be employed by the institution subject to control. In addition, advice included the need for a chief of medical services in detention centres, responsible for the quality of the work.

Bearing these deficiencies in mind, the Copenhagen Seminar set the following guidelines for action, which in our view should have been implemented:

- Deficiencies in medical documentation should have been identified by the superiors of the forensic doctors, through a control system such as the one used for the Journal of Forensic Science article.

- The quality of the doctors' work should be improved through training and supervision.

- The deficiencies detected in the documentation should have been discussed by the chief of medical services and the head of the institution.

- The head of the institution should have initiated an inquiry into the conduct

of the officers of the security forces and reinforced the checks and balances for the protection of detainees' rights.

-The minister should have been informed.

-An external institution, such as the national OPCAT subcommittee, should watch over the quality of the doctors' work and supervise the chief of medical services in detention centres.

In order to evaluate the current situation of medical-forensic documentation on examination of incommunicado detainees, we have begun work to compile new cases since the year 2000. Despite the fact that this work is still at an initial stage, our research regarding the medical-forensic examinations by the Audiencia Nacional suggests the following:

The necessary mechanisms to ensure the detainees' right to be seen by a doctor of their choice have not been put in place.

There is no standardised form for data collection and report-writing. Further, even the Protocol forensic doctors should use when examining detainees, following the Ministry of Justice Order of September 16, 1997, is not used. On this point, a statement made by one of the usual forensic doctors at the Audiencia Nacional, saying that they did not follow the Protocol for care of detained persons because "our superiors have not requested it" is more than significant. Therefore, effective measures to ensure the Protocol is used by forensic doctors at the Audiencia Nacional have not been implemented.

-The Ministry of Justice Order of September 16, 1997 has not been modified to make the forensic medical report include the data requested by the CPT.

-The number of reports stating that the detainee has refused examination is surprisingly high. This fact becomes all the more significant when bearing in mind that at times the very same detainees had indeed agreed to examination by a forensic doctor in the Basque Country.

In contrast with these deficiencies detected in the Audiencia Nacional reports, in many forensic-medical reports in the Basque Country various positive aspects were observed, such as:

-The use of a standardised protocol which, in addition to the information requested in the Ministry of Justice Order of September 16, 1997, at times included the date requested by the CPT.

-Better quality of the information included in the reports.

-A greater degree of detainee cooperation in examinations.

-The joint intervention of 2 forensic doctors.

However, the Administration has not recognised the right of detainees to be examined by a doctor of their own choice.

In view of all the above, our research suggests the following conclusions:

The deficiencies detected in Audiencia Nacional forensic medical examinations have not been solved.

The recommendations made by international experts, including the CPT and the UN, have not been implemented.

There are differences between the work of forensic doctors at the Audiencia Nacional and those in the Basque Country, although in the latter case the right of detainees to be seen by a doctor of their own choice should be upheld.

There is a need for control over controllers at various levels of responsibility. The government has co-responsibility in this respect, which can be remediated by introducing a central control mechanism for management and doctors and by the implementation of clear guidelines regarding those with responsibility for individual activities.

The intervention of independent doctors cooperating with NGOs is, unfortunately, necessary in order to control safeguards for detainees' rights, when these detainees are in danger of being tortured.

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# INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS INSIST ON THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS

**D**URING THE YEAR, A NUMBER OF STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA IN TERMS OF THE POSITION OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS REGARDING THE SPANISH STATE AND THE ISSUE OF TORTURE. These moves are impressive because of the forcefulness with which they are being repeated, as the mentions criticisms and recommendations are mostly not new.

The fact that international organisations see incommunicado detention as the main obstacle to overcome is clear. Thus, the UN Human Rights Commission, in resolution 2003/32 stated that “prolonged incommunicado detention can facilitate the use of torture and can, in itself, be a form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or even, of torture”. In a report published in 2005, Human Rights Watch stated that “there is significant consensus among United Nations human rights bodies that it can give rise to serious human rights violations and should be prohibited”. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) declared that “five days of incommunicado detention may be incompatible with the obligations of Spain under international law”

While these steadfast positions were expressed, the Zapatero government stated it had a “0 tolerance” policy on torture. Within that image campaign, the Spanish authorities were quick to make declarations in various international spheres and to sign new commitments, in order to demonstrate a new attitude, and at the end of the day, to disguise their responsi-

bility in this issue. For instance, Human Rights Watch, after remembering that “The CPT has repeatedly recommended that incommunicado detainees have access to a lawyer from the outset of their detention” regretted the fact that “It is the view of Attorney General Conde-Pumpido that incommunicado status «does not prevent those it affects from enjoying the right to defense, which continues to be offered by a professional of the Bar Association, but rather [from enjoying] the assistance of a lawyer especially designated, in many cases, by the very criminal association to which he belongs»” This statement is gratuitous because if the State Prosecutor General had knowledge of a lawyer who is involved with ETA as part of his or her work, he could use all the legal mechanisms at his disposal in order to put an end to the situation. On the contrary, in recent years, not a single element has been found that could rationally link a lawyer working in legal assistance to ETA’s activity. However, the excuse used by Conde-Pumpido in this case seems to serve as a pretext to justify maintaining the incommunicado detention regime, which favours his political interests while it damages human rights.

In this respect, at the same time as the Spanish government ratified the United Nations Facultative Protocol against torture, it did not move a finger on the design of legislation that affords the security forces powers enabling them to carry out the most brutal interrogation sessions.

During 2005 reproof by international organisations also increased as refers to the lack of activity of the courts when it comes to persecuting torture: delays, lack of investigation, non-existence of disciplinary proceedings, and even, refusal to reinstate damages to victims were all part of the reports published by international observers.

In addition, during last year recommendations directed at the French government were published. These refer to the treatment of Basque citizens arrested under the charge of membership of an “association or wrongdoers”.

The following is a summary of the most relevant mentions we have been able to compile.

