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News stories

## **EU steps up efforts towards a torture-free world**



You, me, anyone could be a victim of torture. Torture is a crime that takes place in different forms and in different settings. Whilst prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is absolute in international law, it continues to be challenged all over the world.

For more than 20 years already, the EU has been giving high priority to the eradication of torture and other ill-treatment that still rank among the most abhorrent violations of human rights and human dignity.

To this end, the EU has put in place dedicated [Guidelines](#) updated in 2019, that foresee the use of all available tools of diplomacy and of concrete actions to achieve the main objective of combating torture and other ill-treatment, ranging from political dialogues with third countries to the assistance to civil society organisations' projects, notably through the [European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights](#).

The current revision of the guidelines on EU policy towards third countries on Torture and other ill-treatment reflects a number of policy developments both at global and EU level since 2012 such as the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) or the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy.

Video of The European Union is strongly opposed to any kind of acts of torture

The updated EU Guidelines also include references to important issues such as enforced disappearances, sexual and gender based violence, migration, transitional justice, victims' rights and torture-free trade. They also include a non-exhaustive list of contexts where torture may occur.

They highlight the key role of monitoring mechanisms in general, and independent national preventive mechanisms in particular, as well as of civil society and human rights defenders who courageously raise their voices against torture around the world.

They recognise the relevance of a comprehensive approach to eradicate torture encompassing prohibition, prevention, accountability and redress for the victims. This is why, for example, in Uganda, the EU supports the Accountability for Torture and Rights' Enhancement project, which provides holistic rehabilitation services to torture survivors with specific emphasis on women, children and the elderly. In addition to rehabilitation, focus is laid on advocating for the prevention of torture, seeking for accountability to hold perpetrators to account for their actions and restore the survivors' rights to remedy and reparations.

Eradication of torture can only be achieved through a global effort. Continuous engagement with our partners at all levels will be crucial to build a torture-free world for all.

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