



# Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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## Committee against Torture

### Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Honduras\*

1. The Committee against Torture considered the second periodic report of Honduras (CAT/C/HND/2) at its 1436th and 1439th meetings (see CAT/C/SR.1436 and 1439), held on 27 and 28 July 2016, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 1455th meeting, held on 10 August 2016.

#### A. Introduction

2. The Committee would like to express its appreciation to the State party for agreeing to follow the optional reporting procedure, as this allows for a more focused dialogue between the State party and the Committee. However, the Committee regrets that the State party's second periodic report was submitted two years late.

#### B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the State party has ratified or become a party to all the core human rights instruments in force and welcomes the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 16 August 2010.

4. The Committee welcomes the following legislative measures taken by the State party in areas related to the Convention:

(a) The amendment of article 209-A of the Criminal Code by Decree No. 22-2011 of 22 March 2011, which prohibits torture in accordance with article 1 of the Convention, as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (see CAT/C/HND/CO/1, para. 7);

(b) The inclusion in 2012 and 2013 of new provisions in the Criminal Code (arts. 333-A and 118-A) establishing the offences of enforced disappearance and femicide, respectively;

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its fifty-eighth session (25 July-12 August 2016).



(c) The reform of the Code of Criminal Procedure, particularly the changes regarding the protection of victims and witnesses, the presumption of innocence, the application of non-custodial sentences and prison benefits;

(d) The adoption of the Trafficking in Persons Act, Decree No. 59-2012 of 25 April 2012;

(e) The adoption of the Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials, Decree No. 34-2015 of 15 May 2015;

(f) The adoption of Executive Decree No. 031-2016 of 3 May 2016, establishing the “Ciudad Mujer” Presidential Programme for the comprehensive support of women, particularly victims of gender-based violence.

5. The Committee commends the State party’s efforts to adjust its policies and procedures in order to afford greater protection for human rights and to apply the Convention, in particular:

(a) The establishment of the national preventive mechanism, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, which began work in September 2010;

(b) The publication of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on 7 July 2011;

(c) The adoption on 22 January 2013 of the Public Policy and National Plan of Action on Human Rights 2013-2022;

(d) The establishment of a process for conducting a purge of the police pursuant to the adoption by Congress in April 2016 of Decree No. 21-2016, declaring a state of emergency for reasons of national security and public interest and calling for a purge of the National Police.

6. The Committee welcomes the signing on 4 May 2015 of an agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government of Honduras on the establishment of a country office in Honduras.

7. Lastly, the Committee appreciates that the State party maintains a standing invitation to the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council.

## **C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations**

### **Pending follow-up issues from the previous reporting cycle**

8. The Committee appreciates the additional information provided by the State party in its second periodic report (CAT/C/HND/2, paras. 230-253) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 9 (fundamental safeguards), 11 (enforced or involuntary disappearances), 13 (trafficking in persons), 14 (pretrial detention), 18 (persons with mental impairment or illnesses deprived of their liberty) and 19 (“unlawful associations”) of its previous concluding observations. The Committee finds it regrettable, however, that that information was not transmitted on the date indicated in the previous concluding observations (CAT/C/HND/CO/1, para. 31) for consideration under the follow-up procedure.

### **Appropriate penalties for torture**

9. While taking note of the contents of the draft Criminal Code currently being considered by parliament, the Committee notes with concern that article 209-A of the

Criminal Code still provides for different punishments depending on the gravity of the harm caused to the victim without establishing criteria that would enable an objective assessment of that harm. The Committee also takes note of the explanations provided by the delegation on the ongoing work to bring the definition and punishment of the offence of torture in military criminal law into line with the Convention (art. 4).

**10. Recalling that penalties commensurate with the gravity of the crime of torture are indispensable if they are to have a deterrent effect, the Committee urges the State party to amend its criminal legislation, including its military criminal legislation, so as to ensure that all acts of torture are punishable by appropriate penalties that take into account their grave nature, in accordance with article 4 (2) of the Convention.**

#### **Safeguards**

11. According to the information provided by the State party, the number of public defenders working in police stations and courts remains insufficient, despite the introduction of a special shift to respond to requests for free legal assistance. The Committee is also concerned by the complaints of arbitrary arrests made for identification purposes, the irregularities in the maintenance of and access to detention records, and the difficulties faced by persons in police custody seeking an independent medical examination (art. 2).