#### 1. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE ISSUE OF TORTURE

The incoming UN Rapporteur on the Question of Torture, Mr. Manfred

Nowak, from Austria, presented report E/CN.4/2005/62/Add.1 to the UN Human Rights Commission during its 61st Session Period in Geneva, including 17 cases of torture of Basque citizens –four of which were detected for the first time in the French state- and restating the recommendations previously made to the Spanish state, towards eradicating torture. In his speech, he took on the report written by his predecessor, Mr. Theo Van Boven, and highlighted his “professionalism and capacity for work” adding that he will continue in his steps. The said report includes 13 cases of Basque citizens tortured during 2002 and 2003 by the various Spanish security forces. The Rapporteur issued urgent calls to the Spanish state regarding the circumstances of the arrests of Mikel Aiensa Laborda, Jon Otegi Eraso, Harkaitz Melchor Hoces, who were arrested by the Guardia Civil, Aingeru Cardaño Reoyo arrested by the Ertzaintza, Jose Miguel Etxeandia Meabe handed over to the Guardia Civil by the Mexican authorities, Joseba and Eneko Compains Silva, Jordi Purtí Planell and Garikoitz Arruarte Santacruz arrested by the Policia Nacional. In addition, the Rapporteur, together with the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, notified the Spanish government of the causes and consequences of the arrest of Aiala Marike Arbeo Santacruz arrested by the Policia Nacional, and of the arrests by the Ertzaintza of Naiara Mallabia Sanchez, Ana Lopez Barrio and her partner Roberto Saiz Olmos. In all cases the report includes a detailed account of the circumstances of the arrests and the torture allegations made by the detainees, which include methods such as blows, use of a plastic bag to cause suffocation, exhausting physical exercises and postures, all kinds of threats, etc. The Rapporteur also included the response issued by the Spanish government, which repeatedly and stereotypically stated it had no knowledge of the complaints in the referred cases in order to justify the lack of any investigations or inquiries deriving in criminal or disciplinary proceedings. Of course, both the TAT and the Basque Observatory for Human Rights, Behatokia, the Rapporteur’s sources in these matters, can irrefutably bear witness to the existence of these claims. In other cases, the Government stated that, although a claim has been made, “the Administration did not find the smallest evidence of wrongful behaviour by the public officials who took part in the arrest and custody of the claimant and the alleged events were not proven during the criminal proceedings”. In some cases, the Spanish aut-

horities did not even issue a reply.

In report E/CN.4/2005/62, the Rapporteur followed up the ten recommendations issued following a visit in October 2003 - E/CN.4/2004/56/Add.2, par. 64-73- based on the information sent on November 16, 2004, by non-governmental sources including those who have compiled this annual report. The Government replied via a letter dated 25 November, 2004, reiterating its line of minimising its own responsibility in the use of torture and justifying the appropriateness of the antiterrorist legislation that provides the setting for torture.

Finally, even the Rapporteur for Freedom of Speech, Mr. Ameyi Ligabo, referred to the issue of torture in report E/CN.4/2005/64/Add.1. The report includes an urgent communication due to the "operation of 20 February, 2003, when the Guardia Civil, empowered by an Audiencia Nacional judge, proceeded to provisionally close down the Basque daily newspaper Euskaldunon Egunkaria and to arrest ten people related to the newspaper: Iñigo Uria, Martxelo Otamendi, Juan Mari Torrealdai, Pello Zubiria, Luis Goia, Fermin Lazkano, Inma Gomila, Xabier Alegria, Xabier Oleaga and Txema Auzmendi". He added that, "all the detainees were held incommunicado by virtue of the antiterrorist legislation and taken to the Audiencia Nacional in Madrid". The Rapporteur wrote "the former editor of the newspaper, Martxelo Otamendi, placed a complaint in June 2003 for torture and ill treatment as a consequence of his arrest and incommunicado detention following the closure of the paper". In his observations "this Rapporteur regrets not having received a reply [from the Spanish government] upon finalising the report".

## 2. THE CAT REJECTED PARDONS FOR THE OFFICIALS WHO TORTURED KEPA URRA

On 03/06/05 decision CAT/C/34/D/212/2002 by the UN Committee Against Torture was published. It admitted the individual claim made by Kepa Urrea against the Pardon for the three guardia civil convicted of having tortured him in 1992. The claim, presented by lawyer and Behatokia member Didier Rouget, invoked Articles 2, 4 and 14 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, mainly regarding the responsibility of the state to punish crimes of torture with adequate sentences and the guarantee of

reparation, compensation and rehabilitation for the victim.

The resolution by the high UN body includes Mr. Urra's account of the events: "the officers took him to a piece of open ground where they subjected him to severe abuse. He was stripped, handcuffed, dragged along the ground and beaten. He states that after six hours of interrogation, he had to be taken to hospital because his pulse rate was very high, he could not speak, he was exhausted and unconscious, and was bleeding from his mouth and nose. The hospital doctors ascertained that he had injuries to his head, face, eyelids, nose, back, stomach, hip, arms and legs. He also had a neck injury which left him unable to move". Following Urra's complaint, in 1997 the Bizkaia Court convicted three guardia civil of a crime of torture and sentenced them to four years, two months and one day in jail and six days and one day disqualification from office plus a suspension from duty during their time in jail. The decision was appealed by the State Prosecution before the Spanish Supreme Court, which reduced the jail sentences to one year. On 16 July, 1999, the Cabinet pardoned all three officials. The CAT concluded "that the absence of appropriate punishment is incompatible with the duty to prevent acts of torture" and that "the imposition of lighter penalties and the granting of pardons to the civil guards are incompatible with the duty to impose appropriate punishment. The Committee further notes that the civil guards were not subject to disciplinary proceedings while criminal proceedings were in progress, though the seriousness of the charges against them merited a disciplinary investigation". It added that "the duty to guarantee compensation for the victim of an act of torture" requires, among other measures "measures to guarantee the non-repetition of the violations". We must remember that whilst the Committee demanded the adoption of measures in this specific case within 90 days, its decisions are not binding. This means that the Spanish state has no contractual obligation to react to this decision. Lack of action was precisely the Spanish response to this decision by the CAT; indeed, the said period of 90 days expired some time ago and no measures were implemented.

