



CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE INITIATIVE
CTI2024.ORG

2020

2022

STRATEGY

To strengthen institutions, policies and practices and to reduce the risks of torture and ill-treatment through applying the UN Convention against Torture



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OUR VISION

We want, once and for all, to remove torture from the toolkit of terror and oppression and to put an end to the profound traumas and societal wounds caused by this violent practice.

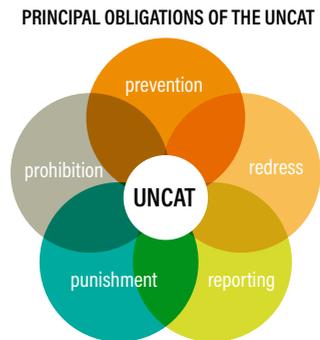
By 2024, the risk of torture and ill-treatment will be reduced as all States will have joined the UN Convention against Torture and will be working actively to implement it.

THE CTI APPROACH



The Convention against Torture Initiative, launched in 2014 as an inter-governmental, cross-regional endeavour, aspires to strengthen institutions, policies and practices for dignified and rule-based governance and to reduce and prevent the risks of torture and ill-treatment through

- dialogue and exchange,
- technical assistance, capacity-building support and institution-strengthening,
- sharing evidence-based recommendations, expert advice and best practices,
- developing, compiling and translating practical examples, experiences, tools, resources and other materials,
- convening seminars, conferences and workshops,
- hosting a platform for information and knowledge dissemination and awareness raising.



CTI's work focuses on the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (the Convention, or UNCAT) as the principal international instrument establishing essential elements of effective torture prohibition, prevention and response. UNCAT offers a practical, actionable framework for integrating institutional, legislative, judicial and executive measures to combat lacunae in laws, policies and procedures, with a view to strengthening the fairness and efficiency of the justice system, and the rule of law and good governance, particularly in the areas of police, prisons and security sector reforms. Such measures contribute in turn to the development of the country, including Sustainable Development Goal 16, democratic transition/consolidation and peaceful communities.

The CTI is committed to increasing awareness of the benefits of UNCAT, of sharing good State practices, as well as expanding our institutional engagement with government ministries and other relevant stakeholders. CTI supports governments in overcoming particular challenges standing in the way of full implementation, such as gaps in resource, human capacity and technical expertise. CTI's capacity building and other support packages are, therefore, geared for ODA-recipient countries.



WHO WE ARE



The Initiative is an inter-governmental, cross-regional initiative comprised of the Governments of Chile, Denmark, Fiji,* Ghana, Indonesia and Morocco, supported by a full-time Secretariat, based in Geneva. The six CTI core States spearheading the initiative are engaged through their direct bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, as well as through sharing and exchanging on their national practices and challenges with other governments and by hosting and participating in various activities. For its part, the CTI Secretariat provides policy and strategic advice to the CTI core States, and delivers an annual programme of activities providing capacity building and technical advice.

The CTI's work is encouraged and bolstered through a [Group of Friends](#), a network based on cooperation, allowing for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas regarding how best to overcome obstacles to full implementation of UNCAT.

The [Association for the Prevention of Torture](#) (APT) is a strategic partner of the CTI, collaborating and advising the CTI on its activities.

* Fiji joined the CTI as a core State in February 2019.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES



Constructive

The CTI is an initiative by States for States, through which experiences and good practices can be shared in a constructive (“no name, no shame”) way. This collaborative approach allows States to discuss sensitive issues that they may not otherwise be prepared to discuss in other settings. It is clear that no State has a perfect record in this area, and acknowledging this has helped CTI support frank and positive discussions.

Twinning

CTI seeks to enhance the exchange of experiences and knowledge between States in order to learn from others with similar challenges, usually through regional or sub-regional settings, and based on equality between States and mutual respect.

Inspirational

CTI aims to inspire, facilitate and motivate by exposing the positive experiences of other countries through peer-to-peer bilateral and multilateral engagement and the development of practical tools. CTI will also motivate by highlighting – in the UN and to the public – States’ efforts to ratify and implement the Convention.

PARTNERSHIPS



Collaboration and partnerships are an integral part of the CTI’s operating philosophy. CTI has been working closely with a wide group of States in different regions, particularly developing countries in Asia/Pacific, the Caribbean and Africa. A diverse number of international and regional organisations, NGOs and independent experts have joined the [CTI’s Friends](#), and have contributed to a range of CTI activities, bringing their wealth of expertise and commitment to the issues at hand.

