

**Chronology of the process on the adoption of the Robben Island Guidelines:  
An active and constructive co-operation with the African Commission on Human and  
Peoples' Rights (Commission).**

**1. October 2000, 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission**

- In his declaration, the APT Program Officer for Africa requested that the Commission moves towards the adoption of a plan of action for the prevention of torture in Africa and proposed that the APT and the Commission organise jointly a meeting of experts which would elaborate concrete measures of prevention to be subsequently submitted to the Commission for adoption.

**2. January 2001**

- By a letter of 16 January 2001, the Secretary of the Commission informed the APT that the Commission gave a warm reception to its proposal of organising a workshop on the prevention of torture and asks that the APT moves on with this project.

**3. April 2001, 29<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission**

- The APT presented to the Commission a draft paper on the organisation of the workshop and gave detailed information on important issues, such as the goals, the themes to be discussed and the expected results of this workshop.

**4. August 2001**

- By a letter of 6 August 2001, the Secretary of the Commission informed the APT that Commissioner Andrew Chigovera was appointed by the Commission to co-ordinate the organisation of the workshop with the APT.

**5. October 2001, 30<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission**

- The Commission met with the APT, in private session, in order to discuss the progress made on the preparation of the workshop. Decision on some practical issues was taken. The date and place of the workshop were set.

**6. November 2001 – January 2002**

- Participants to the workshop were invited jointly by the APT and the Commission and background papers and workshop documents were prepared. The necessary contacts were taken and logistical arrangements made.

**7. 12-14 February 2002**

- The workshop took place in Cape Town on 12-13 February and, on 14 February, a final declaration as well as guidelines and measures for the prohibition and the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in Africa adopted in Robben Island. They were called "The Robben Island Guidelines".

## **8. May 2002, 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Commission**

- The NGO Forum which participating in the session of the Commission supported the results of the workshop and recommended that the Commission adopt a resolution endorsing the Robben Island Guidelines. To this end, the Forum submitted a draft resolution to the Commission, which however postponed its debate on the issue to its 32<sup>nd</sup> session.

## **9. July 2002**

- The participants to the international Seminar on torture, organised by the FIACAT,<sup>1</sup> in Dakar, Senegal, recommended to the African Commission to move forward in the prevention of torture in Africa and to rapidly adopt a resolution of approval of the Robben Island Guidelines.

## **10. October 2002, 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission**

- The APT submitted to the Commission a draft resolution endorsing the Robben Island Guidelines. The African Commission approved this resolution and adopted the Robben Island Guidelines. They are thus the first regional instrument specifically devoted to the prohibition and the prevention of torture and other ill-treatment in Africa.

## **11. December 2003**

- In order to ensure the effective implementation of international instruments prohibiting torture, the APT and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) organized a Consultative Meeting on the Implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines which was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 8 to 9 December 2003. The Consultative Meeting formulated concrete measures which would be taken to prohibit and prevent torture in Africa.

## **12. June 2004, 35<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission**

- At its 35th Ordinary Session, held in Banjul, The Gambia, from 21st May to 4th June 2004, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights established the Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the Robben Island Guidelines

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<sup>1</sup> International Federation of the Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture.