



HURIDOCs Report of Activities 2009

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1. Highlights

2010 was a year of renewal and transition for HURIDOCs in many ways. Some of the highlights:

HURIDOCs organised a timely international conference on civil society communications to the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and the International Criminal Court. This was the first international conference that HURIDOCs organised in ten years, and over 150 delegates and experts attended from all over the world.

The Conference was also the opportunity hold the General Assembly and to receive guidance from the international network on priorities for HURIDOCs activities in the coming years. HURIDOCs also renewed its governance by appointing a new board (Continuation Committee).

HURIDOCs changed its capacity building strategy from a focus on standard documentation trainings, to deep and long-term capacity strengthening relationships with specific organisations or groups or organisations. Capacity building now focuses on the full range of challenges faced by human rights

NGOs, from raw data collection to ensuring that analysis and advocacy reporting reaches its target audiences and obtains the expected impact.

HURIDOCs developed a new version of its Evsys software to document human rights violations, called OpenEvsys. It is built as a web application, and is free and open source. It will be helpful to facilitate reporting of individual complaints to the international human rights mechanisms, and allow NGOs to analyze trends and patterns of abuse in the recorded data.

HURIDOCs also developed a new version of its internet search engine, HuriSearch, using open source technologies rather than proprietary software as before. This gave HURIDOCs the expertise to develop and deploy cost effective custom vertical search engines to be used by NGOs to gather information from the internet.

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In 2011, HURIDOCs will strive to increase its proximity with frontline organisations, and scale up its capacity building activities, by deploying a team of regional coordinators, to provide more pro bono training and support, ensuring that tool development responds to needs.

2. Capacity building achievements in 2009

2009 was a year of change for HURIDOCs, as we are shifting our strategy to place the strongest emphasis on long-term capacity building relationships with specific organisations, leading to concrete results, rather than on more general introductory trainings. Each of the projects below started with considerable time devoted to understanding the organisation's strategy and identifying its needs. This led HURIDOCs to explore new directions in order to find appropriate solutions.

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- *Achievements, status:* ZPP successfully recorded over 15'000 events in this database, and used the data for advocacy reports on patterns in violence surrounding elections, and discrimination in access to food aid. HURIDOCs is currently advising ZPP on measures to take to digitize and secure their paper documentation (over 200'000 documents).

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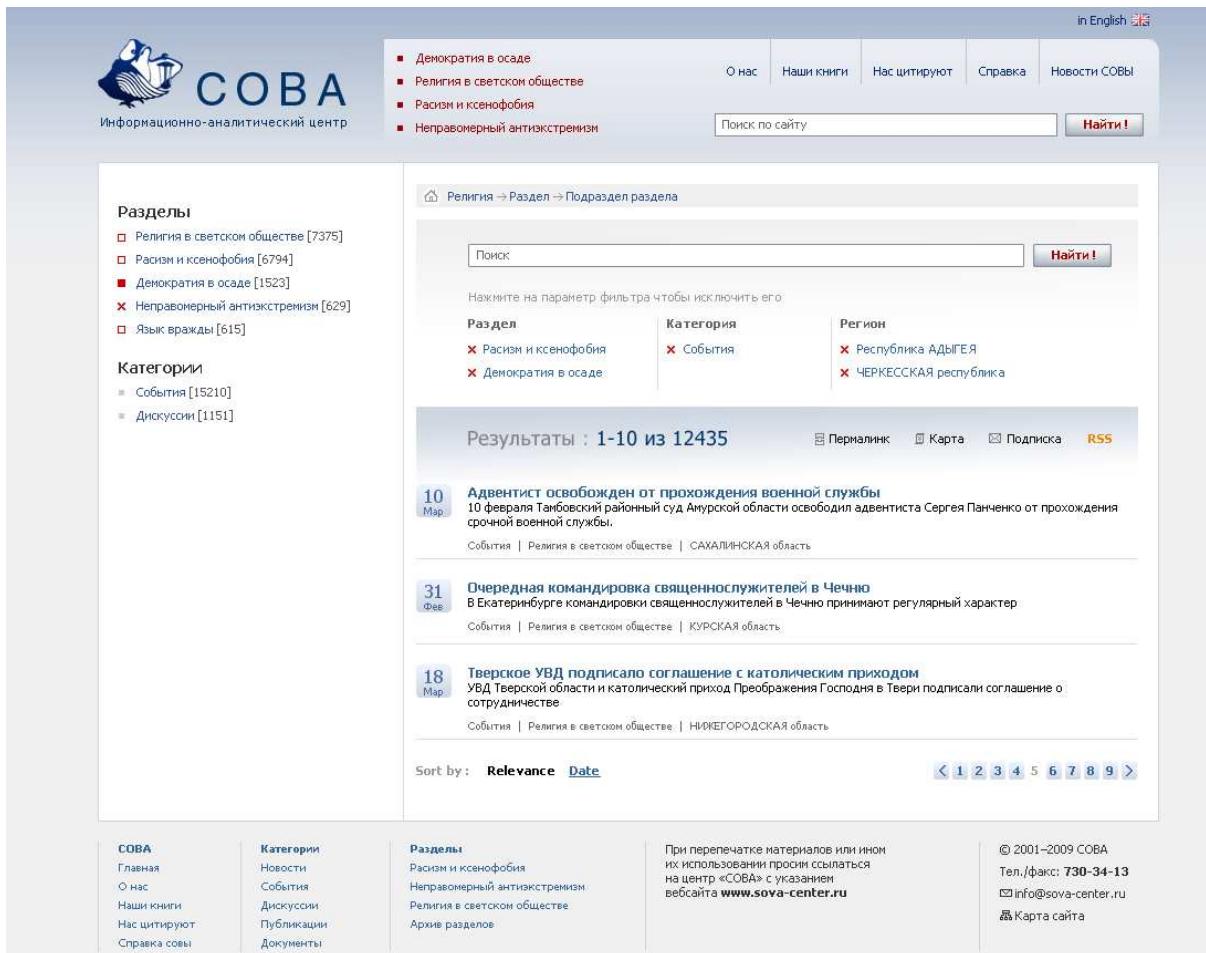
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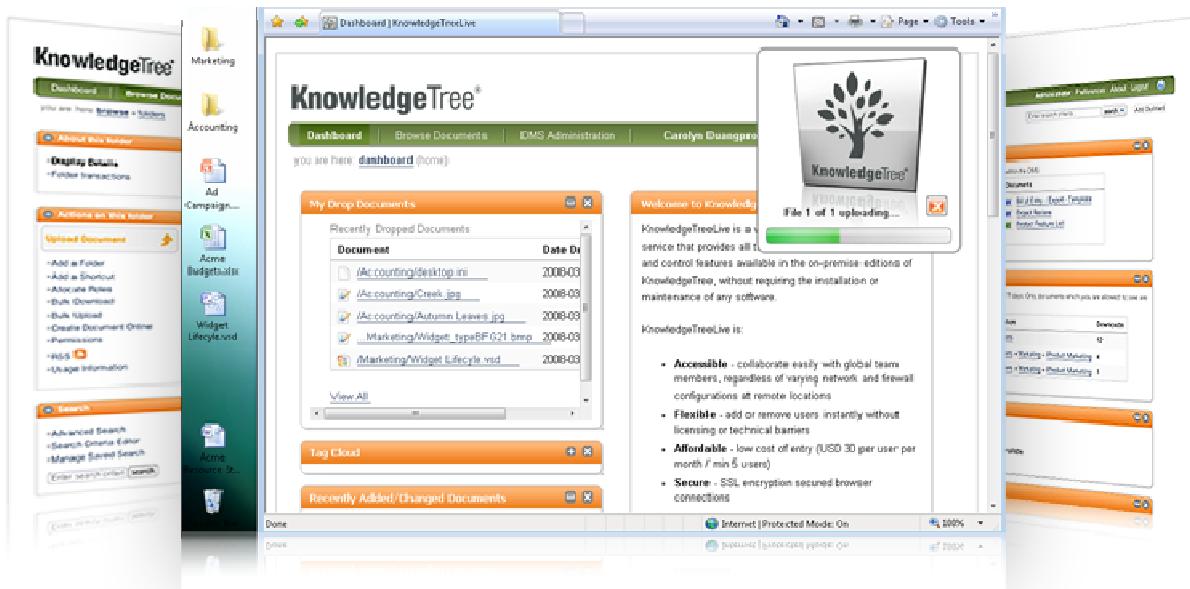
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New SOVA website:



