

ANNUAL REPORT



association for
the prevention
of torture

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SUMMARY OF TERMS

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
CAT	Convention against Torture
ICPA	International Corrections and Prisons Association
IOI	International Ombudsman Institute
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
LPM	Local Preventive Mechanism

NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
OHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
SEANF	Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum
SPT	Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is my first message as President of the APT. I took over this function from Martine Brunschwig Graf, who led the APT for more than 15 years, including during the difficult years of the COVID-19 pandemic. The APT staff and Board express again their deep gratitude to Martine.

My first experiences have confirmed my impressions when I was an observer and friend of the APT: the work initiated by Jean-Jacques Gautier is in very good hands. The APT works tirelessly to uphold the rights and dignity of persons who are in custody or submitted to limitations or deprivation of their liberty for other reasons.

From advocacy for the Méndez Principles for Effective Interviewing, to supporting OPCAT implementation and ratification, and promoting safeguards for persons in situations of vulnerability, the APT is committed to realising its vision for societies without torture.

Prevention works; this has been demonstrated in a wide variety of situations. The APT will continue to build partnerships and advance torture prevention in countries across the globe. Progress may appear modest, but our efforts are effective and growing.



PROFESSOR ROBERT ROTH
President



MESSAGE FROM THE SG

In 2023, conflicts and emerging crisis across the globe placed people at even greater risk of torture and ill-treatment. To respond to ongoing and future challenges, strengthening our anti-torture community is key. This annual report showcases the results of many of our joint efforts, based on our Strategic Plan. Here are three major achievements.

First, the International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions adopted the Kyiv-Copenhagen Declaration, which reaffirms the crucial role of NHRIs in the fight against torture and ill-treatment. With more than 80 NHRIs signing on, this is an important milestone that underlines the importance of prevention, transparency and safeguards.

Second, the APT joined forces with five other anti-torture organisations to form the United Against Torture Consortium. With our joint expertise — in prevention and rehabilitation, justice and accountability — we support partners globally to grow the movement for a torture-free world.

Third, there is new dynamism for OPCAT implementation in Africa, with two regional conferences by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, supported by APT, as well as the creation of an NPM regional network.

This annual report highlights many more APT initiatives at the international, regional and national levels, all of which help strengthen the torture prevention community. Thank you to all our partners and donors for contributing to societies without torture or ill-treatment.



BARBARA BERNATH
Secretary General

IN-COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

PANAMA

Support to NPM; meeting with judiciary

MEXICO

NPM support; Méndez Principles advocacy

BRAZIL

NPM report on LGBTIQ+ persons in detention; update on the Observa Custódia dashboard; support LPM designation; high-level meeting with all 27 public defense offices

PARAGUAY

NPM-Supreme Court roundtable on Méndez Principles

ARGENTINA

Annual national assembly of the torture prevention system

MAURITANIA

NPM event on International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

BURKINA FASO

Event launching the NPM

CABO VERDE

NPM study visit, Geneva

TOGO

Support to NPM on gender-sensitive monitoring; workshop on Méndez Principles

SOUTH AFRICA

Support to NPM; preparation for SPT visit

SWITZERLAND

CAT review; advocacy for criminalisation of torture

MALDIVES

NPM anniversary event and bilateral support

RWANDA

Support to NPM; dissemination of Méndez Principles

MADAGASCAR

Support to NPM and preparation of SPT visit; implementation of custody registers

THAILAND

Workshop with Royal Police Cadet Academy on Méndez Principles; dialogue on new anti-torture law; #SafeInCustody youth speech competition; NHRI forum

PHILIPPINES

Advocacy on OPCAT implementation; training of trainers for NHRI on police monitoring; Basta Run against torture; #SafeInCustody youth speech competition

MALAYSIA

#SafeInCustody festival and youth speech competition

FIJI

NHRI national roundtable on torture prevention

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

AFRICA

- OHCHR-APT Conference on OPCAT in West Africa, Dakar; in East and Central Africa, Yaoundé
- First regional NPM network meeting, Marrakech
- NPM international colloquium on vulnerabilities in detention, Tunis
- Side event on the Méndez Principles during ACHPR, Arusha
- NHRI workshop on OPCAT and women deprived of liberty in Southern Africa, Johannesburg

