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#### TOGETHER AGAINST TORTURE

‘When torturers can’t hide, the torture stops.’

Campaign for the ratification of the Optional Protocol  
to the UN Convention against Torture

amnesty international

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Torture is endemic in most parts of the world.

Physical and mental cruelty – threats, beatings, sexual assaults, the infliction of agonizing pain by any number of means – remain widespread in the 21st century. Torture is not only an assault on the body but also on the inner self. While torture can occur anywhere, those in detention are most at risk.

Twenty years ago, the UN adopted the Convention against Torture – an important move towards stamping out torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. However, torture always thrives where it cannot be seen.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention, adopted in 2002, aims to take concrete steps to prevent torture in police stations, prisons and other places where people are deprived of their liberty. Any states ratifying the Optional Protocol commit themselves to allowing regular and unannounced inspections of places of detention by international monitors. They also commit themselves to setting up independent national bodies to carry out inspections within their territory.

Amnesty International believes that this would significantly reduce instances of torture worldwide. Experience shows that visits to places of detention are among the most effective means to prevent torture and to improve conditions.

[box]

Amnesty International is calling for all countries to support the Optional Protocol. Please write to your government demanding that it commits itself to preventing and eradicating torture by signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture immediately.

[end box]

[caption]

Above: Detainee in hospital wing at Urso Branco detention centre in Rondônia state, Brazil.  
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Front: Detainees were suspended from the iron bars in this interrogation room in Khiam Detention Centre, Lebanon. Many were beaten and subjected to electric shocks. © AI/Ina Tin

[end caption]

Join Amnesty International's campaign. Together we can stamp out torture!

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Dear Minister,

I urge you to ensure that our government signs and ratifies the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture.

I believe that visiting mechanisms such as those established by the Optional Protocol can help prevent torture.

I believe that by signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol, our country will improve the implementation of its obligations as a state party to the Convention against Torture and help to create an important international mechanism that will contribute to the eradication of torture worldwide.

Yours sincerely,

Signature

Name

Address

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To:

Amnesty international

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