



FOUNDING PRINCIPLES OF THE RESEDA NETWORK

Francophone network concerning caregiving and accompaniment of persons in exile who are victims of torture and of political violence

Stating both the lack of caregiving venues dedicated to victims of torture and political violence and the absence of coordinated action organized between the concerned parties engaged in this therapeutic project, the associations MANA (Bordeaux), OSIRIS (Marseille), PRIMO LEVI (Paris), and ULYSSE (Brussels) joined their efforts to contribute to the improvement of care for these individuals. The four founding associations of the RESEDA network – a francophone network dedicated to providing care and to accompany victims of torture and political violence living in exile – have gathered around a set of common ethical and therapeutic values that are outlined in this charter. These associations intend to share their clinical experience, propose improvements on the care given to patients individually as well as to their families, help develop therapeutic facilities, and expand advocacy and other public initiatives that lobby for the network's commonly shared goals.

The network conceives its action to be inscribed into the political, legal, administrative and social context that defines the work of its members, while establishing a nexus between the clinical and the political dimensions. The network entertains close partnerships with non-governmental organisations engaged in the defense of human rights and the right to political asylum, abiding by existing international conventions. The acronym RESEDA echoes the title of Aragon's poem « The Rose and the Reseda », published in 1943 as an homage to the French resistance movement. RESEDA conveys in a highly symbolic manner the particular commitment to which the associations have stated their allegiance.

The network's ethical position

1. **Political independence:** The network acts in complete independence from any political, confessional, labor union, or other type of obedience. It affirms its freedom of expression and critique vis-a-vis national public constituencies and international institutions.
2. **Non-discrimination** concerning service to beneficiaries: the associations represented in the network accept individuals seeking treatment without distinction of their administrative status, expression of opinion, gender, religion, or geographic origins.
3. **Recognition of the individual's position as a subject** defined by conscious, unconscious, and cultural dimensions.
4. **Respect for beneficiaries' traumatic history and suffering as a result of intentionally inflicted violence;** acknowledgment of the nexus between symptoms and events, with symptoms being considered within the context of repressive acts and persecutions suffered.
5. **Acknowledgment of the comprehensive nature of beneficiaries' needs** including their individual, group-related, and collective aspects, with recognition and attention paid to victims' pain and suffering. **Recognizing the importance of a multidisciplinary approach**

must not necessarily imply that beneficiaries' needs are addressed in one and the same location, since different disciplines imply at times different sets of constraints.

6. **Confidentiality and respect of beneficiaries** imply the inviolability of the professional secret, attentive listening and respect for individuals' stated expressions, recourse, if needed, to an interpreter in a language of the person's choice, respect for the individual's particular timing and process, and abstinence from any exertion of pressure or influence on the person's desire to participate in any act of public exposure, including acts of testimony.

Network's objectives

1. **Development of venues specifically dedicated to providing care** for this population, while simultaneously examining how these venues can interface with existing care facilities in the public health system.
2. **Clinical discussion and sharing of clinical practices**, development of tools allowing for the transmission of the specifics of this clinical practice, with respect to legal and political issues, while making available to everyone the results of these efforts via different channels (research, mutualisation of documentation resources, tools for outreach and communication).
3. **Actions demonstrating vigilance to legislative and procedural changes**, initiatives of advocacy, of public sensitization and any other public action on the national or European level aimed at denouncing the deterioration of the current political climate and of the worsening conditions of acceptance of exiles in host countries which constitute nowadays a form of political violence provoking the retraumatization of beneficiaries. Any action aimed at promoting more protective social and legal regulations, and that encourages caregiving interventions adapted to victims' needs.
4. **Participation in anti-torture campaigns** and actions to denounce cruel, inhuman, or otherwise degrading practices in countries of origin.

Operating rules

The founding associations that constitute for one year the network's permanent secretary defined a first phase of structuring and consolidation, abiding by the conditions laid down in this founding charter. Thereafter any physical or moral person committed or desiring to commit to providing caregiving services to victims of torture and political violence, and willing to adhere to the founding principles stated in this declaration will be able to join according to procedures as yet to be defined.

The network is committed to locate funding sources in order to attain the objectives specified in this declaration, in the spirit of solidarity that guides its actions.

The permanent secretary meets no less than three times a year. In the course of the first year any decision taken by its members has to be consensual. Thereafter, a request for network membership must first be accepted by the permanent secretary before being submitted for approval to the assembly's plenary session. If need arises the network may eventually create work groups devoted to different topics.

During the initial phase of consolidation any initiative that defends publically a position in the network's name must be unanimously approved by the founding members who need to jointly back the initiative. These rules and regulations apply for the period of the first year of the network's existence, after which they will be reviewed and completed in the light of ongoing developments.