The screenshot shows the homepage of the SOVA website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to 'О нас' (About us), 'Наши книги' (Our books), 'Нас цитируют' (Cited by us), 'Справка' (Help), and 'Новости СОВЫ' (SOVA news). A search bar with a 'Найти!' button is also present. Below the navigation, there are two columns of filters: 'Разделы' (Sections) and 'Категории' (Categories). The 'Разделы' section includes links to 'Религия в светском обществе' (7375), 'Расизм и ксенофобия' (6794), 'Демократия в осаде' (1523), 'Неправомерный антиэкстремизм' (629), and 'Язык вражды' (615). The 'Категории' section includes links to 'События' (15210) and 'Дискуссии' (1151). The main content area shows a search result for 'Религия' with filters for 'Религия' (10), 'Категория' (31), and 'Регион' (18). The results list three items: 1. 'Адвентист освобожден от прохождения военной службы' (10 Mar) - A protestant was released from military service. 2. 'Очередная командировка священнослужителей в Чечню' (31 фев) - Clergy are being sent to Chechnya again. 3. 'Тверское УВД подписало соглашение с католическим приходом' (18 мар) - The Tver police signed an agreement with a Catholic church. At the bottom, there are footer links for 'СОВА' (SOVA), 'Категории' (Categories), 'Разделы' (Sections), and copyright information.

Knowledge Tree document management platform (free, open source):



- *Achievements, status:* project still ongoing, end projected April 2010. HURIDOCs developed a state-of-the-art website to host their 17'000 research documents, allowing very quick search and browsing by theme, region, author, document type (see screenshot above). HURIDOCs also set up an instance of Knowledge Tree open source documentation management platform, to allow SOVA researchers to store and share digital files securely. HURIDOCs is now building an online violations tracker and reporting suite, and also a search engine using the HuriSearch system to allow Sova to track over 1000 online sources.

[International Gay and Lesbian Organisation, Europe](#) (ILGA-Europe): ILGA-Europe is implementing a three-year project, working with Russian partners to document and advocate about discrimination against sexual minorities. HURIDOCs is assisting ILGA-Europe in designing a monitoring strategy that fits its limited human resources and by providing its partners with training.

- *Achievements, status:* support still ongoing till end 2011. ILGA-Europe has developed a plan of action for its documentation project and is now implementing that plan. HURIDOCs will probably help ILGA-Europe implement the Ushahidi system as a digital home for their documentation work (see ushahidi.com).

[Ethiopian Human Rights Commission](#) (EHRC): this emerging NHRI is in need of a system to handle its complaint investigation activities. HURIDOCs carried out a first assessment of its needs, and we expect to provide it with a custom solution, based on OpenEvsys and its built-in human rights standards, as part of a project in 2010. The experiences and outcomes of this project will also benefit other NRIs based in the South.

- *Achievements, status:* HURIDOCs is currently bidding for a UNDP project to develop a complaint management system for the EHRC.

[United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi](#) (BINUB): BINUB's Human Rights and Justice Division is currently revising its monitoring methodologies and tools, and HURIDOCs is providing advice and technical assistance. The focus is on enabling a stronger capacity for recording violations and analysing patterns of abuse, thereby strengthening its reporting. BINUB is expected to use OpenEvsys from 2010 onwards, as it is a suitable and open source solution that is sustainable in particular because it can be shared with national civil society.

- *Achievements, status:* BINUB expects to start using OpenEvsys in first quarter 2010.

[Legal Resources Foundation](#) (LRF), Kenya: LRF is providing much needed legal aid to rural communities throughout Kenya. HURIDOCs gave LRF strategic advice and training on how to use this network to collect information on the human rights situation in Kenya, with a focus on the administration of justice and domestic and social violence.

- *Achievements, status:* LRF is still working out its exact documentation requirements, but can count on HURIDOCs support as needed.

[Tactical Technology Collective](#) (TTC), UK and India: TTC is currently engaged in a first capacity building project with grassroots NGOs in India and Cambodia, to strengthen their competence to document violations against trafficked women. HURIDOCs transferred its expertise through a short training workshop, so that TTC can carry successfully out these activities.

- *Achievements, status:* Project and consultations ongoing, the TTC project only started in January 2010 and is still in the initial stages. Since then, former OpenEvsys project manager and HURIDOCs expert Tom Longley joined the TTC staff.

[Global Human Rights Defence](#) (GHRC), Netherlands: GHRC is currently in partnership with a Bangladeshi NGO to document cases for international advocacy. HURIDOCs provided GRHC with training on how to use OpenEvsys to store and collaborate on case information for litigation towards the UN human rights treaty bodies and special procedures.

- *Achievements, status:* GHRC is now using an online installation of the OpenEvsys system to store and organise its data on violations, for litigation purposes.

3. Tools and techniques

In 2009 HURIDOCs changed its approach to tool development. Development of tools is now mainly driven by needs identified through capacity building projects. We tried hard to make our tools as user friendly as possible. We are now working with open source technologies, and have built relationships with small firms that have proven to provide us with better service than individual developers or large, commercial corporations.

Documenting violations with OpenEvsys

HURIDOCs redeveloped its WinEvsys tool for documenting violations, based on feedback from users received at its 2008 advanced workshop. The new tool, [OpenEvsys](#), is built as a web application, and enables recording of complex cases in a very simple way.

OpenEvsys now enables human rights organisations:

- To record and browse cases
- Safely store related documents such as evidence
- Track their interventions
- Perform aggregate analysis of the data collected to detect patterns and trends
- Produce case reports for individual complaints to the UN human rights mechanisms

OpenEvsys screenshot – example of an event summary

The screenshot shows a web-based application interface for managing events. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Events', 'Persons', 'Documents', 'Analysis', and 'Admin'. Below the navigation bar, there are two main tabs: 'Browse Events' and 'View Event'. The 'View Event' tab is selected, displaying an event summary for an assault on Memorial's office. The event title is 'Assault on Memorial's office'. The event record number is 34. The date of entry was 2009-10-24, and it was entered by testadmin. The event description details an incident where unknown persons arrived at the Research Centre of the Memorial Saint Petersburg organisation on February 18, 2005, under the pretext of an urgent message from Memorial Moscow. They beat an employee named Mr. Emanuil Polyakov unconscious and took him to hospital. The assailants then went to the office of Irina Flige, director of the Research Centre, destroyed part of the office equipment, searched the archives, and forced open the organisation's safe. The police opened an investigation but did not conclude it. The impact of the event was one person severely injured and the office partly destroyed. Remarks note that the assailants directly went to Mrs. Irina Flige's office and later left by the back door, which could indicate they had a plan of the premises.

[OpenEvsys](#) is built on Sahana, an open source application platform for humanitarian emergencies, by a Sri Lankan company called Respere.com, with a strong developer community behind it.

Search and intelligence

HURIDOCs also redeveloped its internet search engine, [HuriSearch](#), using free open source technologies such as Lucene and Solr. The new search engine has a simpler, but more usable interface than its predecessor.

Our experience with search engines also allows us to build powerful and cost effective tools for frontline NGOs that need to scan the internet for their research and lead information. For example, we are building a search engine similar to HuriSearch for SOVA in Russia (monitors xenophobia and attacks against religious groups), so they can track over a 1000 online sources, with a depth of indexing that Google or Yandex cannot provide.

Through its capacity building work, HURIDOCs also noted that most NGOs use manual searches to scan the environment and gather intelligence. Building on expertise in business intelligence from the private sector, HURIDOCs produced a manual called "*Media monitoring, information scanning and intelligence for human rights NGOs*" to help human rights NGOs build better search and intelligence strategies, and use free or affordable search tools to collect information from the web.

4. Strengthening the network

Photo: H.E. Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi, President of the Human Rights Council, addressing the HURIDOCs conference.



The international Conference "*Human Rights Council and International Criminal Court: the new challenges for human rights communications*" brought together over 150 experts from NGOs, research institutes, international organisations and governmental bodies from over 60 countries.

It provided a useful and practical exchange of practical and tactical insights and experiences about how to engage with the UPR, and valuable network experiences for the participants.

The Conference report was written as a practical guide for NGOs on how to work effectively with these structures, building in experience and tactical tips from experts in human rights advocacy around the world.

Photo: HURIDOCS participants at the Conference 2009.



