

2nd Jean-Jacques Gautier Symposium

Addressing vulnerabilities of LGBT persons in detention

3–4 June 2015

Geneva, Switzerland

Overview

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons have historically faced and continue to face discrimination and violence around the world. When deprived of their liberty, they find themselves in a particular situation of vulnerability and are at risk of serious human rights violations. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has stated that “sexual minorities are often considered as a sub-category of prisoners and detained in worse conditions of detention than the larger prison population. The Special Rapporteur has received information according to which members of sexual minorities in detention have been subjected to considerable violence, especially sexual assault and rape, by fellow inmates and, at times, by prison guards.”

National Preventive Mechanisms (NPM) established according to the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) have an important role to play in preventing abuses and ill-treatment against LGBT persons in detention. The Symposium aims to provide a unique forum for exchange and discussion on the issue of the vulnerability of LGBT persons deprived of their liberty. Fifteen NPMs and other key actors will be present. These two days will also help NPMs in carrying out their preventive mandate by identifying good practices in monitoring the conditions of LGBT persons deprived of their liberty.

Objectives

Day 1: NPMs and other experts

- ✓ Examine the risk factors and situations which contribute to abuse and ill-treatments of LGBT persons in detention.
- ✓ Discuss key issues regarding the difficulties faced when monitoring places where LGBT persons are deprived of liberty.
- ✓ Reinforce cooperation between NPMs and other key actors.

Day 2: NPMs

- ✓ Discuss challenges faced by NPMs in carrying out their preventive mandate with regard to the specific issues addressed on the first day of the Symposium.
- ✓ Exchange good practices and working methods between NPMs.
- ✓ Strengthen cooperation between NPMs.

Outcomes and outputs

- ✓ Participants will have a clear understanding of situations of vulnerability faced by LGBT persons in detention.
- ✓ NPMs will have identified strategies to address these issues in carrying out their preventive mandate.
- ✓ Contacts between participants will help build future collaboration.
- ✓ Working methods of NPMs will be adapted to address vulnerabilities of LGBT persons in detention.
- ✓ The 2nd Jean-Jacques NPM Symposium outcome report will be made public.

Symposium Organisation

The June 2015 meeting is the second of a series of “**Jean-Jacques Gautier Symposiums**”. The Symposium is an international forum, unique in its kind, allowing the exchange of knowledge and practices on the issue of vulnerabilities in detention. In 2014, the first symposium focused on the special vulnerability of children in detention¹. This new edition will look at the situation of LGBT persons deprived of their liberty.

Participants at this event will include fifteen NPMs from all regions of the world, regional and international monitoring bodies (including the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture, SPT) and other experts with extensive knowledge of the issue. The limited number of participants is intended to create an environment which enables exchange and discussion among participants.

Each session will begin with a few brief presentations addressing specific issues and will be followed by discussions among all participants, allowing them to share good practices as well as challenges. Simultaneous interpretation will be available in English, French and Spanish.

- Day 1 :

The first day will gather all participants: NPM representatives, experts, and representatives of regional and international monitoring bodies. The aim is to identify risk factors that lead to abuse and ill-treatment against LGBT persons deprived of their liberty, as well as to highlight key issues. This day will also offer the possibility to identify strategies for NPMs to effectively address these issues in their daily work. Finally, the meeting will also be an opportunity for NPMs and other stakeholders to meet and understand each other's work and to initiate or strengthen cooperation.

- Day 2 :

The second day will gather only NPM representatives as well as the SPT representative in a smaller setting, with the objective of debating challenges faced in the implementation of their preventive mandate. This meeting will also be an opportunity for NPMs to share their practices and working methods, in order to reflect on their actions regarding LGBT persons in detention.

¹ The outcome report of the first symposium : “Addressing children’s vulnerabilities in detention” is available here:
<http://www.apt.ch/en/resources/addressing-children-s-vulnerabilities-in-detention-jean-jacques-gautier-npm-symposium-2014-outcome-report/?cat=61>