

Press Release

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CPT statement on torture and unlawful detention in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation "regrettable but fully justified"

Statement by Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 13.03.2007 – "I am very concerned about the statement by the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture that people continue to be unlawfully detained and tortured by law-enforcement agencies and security forces in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. The statement comes only days after Thomas Hammarberg, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, visited the region and expressed his suspicions about widespread torture and ill-treatment in the Chechen Republic. The situation is further aggravated by the failure of the authorities to investigate allegations and bring perpetrators to justice.

The prohibition of torture in Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights is clear and unconditional. The role of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture is to assist our member states in complying with this prohibition. The rule of confidentiality in the work of the CPT was put in place to facilitate this assistance. It should not be used to hide the lack of cooperation by the countries concerned. It is therefore regrettable, but fully justified, that the CPT has had to resort to the exceptional measure of issuing a public statement about the situation in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation.

I call on the Russian government to comply immediately, fully and effectively with the recommendation put forward by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in their statement released today."

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