**12. The State party should:**

(a) **Ensure that, in practice, persons deprived of their liberty enjoy all the fundamental legal safeguards from the moment of their arrest, in particular the right to be informed of the reasons for their arrest and the nature of the charges against them, the right to be registered at the place of detention, the right to receive prompt legal assistance and the right to request a medical examination by a doctor of their choice;**

(b) **Ensure that detention registers are properly maintained and guarantee access to those registers;**

(c) **Strengthen the resources available to the Directorate-General of Public Defence.**

#### **Militarization of public security services and the prison system**

13. In view of the State party's efforts to reduce the high levels of violence associated with transnational organized crime and gangs, the Committee expresses concern about the reports of numerous complaints of human rights violations, including acts of torture, committed by members of the armed forces in the performance of police duties. In this connection, the Committee notes with concern that, although Decree No. 198-2011 of 11 November 2011 authorized the army to perform police duties "temporarily" and "in emergencies", the period during which this decree-law is in force has been extended and the armed forces' powers expanded by subsequent amendments to the Organic Act on the National Police. Other causes for concern are the proliferation of new security forces and agencies, the privatization of public security work and alleged abuses by employees of private security companies (arts. 2, 11, 12, 13 and 16).

**14. The State party should ensure that all cases and complaints of human rights violations and abuses, including those related to acts of torture and ill-treatment, are investigated promptly, effectively and impartially and that the perpetrators are tried and given sentences commensurate with the gravity of their acts. The Committee urges the State party to live up to its public commitment to begin to redeploy those armed forces supporting the forces of law and order during the last quarter of 2016.**

**Control and management of the prison system**

15. While taking note of the adoption in 2012 of the National Prison System Act and the preparation of the National Prison Policy, the Committee notes with concern that the armed forces and the police now control and manage prisons, where, nevertheless, situations of inmate self-rule sometimes occur. It is also concerned that remand centres have been set up for persons accused of ordinary crimes in at least three military facilities (art. 11).

**16. The Committee urges the State party to prioritize handing over the management of prisons to the National Prison Institute. The State party should end the practice of detaining persons accused of ordinary crimes in military facilities.**

**Purge of the National Police**

17. While taking note of the information provided by the State party on the purge of the National Police, the Committee finds it regrettable that no reasons were given for the dismissal of 42 per cent of the 459 police officers evaluated so far. It also expresses concern about the absence of information on criminal proceedings taken against members of the National Police who were dismissed for acts in breach of the Convention (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

**18. The State party should:**

(a) **Ensure that the purge of the National Police is transparent, impartial and effective, in accordance with the law;**

(b) **Ensure that the alleged perpetrators of acts of torture and ill-treatment, including individuals in positions of command, are duly tried and, if found guilty, punished with sentences commensurate with the gravity of their acts;**

(c) **Ensure that victims of police abuse receive redress, including fair and adequate compensation, and the fullest possible rehabilitation.**

**Conditions of detention**

19. The Committee notes with concern the difficult conditions faced by persons deprived of their liberty in the State party's prisons, particularly because of overcrowding, the lack of security in prisons, inadequate facilities, a shortage of trained personnel and the absence of rehabilitation programmes for prisoners. In this regard, the Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation indicating that four new prisons, including a large one with a capacity of 2,000, would be opening soon, and that these are a response from the State party to the large increase in the prison population in recent years. In addition, the Committee looks favourably on other recent measures taken by the State party to reduce prison overcrowding, especially the proactive identification of remand prisoners eligible for prison benefits and the amendment to article 184 of the Code of Criminal Procedure that removes the restrictions on the use of alternatives to deprivation of liberty for 21 offences. The Committee also expresses concern about the unreliability of health services and the persistent shortage of medical staff in prisons. Lastly, the Committee regrets that there is no guarantee that remand prisoners will be separated from convicted prisoners serving their sentences and that some mixed prisons do not have separate facilities for women detainees or prisoners (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

