UNITED AGAINST TORTURE

On Human Rights Day, We Rise Together Against Torture

As we mark Human Rights Day, the United Against Torture Consortium by Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT), REDRESS, the Omega Research Foundation, and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) reflects on a year of collective resolve and impact. Since 2023, the consortium has supported more than 12,000 survivors, advanced landmark legal and policy reforms, strengthened hundreds of civil society organisations, and mobilised millions through global advocacy. From historic ratifications of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) to rapid crisis responses and survivor-led initiatives shaping UN agendas, our movement continues to defend dignity and push for accountability worldwide. Together, we remain steadfast in building a world free from torture — a commitment we renew as we close out 2025 and look ahead to the work still to come.

OUR IMPACT

Support to survivors: Over 12,000 survivors of torture received legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance.

Global advocacy impact: Over 2 million people were reached through campaigns and survivor testimonies, including regional and youth-led initiatives.

Global advocacy success: UATC's efforts as part of the Torture-Free Trade Network led to the revision of the EU anti-torture regulation.

Strengthening civil society: 227 anti-torture CSOs in 55 countries received funding and 227 engaged directly with the UN Committee against Torture.

Legal and policy wins: We achieved 29 legal victories securing accountability and justice for victims in 19 countries; 59 initiatives advanced National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs).

Rapid crisis response: We launched timely interventions in response to urgent torture situations in Bangladesh, Palestine and the DRC.

Voices of survivors at the heart of UN work: We held regional hearings of survivors in Africa, Asia and Latin America, informing an upcoming thematic report of the UN Special Rapporteur on torture on experiences and perspectives of victims and survivors of torture and other ill-treatment.

Historic policy win in Colombia: After years of coordinated efforts with local partners and a survivor-led movement, Colombia ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) on 10 November 2025.

Movement building: Over 40 human rights defenders from Africa gathered in Banjul for two days of strategic discussions, knowledge sharing, and solidarity.

IN FOCUS

Advancing Torture Prevention in Bangladesh

On 17 July 2025, Bangladesh acceded to OPCAT, and the Convention against Torture itself entered into force a month later. This historic step marks a milestone in the country's human rights journey and signals a strong commitment to dignity, accountability, and justice.

Read more

Healing as Justice for Survivors

From Burundi to Nepal, and Chile to India, survivors of torture have a fundamental human right to rehabilitation. Through the IRCT, 17 UATC consortium partners are supporting 5,000 survivors to rebuild their lives.

Read more

New Initiative to Improve Access to Justice for Pretrial Detainees

In August 2025, ACAT Benin, with support from FIACAT and UATC, launched a project to guarantee access to justice for pretrial detainees in three prisons in Benin, aiming to strengthen judicial actors' skills and protect prisoners' rights.

Read more

Alarming Use of Sexual Violence to Suppress Latin American Protests

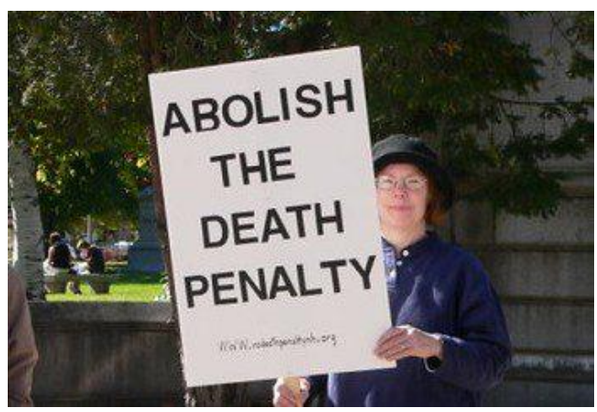
A ground-breaking report by REDRESS and partners exposes how sexual and gender-based violence is systematically used by State actors in Latin America to punish and deter peaceful protesters, with women and LGBTIQ+ groups particularly targeted.

Read more

UN Torture-Free Trade Advocacy

In October, Omega joined a Torture-Free Trade advocacy mission to the UN headquarters in New York, where they called on States to end the trade in tools of torture and to support a legally-binding Torture-Free Trade Treaty.

Read more



Exposing the Death Penalty for What It Really Is: Torture by Design

On World Day Against the Death Penalty, data from the Global Index on Torture by OMCT and partners highlighted how the death penalty is no just vulnerable to abuse in practice, it is, by its very design, a system of torture and cruel, inhuman treatment and punishment.

Read more

MOVEMENT CORNER

Litigators Group Denounce Massacre in Brazil

OMCT's Latin American Group of Litigators denounced the massacre on 28 October 2025 during a police operation against organised crime in northern Rio de Janeiro, which killed 132 people. They condemned the criminalisation of residents, and called for a transparent investigation.

Read more

UATC Gathers 40 Human Rights Actors in Banjul for Strategic Discussions

Our regional partners' meeting in Banjul, The Gambia, brought together 45 human rights actors from 16 countries to share best practices and advance coordinated efforts on torture prevention, accountability and survivor support.

Read more

Chile Issues Historic Apology to the Family of a Torture Victim

Following Chile's historic recognition of the harm caused by Leopoldo García Lucero's torture and exile under the Pinochet's regime, and the State's decades-long failure to deliver justice, the García family reflects on pain, healing and hope.

Read more

WATCH

Growing Impunity: Interview with a Peruvian Human Rights Defender

Tania Pariona Tarqui, an indigenous Quechua human rights defender and the Executive Secretary of the

Crisis in Palestine: Providing Care to Traumatised Victims

The war in Gaza cut the Community Mental Health Programme from treating seriously traumatised

Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos warns on the current threats to women's rights, justice, and accountability in Peru.

