



# SUPPORT LIFE AFTER TORTURE GLOBAL READING

## **IRCT Global Reading on the occasion of the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, 26 June 2016.**

Every year, on 26 June, we express our support around the world for those who have been tortured. These very words will be spoken today in over a hundred countries and in dozens of languages. They might be read by a rehabilitation provider, who invests her knowledge and experience to help torture victims to heal, or by a lawyer, who is assisting them to bring their claims to Court.

They might be read by a philanthropist who is supporting our work, or a policy maker who heard the call to action and is determined to eradicate torture from our lives.

They might also be read by a torture survivor, or a victim, or by a family member who has witnessed the pain and the courage of his or her loved one. With torture still taking place in more than 141 countries across all continents and an unprecedented number of victims fleeing their homes in search of safety elsewhere, the focus of this day remains as relevant as ever.

Let us take a moment to listen to all of these voices. A moment to reflect on the injustice that leads to torture, on the pain and damage that it leaves in its trail, and to pay tribute to the admirable courage required to live and seek happiness after such suffering.

*[Moment of silence]*

It is 29 years since the Convention against Torture came into effect. The Convention is an extraordinary blueprint for the fight against torture. It lays out the global strategy for the fight against torture, emphasising on an equal manner the work of prevention, accountability and reparation. Until torture is eradicated, we must live up to our collective obligation to provide reparation for all torture victims including holistic rehabilitation.

The good news is that we have a strong movement that is determined to make Right to Rehabilitation a reality. We have made a lot of progress this far: our voices have been heard in international and, increasingly, in national law. We also know that rehabilitation works. Most victims who receive support, including rehabilitation, find it useful in their quest for happiness. This has a cascading positive effect on their families, communities and societies. This is why we must all support the provision of rehabilitation services, and we ask you to join our movement in advocating for increased resources for the support of victims of torture.

Listen to the voices around the globe. Recognise and acknowledge all victims of torture and accept the human imperative to support their life after torture.

Thank you.