ASIA

- Two regional workshops for #SafeInCustody project partners, Manila and Kuala Lumpur
- ASEAN Conference on realising Southeast Asia as a torture free region, Denpasar
- Working meeting with AICHR, Geneva
- SEANF Annual Meeting, Bangkok

GLOBAL

- Launch of #UnitedAgainstTorture Consortium
- 14th International Conference of NHRIs focusing on torture and other ill-treatment, Copenhagen
- Panel on external oversight at the ICPA, Antwerp

LATIN AMERICA

- IOI/APT NPM regional workshop on monitoring the situation of women and LGBTIQ+ persons in the first moments of detention, Mexico City
- Webinar on OPCAT in Federal States (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico)
- OHCHR Consultations on promoting racial justice and equality for Africans and Afro-descendants in Central America, Panama City
- Regional congress of LGBTIQ+ civil society organisations, Mexico City

EUROPE

- NPM regional workshop (OSCE region) on mental health and detention
- Council of Europe NPM regional workshop on mental health
- Side event on Méndez Principles, OSCE conference, Warsaw
- South Eastern European Network for NPMs meeting on education in prison, Athens

LEGENDS

- Activities by APT
- Activities where APT participated

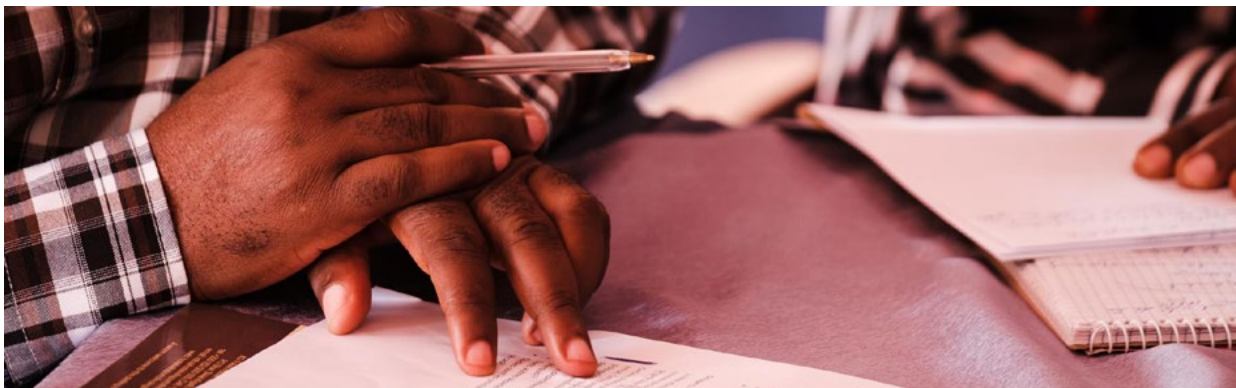
CHANGE 1

People are treated with dignity and fairness by the criminal justice system

Arrest, interrogation and police custody are all moments of increased risks of torture and ill-treatment.

In 2023, we continued to promote the use of the Méndez Principles on Effective Interviewing as a constructive framework to replace coercive interrogation with rapport-based interviewing. In Thailand, the entry into force of the new anti-torture law in February 2023 created new momentum for our work with police. Worldwide, we continued to focus on implementation of safeguards in the first hours of detention. In Brazil, we trained judges in two states and published

nationwide data on how judges implement safeguards and conduct custody hearings. In Madagascar, the letter of rights and registers in police custody, which we helped develop, are used in police stations across the country and the implementation manual has been translated into Malagasy. We have promoted transparency and oversight of police custody by NPMs and NHRIs, including with our #SafeinCustody project partners in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.



The Government of Brazil must re-evaluate the current procedures of investigating law enforcement misconduct, dismantle systemic racial inequalities, and invest in addressing historical disparities at the root of these issues.

