



MEDIA ADVISORY

In advance of the International Day
in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June)

TORTURE: Public Opinion vs Reality

Steven Kull

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Amnesty International

Craig Mokhiber

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

will brief the press

Tuesday, 24 June 2008 at 10:15am
Room S-226, United Nations, New York

In advance of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, speakers will brief the press on new survey data which polled 19,000 people in 19 nations on the acceptance of the use of torture, as well as on the continuing prevalence of torture worldwide.

The WorldPublicOpinion.org poll is part of a larger study on human rights issues being completed in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Results from other polls in the study – on racial discrimination, women's rights, freedom of the press, democracy and governance – will also be highlighted.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provided for the first international prohibition of torture which since then has become accepted as a matter of customary international law. Today, 145 States are parties to the Convention against Torture which obliges them to take action to prevent torture. It also emphasizes that there are no exceptional circumstances whatsoever that can be used to justify acts of torture, including a state or threat of war or any threat of terrorist acts or violent crime. Moreover, the International Criminal Court recognizes torture as a crime against humanity. Yet, States continue to either actively use or fail to prevent and prosecute acts of torture, as reported by the UN human rights mechanisms and human rights NGOs.

[To receive the embargoed poll findings in advance of this event, please contact Melinda Brouwer at mbrouwer@pipa.org or tel: +1 202 232 7500.](mailto:mbrouwer@pipa.org)

Journalists without UN press accreditation wishing to attend the briefing please refer to the website of the Media and Accreditation Liaison Unit for details: <http://www.un.org/media/accreditation/> or contact: +1 212 963 6934.

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