Further, in another example of the lack of will to carry out investigation and persecution of torture, during the weeks following the CAT decision, on 03/06/05, Madrid Investigation Court N°25 shelved the complaint made by Unai Romano, and shortly after, the complaint made by Amaia

Urizar.

Yet again, the will of the authorities in this issue, beyond nice words, alleged zero tolerance and signature of protocols, has been called into question before the international community.

### 3. COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In November 2005, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles, published a report on a previous visit to the Spanish state. In the said report, which at times seems self-contradictory and includes some factual and observation mistakes, the European expert issued several criticisms –in addition to his recommendations- with a certain level of importance. Perhaps the ideological profile of Mr. Gil-Robles and the line he maintained in previous visits to the Spanish state, when he had never noticed the matters he now states he has seen, grant even more weight to his criticism.

Thus, regarding the activity of the courts and repression of the crime of torture, he criticised the fact that “complaints were not always systematically and effectively investigated”. Mentioning non-governmental sources, he highlighted the fact that “several of the NGOs (...) expressed concern at an alleged increase in cases of torture and ill-treatment inflicted by members of the national law enforcement agencies” according to them “fear of reporting such acts, the material difficulty of doing so or obtaining legal assistance, and delays in the investigations all result in many cases of such abuse going unpunished. According to some NGOs, only a small percentage of cases of torture or ill-treatment are reported and even fewer are punished”. The Commissioner referred to Amnesty International, according to which, occurrence of torture or ill treatment was proven in 95 out of 450 court decisions between 1980 and 2004. He nevertheless acknowledged the fact that “none of the concerned detainees were held incommunicado”. As to procedures followed by the Ertzaintza since 2002 “to avoid cases of ill-treatment and false allegations thereof” including “permanent video surveillance of the premises where detainees are kept, except in the cells, lavatories and showers. Police questioning sessions are not video-recorded, however,” this being the time when maximum police violence would occur, which is argued as a measure “in order to protect the identity of the police officers fighting terrorism and organised crime”

Mr. Gil-Robles thus concluded that “The arrangements for compensation of torture victims are far from satisfactory. This is an area where there are many shortcomings, even in the legislation, giving rise to much criticism of the authorities. The excessive length of proceedings, the short time limits for the prescription of torture offences mentioned earlier, the difficulties in identifying the people responsible, the small sums awarded in compensation and the lack of proper state aid for victims are all matters that need to be reviewed and improved, and to which corresponding attention should be given when developing solutions to eradicate torture and ill-treatment”

He also acknowledged the fact that “One of the main criticisms voiced against the Spanish authorities concerns the possibility, under the Law on Criminal Procedure (LECr), of ordering a detainee to be held incommunicado for a period of time which certain international and non-governmental organisations consider excessively long. (...)It is important, however, that the detainee should be able to speak to his or her lawyer at least once in private or to freely inform the lawyer of any ill-treatment suffered.”

Alvaro Gil-Robles concluded that it would be necessary to “review the current regime of incommunicado detention so as to allow the detainee to meet his or her counsel in private, at least once”

#### 4. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The 2005 Amnesty International report, whilst mainly focusing on the issue of torture of immigrants and with a racial component, made two references regarding the scope of this report. Firstly, it highlighted the reception of many “allegations of torture and ill-treatment by persons held incommunicado”.

AI brought to memory and supported the report by the Special Rapporteur on the Question of Torture, which stated “the silence around the issue and the rejection of torture complaints by authorities, without having investigated them, has made the necessary supervision of protection and guarantees particularly difficult”. The Rapporteur concluded that “the internal coherence of the information received” and the precision of the factual details provided regarding several claims suggest these “cannot be considered mere fantasy”. On this point, Amnesty International maintained that “the former government, which energetically dismissed the conclu-

sions of the report, continued to refuse to introduce safeguards for incommunicado detainees and, late in the year, the new government had not taken any measures to put the Rapporteur's recommendations in place".

When explaining the atmosphere created in the wake of the 11 March attacks in Madrid and the reaction following the attacks, the human rights organisation also mentioned the specific case of "Angel Berroeta Legaz, who died in his bakery in Pamplona (Navarra) as a result of the shots issued by an off-duty Policía Nacional officer, after the former had held a heated argument with the latter's wife. Apparently, the baker had refused to hang up a poster blaming ETA as the perpetrator of the Madrid attacks. The officer and his son were arrested and legal and police inquiries into the death were initiated"

In addition, AI mentioned how its Secretary General, Irene Khan, headed a delegation in 2004, which visited Madrid, Barcelona and Vitoria. During that visit, a meeting with the Minister for Justice, Fernando López Aguilar, took place. At the end of this meeting, he publicly stated that "torture complaints are false in 100% of the cases" which seriously clashed with AI's perception of the state of things.

## 5. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

As this NGO states in its investigations, reference HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH VOL. 17 N° 1(D) "This report examines aspects of Spain's anti-terrorism regime that give rise to violations of Spain's obligations under international human rights law. It makes concrete recommendations to the government of Spain on ways to bring its counter-terrorism measures into conformity with international standards".

While the report focuses on treatment of detainees accused of international terrorism, HRW acknowledges that they were placed under "Spain's strict antiterrorism measures, shaped by years of grappling with ETA violence (...) Under these measures, spelled out in Spain's Code of Criminal Procedure, detainees suspected of membership in an armed group may be held in incommunicado detention for up to thirteen days and may be held in pre-trial detention for up to four years". It continued to denounce the fact that "During incommunicado detention, detainees are held in isolation and do not have the right to counsel from the outset of detention or to a lawyer of their own choosing. They are assigned a legal aid attorney,

who must be present at all interrogations and statements before a judge, but with whom they may not consult in private, either before or after these events. The legal aid attorney is unable to address the detainee directly, either to ask questions or provide legal advice. Under these restrictions, the role of the defense attorney is reduced to that of a silent witness. The law and practice of incommunicado detention in Spain renders the right of detainees to file a writ of habeas corpus challenging the lawfulness of their detention virtually meaningless.

