

INVITATION

Torture during Interrogations - Illegal, Immoral, and Ineffective

September 22, 2017
8am – 9.30am ECOSOC
UN headquarters

PROGRAMME

Welcome

- ◆ Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, High Commissioner for Human Rights

Opening remarks

- ◆ H.E. Anders Samuelsen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Denmark
- ◆ H.E. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Morocco
- ◆ Ms. Lorena Fries, Undersecretary of Human Rights and Vice-Minister of Justice, Chile

Video message

- ◆ Prof. Juan E. Méndez, former UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, video message

Panel members

Moderator: Andrew Gilmour, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

Panelists:

- Ms. Nina Holm Andersen, Norwegian Police, lead investigative interviewer in the Anders Behring Breivik case;
- Mr. Mark Fallon, former NCIS Deputy Assistant Director for Counterterrorism, USA;
- Dr. Lilian Stein, Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil;
- Mr. Alexandre Zouev, Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Open discussion

Objective

The event is intended to inform discussion among Member States about the development of standards and guidelines on investigative interviewing by police and other law enforcement agencies and the attendant procedural safeguards, with the aim of assisting States to meet their fundamental legal obligations to prevent torture and ill-treatment.

Background

The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted in 1984, was a landmark event in the global fight against torture and other forms of ill-treatment and has broad-based State support, with 162 State Parties. The Convention requires states to take effective measures to prevent torture in any territory under their jurisdiction, to provide remedies and rehabilitation for victims of torture and ill-treatment, and forbids states to transport people to any country where there is reason to believe they will be tortured. The Convention underlines a fundamental principle that torture is never, under any circumstances, justified. In addition to the Convention, other relevant provisions of international law are applicable – such as Articles 7, 9, 10 and 14 of the ICCPR, and the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, and the revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).

Police, other law enforcement officers and officials from other investigative bodies are bound to respect and protect the inherent dignity and physical and mental integrity of all persons – including suspects, witnesses, and victims – during questioning. Nevertheless, even in cases in which procedural safeguards are enshrined in law, their implementation remains a challenge in some countries, while torture and other forms of ill-treatment, coercion, and intimidation against persons in custody and during interviews continues in different parts of the world.

Yet, there is a large body of scientific evidence that abusive and coercive techniques elicit unreliable information, and are indeed counterproductive, resulting in adverse operational, institutional, and public safety consequences. A growing number of States have implemented human rights-based standards and guidelines for investigations and non-coercive interviewing practices. This event will hear from some of these States about their practices, and will understand how and why such approaches have been introduced. The event will also discuss the benefits in developing guidelines on investigative interviewing.

RSVP to:

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