5. Governance and human resources

The Fifth General Assembly (GA) of HURIDOCS took place on 28 February, the day after its Conference. The GA was chaired by Kofi Kumado, Chair of HURIDOCS.

HURIDOCS took this opportunity to renew its governance (board and advisory council), and spent considerable effort to identify, recruit and integrate a new generation of experts for its capacity building activities, in the areas of information architecture, search and intelligence as well as social research methods.

The outgoing Board presented reports on past activities and on the future directions of HURIDOCS as well as on its finances. Various participants raised questions in relation to collaboration with other organisations, networking at the regional level, access to information and financial support. Regional meetings had taken place during the Conference that preceded the General Assembly, and the different regions provided reports of their activities. They also made some requests to HURIDOCS and pointed out which contributions they expected to make to HURIDOCS' work.

Continuation Committee

The following persons were elected as members of the Continuation Committee:

- Judith Dueck (Canada)
- Jean Enriquez (Philippines, Vice-Chair)

- Frej Fenniche (Tunisia)
- Hannah Forster (Gambia, Treasurer)
- Edward Halpin (United Kingdom)
- Rosario Narvaez (Peru)
- Agnethe Olesen (Denmark, Chairperson).

International Advisory Council

The following persons were elected as members of the International Advisory Council:

- Adama Dieng (Tanzania)
- Ibrahim Sarr (Senegal)
- André M. Titus (South Africa)
- Aurora Javate de Dios (Philippines)
- Adilur Rahman Khan (Bangladesh)
- Dan Brickley (United Kingdom)
- James Lawson (France)
- Tom Longley (United Kingdom)
- Hans Thoolen (Greece)
- Luis Maria Lozano (Argentina)
- Aida Maria Noval (Mexico)
- Nelly Benilde Herrera Román (Ecuador)
- Lucrecia Molina Theissen (Costa Rica)
- Nina Atallah (Palestine)
- Youssef El-Bouhairi (Morocco)
- Lars Bromley (United States)
- Sam Gregory (United States)
- William R. Pace (United States-Netherlands)

Staff

Daniel D'Esposito was also appointed Executive Director, effective 1 January 2010. Daniel was training officer and capacity building officer since 1 January 2006, and joined HURIDOCs after serving 10 years with the ICRC.

Bert Verstappen continues to function as Programme Coordinator, and is also responsible for maintaining the HURIDOCs knowledge systems (OpenEvsys, HuriSearch, and documentation resource library). Bert has been with HURIDOCs since 1986.

Katherin Machalek joined HURIDOCs in March 2009, first as analyst covering the former Soviet Union, then as project manager for this region from October 2009 onwards.

Sabrina Lambat is our finance officer, and handles accounting and payroll. She joined in October 2009 on a part time basis.

6. Renewed strategy

From March 2009 onwards, after the Conference and under the guidance of the new Board, HURIDOCS spent considerable time revisiting its strategy, learning from its experiences of the past three years. The new strategy includes the eight points below:

1. Shift our capacity-building focus towards long-term projects targeting specific organisations, as these projects have proven to be very successful in terms of impact.
2. Focus on NGOs and NHRIs based in the South, but also on those who are working under repressive regimes elsewhere, by strengthening existing capacity-building relationships and establishing new ones.
3. Build a mechanism to aggregate and disseminate learning and solutions from our capacity building work, and to spread the experience of our network members, and to make these easily accessible to all.
4. Continue to drive innovation in tools and techniques for documenting violations and managing and communicating information strategically, in particular in the use of affordable and open source web technologies for collecting, organising, protecting, visualising and communicating information for advocacy.
5. Promote good practices in effective handling of human rights information, to ensure that human rights NGO managers understand the strategic importance of their information systems, and are able to make the appropriate investment decisions to improve them.
6. Equip ourselves with the appropriate human resources and carefully grow our team to scale up our capacity to offer services.
7. Strengthen our leadership and clarify our governance procedures for increased accountability to our board, network and stakeholders.
8. Change our resource development strategy to ensure financial sustainability, by making a more effective demonstration of our impact, expanding our base of core funders, and generating income from projects to finance growth and innovation.

In 2011, HURIDOCS will strive to increase its proximity with frontline organisations, and scale up its capacity building activities, by deploying a team of regional coordinators, to provide pro bono training and support, ensure that tool development responds to needs, and undertake capacity building projects.

7. Endorsements by our partners

Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR), Phnom Penh

“HURIDOCS provided us with their WinEvsys and OpenEvsys (online) databases, and we worked with them to localize these for use in Cambodia. We’ve trained trade unions, human rights NGOs and activists on using them. Working with HURIDOCS, we are revolutionizing the way human rights

violations are monitored and documented in Cambodia, and instilling a collaborative approach to promoting and protecting human rights. Thank you HURIDOCs! ” *Ou Virak, President*

Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), Nairobi

“The training by HURIDOCs on OpenEvsys was instrumental in providing a practical platform for LRF to begin a process of managing its old and new information in a manner that is comprehensive, consistent and builds institutional sustainability. This training was delivered to both the staff and mutual partners of LRF who mainly consist of paralegals who are the core facilitators in information collection and collation. This training will build in the Research and Development Programme which is key in monitoring, reporting and e-learning for both programmatic and policy development proposals.

As you plan for 2010, please take into consideration to work with LRF in respect to more training and finalisation of the tools we are developing to ensure that we are able to activate and implement this training fully.” *Jedidah Wakonyo Waruhiu, Executive Director*

Tactical Tech Collective, Brighton

“Very soon into the training at HURIDOCs in September this year, I was making a mental list of all the NGOs and colleagues I have here in India who could benefit from the HURIDOCs approach to human rights violations documentation. It’s so simple, yet it allows for so much detail and complexity to be included. Moreover, working with the database allowed me to see how it can be modified to suit the specific cultural and social context I am working in. I know of a number of groups in India working on human rights issues but each one has its own system of recording and organizing data, it would really be useful to have the kind of uniform and precise database that HURIDOCs has developed...maybe even for the National Commission.” *Maya Ganesh, Project officer, TTC India*

“HURIDOCs training helped us understand if our existing plans for implementing a project “by a community for a community” were workable. It helped us understand what methodologies currently exist and why the “who did what to whom” model is critical. I think also getting some hands on with OpenEvsys made us come to some realizations of the challenges we will face in working with largely illiterate populations. It also gave us a much greater understanding of HURIDOCs and the existing network they have built around Human Rights Documenters.” *Dirk Slater, Project Lead, TTC UK*

SOVA Centre for Information and Analysis, Moscow

“Sova has long installed the HURIDOCs document management system on its website, and we use this system to search documents. Now, with the participation HURIDOCs work has begun on the restructuring of our web site. As a result, it should soon become more functional for both readers and for ourselves.” *Alexander Verkhovsky, Executive Director*

Global Human Rights Defence, The Hague

“HURIDOCs has been crucial in strengthening the capacities of Global Human Rights Defence in many aspects of our work. Their manuals and vocabularies on human rights documentation has guided us in the development of our frameworks and methods for fact-finding & documentation, and guided our local human rights observers in their work. Furthermore, three-day training with HURIDOCs capacity building officer helped us define the organisation's structural needs in the field of human rights information management and documentation, and it gave us an insight into the possible solutions and tools available. GHRD hope to be able to continue implementing HURIDOCs tools, such as the OpenEvsys in the future.” *Jenny Lundström, Human Rights Officer.*

United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), Bujumbura

“For the past 8 months, the Reporting Unit of the Human Rights and Justice Division of the UN's integrated mission to Burundi (BINUB) has drawn on the expertise of HURIDOCs in its efforts to prepare material and create the design needed for a human rights database. It is envisaged that this database will serve as a resource for the transitional justice mechanisms to which Burundi has committed itself. The Chief of the Reporting Unit has indicated his appreciation for HURIDOCs expertise, ready generosity in sharing it - even during the proposal writing and fundraising phase - and in particular the suppleness of the solutions HURIDOCs is able to provide. This latter feature is particular important given the particular demands faced in Burundi, such as, to cite one example, a desegregation of data in order to provide more effective care to particular categories of victims of sexual violence.” *JPT Savage, Chief of Reporting Unit, Human Rights and Justice Division*

Documentation Centre for Indigenous Peoples, Geneva

“In the framework of the Documentation Network regrouping specialized documentation centres on indigenous issues, doCip organised in partnership with Huridocs and Indigenous organizations several trainings on human rights documentation: two in English, one in Spanish and one in French. The last one took place in November 2008 in Chang Mai Thailand and the indigenous partner was the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation. Huridocs contribution has always been very appreciated by all participants in all trainings as well as by doCip. We certainly will repeat the experience if requested by indigenous peoples.” *Pierrette Birraux, Executive Director*