PROF. JUAN MÉNDEZ,
UN Expert Mechanism to Advance
Racial Justice and Equality in
Law Enforcement, Head of 2023
Delegation to Brazil

Key Achievements



BRAZIL, OBSERVA CUSTÓDIA DATABASE

We further developed our public database on custody hearings, launched in 2022 with 14 Brazilian civil society and public defenders organisations. We published a second round of data in August, collected from 71 courts from all 27 Brazilian states spreading beyond the capital cities, to support comparative analysis of progress and gaps over the previous year.

THAILAND, MÉNDEZ PRINCIPLES

In Thailand, our work to support integration of the Méndez Principles in the training of police cadets gained new ground. Following a training workshop for the Royal Police Cadet Academy (RPCA) in May 2023 alongside the Norwegian Center for Human Rights, RPCA lecturers began research on current interviewing practices in Thai police investigations and a project to integrate the Méndez Principles in the RPCA curricula.

MÉNDEZ PRINCIPLES: INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AND OWNERSHIP BY PARTNERS

The UN Human Rights Committee recommended to eleven States reviewed in 2023, including Brazil, to integrate the Méndez Principles in their training to law enforcement officials, members of the judiciary, prosecutors and prison staff. Partners translated the Principles into Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Indonesian, Latvian, and Turkish. In Thailand, the Nitivajrat Institute printed 5,000 copies of the Méndez Principles in Thai to train prosecutors



OTHER ACTIVITIES



THREE SIDE EVENTS

on the Méndez Principles, with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and at the margins of the 54th session of the UN Human Rights Council and the OSCE/ODIHR Warsaw Human Dimension Conference



OVER 500 NEW VISITORS AND 4,000 INTERACTIONS

on the Observa Custódia platform



Méndez Principles are now available in **14 LANGUAGES IN TOTAL**

CHANGE 2

Persons in situations of vulnerability are safe from torture and ill-treatment

Deprivation of liberty disproportionately affects people who suffer from conditions of inequality, including structural and intersectional discrimination.



In 2023, we continued promoting a differentiated approach to respond to the specific needs of persons in situations of vulnerability deprived of liberty. We supported independent oversight mechanisms and judicial actors to address the risks of discrimination, abuse and torture faced by women and LGBTIQ+ persons in police custody and prison. Responding to the increasing need to address mental health in detention, we fostered exchanges of experiences between NPMs, civil society organisations and international experts to better prevent ill-treatment and torture of persons with mental health conditions in different detention settings.



It is imperative to adopt a gender-sensitive approach in preventing torture, to be able to establish special measures and to guarantee adequate attention to groups in situations of vulnerability from the outset of deprivation of liberty.

NASHIELI RAMÍREZ HERNÁNDEZ,
President, Human Rights
Commission of Mexico City

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

BRAZIL: LANDMARK REPORT ON LGBTIQ+ PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

In September 2023, the NPM of Brazil, LGBTIQ+ organisation SOMOS, and local preventive mechanisms of the states of Rondônia and Pernambuco launched the first [national report](#) by torture prevention mechanisms dedicated to the treatment and conditions of detention of LGBTIQ+ persons deprived of liberty. The report includes data from visits to 24 detention centres in 12 states of Brazil.



MONITORING MENTAL HEALTH IN DETENTION

The APT, in partnership with the Council of Europe (CoE), OSCE/ODIHR and the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman, [facilitated face-to-face dialogue](#) between independent oversight bodies from over 30 countries in Europe and Central Asia, civil society and international experts. They identified strategies to address the challenges and risks faced by people with mental health conditions in prisons, pre-trial detention, psychiatric institutions, social care facilities and immigration detention. A joint APT/CoE webinar also addressed this issue earlier in 2023.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Africa:** APT regional webinar for NPMs on monitoring the situation of women deprived of liberty
- **Latin America:** APT/IOI regional workshop on monitoring the situation of women and LGBTIQ+ persons in the first moments of detention, Mexico
- **Latin America:** Regional Congress of LGBTIQ+ organisations on the protection of LGBTIQ+ persons deprived of liberty, Mexico
- **Southern African Development Community:** NHRI workshop on OPCAT and women deprived of liberty, South Africa

CHANGE 3

Strong arguments and new voices are mobilised to prevent torture

Powerful synergies and new voices are vital to raise awareness and build engagement in support of torture prevention.