Although incommunicado detainees are technically under judicial supervision, in practice the competent judge does not see the detainee until he or she has spent three, or even five, days in police custody. Detainees are examined regularly by court-appointed forensic doctors, an important safeguard against torture, but not all reports of ill treatment are duly investigated. There is no access to an examination by a doctor of the detainee's choice."

As to another aspect of the legal proceedings, HRW broadened the scope of their recommendations: "The right of terrorist suspects to an effective defense, already undermined by the limitations on access to counsel during the incommunicado period, is further impaired by the use of secret legal proceedings. Judges may – and often do – impose secrecy, or *secreto de sumario*, on the investigation and judicial proceedings, either in whole or in part. Under *secreto de sumario*, defense attorneys do not have access to critical information regarding the charges against their clients or the evidence against them, including the full grounds for remand to pre-trial detention". This ONG continued by reporting that "Since 1989, Spain has implemented a policy of dispersing ETA inmates, both those in pre-trial detention as well as those serving sentences, all over the national territory. Human rights organizations and ETA itself have argued that this measure is an additional punishment. In his February 2004 report on Spain, Special Rapporteur on Torture Theo van Boven said dispersal of detainees "apparently has no grounding in law and is applied arbitrarily." Therefore, HRW recommends that Basque prisoners "should be detained as close to their usual place of residence and their families as possible".

## 6. THE FRENCH STATE AND TORTURE

As we mentioned at the beginning of this section, last year at least two

international organisations mentioned the situation in the French state. In report E/CN.4/2005/62/Add.1, the UN Rapporteur on the Question of Torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, specifically referred to cases of torture of Basque citizens in the French state. The citizens mentioned were Lander Fernandez Harrinda, Garazi Aldana, Ibon Fernandez Iradi and Patxi Abad Urkijo. These accounts of torture in the custody of DNAT agents include blows all over the body, pulling of hair, sensory deprivation by covering the detainee's head with a hood, threats, insults... In addition, Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, described French detention centres as "repulsive", and compared them to the state of jails in Moldavia. He described the detention centre in the basement of the Palace of justice in Paris as "horrifying", in an interview given to the daily Libération.

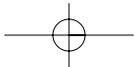
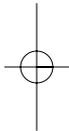
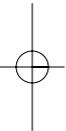
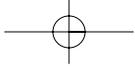
The interview dealt with a visit the Commissioner made to the French state, where he visited several prisons and detention centres, and based on which he will issue a series of recommendations for the French authorities. The NGO International Prisons Observatory (OIP) had previously criticised the state of prisons in the French state, which amounts to cruel and degrading treatment of prisoners.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, although some changes have been proposed, such as the proposal by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights to make the crime of torture non-prescriptible, so that torturers cannot take advantage of the passage of time and to prevent impunity, or other proposals regarding deficiencies in the use of CCTV or in the work of the courts on the issue of torture, recommendations by international organisations and institutions highlight and insist on similar concerns, year after year. Over and above image campaigns, incoherent apologies, institutional declarations and mechanical signing of protocols, which are empty of any practical instruments, the Spanish state keeps stumbling on the same rock: maintaining the incommunicado detention regime.

The assessment by TAT and Behatokia of the insistent international denunciations of the Spanish state (and now the French state) on the question of torture is well known. The potential of all these recommendations is that they again demonstrate the fact that the international community

is observant; that the international community has demanded the implementation of measures to prevent torture on innumerable occasions, particularly the derogation of incommunicado detention. Meanwhile, the response from the authorities continues to be evasive ■



# THE IMPACT OF TORTURE ON THE VICTIMS FAMILIES: Therapeutic value of affection and resilience

Dr. Jorge Barudy Labrin

## INTRODUCTION

The content of this article reflects part of our therapeutic experience of nearly three decades at the EXIL Centre in Brussels and nearly 6 years at the EXIL Centre in Barcelona. The EXIL Centre – Belgium was created in 1976 by Chilean healthcare professionals who were in exile in that country. Other Latin-American professionals as well as Belgian professionals joined the project, enabling it to become a reality. The Latin-American professionals happened also to be survivors of the political repression and torture carried out by the military dictatorships that devastated South America in the 1970s. The EXIL – Spain Centre was created as an office of the Belgian project, in the year 2000, in Barcelona.

The professional teams of EXIL centres are made up of family doctors, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, care workers and administration staff. The team provides medical, psychological and social care through a community and intercultural practice, based on a systemic understanding of the suffering of torture victims and their families. One of the basic pillars of our programmes is to see our therapeutic intervention as support for the natural resistance and healing resources of affected individuals, families and communities. The role of the team is to aid therapeutic prevention and reparation programmes, providing resources and professional competency in the field of medicine psychotherapy and social work.

This article is an attempt at describing what we have learnt from therapeutic work with families of torture victims. Through this work we have learnt that therapy directed at the consequences of torture is possible when victims and their families are offered integral therapeutic care that allows them to alleviate the pain and stress of their experience. Through the various aspects of care, we try to get tortured people and their families to recognise themselves as victims of one of the most extreme forms of human violence: Torture.

At the same time we attempt to ensure they acknowledge themselves as being survivors thanks to their own, personal, cultural and social resources. The attention we have provided thousands of people, victims of this violence, allows us to verify the fact that throughout the entire process of torture the victims struggle to resist their torturers, to stay alive, but above all, not to hand over their identity to their torturers and not to lose their dignity as human beings.

Therefore, our therapeutic intervention is aimed at allowing the victims to “resiliate” their experiences as victims of torture; that is to say, to allow them to overcome their wound with the support of their families and social networks in order to constructively integrate these experiences, feel more dignified for having resisted violence and attempt to rebuild a personal, family and social project of wellbeing, solidarity and happiness.