International Gay and Lesbian Association of Europe, Brussels

“We find cooperation with HURIDOCs very important in ILGA-Europe's efforts to support documentation work of our members throughout Europe (in particular Eastern Europe). HURIDOCs has made a very important contribution to four documentation trainings we have organised in the course of the last three years, and Judith Dueck, former vice-president of HURIDOCs, has served on the advisory panel of the Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund on voluntary basis. We find HURIDOCs to be highly professional, and we much appreciate the combination of a very thorough approach (professionalism / quality of work is never compromised) with flexibility (being able to react fast to our requests for cooperation, always willing to support our work). We hope to continue

cooperation with HURIDOCS in the next years, particularly in furthering our LGBT-related documentation work and setting up documentation systems throughout Europe.” *Maxim Amnaghichean, Executive Director*



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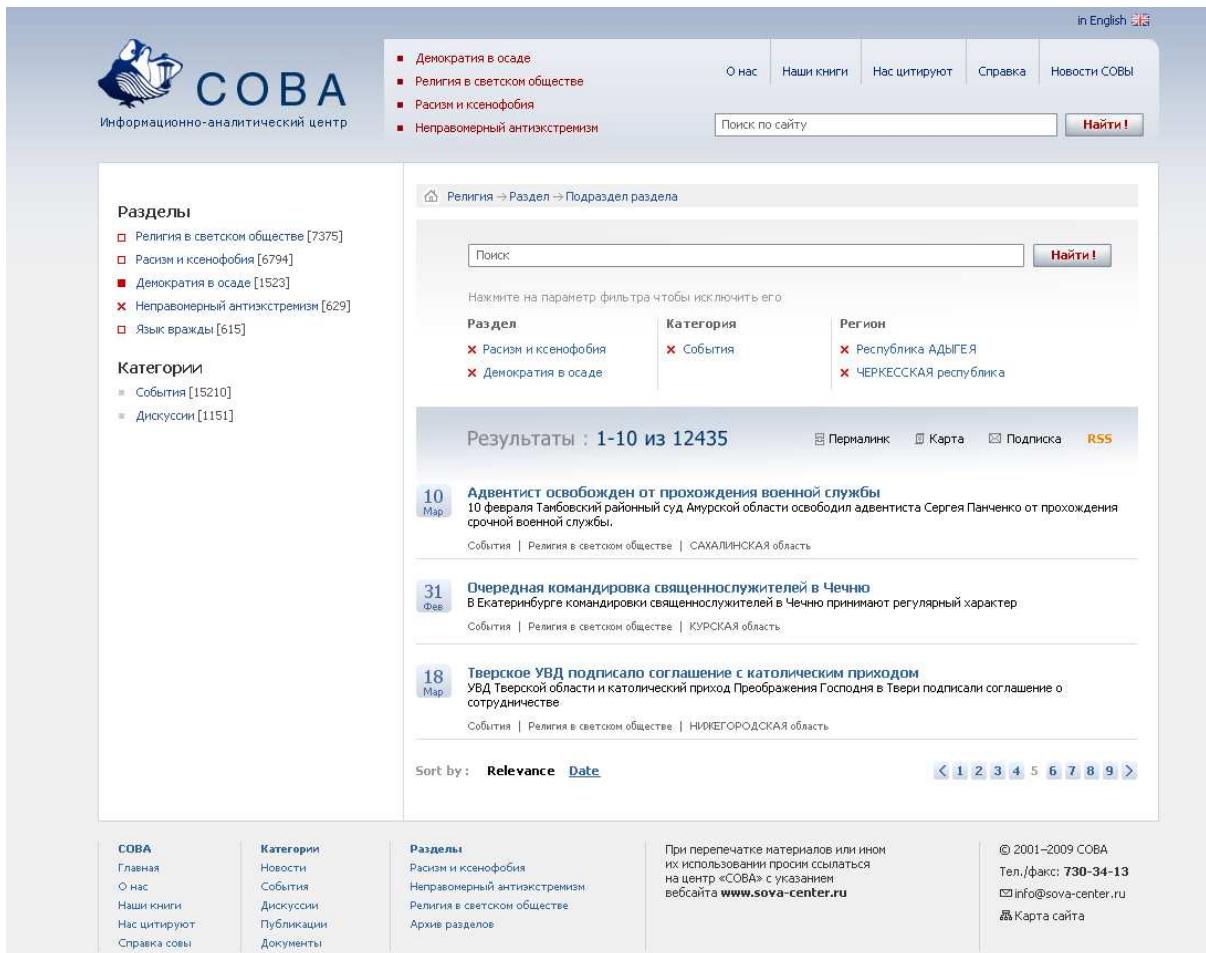
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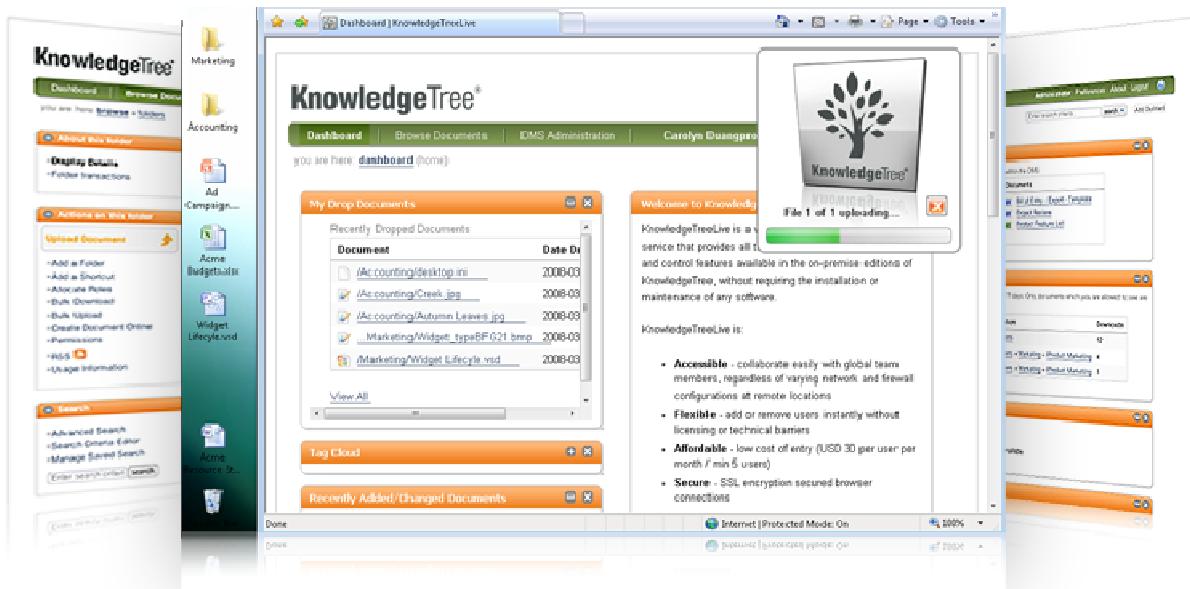
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The screenshot shows the homepage of the SOVA website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to 'О нас' (About us), 'Наши книги' (Our books), 'Нас цитируют' (Cited by us), 'Справка' (Help), and 'Новости СОВЫ' (SOVA news). A search bar with a 'Найти!' button is also present. Below the navigation, there are two columns of filters: 'Разделы' (Sections) and 'Категории' (Categories). The 'Разделы' section includes links to 'Религия в светском обществе' (7375), 'Расизм и ксенофобия' (6794), 'Демократия в осаде' (1523), 'Неправомерный антиэкстремизм' (629), and 'Язык вражды' (615). The 'Категории' section includes links to 'События' (15210) and 'Дискуссии' (1151). The main content area shows a search result for 'Религия' with filters for 'Религия' (10), 'Категория' (31), and 'Регион' (18). The results list three items: 1. 'Адвентист освобожден от прохождения военной службы' (Relevance: 10, Date: 10 февраля). 2. 'Очередная командировка священнослужителей в Чечню' (Relevance: 31, Date: 16 февраля). 3. 'Тверское УВД подписало соглашение с католическим приходом' (Relevance: 18, Date: 15 марта). At the bottom, there are footer links for 'СОВА' (Main page, About us, Our books, Cited by us, Help, News), 'Категории' (News, Events, Discussions, Publications, Documents), 'Разделы' (Racism and xenophobia, Unlawful anti-extremism, Religion in a secular society, Archives), and copyright information (© 2001–2009 СОВА, Tel./fax: 730-34-13, info@sova-center.ru, Site map).

