



JOINT STATEMENT MARKING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE

Six points of hope to reduce the risks of torture in police custody in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand

The Association for Prevention of Torture (APT), Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM), Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF) and Task Force Detainees (TFDP) have joined hands to prevent risky practices which might lead to torture while in police custody Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand.

In April 2021, we launched a 3.5-year project to reduce risky practices in police custody that lead to torture and ill-treatment, supported by the European Union. The project will help strengthen national human rights institutions (NHRIs) in their role to monitor police custody; enhance police practices through awareness and training; and promote public conversations that build community support for torture prevention. We are committed to dialogue and collaboration with our stakeholders in the three countries, and across the region, to contribute to societies that treat all people with dignity, respect and fairness.

Earlier this month, the [Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigation and Information Gathering](#) ("Principles on Effective Interviewing") were launched to the international community. They provide a strong and practical framework to enhance the important work of police to investigate and prevent crime. We will share the Principles on Effective Interviewing and other good practices to inspire positive change within police institutions, relevant government agencies, the judiciary and other relevant stakeholders.

To commemorate the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, 26 June 2021, we are calling on everyone - especially government agencies, police authorities, NHRIs and civil society - to support, implement and champion the following six points of hope for torture prevention:

- To **seek common ground and work together** towards better synergies for torture prevention
- To **support and endorse practical approaches and knowledge**, such as the Principles on Effective Interviewing, that enhance the effectiveness of policing and increase public confidence in the justice system
- To **open police detention to regular and independent monitoring by NHRIs**, in order to enhance detention policies, practices and conditions and to ensure the rights and well-being of detainees, police personnel and the overall criminal justice system
- To **reduce the gap between law and practice during the first hours of police custody**, particularly the prohibition on forced confession and incommunicado detention
- To ensure that **efforts to prevent torture are underscored by evidence, the rule of law and human rights standards**, which are inherent qualities of peaceful and democratic societies



- To **foster and mobilise public support**, regardless of gender, age, religion, ethnicity, political opinion, socio-economic status or professional background, to demystify narratives that condone torture in all its forms.

We pledge to listen to and work closely with our partners, communities and others who support genuine change to implement the six points of hope. Our approach will be inclusive, equitable, participatory and driven by the spirit of *"gotong-royong"* (mutual assistance).

Together, we can prevent torture.

Undersigned,

Association for Prevention of Torture (APT), Switzerland
Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM), Malaysia
Task Force Detainees (TFDP), the Philippines
Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF), Thailand

Disclaimer:

The European Union funds the project on 'Reducing risky practices leading to torture and ill-treatment in police custody in Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand'. However, the content of this press statement is the sole responsibility of the APT, SUARAM, TFDP and CrCF and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.