#### THE IMPACT OF TORTURE ON THE FAMILY

Our encounters with torture victims and their relatives, people put to the test by this human barbarism, are the main source of our knowledge. In our programmes, both in Spain and in Belgium, we have attended victims and families from various regions in the world who have been tortured at different historical moments in their own countries. For instance, we have learnt of the pain suffered by hundreds of South American exiles, victims of the systematic and massive use of torture during the South American dictatorships and currently in countries such as Colombia. We have also aided victims from Chechnya, Morocco, Iran, from various parts of the former Yugoslavia and USSR, as well as people from various African countries with conflicts. We have also listened to the suffering of the children of members of various European resistances who were tortured by the Nazis during World War II and direct victims, relatives and children of people tortured

during Franco's dictatorship in Spain. To our surprise and sorrow, we have learnt of the suffering of victims from Catalonia and the Basque Country and their relatives, people who were recently tortured in Spain.

Through our professional work as therapists for these torture victims we have found that the highly traumatic nature of these experiences does not only affect the victims, but also, to varying degrees, the other members of their families and often other people in their environment. In certain extreme cases a break of the victims' family, community and social network occurs, causing the disappearance of the natural cure provided by these links, relationships of affection and membership of a family, which are necessary in order to alleviate the pains and elaborate traumatism. In the case of offspring, the traumatic wounds of adults can become serious obstacles for the exercise of parenthood; especially when they are accompanied by the disappearance of the normal family framework and a disorganisation of the fabric of the community.

The torture victim's family group is affected from the moment one of the members is arrested.

The suffering and damage caused in families is part of the intentional destruction plan for all those whom the security forces consider to be a part of the support network of the detainees. Teams of torturers also attempt to punish, terrify and neutralise any attempt by the family to respond and to defend the detained person.

In this situation, family members face an unsolvable paradox, on the one hand they know, because of the accounts of other victims, that their detained relative will be interrogated and tortured, but on the other hand, those responsible for the arrest will do everything necessary to cover up and deny their practices. Even any claim by the victims or their relatives will be disregarded, saying that these are part of the strategy to smear the law and order forces. Beyond the real difficulties the detention involves, this situation generates a feeling of fear, vital threat and confusion. If this happens to them for the first time, or they do not have information about what may happen, the family can suffer a state of eradication or psychological shock, due to the unexpectedness of the situation. If they lack the necessary elements to develop an adequate judgement of what has happened, there is a danger that family members and particularly children become entrapped within fantasies of annihilation and destruction. The difficulties adults find

to explain what is happening, in fair and simple words, to the children in the family amplifies the danger that children will be trapped in monstrous representations of what has happened and what will happen.

It is possible to distinguish three different situations in which the family system can be affected by torture:

1. - One of its members is arrested and tortured
2. - Two or more members of one family are arrested and tortured, whether together or separately in the detention centre.
3. - As a consequence of the two above situations there is a transmission of suffering to part of or all the relatives who were not arrested.

#### ARREST AND TORTURE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

When a person is arrested, in addition to the suffering due to imprisonment, incommunicado detention and torture, there is a fear that something similar may happen to members of his or her family. This is not only a product of the victim's imagination, it is also part of the strategies of the torture systems, to convince the victims that they (the torturers) also have the power or the necessary information to arrest and interrogate any member of their families. Family links of affection are manipulated in order to break the victims and induce them to give information and/or to admit the charges against them

Family members, meanwhile, are in a crisis due to the disruption of their daily routine and the inrush of concern and increasing worry about the situation of the detained relative. When the arrest is carried out by security forces in democratic countries, which use torture but do not acknowledge it, the relatives know that the detainee will be tortured in a public building, usually police premises, during the period incommunicado detention lasts according to law. Family members will stop carrying out their usual activities to devote a large part of their time to prevent this from taking place. Relatives often appeal to magistrates or public officials from the competent judiciary bodies, which in most cases acknowledge the arrest but declare themselves powerless, or behave evasively or bureaucratically in terms of taking measures to ensure protection for the detainees. Relatives' experiences in such cases are full of feelings of powerlessness and neglect, which in turn enhance the emotional climate of anguish and family worry. This may encourage later development of stress disorders, anxiety or

depressive disorders in any of the family members, as part of what we call traumatic contamination.

These situations are even more extreme in dictatorial governments. In such cases, people are arrested by secret agents and taken to clandestine detention premises where they are tortured for an indefinite period in a situation of total defencelessness. In these circumstances, courts are often accomplices of the dictatorships, magistrates do not take on appeals and officials deny the arrests and threaten relatives with reprisals. In such a context, the emotional climate for families is flooded with anguish, fear and helplessness, coupled to images of the torment the detained relative may be suffering.

Due to its abrupt and unexpected nature, the situation requires an urgent explanation which will make sense of it. There is an urgent need to think, but thinking will bring on imagining what the detainee may be suffering; this is why thoughts quickly become waking nightmares. This creates the context for traumatic stress disorders to appear in some relatives right from the beginning; these include nightmares, recurrent and invasive thoughts related to the detention and to horrifying images of what the victim may be going through. Far from being pathological, this is a normal reaction following an aggression that implies a real threat to one of the members of the family. We find that in the face of the possibility of horror, relatives make an effort not to think while at the same time their thoughts are invaded by monstrous images. Unfortunately, these images sometimes fall short of what the torturers are capable to do to their victims. Insomnia, attempts to control one's emotions, feelings of absolute powerlessness coupled to feelings of guilt for not having helped one's relative efficiently or sufficiently are all part of the experiences suffered by relatives. These are part of the normal and coherent reaction to the abnormality of the situation. The more important the family link is, the greater the suffering will be; it is greater for parents, children, partners, brothers and sisters...

The situation can become unsustainable and may lead to extremes, even to immolation of a family member in order to save the detained relative.

This happened in Chile during Pinochet's dictatorship. Sebastian Acevedo was the father of two sons who had been arrested by secret agents of the dictatorship in the south of the country and taken to secret torture centre. This happened during one of the most sinister periods of the dictatorship, detentions were often followed by disappearance, the detainees having been sub-

jected to unthinkable torture methods. Sebastian Acevedo feared for his sons, reasonably, and after unsuccessfully attempting everything for Chilean courts to take action, he made the decision to sacrifice himself. He set himself on fire in the main square of the city where his sons had been arrested. He poured kerosene on himself and set himself alight; he died as a result of his injuries, but he succeeded in getting his sons recognised as political prisoners and stopping the torturers from disappearing them. From that moment, the example of Sebastian Acevedo became a symbol for the struggle against torture in Chile. A few weeks after his sacrifice, the Sebastian Acevedo Movement against torture was created. It played a valiant and efficient role in non-violent resistance against torture and contributed to bring down the military dictatorship with its denunciation of torture.