**20. The State party should:**

(a) **Redouble its efforts to relieve overcrowding in penal institutions, mainly by making use of alternatives to custodial sentences;**

(b) **Continue working to improve existing penal facilities;**

- (c) **Guarantee security inside prisons by providing appropriate training to prison staff and by developing strategies to reduce violence among prisoners;**
- (d) **Ensure the strict separation of remand prisoners from prisoners serving sentences. In mixed prisons, the women's wing should be completely separate from the men's wing;**
- (e) **Allocate, without delay, the resources needed to provide prisoners with proper medical and health care;**
- (f) **Develop programmes for the social reintegration of inmates.**

#### **Act on Work for Persons Deprived of their Liberty and the Regime for Highly Dangerous and Aggressive Prisoners**

21. The Committee takes note of the delegation's explanations about the Act on Work for Persons Deprived of their Liberty and the Regime for Highly Dangerous and Aggressive Prisoners (Decree No. 101-2015), particularly as regards its assurances that the prison work regulated by the Act is voluntary. In this connection, the Committee draws the State party's attention to rules 96 to 103 and 116 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). The Committee is nevertheless concerned about the provisions governing the treatment of prisoners considered to be highly dangerous and aggressive, as in practice they are subjected to a regime of prolonged isolation for the period of their sentence (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

22. **The State party should ensure that its legislation and practices regarding prison labour and solitary confinement comply with international rules, notably rules 43 to 46, 96 to 103, and 116 of the Nelson Mandela Rules.**

#### **Minors in detention**

23. While taking note of recently amended article 332 of the Criminal Code (on unlawful association), the Committee notes with concern the increase in the number of minors held in detention centres in the State party, 90 per cent of whom are being detained because they are members of gangs. The Committee also expresses its concern about the problems with the administration of juvenile justice in the State party observed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/HND/CO/4-5, paras. 83 and 84) (arts. 11 and 16).

24. **The Committee urges the State party to take the necessary measures to prevent the recruitment of children and to protect them from violence by gangs and other criminal groups, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/HND/CO/4-5, para. 38). The State party should ensure full implementation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines).**

#### **Deaths in custody**

25. The Committee is concerned that, between January 2009 and June 2014, in total there were 91 natural deaths and 153 violent deaths in the prison system, even though there was an overall reduction in the number of violent deaths during the reporting period. The Committee also notes with concern that 81 of these violent deaths occurred in the San Pedro Sula prison. While noting the statistical data provided by the delegation on the causes of death in these cases, the Committee is concerned by the lack of information on the results of the investigations. Moreover, the Committee has not received any information on

measures taken to prevent the recurrence of similar cases, or on any compensation provided to the victims' relatives (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

**26. The State party should, without delay, undertake thorough, impartial investigations into all cases in which persons have died while in custody and, where appropriate, carry out autopsies. The State party should determine whether prison officials and members of the armed forces and the police are in any way responsible for such deaths and, if so, punish the guilty parties and provide the victims' family members with adequate redress.**

#### **Inspection and complaint mechanisms**

27. The Committee expresses its concern about reports it has received of cases where the prosecution service and enforcement judges have had difficulty accessing prisons, in particular after armed forces personnel were assigned the task of guarding persons deprived of liberty. The Committee is also concerned that, notwithstanding the provisions of article 297 of the implementing regulations of the National Prison System Act on submitting complaints to the prison administration, efforts to establish internal mechanisms for submitting complaints in places of detention in the State party are still ongoing (arts. 2, 11, 12, 13 and 16).

**28. The State party should ensure that all places of detention are subject to regular and independent inspections. It should also guarantee the right of detainees to lodge complaints, and the effectiveness of those complaints should be evaluated periodically.**

#### **National preventive mechanism**

29. While noting the explanations provided by the delegation, the Committee remains concerned about the budgetary constraints facing the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment. According to the information submitted by the National Committee itself, the funds allocated to it are not sufficient to enable it to function normally. The Committee expresses its concern that the system currently in place for selecting and appointing the three experts who make up the National Committee does not seem to include the necessary procedures to ensure the candidates' functional independence and the absence of any conflicts of interest. Lastly, the Committee deplores the lack of information provided on measures taken by the State party in response to the recommendations made by the National Committee (art. 2).

