

SIDE-EVENT AT THE COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (CCPCJ)

Implementing the New 'Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering' – Towards Better and Fairer Administration of Justice

PRE-RECORDED STATEMENT BY H.E. RAMSES JOSEPH CLELAND, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA
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(Check against delivery)

**Excellencies,
Distinguished speakers and participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Government of Ghana, and as a Core State of the Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI), I welcome the completion of the *Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering* and I am delighted to be speaking at this side-event today.

Let me start by thanking the organisers, the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), a key partner of CTI; the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum; the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights and the Justice Section of UNODC for inviting me and for putting together this very timely and important event.

Since 2014, the CTI Core States have been leading a ten-year global and cross-regional initiative, supporting States through confidential dialogue, exchange and experience-sharing towards ratification and implementation of the UN Convention against Torture (UNCAT), with a view to achieving universal ratification of the Convention and improved implementation by 2024. CTI has made it one of its key strategic priorities to support States in their torture prevention efforts through the implementation of safeguards against torture and ill-treatment in the first hours of police custody, including on investigative interviewing techniques. CTI has held regional seminars where States have shared their experiences and challenges in implementing safeguards against torture and ill-treatment, and we have regularly received requests for further training and awareness-raising on the benefits of non-coercive interviewing techniques.

Last month, Ghana hosted a professional online training workshop, in which CTI partnered with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa, gathering senior representatives of the police service and criminal justice system of five West African countries, alongside major international experts in policing, forensic psychology and torture prevention. I must confess that the workshop was timely and effectively organized. The workshop created the platform for those of us in West Africa to engage with senior police officials and justice policy makers on how we can move away from coercive interrogation methods and embrace investigative interviewing, which allows police and law enforcement to gather accurate and reliable information, even as it reduces incentives to resort to coercive interrogation methods and decreases risks of false confessions and allegations of police misconduct. The workshop illustrated the considerable interest in effective interviewing and the equally considerable capacity for change that resides within law enforcement agencies.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome the completion of the 'Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering', which can provide a normative base for the implementation of non-coercive interviewing and reliable information-gathering, a key element in fighting crime. I, therefore, trust that the implementation in practice will lead to better outcomes for investigations and, at the same time, a reduction in the risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Lastly, it's good to remind ourselves that the UN Convention against Torture requires States to systematically review interrogation methods and practices with a view to preventing acts of torture. The new Principles, therefore, should assist State parties across the globe to move one step further towards the eradication of all acts of torture, prompting reviews of police questioning methods and supporting broader police reform efforts domestically.

I thank you for your attention and I wish you a fruitful and successful event.