A different moment to the one described is when the relatives meet again, which often happens in a jail or prison. Experiences can be ambivalent or contradictory; on the one hand, the detainee, who has been tortured, humiliated, hurt in his or her self-esteem, who needs support from relatives but does not want to contaminate them with the pain and wishes to protect them from the horror suffered. On the other hand, the relatives, who want to help, to give support, but feel powerless and guilty for not having been able to prevent what happened, do not know how to help.

In some situations, suffering is contaminated through direct and indirect reproach by the relatives towards the detainee for having got into trouble, or involved in a struggle that does not make sense to the family. The greater the relatives' disagreement with the social or political commitment of the victim, the worse the family's suffering will be in these encounters.

In other cases, families can offer compassion, but prisoners need to be taken in and reinforced in their beliefs, for which they were tortured; but the latter may not know how or not dare to ask for this. There may be situations where everyone's suffering is amplified. The tortured person tries to portray him or herself as being strong, even denying torment, in order not to cause his or her family worry. This stance intensifies the detainee's suffering, because he or she has no one with whom to share the suffering.

Relatives may be frustrated in their attempts to help; they may even see the detainee's reaction as a rejection of the affection and support they wish to offer, which may worsen their feelings of guilt and powerlessness, by interpreting the victim's reaction as a reproach.

Thus, a vicious circle may appear, causing a situation whereby, powerlessness, frustration, isolation, confusion and guilt are all augmented. All this may bring on family conflict, or worsen pre-existing ones. From the outside, it may seem that the problem is the result of a family dysfunction, when it is really part of a coherent response to a severe aggression that affects the whole of the family nucleus.

Therefore, the torturers' violence can contaminate family experiences and the most sensitive members may portray depressive processes, as a product of the enormous emotional stress caused by an extreme real situation. Other family members, in general, may show various reactions: males may present emotional blockage, accompanied with explosive reactions or rage and aggressiveness.

If emotional tension and stress are high intensity and sustained over a long time, it may be that the personal, family and social resources aimed at regulating them run out. In such a case, the family may reach an imbalance, and an increase of arguments, insomnia, depressive reactions, anxiety crises, psycho-somatic disorders can appear and, in the most serious cases, intra-family violence and a disintegration of the family fabric may occur. These consequences are all increased when the torture victims' family has to live in exile (Barudy J.)

All the above leads us to defend the idea that therapeutic accompaniment is fundamental. This must be as early as possible and involve all the family members, in order to help them to "externalise" the causes of the family conflicts, meaning that all family members realise that the main cause is repression and torture of one of its members and that what they are going through is part of the normal reactions following a family crisis.

#### DETENTION AND TORTURE OF TWO OR MORE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Our practice has allowed us to hear testimonials whereby several members of one family have been arrested and tortured simultaneously, such as a couple, parents and children, brothers or sisters. The most dramatic situations, due to their violence and cowardice, were torture of children in front of their parents, in order to break the latter and obtain confessions or cooperation with the torturers. An example of this barbarism happened during Pinochet's dictatorship, when over 200 children were tortured by the

Chilean military. Unfortunately, to date none of the democratically elected Chilean governments have been brave enough to acknowledge this crime and take action against those responsible. If it is difficult to obtain punishment for torturers of adults, it seems even more difficult to achieve when the victims are children.

Another case is that of the hundreds of children who were used to manipulate their parents, who were arrested, tortured and later disappeared during the military dictatorships in Argentina. Many of these children were stolen from their parents' families and handed over to the families of members of the military.

Capturing and torturing several members of one family has a certain logic within the torture system. This system always seeks the most vulnerable aspects of its victims, so as to inflict the most profound humiliation and create a situation with no way out, in other words, any of the choices the victim makes will be destructive.

Torturing two or more members of one family seeks to manipulate family loyalty based on the emotional and affection links that bring family members together. The consequences of these experiences can be very serious, not only for those involved, but also for their family relationships. Torture, being a profoundly humiliating and destructive experience, leads those who suffered it to shut themselves in. This is worsened when one has been tortured in the presence of or together with a loved one; deep feelings of powerlessness and guilt are added to the shame.

This explains the difficulties victims find to develop an experience of shared suffering and feel entitled to receive support from other family members.

Instead of this experience, a great lack of communication may set in as a result of self-imposed silence or of the need to keep what happened secret. These defensive reactions, seeking to protect oneself and the family, may become terribly destructive and, upon contaminating the group, can even lead to disintegration of the group if they do not request or receive the necessary and legitimate therapeutic support.

#### POST-TRAUMATIC CONTAMINATION OF THE FAMILY GROUP

The families of torture victims we have accompanied have told us about their pains and conflicts, but also about the resources that have allowed them to survive and continue producing family solidarity and affection.

These are men, women and children who have survived almost unthinkable experiences of horror. Their survivor testimonials are horrifying accounts of an encounter with the deadly experience of torture, but they are also accounts of heroic resistance, which has allowed them to continue alive without losing human qualities.

The suffering and damage experienced are the result of aggressions that have caused unimaginable pain and intense-long-lasting stress.

We are not only referring to physical pain, but also and especially, the mental pain of humiliation and psychological manipulation. This pain is suffered by the victim as a consequence of a set of severe traumas and experienced by the family via contamination. The traumatic content on a psychological level has to do with the fact that these were produced by deliberate aggression by other human beings, who have used their power to make the person suffer and damage the person and his or her family links. The intensity, the content and the length over time of the experiences also explain this high traumatic content.

On the other hand, torture is also a source of stress for the victims and their families, which often overwhelms the natural resources people have to control stress. Stress, thus experienced, is interiorised as a kind of traumatic memory, which explains what is known as: post-traumatic stress disorder.

