



MEDIA RELEASE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE, 26TH JUNE 2023 UNDER THE THEME; TORTURE IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice in solidarity with the comity of nations commemorates the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, observed yearly on June 26.

The theme for this year's commemoration, '*Torture is a crime against Humanity*,' is focused on prohibiting all forms of torture against every individual and is dedicated to victims of torture who have been ignored and those who are still experiencing torture today.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana prohibits torture, inhuman and degrading treatment. Globally, Ghana is also a State Party to the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and several international human rights instruments. Ghana has also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

Notwithstanding these international instruments and domestic legislation to prevent torture and related practices, reports of cases of police brutalities, allegations of arbitrary or unlawful killings, including extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests or detention, threats of violence against journalists, and domestic or intimate partner violence, among others. The Commission calls on all stakeholders, including UN Member States, Civil society, and individuals worldwide, to unite in support of the hundreds of thousands of victims of torture around the world.

The Commission urges all relevant stakeholders and individuals in Ghana to encourage and educate the public on reporting mechanisms on issues of torture. The Commission further calls on the Parliament of Ghana to expedite action on the passage of the impending Bills seeking to abolish the death penalty in Ghana.

The Ghana Prison Service reported in September 2022 that overcrowding at our prisons stood at 150% of capacity representing an increase of 15% from 2021. This situation calls for urgent action to put measures in place to improve prison conditions and to make the lives of inmates better. Thus, the Commission calls on Government to resource rehabilitation centers as well as build the necessary collaborations to deal with overcrowding in the prisons and the associated insanitary conditions, inadequate medical care, allegations of physical abuse, and substandard food.

The International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was first observed on June 26, 1998, pursuant to a UN General Assembly resolution of 12 December 1997 and has since been celebrated on June 26 every year. The prohibition of torture in totality is a Human Rights issue enshrined in International Law without exception.

The Commission remains committed to increasing advocacy and enforcement mechanisms to protect the rights of every person against torture of all forms.



Joseph Whittal
Commissioner