**30. The State party should ensure that the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment has sufficient resources to carry out its role effectively and independently, in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Committee urges the State party to adopt criteria for the selection of the National Committee's members based on the guidelines on national preventive mechanisms issued by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (see CAT/OP/12/5, paras. 16-20). The State party should also ensure effective follow-up on and implementation of the recommendations made by the National Committee on the basis of its monitoring activities (ibid, paras. 13 and 38).**

#### **Complaints of torture and ill-treatment**

31. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party, according to which the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights received 253 complaints of torture between 2009 and 2014, while the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights — the country's national human rights institution — registered 912 complaints of

torture and ill-treatment between 2010 and 2014, with the most serious cases being referred to the Public Prosecution Service. Between 2009 and 2013, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights submitted 54 applications for prosecution against 92 police officers, members of the armed forces and other public officials, although during the same period only four custodial sentences were handed down for acts of torture, and none of those sentences was longer than 5 years. The Committee also expresses its concern about the considerable budgetary constraints facing the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights. The Committee appreciates the explanations provided by the delegation about the amendments to article 13 of the Military Police Act, but it still has misgivings about the fact that the competence to investigate complaints concerning the actions of the military police lies with the Prosecution Unit Attached to the Military Police and not the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights. Lastly, the Committee notes with concern the shortcomings in the victim and witness protection programme as described by the State party in its periodic report (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

**32. The State party should:**

**(a) Ensure that all complaints of torture or ill-treatment are promptly investigated in an impartial manner by an independent body, that there is no institutional or hierarchical relationship between that body's investigators and suspected perpetrators of such acts and that the suspected perpetrators are duly tried and, if found guilty, are punished in a manner that is commensurate with the gravity of their acts;**

**(b) Ensure that the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights has the necessary resources to carry out its duties;**

**(c) Ensure that the authorities undertake investigations on their own initiative whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture or ill-treatment has been committed;**

**(d) Ensure that, in practice, complainants and witnesses are protected from reprisals and acts of intimidation stemming from their complaint or testimony.**

**Excessive use of force**

33. While the Committee appreciates the information provided by the State party on the preparation of a draft bill on the use of force, it is concerned by reports that point to an increase in the number of complaints of excessive use of force by members of the armed forces and the National Police. The Committee regrets that it has no data on the corresponding investigations (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

**34. The State party should:**

**(a) Ensure that prompt, impartial and effective investigations are undertaken into all allegations relating to the excessive use of force by law enforcement officials and soldiers and ensure that the perpetrators are prosecuted and the victims adequately compensated;**

**(b) Increase its efforts to systematically provide training to all law enforcement officials on the use of force, especially in the context of demonstrations, taking due account of the Basic Principles on the Use of Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.**

**Social protest and the suppression of demonstrations calling for a return to the rule of constitutional law**

35. The Committee deems insufficient the explanations provided by the State party with regard to the meagre results achieved in the investigation and prosecution of serious human rights violations, including acts of torture and ill-treatment, carried out in 2009 in the context of social protest and the suppression of demonstrations calling for a return to the rule of constitutional law. The Committee has also not received any information about the alleged obstruction of criminal investigations into such acts by members of the armed forces and officers of the various directorates of the National Police (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

**36. The State party should:**

(a) **Ensure that prompt, impartial and effective investigations are conducted into all allegations concerning violations of the Convention committed by police officers and members of the armed forces following the events of 28 June 2009, and provide information about the progress made in the investigations and criminal proceedings initiated;**

(b) **Ensure that the alleged perpetrators of and accomplices to torture, including persons in positions of command, are duly prosecuted and, if found guilty, given penalties commensurate with the grave nature of their acts.**

**Independence of the judiciary**

37. The Committee expresses its concern about the irregularities found in the highly politicized disciplinary proceedings brought against judges and magistrates during the reporting period, in particular those relating to unfair dismissals following the 2009 coup d'état. In this regard, the Committee hopes that the State party will implement the judgment rendered on 5 October 2015 by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the case of *López Lone et al. v. Honduras* once the Court has issued a decision with respect to the written statement submitted by Honduras on 4 February 2016. The Committee is also concerned about the concentration of administrative and judicial functions in the hands of the President of the Supreme Court as a result of the dissolution of the Council of the Judiciary following the judgment issued by the High Court on 11 February 2011, which declared unconstitutional the Act on the Council of the Judiciary and the Judicial Service. While noting that a draft bill on a new council of the judiciary is being prepared, the Committee deplores the fact that the judicial service is at present governed once again by the Judicial Service Act of 1980, which is marred by serious shortcomings with respect to disciplinary proceedings (art. 2).

**38. In the light of its previous recommendation (CAT/C/HND/CO/1, para. 10), the Committee considers it essential that legislative measures be adopted to guarantee the independence of the judiciary. In addition, the Committee wishes to draw the State party's attention to the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct (E/CN.4/2003/65, annex). The State party should take the necessary legislative measures to guarantee the separation of administrative and judicial functions within the judiciary.**

**Enforced disappearance**

39. The Committee notes with concern the lack of progress in the search for and identification of the remains of persons who disappeared under the authoritarian regimes prior to 1982. It also expresses its concern about the lack of information on measures of redress and compensation ordered by the courts or other State bodies (arts. 2, 12, 13, 14 and 16).

40. **Recalling the Committee's previous recommendation (CAT/C/HND/CO/1, para. 11), the State party should take appropriate measures to ensure effective and impartial investigations into all outstanding cases of alleged enforced disappearance, prosecute the perpetrators and, where appropriate, punish them and provide compensation to the families of the victims. The State party should ensure that the relatives of disappeared persons receive comprehensive information about their rights as victims.**

#### **Redress and rehabilitation**

41. While noting the existence of a bill on comprehensive compensation for victims of human rights violations, the Committee is concerned that, since the consideration of the initial report in 2009, no claims for redress for acts of torture or ill-treatment have been submitted, nor have the courts ordered any measures of redress or compensation for victims of torture. Nevertheless, the Committee appreciates the information provided by the delegation on the amicable settlement reached with representatives of the families of the persons who perished in the fire that broke out in the Comayagua prison on 14 February 2012. The Committee is also concerned that it has not received information on the implementation of programmes to provide redress, including treatment for trauma and other forms of rehabilitation, to victims of torture (art. 14).

42. **The Committee would like to draw the State party's attention to its general comment No. 3 (2012) on the implementation of article 14 by States parties, which describes in detail the nature and scope of States parties' obligation to provide full redress and the means for full rehabilitation to victims of torture. In particular, the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Consider the possibility of conducting a needs assessment with respect to redress for victims of torture in collaboration with specialized civil society organizations;**

(b) **Provide all victims of torture or ill-treatment with full redress for the harm they have suffered, which should include fair and adequate compensation and as full rehabilitation as possible.**

#### **Human rights defenders and other representatives of civil society who are at risk**

43. The Committee condemns the numerous deadly attacks carried out against human rights defenders, journalists and environmental activists since the consideration of the initial report in 2009. In this regard, the Committee finds it regrettable that the delegation of the State party has not provided any further information about the investigations that point to the involvement of a serving army officer in the murder of Berta Cáceres and that it has not commented on news reports indicating that her name was on a blacklist held by an elite army unit. The Committee is also concerned by reports of threats, assaults and other acts of intimidation against human rights defenders and civil society representatives, as well as the apparent impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of those acts. While noting the recent adoption of the Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials, the Committee expresses its concern about the lack of information on specific measures taken in response to the 38 requests for protection filed with the Directorate-General of the National System for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders as at June 2016. Lastly, the Committee also expresses its concern about reports of public statements made by high-ranking State officials discrediting the work of human rights defenders and journalists, thereby putting them at risk of physical harm (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

44. **The Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Provide detailed information on the prosecution of those responsible for the death of Berta Cáceres;**

