An interactive dialogue on the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: What next in tackling torture and ill-treatment?
CTI Annual Forum 2018

Thursday 29 November 2018

11:00 – 13:00, followed by a light lunch

Graduate Institute, Geneva

70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
what next in tackling torture and ill-treatment?

About the CTI and its Annual Forum

The Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI) is a cross-regional, 10-year inter-governmental initiative of Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco, with the purpose to facilitate technical advice, support and cooperation among States to help them overcome obstacles to ratification and/or implementation of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT). By 2024, it is CTI’s vision that every UN Member State will have ratified, and will be actively implementing the Convention, putting to rest any doubts that torture and other abuses of power or position are unacceptable in all their forms.

An essential part of achieving CTI’s goals is the support of its Friends. CTI’s Group of Friends, an informal network made up currently of 40 UN Member States, along with leading international and regional organisations, anti-torture non-governmental organisations and experts, serves as a platform for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas.¹

In June 2018, CTI launched its 2018 – 2020 Strategy outlining its priorities and activities over the next three years. CTI’s 2018 Annual Forum provides an opportunity for CTI’s Friends and other invited guests to hear about progress, provide input and advice on upcoming activities, and to discuss good experiences and challenges concerning the ratification and/or implementation of the Convention.

Group of friends

Collaboration and partnership are an integral part of CTI’s operating philosophy. CTI has been working closely with a wide group of States in all regions, as well as NGOs and experts, who bring their wealth of expertise and commitment to the Initiative.

¹ For more information on and how to join CTI’s Group of Friends see: http://www.cti2024.org/en/group-of-friends/
The 2018 Forum theme

The 2018 Forum will take place shortly before the 70th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948. A milestone document in the history of human rights, the Declaration signalled a new world order based on human rights and dignity for all. It recognises the “inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” as the “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” Article 5 stipulates that “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

Over the past 70 years, the absolute prohibition against torture as first articulated in the Declaration has become a core principle of customary international law and is one of few norms that has attained peremptory status, against which no derogation is permitted. The prohibition is enshrined in regional and international treaties, notable amongst them UNCAT, adopted in 1984 and which entered into force in 1987.

The Convention commits and guides States, through an incremental process of improvement, on effective torture prohibition, prevention, punishment and redress for victims. Now ratified by 165 States, with 11 States having joined in CTI’s first four years, momentum is building to achieving universality. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture’s latest report notes that one of the key reasons why torture persists is the “incomplete adoption of the international framework” by States, and calls for universal ratification. For CTI, universal ratification would represent a significant marker reinforcing the international community’s commitment to prevent and respond to torture and other ill-treatment in all its forms.

This progressive normative development has gone hand in hand with the establishment of relevant institutions, including in particular the UN Committee against Torture, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the UN Trust Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT) and the Sub-Committee on the Prevention of Torture. Coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the UDHR, 2018 also marks 40 years since the Trust Fund for Victims in Chile was established in 1978 (which was later transformed into the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture) as well as 30 years since the Committee against Torture reviewed its first State report. The CTI’s Annual Forum will provide a space to take stock of developments and opportunities.

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2 UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: reaffirming and strengthening the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, 20 July 2018, A/73/207, para.76 (a), at http://www.undocs.org/a/73/207.
Programme

The event will be facilitated by Dr. Alice Edwards, Head of the CTI Secretariat

10:30 – 11:00 Registration

11:00 – 11:05 Welcome and Opening Remarks H.E. Ambassador Hasan Kleib, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the UN in Geneva

11:05 – 12:00 A view from CTI: Making progress on the 2018-20 Strategy H.E. Ambassador Ramses Joseph Cleland, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the UN in Geneva; H.E. Ambassador Juan Eduardo Eguiguren, Permanent Representative of Chile to the UN in Geneva; H.E. Ambassador Morten Jespersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN in Geneva

Includes a discussion with the CTI Ambassadors

12:00 – 12:55 Interactive Dialogue, followed by discussion: What next in tackling torture and ill-treatment?

After 70 years of international consensus on the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, this inter-active dialogue will seek to reflect on how far we have come as an international community, and with a future orientation, take stock of good practices and measures taken to address current trends and challenges. The session will be guided by the following overarching questions:

(i) From UDHR to UNCAT and beyond: how far have we come in preventing and eradicating torture? What has worked, what hasn’t?
(ii) What are some of the key challenges and how can we collectively address those?
(iii) Outlook: what might the landscape regarding torture and ill-treatment look like in the years ahead?