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OpenEvsys screenshot – example of an event summary

The screenshot shows a web-based application interface for managing events. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Events', 'Persons', 'Documents', 'Analysis', and 'Admin'. Below the navigation bar, there are two main tabs: 'Browse Events' and 'View Event'. The 'View Event' tab is selected, displaying an event summary for an assault on Memorial's office. The event title is 'Assault on Memorial's office'. The event record number is 34. The date of entry was 2009-10-24, and it was entered by testadmin. The event description details an incident where unknown persons arrived at the Research Centre of the Memorial Saint Petersburg organisation on February 18, 2005, under the pretext of an urgent message from Memorial Moscow. They beat an employee named Emanuil Polyakov unconscious and destroyed part of the office equipment. The police opened an investigation, but the report concluded that the assailants had a plan of the premises. The impact of the event was one person severely injured and the office partly destroyed. Remarks note that the assailants directly went to Mrs. Irina Flige's office and later left by the back door.

[OpenEvsys](#) is built on Sahana, an open source application platform for humanitarian emergencies, by a Sri Lankan company called Respere.com, with a strong developer community behind it.

Search and intelligence

HURIDOCs also redeveloped its internet search engine, [HuriSearch](#), using free open source technologies such as Lucene and Solr. The new search engine has a simpler, but more usable interface than its predecessor.

Our experience with search engines also allows us to build powerful and cost effective tools for frontline NGOs that need to scan the internet for their research and lead information. For example, we are building a search engine similar to HuriSearch for SOVA in Russia (monitors xenophobia and attacks against religious groups), so they can track over a 1000 online sources, with a depth of indexing that Google or Yandex cannot provide.

Through its capacity building work, HURIDOCs also noted that most NGOs use manual searches to scan the environment and gather intelligence. Building on expertise in business intelligence from the private sector, HURIDOCs produced a manual called "*Media monitoring, information scanning and intelligence for human rights NGOs*" to help human rights NGOs build better search and intelligence strategies, and use free or affordable search tools to collect information from the web.

4. Strengthening the network

Photo: H.E. Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi, President of the Human Rights Council, addressing the HURIDOCs conference.



The international Conference "*Human Rights Council and International Criminal Court: the new challenges for human rights communications*" brought together over 150 experts from NGOs, research institutes, international organisations and governmental bodies from over 60 countries.

It provided a useful and practical exchange of practical and tactical insights and experiences about how to engage with the UPR, and valuable network experiences for the participants.

The Conference report was written as a practical guide for NGOs on how to work effectively with these structures, building in experience and tactical tips from experts in human rights advocacy around the world.

Photo: HURIDOCS participants at the Conference 2009.



5. Governance and human resources

The Fifth General Assembly (GA) of HURIDOCS took place on 28 February, the day after its Conference. The GA was chaired by Kofi Kumado, Chair of HURIDOCS.

HURIDOCS took this opportunity to renew its governance (board and advisory council), and spent considerable effort to identify, recruit and integrate a new generation of experts for its capacity building activities, in the areas of information architecture, search and intelligence as well as social research methods.

The outgoing Board presented reports on past activities and on the future directions of HURIDOCS as well as on its finances. Various participants raised questions in relation to collaboration with other organisations, networking at the regional level, access to information and financial support. Regional meetings had taken place during the Conference that preceded the General Assembly, and the different regions provided reports of their activities. They also made some requests to HURIDOCS and pointed out which contributions they expected to make to HURIDOCS' work.

Continuation Committee

The following persons were elected as members of the Continuation Committee:

- Judith Dueck (Canada)
- Jean Enriquez (Philippines, Vice-Chair)

- Frej Fenniche (Tunisia)
- Hannah Forster (Gambia, Treasurer)
- Edward Halpin (United Kingdom)
- Rosario Narvaez (Peru)
- Agnethe Olesen (Denmark, Chairperson).

International Advisory Council

The following persons were elected as members of the International Advisory Council:

- Adama Dieng (Tanzania)
- Ibrahim Sarr (Senegal)
- André M. Titus (South Africa)
- Aurora Javate de Dios (Philippines)
- Adilur Rahman Khan (Bangladesh)
- Dan Brickley (United Kingdom)
- James Lawson (France)
- Tom Longley (United Kingdom)
- Hans Thoolen (Greece)
- Luis Maria Lozano (Argentina)
- Aida Maria Noval (Mexico)
- Nelly Benilde Herrera Román (Ecuador)
- Lucrecia Molina Theissen (Costa Rica)
- Nina Atallah (Palestine)
- Youssef El-Bouhairi (Morocco)
- Lars Bromley (United States)
- Sam Gregory (United States)
- William R. Pace (United States-Netherlands)

Staff

Daniel D'Esposito was also appointed Executive Director, effective 1 January 2010. Daniel was training officer and capacity building officer since 1 January 2006, and joined HURIDOCs after serving 10 years with the ICRC.

Bert Verstappen continues to function as Programme Coordinator, and is also responsible for maintaining the HURIDOCs knowledge systems (OpenEvsys, HuriSearch, and documentation resource library). Bert has been with HURIDOCs since 1986.

Katherin Machalek joined HURIDOCs in March 2009, first as analyst covering the former Soviet Union, then as project manager for this region from October 2009 onwards.

Sabrina Lambat is our finance officer, and handles accounting and payroll. She joined in October 2009 on a part time basis.

6. Renewed strategy

From March 2009 onwards, after the Conference and under the guidance of the new Board, HURIDOCS spent considerable time revisiting its strategy, learning from its experiences of the past three years. The new strategy includes the eight points below:

1. Shift our capacity-building focus towards long-term projects targeting specific organisations, as these projects have proven to be very successful in terms of impact.
2. Focus on NGOs and NHRIs based in the South, but also on those who are working under repressive regimes elsewhere, by strengthening existing capacity-building relationships and establishing new ones.
3. Build a mechanism to aggregate and disseminate learning and solutions from our capacity building work, and to spread the experience of our network members, and to make these easily accessible to all.
4. Continue to drive innovation in tools and techniques for documenting violations and managing and communicating information strategically, in particular in the use of affordable and open source web technologies for collecting, organising, protecting, visualising and communicating information for advocacy.
5. Promote good practices in effective handling of human rights information, to ensure that human rights NGO managers understand the strategic importance of their information systems, and are able to make the appropriate investment decisions to improve them.
6. Equip ourselves with the appropriate human resources and carefully grow our team to scale up our capacity to offer services.
7. Strengthen our leadership and clarify our governance procedures for increased accountability to our board, network and stakeholders.
8. Change our resource development strategy to ensure financial sustainability, by making a more effective demonstration of our impact, expanding our base of core funders, and generating income from projects to finance growth and innovation.

In 2011, HURIDOCS will strive to increase its proximity with frontline organisations, and scale up its capacity building activities, by deploying a team of regional coordinators, to provide pro bono training and support, ensure that tool development responds to needs, and undertake capacity building projects.

7. Endorsements by our partners

Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR), Phnom Penh

“HURIDOCS provided us with their WinEvsys and OpenEvsys (online) databases, and we worked with them to localize these for use in Cambodia. We’ve trained trade unions, human rights NGOs and activists on using them. Working with HURIDOCS, we are revolutionizing the way human rights

violations are monitored and documented in Cambodia, and instilling a collaborative approach to promoting and protecting human rights. Thank you HURIDOCs! ” *Ou Virak, President*

Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), Nairobi

“The training by HURIDOCs on OpenEvsys was instrumental in providing a practical platform for LRF to begin a process of managing its old and new information in a manner that is comprehensive, consistent and builds institutional sustainability. This training was delivered to both the staff and mutual partners of LRF who mainly consist of paralegals who are the core facilitators in information collection and collation. This training will build in the Research and Development Programme which is key in monitoring, reporting and e-learning for both programmatic and policy development proposals.