People may show this kind of disorder when they have been victims of severe aggression or experienced, witnessed or listened to terrible events related to death or threats against the safety of their loved ones. Their response was fear, despair or horror. This definition explains the suffering and damage that members of a family may experience as a result of knowing about or hearing the torture account of one of their relatives.

Intense and long-lasting pain and stress from torture are part of what we call “traumatic family processes” or “the trauma-race of families” (Barudy et al 2004)

We are talking about traumatic family processes every time one of its members is confronted with painful and stressful exogenous aggression produced by other human beings. These events can weaken or exhaust the natural resources people and families have for control of pain and stress. In addition, because of its content, duration and repetition, it exhausts people's or families' cognitive processes for understanding what is happening

and elaborating it; in other words, to make sense of the events. These traumatic processes place families before a double challenge: alleviating the pain from the wounds and making sense of those experiences. We may highlight the fact that sometimes it is extremely difficult to find a meaning for such traumatic experiences as torture, especially in extreme cases; for instance, witnessing torture of family members or being raped, or being made to torture another person, who may be a loved one.

The nucleus of the traumatic process in families is the wound and the breach: a wound on the personal physical and mental structure of a person and the breach of family, community and social ties.

The causes of the fragilisation of families who are victims of torture then takes place on different levels, which frequently accumulate:

-The impact of the violent events, traumatic for the body and the psyche of the tortured family members. If they are parents, their abilities to take on the functions and roles that guarantee correct treatment of children may be affected. This happens especially when these parents do not find adequate and efficient therapeutic support in their environment. Torture of parents can damage children's capacities and resources to continue developing and growing in a healthy manner. The guilt the parents experience may amplify this.

-Traumatic impact on family, community and social ties and links; particularly disintegration of families, with the loss of specific and symbolic support which can calm the pain of the wounds and elaborate the suffering of torture, making sense of the experience.

-The challenge posed by the need to survive in an often unknown and increasingly hostile context, such as the case of torture victims' families who go into exile or victims who have to spend long periods of time far from their families, in jail, following a conviction. The most dramatic and scandalous case is that of the prisoners held in Guantanamo, who are subjected to torture and degrading treatment in broad daylight and with a scandalous level of impunity.

## CONCLUSION

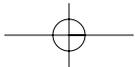
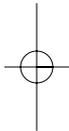
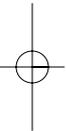
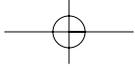
In this article, we have attempted to propose elements to help relatives of a tortured person to understand the various aggressions that affect the whole family and the reactions that occur most frequently.

As a final conclusion, we would like to insist on the fact that, while it is true that torture is a form of violence that causes suffering and damage, as with other forms of violence, it does not have absolute power to destroy a person or his or her family network. The intensity of damage depends on the resources put into effect by people and their family and social networks in order to implement mutual support and rebuild their identities. It is also important to place their experiences at the service of denunciation and the search for justice, so that those directly responsible and the instigators and accomplices of this violence do not enjoy impunity.

It is also necessary to recognise that, during torture, victims have done everything possible to resist, but that afterwards they have the right to receive help in order to repair the trauma suffered and to resiliate their experiences.

For this to be possible, it is necessary to offer welcoming therapeutic and affective environments wherein the people who were tortured and their families can share their experiences, doubts and memories in an atmosphere where they feel respect, authenticity, solidarity and empathy from those who wish to help them. But it is also essential that the whole of society too recognises the existence of this violence and contributes, through its institutions, to repair the individual, family and social damage suffered by victims, as well as to punish those materially and intellectually responsible for the crime.

Although it is often difficult to obtain justice from judicial authorities, there is at least the right to bear witness to and denounce what happened, to obtain recognition from other people who were also victims and from the braver and more decent sections of civil society ■



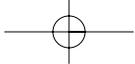
# COMPLAINTS

IT WAS A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO, WHILE I WAS LISTENING TO THE NEWS ON THE RADIO, AS I DID EVERY DAY. I HEARD A PIECE OF NEWS OF THE KIND WE NEVER WANT TO HAVE TO HEAR. My friend “Joxe txiki” had been arrested in Madrid. Rage and fear took over me. I knew what people in that situation go through, the suffering. Hours and days passed, and I could not keep Joxe out of my mind; smiling, jovial, silent, prudent Joxe, and especially, Joxe, the good friend... I knew his nature would be unable to overcome the situation.

But more news arrived, again, through the small radio, and unfortunately the news went beyond my worst fears. Torture unveiled its most sinister face. Joxe had died; they had killed him. As we later heard from those who were with him, when he was dying, his last words were “it’s been very tough”; “I’m too big a burden for you”. They flooded his lungs with water, they covered his body with blows and wounds, they burnt him everywhere and, the marks we saw in those photographs that somebody left in a post-box!

Who didn’t remember the song we used to sing? This time, it was Joxe’s turn to be “Itziarren semea”, Itziar’s son. We who knew him knew well that he had paid with his life for remaining silent and keeping his dignity. Even when they turned his smile off, we kept who he was and what he fought for in our hearts. This is why they never erased his dignity.

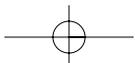
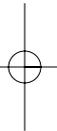
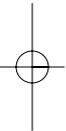
25 years have passed since our hearts were broken on that fateful day and, since then, many activists have suffered every kind of torture in detention



centres in the Basque Country and in the French and Spanish states. We unfortunately have more examples, like Mikel Zabalza, Gurutze Iantzi, Xabier Kalparsoro... In these cases, the result of torture and violence was death, but we still continue to receive new torture complaints. We know how the members of the various security forces behave, how they get no punishment.

Our commitment is, has to be, to end every form of torture once and for all. This will be the best tribute we can offer to all the comrades who have filled police stations with their blood and tears.

Every year, the TAT publishes this book for society to have access to and knowledge of the torture complaints received during the year. We would like to dedicate this humble report to all those who have suffered torture during these last 25 years ■



# GLOSSARY

The aim of this short glossary is to clarify possible doubts readers from outside of the Basque Country may have, regarding terms, phrases and names that appear in the torture testimonials in this 2005 report. We hope these brief explanations may aid understanding of the said testimonials.