ACTIVITIES



Capacity building and institution-strengthening

Direct engagement at national level, with national governments, policy-makers, practitioners, national institutions, civil society and other stakeholders allows for deeper understanding and identification of national opportunities, challenges and experiences, as well as ways to overcome obstacles. Such engagement builds positive relations between CTI and States and within relevant ministers, government departments and other interlocutors. For the period 2020-22, CTI will therefore annually plan a programme of country visits to ODA-recipient countries, guided by careful analysis and the needs and requests of governments. Such visits offer both diplomatic solidarity and technical expertise and capacity building assistance, opportunities for exchange and dialogue, and strategizing for government policy-making and delivery. CTI conducts technical seminars to accompany such visits or as stand-alone events, at the request of governments.

Peer-to-peer exchanges

As a cross-regional initiative, the CTI sees the strategic advantages of convening peer-to-peer regional and sub-regional exchanges between States that share legal traditions, practical similarities and friendship, as well as technical and capacity building seminars and workshops. Activities will also be pursued between non-geographical groupings, such as engaging with the important group of LDCs and SIDS, fostering greater opportunities within and amongst Commonwealth countries, and other organisations such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

As a multi-stakeholder platform for information sharing and exploring challenges and good practices, the CTI core States will host an Annual Forum, and other meetings, to keep CTI's Friends and others informed of progress and achievements and to highlight and to canvass key global issues and developments.

Technical advice, tools and resources

The CTI develops and disseminates comprehensive, implementable tools and resources covering operational, policy and laws. To date, CTI tools have compiled over 100 examples of good and innovative practices, and are available in over 8 different languages (Arabic, English, French, Indonesian Bahasa, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian).

Additionally, CTI's expert team in the CTI Secretariat provides one-on-one technical advice to governments and institutions in developing countries, through its “remote help desk”, responding confidentially to technical queries on a wide range of issues, including UNCAT obligations, legislative reviews and drafting of anti-torture laws and policies, and operational changes in policing, prisons, security and justice sectors. CTI Secretariat also operates as a “referral service” connecting requests for technical or capacity support with appropriate partners and friends, where the CTI Secretariat is not best placed to support or advise.



Platform for state of the art knowledge transfer

CTI collaborates with and inducts a diverse range of expert partners to bring the most up-to-date knowledge, analysis and expertise to bear on the work of CTI. CTI's website, www.cti2024.org, provides a repository of tools and information on UNCAT, in a simple uncluttered format, with over 4,800 unique users and 20,300+ page views per year. The website posts major CTI news items, event reports, tools and other resources, as well as generate an e-newsletter seasonally for those registered. Given the importance of disseminating CTI tools, materials and resources in multiple languages, CTI maintains its “e-library” of CTI materials and resources available in other languages. The CTI will also continue to build and maintain a social presence. CTI will expand and enhance communication on the vision, work and successes of the CTI in relevant publications, media and other outlets, with a view to building global momentum and raising greater awareness.

Awareness-raising

GENEVA: As the human rights home of the United Nations, CTI is engaged in awareness-raising, information-sharing and promoting ratification¹ and implementation of UNCAT through relevant United Nations' mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Human Rights Council (HRC), the UN Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the HRC, and the deliberations of the four UN anti-torture entities, the UN Committee against Torture (CAT), the Sub-Committee on the Prevention of Torture, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, and the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. CTI further collaborates and partners, where relevant, with divisions of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including the capacity-building programme, to identify synergies and opportunities.

Along with other criteria, the UPR will continue to guide and indicate political willingness to ratify and implement UNCAT. CTI will engage with States regarding meeting their voluntary commitments. During the first and second cycles, ratification of UNCAT and improved implementation on torture-related themes were in the [top 5 recommendations](#) made by States to other States. In the years ahead, CTI core States will continue to reach out to ODA-recipient countries, in particular during the period leading up to and following their UPR.

NEW YORK: The United Nations in New York's Third Committee and agendas including security, counter-terrorism, policing and development mean that the CTI needs to know and be oriented to the important discussions taking place there. The UN in New York is also a key location for bilateral discussions with LDCs and SIDS as UN Member States that do not have permanent missions in Geneva. The CTI also aim to play a helpful role in aligning approaches between Geneva and New York.

