



WORLD ORGANISATION AGAINST TORTURE (OMCT)

PRESS RELEASE

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

Victims' rights must be centre stage in global fight against torture

Geneva, 26th of June 2012. On the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), the leading global civil society coalition against torture, calls on States and the international community to increase its efforts to protect victims of torture and to end impunity for acts of torture.

'The UN Day for the Victims of Torture should remind us all that the protection of victims and their rights must be centre stage of the global anti-torture efforts', said Gerald Staberock, OMCT Secretary General.

In a special video message launched today (*see below*), members of the OMCT General Assembly, representing its global network against torture, highlight the importance of June 26 globally and the need to act resolutely to protect victims of torture.

'Much more needs to be done to ensure that victims are protected, that remedies are made to work in practice, that investigations into torture are conducted with independence and that those responsible are effectively brought to justice. This is fundamental for victims to re-establish their lives. And without justice for victims of torture will not be prevented in the future', he added.

Victims of torture have rights under international law and States have clear obligations to provide remedies and reparation to victims, including rehabilitation and compensation. Yet the OMCT observes daily that remedies fail in practice and that reparations are rarely provided to victims of torture. Multiple legal and practical impediments continue to prevent independent investigations into the crime of torture. Impunity remains the rule in many parts of the world.

On the occasion of the UN Day for the Victims of Torture the OMCT is conducting a number of special events that will be published on a specially designated website as part of its global campaign for the Absolute Prohibition of Torture and Ill-treatment, notably through the Manifesto entitled "Nothing can justify torture under any circumstances", which has already been signed by more than 4,000 signatories, including ten laureates of the Nobel Prize.

'Indeed June 26 should not only serve to remind States of their obligations to respect and guarantee the absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, but that the fight against torture can only be effective if the public in our societies rejects and denounces such barbaric practices and demands from their governments effective steps to protect victims of torture', said the OMCT.

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For further information on OMCT's Campaign and June 26:

www.omct.org/assistance-to-victims/events/2012/06/d21843/

To watch the video, click on <http://vimeo.com/44444662>