

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

28th Session – Item 3 General Debate

Statement by the Convention against Torture Initiative on behalf of a group of States

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Thank you, Mr. President,

I have the pleasure of speaking on behalf of the governments of Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco as initiators of the Convention against Torture Initiative.

Mr. President,

We have given ourselves the challenge of achieving universal ratification and implementation of The Convention against Torture before 2024. Our strategy is as simple as we believe it is effective: We will as governments assist and inspire each other to achieve incremental, yet significant progress with tangible results on the ground.

With this in mind, allow us to draw the Council's attention to the progress achieved by a number of States, which may serve as an inspiration for us all.

First, we congratulate and welcome **Eritrea**, the **State of Palestine** and **Vietnam** on their UNCAT ratifications during the past year bringing the number of States parties to an impressive 157. We furthermore welcome the process being undertaken by the Government of **Fiji** to implement a UPR recommendation of ratification of the UNCAT by conducting a national review process, including a current parliamentary hearing on the matter. The CTI looks forward to cooperate and support Fiji in its continued endeavors on this matter.

We congratulate **Finland**, **Greece**, **Lithuania**, **Niger**, **Mongolia** and **Mozambique** who along with **Morocco** are the newest States parties to OPCAT bringing the number of States parties to 77. We also congratulate the countries that established their Parliamentary Ombudsperson's Office as their National Preventive Mechanisms in 2014, among others **Finland**, **Greece**, and **Norway**.

We congratulate **Brazil** for the recent establishment of a National System for the Prevention of Torture and a National Preventative Mechanism. We also commend the publication of Brazil's National Truth Commission's report. Uncovering the truth about past abuses is an important step towards preventing future abuses, including torture.

We congratulate **Uganda** for domesticating the Convention against Torture after cooperation between the Government, Parliament, the National Human Rights Institution, and civil society during the drafting and adoption processes.

We also take the opportunity to welcome the efforts of **Thailand** and **Nepal** who like **Indonesia** are reviewing domestic laws to bring them in line with the international definition provided in the Convention.

We commend the **United States** for the publication of the summary report on the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Let the report inspire

and remind us all of the importance of constant self-scrutiny in the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

While recognizing that the national achievements highlighted here do not in and by themselves guarantee that torture will be eradicated, we firmly believe, that they are important steps towards a better global implementation of the Convention.

We would also like to recognize and extend our thanks to the 21 UN member states who have already signed up to the Group of Friends of the Convention against Torture Initiative: Australia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Kingdom and Uruguay. As well as to the range of leading UN experts and NGOs who have joined the Friends' group. In order to widen the platform for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas on how to achieve universal ratification and implementation of The Convention against Torture, we reiterate our invitation to *all* UN member states to join the Group of Friends of the CTI.

Finally, we strongly encourage States that have not yet taken steps towards ratification of the UN Convention against Torture and its optional protocol to join our efforts and consider ratification. The Convention against Torture Initiative stands ready to support any State wishing to advance on this issue.

I thank you, Mr. President.