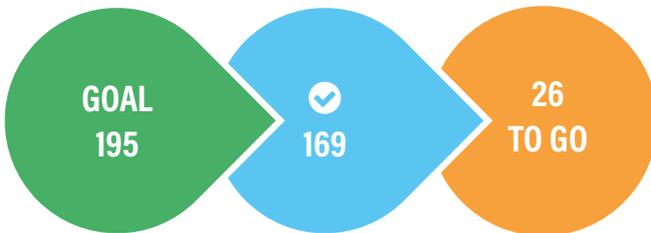
REGIONAL BODIES: CTI has partnered with a number of regional organisations (ASEAN, ACHPR and the CPTA, the Council of Europe, the OSCE) in the design and delivery of CTI's programme of regional seminars, and will continue to do so during 2020-22. In addition, CTI will seek to raise greater awareness of the Convention at the sessions of regional organisations, where relevant.

¹ This strategy uses the term 'ratification' throughout to refer both to ratification and accession. Both are allowed under the Convention.

ACHIEVING UNIVERSALITY



The general prohibition against torture is universal. However, specific obligations of UNCAT are not universally applicable, because not all States are yet party to the Convention. While ratifying UNCAT makes an international commitment against torture and ill-treatment, the benefits of domestic implementation are clear. In particular, through processes of preparation, capacity building, consultation, and transparency, public trust in institutions and authorities can be enhanced, and knowledge and expertise of national authorities can be improved.



The majority of States still to ratify the Convention are ODA-recipient countries (77%), with over 50% located in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Since the CTI was launched in 2014, 15 States have joined the Convention, of which the large majority 13 out of 15 (87%) are ODA-recipient countries, and they are now working towards implementation. A State's decision to ratify UNCAT is thus an indicator of progress as well as a catalyser for further capacity building as well as a commitment to ongoing legislative, institutional and practical reforms. For this reason, CTI works with ODA-recipient countries broadly on torture prevention and response and specifically on the implementation of UNCAT both prior and posterior to ratification.



TOWARDS EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION



In working with States to prevent and eradicate torture and ill-treatment, it is necessary to understand the conditions that allow it to occur, and how and why it persists. Research shows that a combination of political, economic, legal, cultural and social processes and structures create the conditions conducive to its use. Evidence also shows that the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society are more likely to be at risk of ill-treatment.

As individuals who torture or abuse their position of power or authority are only one part of a complex bureaucracy, any approaches to preventing torture and ill-treatment should address all aspects that contribute to the overall process that permits such practices, and be properly located within broader processes and structures governing the rule of law and the administration of justice.

At the centre of CTI's approach to eradicate and prevent torture is UNCAT: UNCAT guides States, step-by-step, on how to put in place policies, legislation and prevention responses, with ample flexibility for States to tailor them to their national constitutional, legal and practical realities.

CTI's work will cover a range of areas relevant to the fight against torture and ill-treatment and to broader processes of institution-strengthening, such as advising governments on legislative reforms, as well as on practical implementation such as police custody, complaints and investigations, interviewing techniques, safeguards and procedures, prison overcrowding and conditions, juvenile justice, the link between corruption and violent government practices, security/counter-terrorism, independent visiting or oversight bodies, and other aspects of the justice sector that support fairness, transparency and accountability, such as the rule of non-admission of torture-tainted evidence in court proceedings.

REPORTING TO COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE



Reporting to the UN Committee against Torture (per Article 19, UNCAT) is a key obligation as well as important indicator of progress and positive source of advice. CTI will continue to support LDCs and SIDS in submitting their initial report. CTI will also raise awareness of good practices in this area including through disseminating CTI's [implementation tool on reporting](#). This work will be closely coordinated with the OHCHR's capacity building initiative.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION



As part of efforts to monitor, evaluate and report on progress and impact, updates will be provided to the Group of Friends, a public annual report will be prepared by the CTI Secretariat, and an annual forum will bring together CTI Friends to discuss progress and opportunities.

UPDATING



This is a revised Strategy, replacing the Strategy for the period 2018-20, taking into account the addition of Fiji as the sixth CTI core State in February 2019, and other developments. It will be updated as required.

Updated March 2020*



**EACH
YEAR**



AT LEAST 3 STATES

will benefit from a CTI in-country visit or study visit, expanding local knowledge, capacity and readiness to implement UNCAT.



UP TO 10 STATES

will receive expert advice on UNCAT and related legal and operational matters from the CTI Secretariat's "help desk" or through other means.



30+ SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

will participate in CTI's technical and capacity-building seminars, conferences and workshops.

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