Invited panelists:

- H.E. Ambassador Carla María Rodriguez Mancia, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the UN in Geneva
- Professor Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture
- Dr Carla Ferstman, Senior Lecturer, University of Essex, United Kingdom

12:55 – 13:00 Closing remarks H.E. Ambassador Omar Zniber, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the UN in Geneva

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch
**Bios of Panelists**

**H.E. Carla María Rodríguez Mancia, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the UN in Geneva**

Ambassador Rodríguez Mancia has been serving as Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the UN in Geneva since March 2016. Previously, she served as the Ambassador of Guatemala to Spain from 2013-2016, as Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva from 2012-2013, and as Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to the UN in Vienna from 2008-2012. Ambassador Rodríguez Mancia has served in many capacities in the course of her career, including Ambassador to the Netherlands (2006-08), Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (2006-08), Alternate Governor of Guatemala to the Common Fund for Commodities (2006-08), Director-General for International, Multilateral and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Guatemala City (2003-06), Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva (1998-03), Deputy Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization (1997-98), Minister-Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the European Communities and at the Embassy of Guatemala to Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (1993-97), and Programme Assistant, Guatemala’s Desk, UNICEF Area Office for Central America (1985-89).

Ambassador Rodríguez Mancia holds a degree in Political and Social Sciences from Rafael Landivar University, Guatemala City.

**Professor Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture**

Professor Melzer has been the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture since November 2016. He is also the Human Rights Chair of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, and Professor of International Law at the University of Glasgow. Prof. Melzer served for 12 years with the International Committee of the Red Cross as a Legal Adviser, Delegate and Deputy Head of Delegation in various zones of conflict and violence. After leaving the ICRC in 2011 he has represented civil society in the Steering Committee of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers. Prof. Melzer has also served as Senior Security Policy Adviser to the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, has carried out advisory mandates for institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss Federal Department of Defence.

Professor Melzer holds a PhD degree in Law from the University or Zurich.

**Dr. Carla Ferstman: Senior Lecturer, University of Essex**

Dr. Ferstman is Senior Lecturer in law at the University of Essex in the United Kingdom. She is a Canadian qualified barrister and solicitor (year of call 1994). She is a member of the Council of Europe's Expert Council on NGO Law and is an expert member of the Group of Friends of the Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI). Dr Ferstman has worked in the human rights field for the bulk of her career to date including for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Rwanda in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, the International Secretariat of Amnesty International in London and as Executive Legal Advisor of the Commission for Real Property Claims of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2001, Dr. Ferstman joined REDRESS, the award-winning nongovernmental organization that pursues justice on behalf of victims of torture and related international crimes, first as Legal Director and from 2004 - 2018 as Director. In 2012/13 while on sabbatical from REDRESS she was a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace.

Dr. Ferstman received her DPhil in Public International Law from the University of Oxford, her LLM in International Law from New York University and her LL.B from the University of British Columbia.
The Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI)

In March 2014, the Governments of Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco marked the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention against Torture (UNCAT) by launching a ten-year global initiative for the universal ratification and implementation of the Convention.

Vision

By 2024, universal ratification of UNCAT will be a reality. The risk of torture will be reduced as all States parties will be working actively to implement the Convention.

Objectives

The immediate objectives of the CTI are:

- To identify challenges and barriers to ratification and implementation of the UNCAT
- To address these obstacles through inter-State cooperation, assistance and dialogue.
- To become a hub for sharing knowledge and good practices between governments.
- To build a global platform of States, the UN, national and international NGOs and experts to work jointly to achieve the CTI vision.

Operating principles

The work of the CTI is guided by three fundamental principles:

**Constructive.** The CTI takes a constructive approach to the push for ratification and implementation of UNCAT. It is not the role of CTI to “name and shame” but rather to support Governments in their efforts to pursue ratification of and to implement the Convention.

**Twinning.** CTI is an initiative by and for Governments, based on mutual respect and equality, seeking to enhance the exchange of experiences and knowledge in order to learn from others with similar challenges – typically in regional settings.

**Inspirational.** CTI will inspire, not prescribe. CTI will inspire, facilitate and motivate. It will inspire countries by exposing them to the experience of other countries; facilitate by creating a platform for informal meetings with experts and through the development of useful tools; and motivate by highlighting – in the UN and to the public – States’ efforts to ratify and implement the Convention.

Organisation

The Initiative is spearheaded by the Governments of Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco and supported by a full-time Secretariat, based in Geneva.

The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) is designated to support the development of the CTI.

All UN Member States and relevant NGOs, experts and academia are invited to join the CTI’s Group of Friends. The Group of Friends will serve as a network for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas on how to overcome obstacles to ratification and implementation of the UNCAT and will be engaged in the CTI through participation in annual meetings and events in Geneva and New York.

The CTI Forum is the main annual event of the CTI and will provide a unique multi-stakeholder platform for sustained and informal exploration of the challenges related to UNCAT ratification and implementation. The CTI has the capacity to organise technical or capacity building support missions or visits to countries, as well as Geneva-based study visits.