In 2023, together with our partners, we continued to reach out to the public, especially youth, through a music festival, speech competition, fun run and other events. On 26 June, International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, we mobilised public support for the absolute prohibition of torture. We featured photographs by our colleague Ben Buckland on social media and in photo essays to present torture prevention efforts through a fresh lens. And with the launch of our new website, we improved access to APT resources, videos, podcasts and in-country activities.

“



”

The Basta Run Against Torture is a powerful form of public action to bring visibility to the campaign for full implementation of the Anti-Torture Law in the Philippines and the importance of establishing independent monitoring mechanisms.

MR. JERBERT BRIOLA,
Task Force Detainees
of the Philippines

KEY FIGURES

**MORE THAN
10,000 DOWNLOADS**
of APT publications

**MORE THAN
15,000 VIEWS**
of APT videos on YouTube

13% INCREASE
in followers across
all APT channels

371,000 VIEWS
on social media

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

UNITED AGAINST TORTURE CONSORTIUM

We are stronger together and when we speak with one voice. This year, we joined five leading anti-torture organisations to launch a new consortium, United Against Torture, funded by the European Union. We are partnering with the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT), Omega Research Foundation and REDRES. Building on our different areas of expertise, from prevention to rehabilitation, litigation and accountability, we will support and grow the global movement against torture.

#SAFEINCUSTODY FESTIVAL AND SPEECH COMPETITION

We recognise the importance of young people as agents of change for torture prevention. Through the #SafeInCustody project, our partner Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM) organised a creative festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. With speeches, presentations, music and theatre performances, more than 300 young people took part in a conversation about their rights during police arrest and custody.

Together with our national partners in Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, we held the first-ever #SafeInCustody Speech Competition to inspire new voices and future advocates. More than 30 students from the three countries delivered speeches on anti-torture themes.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

■ **War and torture:** a public conference-debate in Chêne-Bougeries, Geneva

■ **Basta Run, Philippines:** More than 400 law enforcement officials supported the #SafeInCustody campaign and signed a manifesto

■ **Photo essays** on Madagascar [detention monitoring](#) and the new [NPM, by our colleague and photographer Ben Buckland](#)

CHANGE 4

Effective and independent oversight protects persons deprived of liberty



We continued to promote OPCAT implementation in many countries through bilateral support to National Preventive Mechanisms and regional exchanges.

We responded to many requests from NPMs and conducted capacity strengthening workshops with the NPMs of Cabo Verde, Madagascar, Maldives, Panama and Togo. Ahead of visits by the SPT to South Africa, Madagascar and the Philippines, we held in-country preparation meetings with civil society organisations and the NPM. We also commented on draft Bills to establish NPMs in the Philippines, South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire. At the regional level, the APT supported and

participated in two conferences in Africa on the OPCAT, along with the launch of the network of African NPMs in Morocco. We also organised a regional workshop with NPMs in Latin America and for NPMs in the OSCE region, where new NPMs from Mongolia and Slovakia participated for the first time. In addition, we launched an online course on the OPCAT and contributed significantly to the outcome declaration adopted at the 14th International Conference of NHRIs, held in Copenhagen.



The APT brought us together bilaterally and collectively with NPMs internationally and regionally in ways that enrich our work. Their less visible role as a confidential and impartial 'friend of the institution' is particularly useful as we navigate the numerous political and policy challenges we face in our daily work.

KWANELE PAKATI,
Head of South African NPM

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

ADVANCING OPCAT IMPLEMENTATION IN AFRICA

With 24 States Parties, Africa is the second largest region for OPCAT ratification. 2023 saw the region take a step forward in implementing the OPCAT, through the establishment and operation of NPMs. Two sub-regional conferences organised by OHCHR with the support of APT provided new momentum, with Cote d'Ivoire ratifying OPCAT and Burkina Faso launching its NPM. Developments are also under way in Gabon and Benin. A total of 14 NPMs are now operational and an Africa-wide NPM network was established in June 2023.

NHRIS REAFFIRM THEIR ROLE TO PREVENT TORTURE

The role of NHRIs to combat and prevent torture and other ill-treatment was the theme of the 14th International Conference of NHRIs, held in November 2023. The APT supported the Global Alliance of NHRIs in organising the conference, which adopted a milestone Declaration that highlights the vital role of NHRIs to prevent torture, including when they are designated as NPMs, and sets out areas for future work and collaboration.