As you plan for 2010, please take into consideration to work with LRF in respect to more training and finalisation of the tools we are developing to ensure that we are able to activate and implement this training fully.” *Jedidah Wakonyo Waruhiu, Executive Director*

Tactical Tech Collective, Brighton

“Very soon into the training at HURIDOCs in September this year, I was making a mental list of all the NGOs and colleagues I have here in India who could benefit from the HURIDOCs approach to human rights violations documentation. It’s so simple, yet it allows for so much detail and complexity to be included. Moreover, working with the database allowed me to see how it can be modified to suit the specific cultural and social context I am working in. I know of a number of groups in India working on human rights issues but each one has its own system of recording and organizing data, it would really be useful to have the kind of uniform and precise database that HURIDOCs has developed...maybe even for the National Commission.” *Maya Ganesh, Project officer, TTC India*

“HURIDOCs training helped us understand if our existing plans for implementing a project “by a community for a community” were workable. It helped us understand what methodologies currently exist and why the “who did what to whom” model is critical. I think also getting some hands on with OpenEvsys made us come to some realizations of the challenges we will face in working with largely illiterate populations. It also gave us a much greater understanding of HURIDOCs and the existing network they have built around Human Rights Documenters.” *Dirk Slater, Project Lead, TTC UK*

SOVA Centre for Information and Analysis, Moscow

“Sova has long installed the HURIDOCs document management system on its website, and we use this system to search documents. Now, with the participation HURIDOCs work has begun on the restructuring of our web site. As a result, it should soon become more functional for both readers and for ourselves.” *Alexander Verkhovsky, Executive Director*

Global Human Rights Defence, The Hague

“HURIDOCs has been crucial in strengthening the capacities of Global Human Rights Defence in many aspects of our work. Their manuals and vocabularies on human rights documentation has guided us in the development of our frameworks and methods for fact-finding & documentation, and guided our local human rights observers in their work. Furthermore, three-day training with HURIDOCs capacity building officer helped us define the organisation's structural needs in the field of human rights information management and documentation, and it gave us an insight into the possible solutions and tools available. GHRD hope to be able to continue implementing HURIDOCs tools, such as the OpenEvsys in the future.” *Jenny Lundström, Human Rights Officer.*

United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), Bujumbura

“For the past 8 months, the Reporting Unit of the Human Rights and Justice Division of the UN's integrated mission to Burundi (BINUB) has drawn on the expertise of HURIDOCs in its efforts to prepare material and create the design needed for a human rights database. It is envisaged that this database will serve as a resource for the transitional justice mechanisms to which Burundi has committed itself. The Chief of the Reporting Unit has indicated his appreciation for HURIDOCs expertise, ready generosity in sharing it - even during the proposal writing and fundraising phase - and in particular the suppleness of the solutions HURIDOCs is able to provide. This latter feature is particular important given the particular demands faced in Burundi, such as, to cite one example, a desegregation of data in order to provide more effective care to particular categories of victims of sexual violence.” *JPT Savage, Chief of Reporting Unit, Human Rights and Justice Division*

Documentation Centre for Indigenous Peoples, Geneva

“In the framework of the Documentation Network regrouping specialized documentation centres on indigenous issues, doCip organised in partnership with Huridocs and Indigenous organizations several trainings on human rights documentation: two in English, one in Spanish and one in French. The last one took place in November 2008 in Chang Mai Thailand and the indigenous partner was the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation. Huridocs contribution has always been very appreciated by all participants in all trainings as well as by doCip. We certainly will repeat the experience if requested by indigenous peoples.” *Pierrette Birraux, Executive Director*

International Gay and Lesbian Association of Europe, Brussels

“We find cooperation with HURIDOCs very important in ILGA-Europe's efforts to support documentation work of our members throughout Europe (in particular Eastern Europe). HURIDOCs has made a very important contribution to four documentation trainings we have organised in the course of the last three years, and Judith Dueck, former vice-president of HURIDOCs, has served on the advisory panel of the Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund on voluntary basis. We find HURIDOCs to be highly professional, and we much appreciate the combination of a very thorough approach (professionalism / quality of work is never compromised) with flexibility (being able to react fast to our requests for cooperation, always willing to support our work). We hope to continue

cooperation with HURIDOCS in the next years, particularly in furthering our LGBT-related documentation work and setting up documentation systems throughout Europe.” *Maxim Amnaghichean, Executive Director*



HURIDOCs Report of Activities 2009

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1. Highlights

2010 was a year of renewal and transition for HURIDOCs in many ways. Some of the highlights:

HURIDOCs organised a timely international conference on civil society communications to the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and the International Criminal Court. This was the first international conference that HURIDOCs organised in ten years, and over 150 delegates and experts attended from all over the world.

The Conference was also the opportunity hold the General Assembly and to receive guidance from the international network on priorities for HURIDOCs activities in the coming years. HURIDOCs also renewed its governance by appointing a new board (Continuation Committee).

HURIDOCs changed its capacity building strategy from a focus on standard documentation trainings, to deep and long-term capacity strengthening relationships with specific organisations or groups or organisations. Capacity building now focuses on the full range of challenges faced by human rights

NGOs, from raw data collection to ensuring that analysis and advocacy reporting reaches its target audiences and obtains the expected impact.

HURIDOCs developed a new version of its Evsys software to document human rights violations, called OpenEvsys. It is built as a web application, and is free and open source. It will be helpful to facilitate reporting of individual complaints to the international human rights mechanisms, and allow NGOs to analyze trends and patterns of abuse in the recorded data.

HURIDOCs also developed a new version of its internet search engine, HuriSearch, using open source technologies rather than proprietary software as before. This gave HURIDOCs the expertise to develop and deploy cost effective custom vertical search engines to be used by NGOs to gather information from the internet.

HURIDOCs appointed Daniel D'Esposito as its Executive Director, taking over from Acting Director Agnethe Olesen (Chairperson).

In 2011, HURIDOCs will strive to increase its proximity with frontline organisations, and scale up its capacity building activities, by deploying a team of regional coordinators, to provide more pro bono training and support, ensuring that tool development responds to needs.

2. Capacity building achievements in 2009

2009 was a year of change for HURIDOCs, as we are shifting our strategy to place the strongest emphasis on long-term capacity building relationships with specific organisations, leading to concrete results, rather than on more general introductory trainings. Each of the projects below started with considerable time devoted to understanding the organisation's strategy and identifying its needs. This led HURIDOCs to explore new directions in order to find appropriate solutions.

Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP): ZPP monitors violations through a network of over 250 field monitors, leading to over 23'000 cases documented each year. HURIDOCs helped ZPP to manage and analyse this information, by adapting and using the WinEvsys database.

- *Achievements, status:* ZPP successfully recorded over 15'000 events in this database, and used the data for advocacy reports on patterns in violence surrounding elections, and discrimination in access to food aid. HURIDOCs is currently advising ZPP on measures to take to digitize and secure their paper documentation (over 200'000 documents).

Cambodia Centre for Human Rights (CCHR): CCHR seeks to position itself as a centre of expertise in monitoring violations in Cambodia, and HURIDOCs provided its team with extensive training on documentation techniques.

