

PROGRAMME – EU NGO HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM 2016 – BRUSSELS

United against all forms of Torture

Applying a cross-cutting perspective to prevent, prohibit, and redress torture globally

(Venue: Thon Hotel EU, Rue de la Loi 75, 1040 Brussels)

2016 is a key moment for global engagement against torture and ill-treatment, and to take stock of achievements and challenges in the fight against torture and ill-treatment worldwide. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT), the 29th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the latter prohibiting torture and ill-treatment in Article 7. Addressing torture and ill-treatment remains as urgent as ever against the backdrop of the global and European migration crises, counter-terrorism efforts and the shrinking space for independent civil society, in particular the repression of human rights defenders.

Objectives

Within the context of the new 2015-2019 EU Action Plan for Human Rights and Democracy, and in particular the objective to prevent, fight and redress torture and ill-treatment, the EU NGO Forum will facilitate open dialogue, bringing together representatives of the European institutions, EU Member States, international organisations and global civil society, including practitioners and human rights defenders, to:

- **analyse the challenges in the eradication of torture and ill-treatment;**
- **assess the impact of existing responses in policy and practice;**
- **identify best practices to circulate and ways to improve the effectiveness of existing policy and practice ;**
- **foster connections, exchange and partnerships.**

Format

The programme will offer a mix of interactive plenary sessions, exchanges with high-level decision-makers, and working groups that focus on analysis and outcomes. We propose three main cross-cutting areas of focus for discussion:

- Most vulnerable groups, specific risks and needs for protection.
- Ensuring Accountability and Redress.
- The fight against torture and ill-treatment in today's foreign and domestic security policy agenda.

Each working group will allow for an interactive exchange with a moderator, kicked off by speakers, with facilitators to spark discussion and a rapporteur. Each group will begin by looking broadly at the issues to identify key threats and challenges, before moving into more in-depth discussions of specific themes/case studies. It will end with a final session to draw together and build on the conclusions of the individual discussions, suggest ways to improve the effectiveness of current policies and practices and identify key next steps and outcomes.

Day 1 – Thursday, 1 December 2016

REGISTRATION from 08:00 till 09:00 (NB: registration is required to receive headphones to listen to simultaneous interpretation!)

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| 09.00-10.30 | <p>Opening – Introductions from the EU and HRDN</p> <p>Opening Panel – A Global Outlook</p> <p><i>(Analysis of current state of play – to take stock of achievements and challenges in the fight against torture globally)</i></p> <p>Moderator: Carla Fertsman, Director of REDRESS</p> <p>Josef Weidenholzer, DROI member, European Parliament</p> <p>Stavros Lambrinidis – EU Special Representative on Human Rights</p> <p>Salih Osman, 2007 Sakharov Prize Laureate</p> <p>Gerald Staberock, Secretary General, World Organisation Against Torture,</p> |
| 1030-11.00 | Coffee Break |

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| | <p>WORKING GROUP I – Groups Vulnerable to Torture and Ill-Treatment</p> <p><i>Some individuals are disproportionately exposed to risks of torture and ill-treatment because of their age, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, ethnicity, physical and mental health, or economic situation. Groups which face marginalisation or discrimination in society are at specific risk when deprived of their liberty in prisons, police stations, psychiatric institutions, or other places from which one cannot leave at one's own free will.</i></p> <p><i>This working group will analyse the specific vulnerabilities to risks of torture of specific groups within broader society in order to protect them and address their needs.</i></p> | <p>WORKING GROUP II – Ensuring Accountability and Redress</p> <p><i>Despite the high priority accorded by the international community, the fight against impunity remains a challenge, especially in light of recent negative developments in the human rights sphere, such as the shrinking space for civil society and pressures on human rights defenders. While impunity often reaches appalling levels, fighting it requires a multifaceted approach.</i></p> <p><i>This working group will look at a number of elements related to prevention, documentation, redress and rehabilitation.</i></p> | <p>WORKING GROUP III – Speaking of Torture and Ill-Treatment Explicitly in Today's Foreign and Domestic Security Policy</p> <p><i>The absolute ban on torture and ill-treatment is enshrined in core UN human rights conventions to which the European Union and its Member States are committed in law, policy and practice. However, despite the efforts by the EU and the wider international community, torture and other ill-treatment persist in all parts of the world.</i></p> <p><i>This working group will look how the EU and Member States can more explicitly address torture in foreign and domestic security policy, and particularly in three topics identified as major challenges for human rights at a global level: counter-terrorism policies, shrinking space for civil society organisations, and migration, including the role that civil society can play in this process.</i></p> |
| 11.00-11.30 | Introduction and Identification of the Issues | Introduction and Identification of the Issues | Introduction and Identification of the Issues |
| 11.30-13.00 | Gender Perspective on Torture and Ill-Treatment: Women and Girls | Shedding Light on Systemic Risks and Dealing with Individual Cases: Detention Monitoring and Documentation | Torture in the Context of Counter-Terrorism |
| 13.00-14.30 | Lunch | | |

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| 14.30-16.00 | Age Perspective on Torture and Ill-Treatment: Children | Ensuring Accountability through Justice Mechanisms | Torture in the Context of Shrinking Space for Civil Society |
| 16.00-16.30 | Coffee Break | | |
| 16.30-18.00 | <p>Plenary – Fighting Torture and Ill-treatment – Consistency in Protecting Fundamental Rights and Effective Use of the International Instruments</p> <p><i>(Reflections on torture and ill-treatment as a cross-cutting issue, covering several areas of human rights work – including the shrinking space and work of human rights defenders, as well as external and internal EU policies – to analyse how strategies should be joined up for an integrated EU approach to human rights)</i></p> <p>Moderator: Mercedes Garcia Perez, Head of the Human Rights Division, EEAS</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Jean Louis Ville, Director a.i., European Commission, DG DEVCO</p> <p>Hannah Forster, Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa (ACPHR)</p> <p>Mykola Gnatovskyy, Chair of the CPT of Council of Europe</p> <p>FIACAT President - Sylvie Bukhari-de Pontual</p> | | |
| 18.00-20.00 | Networking Event | | |

Day 2 – Friday, 2 December 2016

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| 09.00-10.30 | Acts of Torture and Ill-Treatment Targeting Minorities and Indigenous people | Establishing Victim-Centred Approaches through Rehabilitation and Redress | Torture in the Context of People on the Move (migration) |
| 10.30 – 10.45 | Christian Leffler, EEAS Deputy Secretary General | | |
| 10.45-11.00 | Coffee | | |
| 11.00-13.00 | Summary and Ways Forward | Summary and Ways Forward | Summary and Ways Forward |
| 13.00-13.40 | EU HRVP F. Mogherini's address (tbc) | | |
| 13.40-15.00 | Lunch | | |
| 15.00-16.45 | <p>Plenary – Next Steps, Follow Up and Reflections – What has Emerged?</p> <p><i>(The discussion will begin with 5-minute reports by the rapporteurs on proceedings from the 3 Working Groups)</i></p> <p>Moderator: Barbara Bernath, Association for the Prevention of Torture</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Mercedes Garcia Perez, Head of the Human Rights Division, EEAS</p> <p>François Crépeau, UN Special Rapporteur on Migrants (video message)</p> <p>2-minute video on the OPCAT</p> <p>Mari Amos, Head of the Europe Regional Team, UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture, UN SPT (Conference call/Skype)</p> <p>Iverna McGowan, Head of European Institutions Office & Advocacy Director, Amnesty International</p> | | |
| 16.4-17.00 | Closing | | |