BRAZIL: IMPLEMENTING THE OPCAT SYSTEM

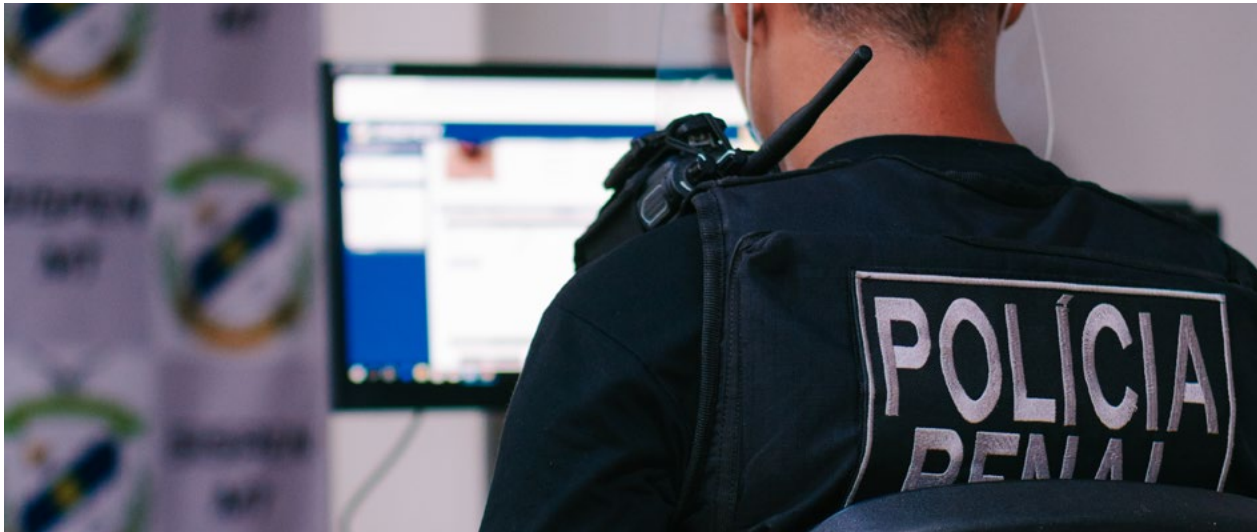
Brazil was before the UN Committee against Torture (CAT) for a landmark review following a 25-year gap. The CAT called on Brazil to promptly establish a network of fully-resourced and independent local preventive mechanisms (LPMs) in all states, a measure also advocated by the APT. This led to new momentum at national level. An LPM was established in the state of Acre, the sixth in the country and two other states are making significant progress towards this end. The APT supported these processes, providing training for the new LPM in Acre and participating in regular meetings of the National Committee to Prevent Torture.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Philippines:** Online and face-to-face courses for 50 trainers on the role of NHRIs to prevent torture and monitor police custody
- **Brazil, Mexico, Argentina:** Webinar on OPCAT implementation in Federal States
- **Maldives and Cabo Verde:** Study visit by the NPM of the Maldives and Cabo Verde to Switzerland



Equipping detention monitors



Torture prevention requires specific skills and knowledge, especially detention monitoring activities.

The APT's online platform — the Torture Prevention Learning Village — was further enhanced this year to meet these needs: with a new course on the OPCAT; improved chat features in the Virtual Café; and in-depth courses for oversight bodies and institutions to strengthen their capacity.



I learned a lot, especially when you have to visit police custody. You have to be prepared. I also learned the importance of interviewing. I got a chance to review the importance of NHRIs.