(b) **Ensure that journalists, human rights defenders and other representatives of civil society are protected from acts of intimidation and violence to which they may be exposed because of their activities;**

(c) **Ensure that all incidents involving threats or attacks directed at journalists, human rights defenders and members of civil society organizations are promptly and impartially investigated.**

#### **Gender-based violence**

45. The Committee shares the State party's concern about the increase in the number of women murdered in Honduras in recent years. It is particularly concerned by reports indicating a pattern of extreme violence against women and girls, including abductions, disappearances, torture in "mad houses" and the burial of bodies in clandestine grave sites. In addition, the State party's delegation indicated that, in 2015 alone, 36,284 cases of domestic and family violence had been registered by specialized courts and another 2,400 cases of family violence had been registered by the criminal courts. Although the delegation stated that 96.06 per cent of the cases of sexual violence reported in 2015 had already been brought to court, the Committee remains concerned about the low number of convictions handed down by the courts for sexual violence and other forms of violence against women during the reporting period (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

46. **The Committee urges the State party to redouble its efforts to combat all forms of gender-based violence and to ensure that all complaints are thoroughly investigated and that suspected offenders are prosecuted and, if convicted, punished appropriately. The State party should also ensure that victims receive full redress for the harm suffered, including fair and adequate compensation and the fullest rehabilitation possible. Public awareness-raising campaigns concerning violence against women should also be expanded.**

#### **Abortion**

47. The Committee is concerned about the restrictions on access to abortion, especially for rape victims, set out in the State party's criminal legislation, which permits the voluntary termination of pregnancy only when the mother's life is at risk.

48. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that women, especially victims of rape, who voluntarily decide to terminate their pregnancy have access to safe, legal abortions.**

#### **Violence committed on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity**

49. The Committee expresses its concern at the information included in the periodic report about violent deaths of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, in particular the murder of 11 transgender women between 2010 and 2013. According to the information provided, the alleged perpetrators have been prosecuted in only two of these cases, including one case that resulted in an acquittal (arts. 2 and 16).

50. **The State party should ensure the personal safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in all spheres, including in places of detention. It should also ensure that murders and assaults motivated by a person's sexual orientation or gender identity are investigated and that the persons responsible are brought to justice.**

## Training

51. While noting the efforts made by the State party to provide human rights training to members of the security forces and the armed forces, the Committee finds it regrettable that it has not received any information about the development of mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of those training programmes in reducing the number of cases of torture and ill-treatment. The Committee appreciates the cooperation between the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, the Public Prosecution Service, the Judicial Training College, the Directorate-General of Forensic Medicine and civil society organizations in conducting training on the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) (art. 10).

52. **The State party should:**

(a) **Continue to conduct and review mandatory training programmes in order to ensure that all civil servants, and particularly security and armed forces personnel, fully understand the provisions of the Convention and are fully aware that offences will not be tolerated and will instead be investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted;**

(b) **Establish a methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes as a means of reducing the number of cases of torture and ill-treatment;**

(c) **Ensure that all relevant staff, including medical personnel, are specifically trained to identify cases of torture and ill-treatment, in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol;**

(d) **Strengthen efforts to raise awareness and provide education about gender-based violence for public officials who work directly with victims.**

## Follow-up procedure

53. The Committee requests the State party to provide, by 12 August 2017, information on follow-up to the Committee's recommendations contained in paragraphs 16, 20 (a) and (c), 30 and 44. In that context, the State party is invited to inform the Committee about its plans for implementing, within the coming reporting period, some or all of the remaining recommendations in the concluding observations.

## Other issues

54. The Committee encourages the State party to consider making the declarations provided for in articles 21 and 22 of the Convention.

55. The State party is requested to disseminate widely the report submitted to the Committee and the present concluding observations, in appropriate languages, through official websites, the media and non-governmental organizations.

56. The Committee invites the State party to submit its third periodic report by 12 August 2020. To that end, and in view of the fact that the State party has agreed to report to the Committee under the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee will, in due course, transmit to the State party a list of issues prior to reporting. The State party's replies to that list of issues will constitute its third periodic report under article 19 of the Convention.