**Audiencia Nacional.** Spanish central anti-terrorist courts. Created in 1977 to substitute the TOP (Public Order Tribunal) which was the institution that dealt with political crime under Franco's dictatorship.

**Beltzak.** "The Black ones". Name given by people to the special anti-riot unit of the Ertzaintza, officially known as The Mobile Brigade, because of their black uniform and hoods.

**Cara al Sol.** Spanish fascist anthem, sung by members of the Falange (FEJONS) during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and during the dictatorship and to date by the ultra-right wing, and, as seen here, appreciated by the security forces.

**Ertzaina.** Member of the Basque Regional Police.

**Ertzaintza.** The Basque Regional Police, set up in 1982 with scope in traffic, common crime and counter-terrorism. Its jurisdiction extends to the Basque Autonomous Community (the provinces of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa)

**Eusko Gudariak.** "Basque Warriors" anthem of the Basque army, used during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Later taken on by the

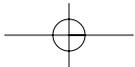
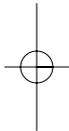
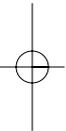
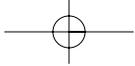
- Basque National Liberation Movement (BNLM)
- GEO.** “Grupos Especiales de Operaciones”, Special Operations Group of the Spanish Policía Nacional.
- Guardia Civil.** “Civil Guard” Spanish security force, founded in 1844 by the Duke of Ahumada. Despite its name, it has a military structure and code and it administratively answers to the armed forces rather than civil police authorities. They have powers to act in traffic, common crime, borders and counter-terrorism throughout the Kingdom of Spain.
- Gudari.** Basque warrior. Name of Basque soldiers during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). A word later taken on by the Basque National Liberation Movement (BNLM) to designate ETA activists. Here used contemptuously by the security forces.
- Imanol Gómez.** Basque activist. Fled into exile and died in a road accident, in France, when chased by French security forces in 2005.
- Iparralde.** Literally, then north side (of the border). Basque word used to designate the part of the Basque Country under French administration.
- Jo ta ke.** Basque exclamation of encouragement, «Jo ta ke Irabazi arte !» meaning, «keep struggling until victory !»
- Korrika.** A fund-raising run. It is organised by the Basque language organisation AEK and runs in relays, non stop, day and night, throughout the Basque Country, for a whole week. Here contemptuously used by the security forces to make the detainee run and chant Basque slogans.
- Lasa and Zabala.** Joxean Lasa and Joxi Zabala. Basque exiles. In 1983, they were illegally kidnapped in the French-Basque Country by death squadrons (GAL) made up of Guardia Civil members, tortured, executed, and buried in quicklime in Alicante. The remains of their bodies were found in 1995. Despite the fact that several members of the Guardia Civil and administration officials (including former general Rodríguez Galindo and former civil governor of Gipuzkoa Julián Elgorriaga) were convicted of the crime and sentenced in 2001, most of those involved are not in jail.
- Pikolos/pikoletos.** Pejorative words used to designate the guardia civil.
- Policía Nacional.** Spanish Nacional Police. They have powers to deal with common crime, borders and counter-terrorism, throughout the Kingdom of Spain.

**Susper.** Nom de guerre of Ibon Fernandez Iradi, arrested by the French police in 2002, he escaped the detention centre and was rearrested in 2003. During the operation when he was arrested, the security forces allegedly seized a set of documents, which allegedly included a coded list of people to be approached and possibly recruited into ETA. Based on this list, the Spanish security forces have arrested around 110 people since 2003.

**The Bag.** Suffocation technique. See section on Torture Methods.

**The Bath.** Water torture method. See section on Torture Methods.

**Zabalza.** Mikel Zabalza. Basque citizen arrested by the Guardia Civil in November 1985. He was not taken before the judge when the incommunicado detention period was up. Official sources said he had attempted to escape when leading Guardia Civil officers to an arms dump and had possibly fallen into the Bidasoa River, still handcuffed. His body was found 20 days after his arrest, in the Bidasoa River. At the time, large sections of Basque society denounced this as a cover-up of a murder in custody. In 2004 information came to light which indicated that Guardia Civil interrogators had “overdone” it when subjecting Zabalza to the torture method known as The Bath. They had taken water from the river Bidasoa, submerged his body in a tub with this water, and injected his lungs with the same water. Later, when it was deemed convenient, his body was dumped in the river, and thus found in a place which had been previously dragged, to no avail. ■





## We must eradicate the torture!

### TAT needs your support

**W**E REALISE HOW IMPORTANT OUR WORK IS. ANY SOCIETY THAT ACCEPTS, HIDES OR REMAINS SILENT BEFORE TORTURE IS A SOCIETY WHICH IS ILL. Unfortunately, the spheres of power that are responsible for the continuity of torture use all the legal and institutional resorts at their disposal and use the media to cover up the reality of torture and infect society. We will pull down the walls of silence with our work. This is our commitment. But, in order to do this, in order to carry on with our work, we need your help.

If you would like to be a Friend of TAT you can choose between two options. One of them is to organise a periodic transfer to one of our accounts in Laboral or Gipuzkoako Kutxa. All you have to do is go to your nearest branch and tell them that you want to transfer a given amount to our account every month. It is important that you specify that your name and surname must appear, so that we know who the contribution is coming from. This is our preferred way of managing contributions.

The second option is for you to give us the twenty digits in your account number and we will manage the charge to your account of whatever monthly amount you tell us, with no cost for you.

In any case, please fill in this form and send it to us. You can also do this on our web page: [www.stoptortura.com](http://www.stoptortura.com)



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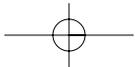
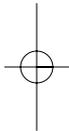
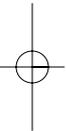
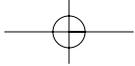
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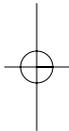
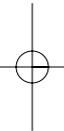
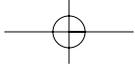
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