PEGGY GALLIEGO,
Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines, following APT training

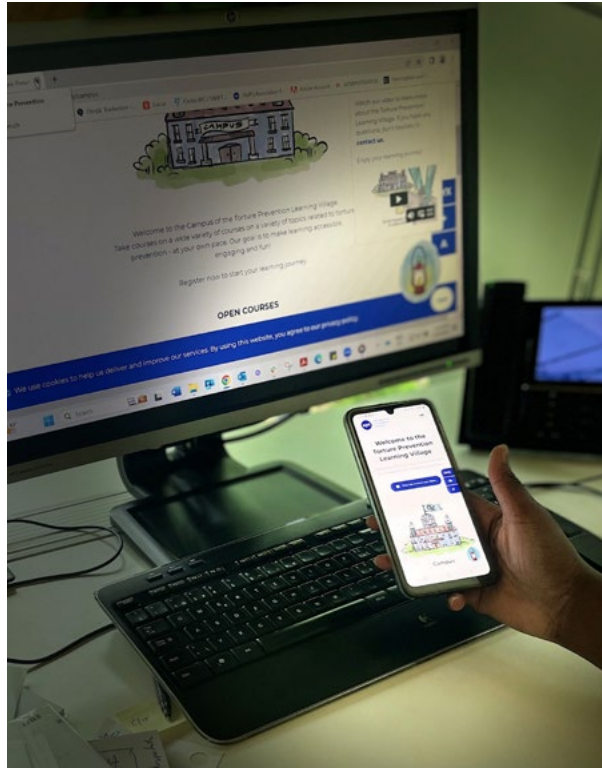
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

OPEN COURSES AND IN-DEPTH LEARNING

We launched an open course (in English, French and Spanish) that introduces and explores key elements of the OPCAT. We also developed in-depth courses that provide advanced knowledge on: gender-sensitive detention monitoring, including preparing reports and recommendations; the role of NHRIs in torture prevention; and monitoring police custody. Representatives of the judiciary, police, NHRIs and NPMs from five countries (Brazil, Cabo Verde, Maldives, Morocco and the Philippines) took part in these courses.

VIRTUAL CAFÉ FOR BLENDED LEARNING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Virtual café allows participants from across the globe to discuss common issues, ask questions and share experiences related to torture prevention. This has been useful in strengthening our online community of practice.



KEY FIGURES



1,500+ USERS
of the TPV from
96 COUNTRIES



600 VIEWS/USERS
of the Virtual café



348 REGISTRATIONS
for OPCAT course



316 REGISTRATIONS
for 6 in-depth courses

Board and staff



OUR BOARD

Martine Brunschwig Graf (Switzerland)
President until April 2023

Pr. Robert Roth (Switzerland)
President from April 2023

Michael Kellet (United Kingdom)
Vice-President

Florence Simbiri-Jaoko
Vice-President

Christophe Broggi (Switzerland)
Treasurer

Anh Thu Duong (Switzerland)
Member of the Bureau

Olga Espinoza (Peru)

Abdelwahab Hani (Tunisia)

Caio Cesar Klein (Brazil)

Cecilia Jimenez-Damary (Philippines)

Manuel Sager (Switzerland)

Erika Schläppi (Switzerland)

Three Board members left the Board in April 2023: **Krassimir Kanev** (Bulgaria); **Juan E. Méndez** (Argentina) and **Mervat Rishmawi** (Palestine, United Kingdom) and we thank them for their engagement and support during all these years.

OUR STAFF

Luce Ahouangnimon
Senior Adviser
Detention & Mobilisation

Linda Asamoah
Team Support and
Office Administrator

Juvénal Babona,
Africa Representative

Barbara Bernath,
Secretary General

Ben Buckland,
Senior Adviser, Oversight

Peggy Bünzli,
Finance Manager

Valentina Cadelo,
Senior Adviser
Law & Advocacy

Emilio Congco,
Communications Adviser
(from October 2023)
replacing **Almudena García España**
(until September 2023)

Sylvia Dias, National
Representative in Brazil
& Senior Legal Adviser

Veronica Filippeschi,
Senior Adviser
Vulnerabilities & Policy

Sara Vera López
Senior Adviser,
Latin America & Oversight

Audrey Olivier Muralt
Deputy Secretary General
(until September 2023)

Nid Satjipanon
Regional Project Manager

Cécile Trochu Grasso
Fundraising Manager

Manachaya Yankittikul
Project Officer

Jasmine Zik-Ikeorha
Senior Adviser, Learning
Development & Outreach



IN MEMORIAM: JEAN-BAPTISTE NIYIZURUGERO

We honour our friend and former colleague, Jean-Baptiste, who passed away on 2 November 2023. As APT Africa Programme Officer for 20 years, Jean-Baptiste was a tireless ambassador for torture prevention on the continent, respected by all. With others, he helped establish the 2002 Robben Island Guidelines for the Prohibition and Prevention of Torture in Africa. We miss him deeply but his legacy remains.