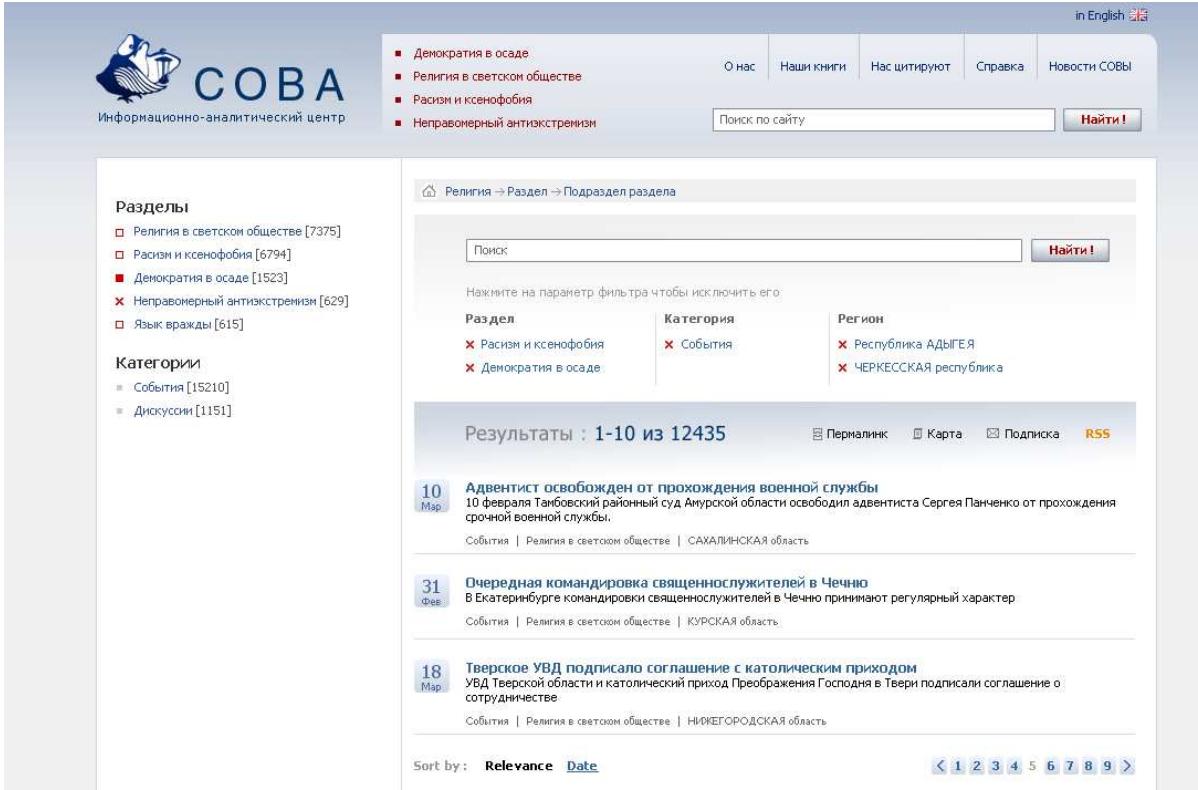
- *Achievements, status:* CCHR now uses OpenEvsys, and has translated its vocabularies into Khmer for the benefit of all Cambodian human rights NGOs.

[International Protection Centre](#) (IPC), Russian Federation: IPC is one of the leading NGOs that litigates cases at the European Court of Human Rights, and tackles such sensitive cases as the Politovskaya murder. HURIDOCs is helping IPC to manage its caseload through a custom database, and to secure its valuable case files against attack by using safe and affordable web-based file storage and browsing solutions.

- *Achievements, status:* project still ongoing, end projected May 2010.

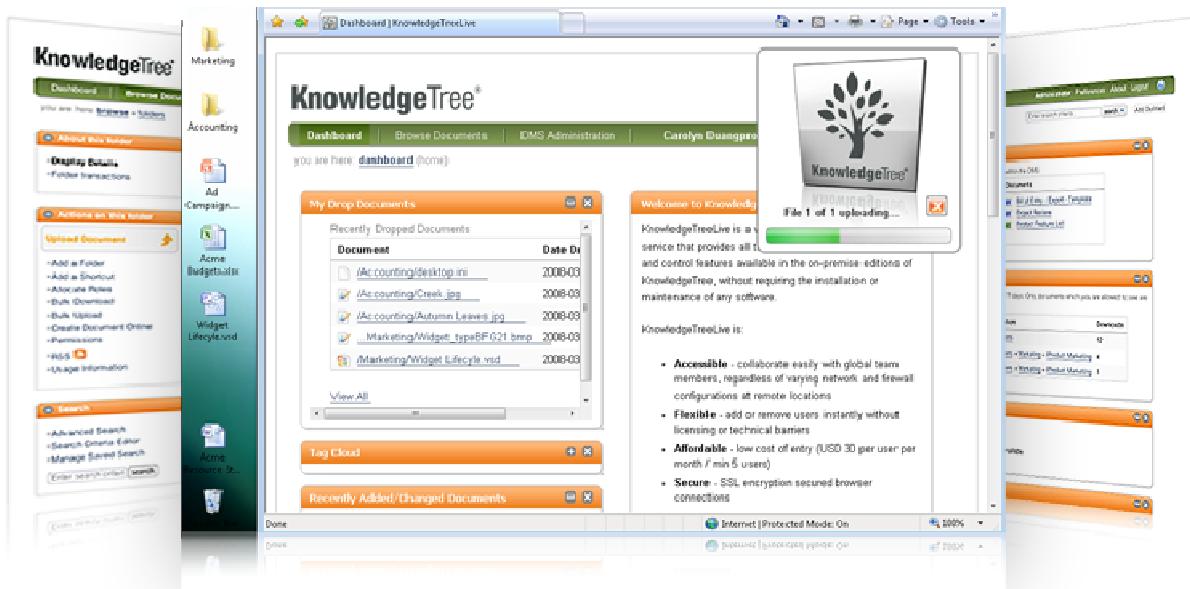
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- Produce case reports for individual complaints to the UN human rights mechanisms

OpenEvsys screenshot – example of an event summary

The screenshot shows a web-based application interface for managing events. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Events', 'Persons', 'Documents', 'Analysis', and 'Admin'. Below the navigation bar, there are two main tabs: 'Browse Events' and 'View Event'. The 'View Event' tab is selected, displaying an event summary for an assault on Memorial's office. The event title is 'Assault on Memorial's office'. The event record number is 34. The date of entry was 2009-10-24, and it was entered by testadmin. The event description details an incident where unknown persons arrived at the Research Centre of the Memorial Saint Petersburg organisation on February 18, 2005, under the pretext of an urgent message from Memorial Moscow. They beat an employee named Emanuil Polyakov unconscious and destroyed part of the office equipment. The police opened an investigation, but the report concluded that the assault was planned. The impact of the event was one person severely injured and the office partly destroyed. Remarks note that the assailants directly went to Mrs. Irina Flige's office and later left by the back door. The application has tabs for 'Event Summary', 'Victims and Perpetrators', 'Sources', 'Interventions', 'Chain of Events', and 'Audit Log'.

[OpenEvsys](#) is built on Sahana, an open source application platform for humanitarian emergencies, by a Sri Lankan company called Respere.com, with a strong developer community behind it.

Search and intelligence

HURIDOCs also redeveloped its internet search engine, [HuriSearch](#), using free open source technologies such as Lucene and Solr. The new search engine has a simpler, but more usable interface than its predecessor.

Our experience with search engines also allows us to build powerful and cost effective tools for frontline NGOs that need to scan the internet for their research and lead information. For example, we are building a search engine similar to HuriSearch for SOVA in Russia (monitors xenophobia and attacks against religious groups), so they can track over a 1000 online sources, with a depth of indexing that Google or Yandex cannot provide.

Through its capacity building work, HURIDOCs also noted that most NGOs use manual searches to scan the environment and gather intelligence. Building on expertise in business intelligence from the private sector, HURIDOCs produced a manual called "*Media monitoring, information scanning and intelligence for human rights NGOs*" to help human rights NGOs build better search and intelligence strategies, and use free or affordable search tools to collect information from the web.

4. Strengthening the network

Photo: H.E. Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi, President of the Human Rights Council, addressing the HURIDOCs conference.



The international Conference "*Human Rights Council and International Criminal Court: the new challenges for human rights communications*" brought together over 150 experts from NGOs, research institutes, international organisations and governmental bodies from over 60 countries.

It provided a useful and practical exchange of practical and tactical insights and experiences about how to engage with the UPR, and valuable network experiences for the participants.

The Conference report was written as a practical guide for NGOs on how to work effectively with these structures, building in experience and tactical tips from experts in human rights advocacy around the world.

Photo: HURIDOCS participants at the Conference 2009.



5. Governance and human resources

The Fifth General Assembly (GA) of HURIDOCS took place on 28 February, the day after its Conference. The GA was chaired by Kofi Kumado, Chair of HURIDOCS.

HURIDOCS took this opportunity to renew its governance (board and advisory council), and spent considerable effort to identify, recruit and integrate a new generation of experts for its capacity building activities, in the areas of information architecture, search and intelligence as well as social research methods.

The outgoing Board presented reports on past activities and on the future directions of HURIDOCS as well as on its finances. Various participants raised questions in relation to collaboration with other organisations, networking at the regional level, access to information and financial support. Regional meetings had taken place during the Conference that preceded the General Assembly, and the different regions provided reports of their activities. They also made some requests to HURIDOCS and pointed out which contributions they expected to make to HURIDOCS' work.

Continuation Committee

The following persons were elected as members of the Continuation Committee:

- Judith Dueck (Canada)
- Jean Enriquez (Philippines, Vice-Chair)

- Frej Fenniche (Tunisia)
- Hannah Forster (Gambia, Treasurer)
- Edward Halpin (United Kingdom)
- Rosario Narvaez (Peru)
- Agnethe Olesen (Denmark, Chairperson).

