



**60th session of the Human Rights Council
Item 2 – Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention**

Oral statement by the World Organisation Against Torture

17 September 2025

Madame Vice-President,

The World Organisation against Torture welcomes this dialogue and shares the Group's concern over the use of pretrial detention. Our Global Torture Index shows that nearly half of all countries fail to separate pretrial detainees from convicted prisoners, despite this being an essential safeguard.

We also witness an extremely high rate of children held without sentencing—close to 80 or 90% in some countries. Many spend months, even years in detention, where they face an alarming risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Detention is further misused to silence human rights defenders. In our 2024 report *Censorship by Detention*, we documented 444 cases across 17 countries, where detention became a form of punishment itself.

In Peru, mass arrests during the 2022–23 protests arbitrarily targeted women, children, and indigenous people. In Tajikistan, defenders like lawyer Manuchehr Kholiqnazarov remain imprisoned, even after the Working Group declared his detention arbitrary and called for his release.

We urge States to comply with the Working Group's opinions and end the misuse of detention. Victims deserve justice.

Thank you.