The CTI’s website, [www.cti2024.org](http://www.cti2024.org), provides an important repository of tools and information on CTI activities.
HOW THE CTI CAN HELP

There are a number of ways that the CTI can assist States. This includes States that are considering ratification and those that have already ratified but want help to implement the Convention more effectively.

Regional meetings As a cross-regional initiative, CTI sees the advantages of regional and sub-regional exchanges between States that share legal traditions, practical similarities and friendship. Annually the CTI works with national counterparts to arrange a number of peer-to-peer government dialogues on themes of relevance to States in a region. These confidential meetings offer a unique opportunity for States to share experiences on the challenges and opportunities provided by ratification and implementation of the Convention with a view to building strong relationships between States at regional level.

Study visits The CTI can arrange “study visits” to Geneva for delegations from non-States-parties to the Convention who have shown an interest in learning more about what it means to be a State party. The visits generally consist of expert briefings on the Convention, meetings with high level UN and other Government officials, including the UN Committee against Torture, to explain and share views, and there are opportunities to observe a session of the Committee against Torture in their review of a State party report and the State party’s replies.

Country diplomatic and/or technical visits: CTI carries out a number of high-level diplomatic and/or technical delegation visits each year to States to provide assistance on a range of issues relating to ratification and implementation of the Convention. A seminar with national stakeholders may be included in such a visit. Visits are tailored to the needs and wishes of the individual Government, and are not used to lobby or pressure. The CTI will work in close partnership with the State in question to meet its exact needs.

High-level UN and regional events The CTI holds regular meetings at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva and the UN General Assembly in New York, and also at regional fora. Through these meetings, the CTI brings together States and torture prevention experts to discuss progress and opportunities for increased ratification and better implementation of the Convention.

Tools and Guides – The CTI works with expert partners to prepare tools intended to assist officials to understand and implement the Convention more effectively. These tools are practical and share good State practices.

Non-English language versions are also available.

The CTI Secretariat is also available to support States through:

- A remote help desk, responding to technical queries relating to ratification or implementation of the Convention;
- A referral service, connecting State requests for technical advice and support with appropriate partners and friends if the CTI is not best placed to support or advise;
- Partnering with a diverse range of partners and experts – CTI will keep up to date with the latest knowledge, analysis and expertise relevant to the prohibition and prevention of torture and ill-treatment.

If you could like to learn more about any of the above, please contact the CTI Secretariat:
CTI GROUP OF FRIENDS

CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE INITIATIVE

In March 2014, the Governments of Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco marked the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention against Torture by launching a ten-year global initiative for the universal ratification and implementation of the Convention.

The Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI) provides technical advice, support and cooperation among States parties as well as non-States-parties to the Convention – in order to help States overcome technical and capacity-related obstacles to ratification and implementation of the Convention.

CTI GROUP OF FRIENDS

The CTI is achieving progress with the help of its many Friends. Governments, international, regional and non-governmental organisations and experts sharing the vision and the ambition of the CTI are invited to join the initiative by becoming members of the CTI Group of Friends.

Who: The CTI Group of Friends consists of UN Member States Governmental Friends and Non-Governmental Friends. All 193 UN Member States are invited to participate in the Group of Friends. NGOs, international and regional organisations, experts, researchers and academics are invited on the basis of expertise, track-record and potential for contributing to the objectives of the CTI.

What: The Group of Friends serves as a platform for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas on how to overcome obstacles to ratification and implementation of the UNCAT.

Friends of the CTI are involved in the achievements, progress and development of the CTI through various forums. In particular, Friends are invited to attend the CTI’s Annual Forum which provides an opportunity for Friends to inter alia provide input and advice on the overall strategic direction of the CTI, as well as to address specific regional and thematic challenges in the ratification and/or implementation of the Convention.

Membership of the Group of Friends does not come with specific obligations or commitments, however, Friends are expected to share the vision and goals of the CTI and to work positively to those ends. The CTI Secretariat welcomes specific offers of support.

Current members (updated on a rolling basis):

States: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, The Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Luxembourg, Macedonia (former Yugoslav Republic of), Moldova, Montenegro, Myanmar, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA.


Experts: A wide number of experts working in the field of torture prevention and response, as well as the policing, intelligence, corrections and justice sectors are included in the CTI Friends.

The full list of CTI Friends can be found at: https://cti2024.org/en/group-of-friends/

How: Interest in joining the CTI Group of Friends can be indicated by letter or email to the CTI Secretariat info@cti2024.org.
Thank you for your participation and support over the last year. Wishing you all a good end to 2018 and further great collaboration in 2019.