Finances

In 2023, we were able to do more activities and we had sufficient income to cover this slight increase in our expenditure compared to last year.

We ended the year with a positive financial result, for the fourth consecutive year. Through the launching of the United Against Torture Consortium, we received important funding from the European Union for the first joint project gathering major anti-torture international NGOs. Additionally, we express sincere appreciation to the Swiss government for its substantial increase of core support in 2023. Other efforts to generate our own income, especially through renting office space, is paying off. We also thank our individual donors for their support and are particularly grateful to Laurent and Denise Gautier for their generous and renewed donation.

ASSETS 2023	CHF
Current Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	738,599
Accounts receivable	502,857
Accruals and other current assets	70,958
Total Current Assets	1,312,414
Fixed Assets	
Centre Jean-Jacques Gautier	2,484,857
IT hard and software	95,958
E-learning platform	94,450
Total Fixed Assets	2,675,265
Total Assets	3,987,679

LIABILITIES AND WEALTH 2023	CHF
Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	110,042
Income received in advance	15,250
Other current liabilities	94,890
CTI current account	221,456
Total Current Liabilities	441,638
Restricted Funds	
Restricted funds - ongoing projects	426,094
Restricted funds - investment	211,097
Restricted funds - Centre Jean-Jacques Gautier	2,207,993
Total Restricted Funds	2,845,184
Wealth	
Tied capital	500,000
Reserve Centre Jean-Jacques Gautier	289,967
Balance brought forward	(142,730)
Result of the year	53,620
Total Wealth	700,857
Total Liabilities and Wealth	3,987,679

INCOME 2023	CHF
Restricted	
Foreign governments	363,132
Swiss authorities and public institutions	275,600
Intergovernmental organizations	678,683
Total Restricted Income	1,317,415
Unrestricted	
Foreign governments	272,133
Swiss authorities and public institutions	500,000
Private foundations	117,078
Membership and private donations	67,263
Other income	55,195
Services to CTI	32,643
Total Unrestricted Income	1,044,312
Total Income	2,361,727

EXPENDITURES 2023	CHF
Staff salaries	(1,084,086)
Consultants	(306,227)
Activities-related direct costs	(499,679)
Operating costs	(107,309)
Rent and maintenance costs	(38,794)
Coaching	(11,300)
Other costs (fiduciary, audit, etc.)	(29,516)
Governance bodies' meeting costs	(24,377)
Depreciation of fixed assets	(133,528)
Total Operating Expenditures	2,234,816
Operating Result	126,911
Interest banking fees	(5,493)
Exchange rate difference	(8,429)
Extraordinary, non-recurring or prior-period expenses	(30,722)
Result before change in restricted funds	82,267
Allocation to restricted funds	(1,317,415)
Use of restricted funds	1,288,768
Net change in restricted funds	(28,647)
Result 2023	53,620

We thank all our donors for their trust in our work towards societies without torture or ill-treatment.

Core:

- Switzerland
- Denmark
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Luxembourg

Projects:

- European Union
- United Kingdom
- Canton of Geneva
- Canada
- Hans Wilsdorf Foundation
- City of Geneva
- UNDP (Brazil)
- OPCAT Special Fund
- Tinker Foundation
- Plan-les-Ouates
- Netherlands (Embassy in Brazil)
- Chêne-Bougeries

Join our Torture Prevention Learning Village and register to our courses

www.tortureprevention.ch



Library



Virtual Cafe



Campus



Immersive Experience



APT Office



Association for the Prevention of Torture

Centre Jean-Jacques Gautier

10, route de Ferney

1202 Geneva

www.apt.ch



association for
the prevention
of torture

IBAN: CH62 0027 9279 C811 7533 0

Photography: Ben Buckland

Design & Illustration: Vicky Tong Design