International Advisory Council

The following persons were elected as members of the International Advisory Council:

- Adama Dieng (Tanzania)
- Ibrahim Sarr (Senegal)
- André M. Titus (South Africa)
- Aurora Javate de Dios (Philippines)
- Adilur Rahman Khan (Bangladesh)
- Dan Brickley (United Kingdom)
- James Lawson (France)
- Tom Longley (United Kingdom)
- Hans Thoolen (Greece)
- Luis Maria Lozano (Argentina)
- Aida Maria Noval (Mexico)
- Nelly Benilde Herrera Román (Ecuador)
- Lucrecia Molina Theissen (Costa Rica)
- Nina Atallah (Palestine)
- Youssef El-Bouhairi (Morocco)
- Lars Bromley (United States)
- Sam Gregory (United States)
- William R. Pace (United States-Netherlands)

Staff

Daniel D'Esposito was also appointed Executive Director, effective 1 January 2010. Daniel was training officer and capacity building officer since 1 January 2006, and joined HURIDOCs after serving 10 years with the ICRC.

Bert Verstappen continues to function as Programme Coordinator, and is also responsible for maintaining the HURIDOCs knowledge systems (OpenEvsys, HuriSearch, and documentation resource library). Bert has been with HURIDOCs since 1986.

Katherin Machalek joined HURIDOCs in March 2009, first as analyst covering the former Soviet Union, then as project manager for this region from October 2009 onwards.

Sabrina Lambat is our finance officer, and handles accounting and payroll. She joined in October 2009 on a part time basis.

6. Renewed strategy

From March 2009 onwards, after the Conference and under the guidance of the new Board, HURIDOCS spent considerable time revisiting its strategy, learning from its experiences of the past three years. The new strategy includes the eight points below:

1. Shift our capacity-building focus towards long-term projects targeting specific organisations, as these projects have proven to be very successful in terms of impact.
2. Focus on NGOs and NHRIs based in the South, but also on those who are working under repressive regimes elsewhere, by strengthening existing capacity-building relationships and establishing new ones.
3. Build a mechanism to aggregate and disseminate learning and solutions from our capacity building work, and to spread the experience of our network members, and to make these easily accessible to all.
4. Continue to drive innovation in tools and techniques for documenting violations and managing and communicating information strategically, in particular in the use of affordable and open source web technologies for collecting, organising, protecting, visualising and communicating information for advocacy.
5. Promote good practices in effective handling of human rights information, to ensure that human rights NGO managers understand the strategic importance of their information systems, and are able to make the appropriate investment decisions to improve them.
6. Equip ourselves with the appropriate human resources and carefully grow our team to scale up our capacity to offer services.
7. Strengthen our leadership and clarify our governance procedures for increased accountability to our board, network and stakeholders.
8. Change our resource development strategy to ensure financial sustainability, by making a more effective demonstration of our impact, expanding our base of core funders, and generating income from projects to finance growth and innovation.

In 2011, HURIDOCS will strive to increase its proximity with frontline organisations, and scale up its capacity building activities, by deploying a team of regional coordinators, to provide pro bono training and support, ensure that tool development responds to needs, and undertake capacity building projects.

7. Endorsements by our partners

Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR), Phnom Penh

“HURIDOCS provided us with their WinEvsys and OpenEvsys (online) databases, and we worked with them to localize these for use in Cambodia. We’ve trained trade unions, human rights NGOs and activists on using them. Working with HURIDOCS, we are revolutionizing the way human rights

violations are monitored and documented in Cambodia, and instilling a collaborative approach to promoting and protecting human rights. Thank you HURIDOCs! ” *Ou Virak, President*

Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), Nairobi

“The training by HURIDOCs on OpenEvsys was instrumental in providing a practical platform for LRF to begin a process of managing its old and new information in a manner that is comprehensive, consistent and builds institutional sustainability. This training was delivered to both the staff and mutual partners of LRF who mainly consist of paralegals who are the core facilitators in information collection and collation. This training will build in the Research and Development Programme which is key in monitoring, reporting and e-learning for both programmatic and policy development proposals.

As you plan for 2010, please take into consideration to work with LRF in respect to more training and finalisation of the tools we are developing to ensure that we are able to activate and implement this training fully.” *Jedidah Wakonyo Waruhiu, Executive Director*

Tactical Tech Collective, Brighton

“Very soon into the training at HURIDOCs in September this year, I was making a mental list of all the NGOs and colleagues I have here in India who could benefit from the HURIDOCs approach to human rights violations documentation. It’s so simple, yet it allows for so much detail and complexity to be included. Moreover, working with the database allowed me to see how it can be modified to suit the specific cultural and social context I am working in. I know of a number of groups in India working on human rights issues but each one has its own system of recording and organizing data, it would really be useful to have the kind of uniform and precise database that HURIDOCs has developed...maybe even for the National Commission.” *Maya Ganesh, Project officer, TTC India*

“HURIDOCs training helped us understand if our existing plans for implementing a project “by a community for a community” were workable. It helped us understand what methodologies currently exist and why the “who did what to whom” model is critical. I think also getting some hands on with OpenEvsys made us come to some realizations of the challenges we will face in working with largely illiterate populations. It also gave us a much greater understanding of HURIDOCs and the existing network they have built around Human Rights Documenters.” *Dirk Slater, Project Lead, TTC UK*

SOVA Centre for Information and Analysis, Moscow

“Sova has long installed the HURIDOCs document management system on its website, and we use this system to search documents. Now, with the participation HURIDOCs work has begun on the restructuring of our web site. As a result, it should soon become more functional for both readers and for ourselves.” *Alexander Verkhovsky, Executive Director*

Global Human Rights Defence, The Hague

“HURIDOCs has been crucial in strengthening the capacities of Global Human Rights Defence in many aspects of our work. Their manuals and vocabularies on human rights documentation has guided us in the development of our frameworks and methods for fact-finding & documentation, and guided our local human rights observers in their work. Furthermore, three-day training with HURIDOCs capacity building officer helped us define the organisation's structural needs in the field of human rights information management and documentation, and it gave us an insight into the possible solutions and tools available. GHRD hope to be able to continue implementing HURIDOCs tools, such as the OpenEvsys in the future.” *Jenny Lundström, Human Rights Officer.*

United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), Bujumbura

“For the past 8 months, the Reporting Unit of the Human Rights and Justice Division of the UN's integrated mission to Burundi (BINUB) has drawn on the expertise of HURIDOCs in its efforts to prepare material and create the design needed for a human rights database. It is envisaged that this database will serve as a resource for the transitional justice mechanisms to which Burundi has committed itself. The Chief of the Reporting Unit has indicated his appreciation for HURIDOCs expertise, ready generosity in sharing it - even during the proposal writing and fundraising phase - and in particular the suppleness of the solutions HURIDOCs is able to provide. This latter feature is particular important given the particular demands faced in Burundi, such as, to cite one example, a desegregation of data in order to provide more effective care to particular categories of victims of sexual violence.” *JPT Savage, Chief of Reporting Unit, Human Rights and Justice Division*

Documentation Centre for Indigenous Peoples, Geneva

“In the framework of the Documentation Network regrouping specialized documentation centres on indigenous issues, doCip organised in partnership with Huridocs and Indigenous organizations several trainings on human rights documentation: two in English, one in Spanish and one in French. The last one took place in November 2008 in Chang Mai Thailand and the indigenous partner was the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation. Huridocs contribution has always been very appreciated by all participants in all trainings as well as by doCip. We certainly will repeat the experience if requested by indigenous peoples.” *Pierrette Birraux, Executive Director*

International Gay and Lesbian Association of Europe, Brussels

“We find cooperation with HURIDOCs very important in ILGA-Europe's efforts to support documentation work of our members throughout Europe (in particular Eastern Europe). HURIDOCs has made a very important contribution to four documentation trainings we have organised in the course of the last three years, and Judith Dueck, former vice-president of HURIDOCs, has served on the advisory panel of the Human Rights Violations Documentation Fund on voluntary basis. We find HURIDOCs to be highly professional, and we much appreciate the combination of a very thorough approach (professionalism / quality of work is never compromised) with flexibility (being able to react fast to our requests for cooperation, always willing to support our work). We hope to continue

cooperation with HURIDOCS in the next years, particularly in furthering our LGBT-related documentation work and setting up documentation systems throughout Europe.” *Maxim Amnaghichean, Executive Director*