Palestinians. A UATC grant enabled TRC in the West Bank to run a support hotline, document torture and provide psychological care.

Torture Crisis in India: Can it Lead on Peace and Security Globally?

Despite its global influence, India faces a torture crisis at home. This video and our report explain why legal reform and the ratification of the UN Convention against Torture are necessary to align India's aspirations with its human rights leadership.

Torture and Democracy: Why This Fight Matters for Youth Today

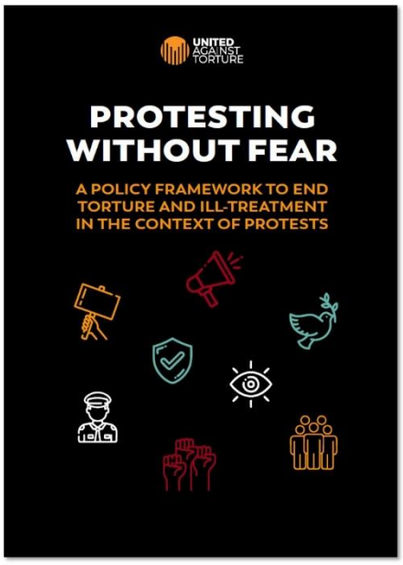
Why is the issue of torture integral to the fight for democracy? And does it matter to young people today? Find out at IRCT's new TikTok account, featuring videos from the UATC partners' meeting in The Gambia.

PUBLICATIONS

Guidance Note to Help Document Misuse of Police Weapons in Protests

"Challenging repression" is a new practical tool from UATC designed to help monitors safeguard the right to peaceful assembly. It provides an overview of the law enforcement weapons commonly used against protesters, guidance on legal standards, and instructions on how to document incidents, turning evidence into effective advocacy and accountability.

Read the guide



Protecting the Right to Protest: Exposing Global Repression

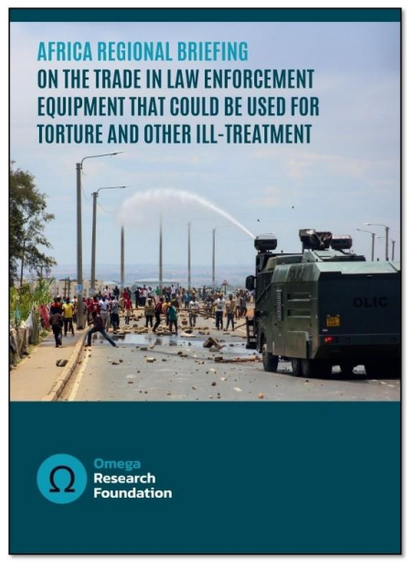
This policy paper from UATC, “Protesting Without Fear”, exposes the global repression of peaceful protest through unlawful force amounting to torture and other ill-treatment. It urges governments and stakeholders to take immediate action to safeguard the fundamental right to protest.

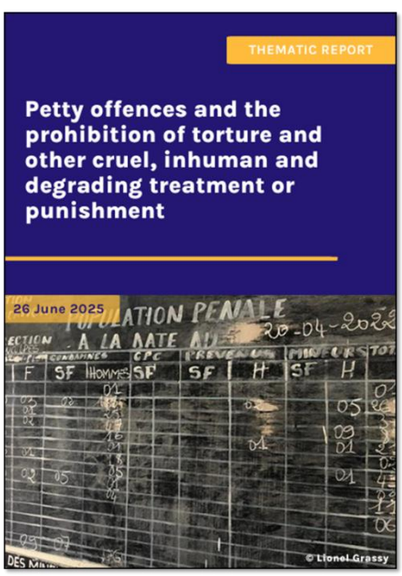
Read the policy paper

Africa Regional Briefing on the Trade in Law Enforcement Equipment that Could Be Used for Torture

As new research exposes the African trade in tools used for torture between 2020 and 2024, Omega and global partners have called for strict controls on law enforcement equipment that can be used for torture and other ill-treatment.

Read the briefing





Petty Offences and the Prohibition of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Punishment or Treatment

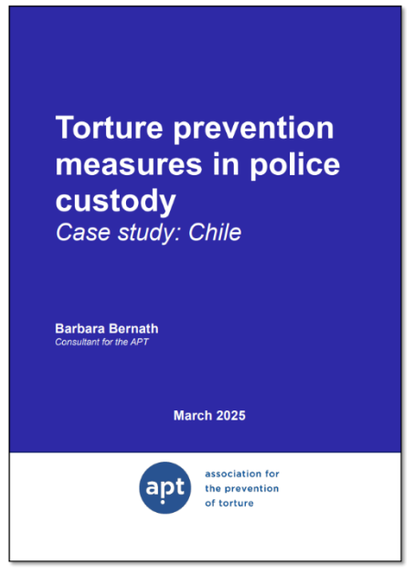
This new FIACAT policy brief shows how criminalising petty offences caused unnecessary arrests and prison overcrowding. It also urges States to adopt human rights-based reforms.

Read the report

Torture Prevention in Practice: Chile Case Study

APT's latest study examines Chile's mixed progress on torture prevention since 2019, analysing police reforms, training, legal access, and oversight, and identifying key steps needed to strengthen protection.

Read the case study



This newsletter was written in collaboration with the United Against Torture Consortium (UATC) and our network members. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the UATC and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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OMCT SOS-Torture Network

REDRESS Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

fiacat

apt association for the prevention of torture

irct International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims

Omega Research Foundation

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