



Lebanon has to criminalize torture! A call to the Lebanese Deputies

As we approach the International Human Rights Day on December 10, our organizations join efforts to call again upon the Lebanese authorities to criminalize the practice of torture.

Lebanon ratified the Convention against Torture in 2000 and reaffirmed its resolve to combat torture when acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture in 2008. However, the practice of torture still prevails.

Every year, hundreds of persons are tortured during the investigations or in detention places, for various reasons, and their lives remain forever altered by this traumatizing experience.

Curbing down the practice of torture in Lebanon will never achieve results as long as the perpetrators are not properly prosecuted and punished.

Right now, the Lebanese legislation does not include a comprehensive definition of the crime of torture and fails to provide for appropriate punishment for those who commit torture.

Our organizations call upon the Members of the Parliament in Lebanon to enact the draft law on torture criminalization that has been under study by the Law and Administration Committee of the Parliament since December 2012 in a timely manner. We call on them as well to complete this process in the most transparent way, especially if substantial changes are to be introduced to the initial proposal.

According to the Convention against Torture, the term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

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In addition to criminalizing torture in order to put an end to this inhumane practice, the law needs to reinforce the rule of law. Ceasing a culture of impunity among state institutions will allow human dignity to be upheld by duty bearers

Beirut, December 2, 2013

Signatories:

- Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH),
- Centre Nassim for the rehabilitation of victims of torture,
- ALEF – Act for Human Rights
- Justice and Mercy Association (AJEM)
- Alkarama Foundation
- Restart Center for the rehabilitation of victims of violence and torture
- World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

This press conference is part of the campaign entitled “Nothing can justify torture” conducted by the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT).

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