



United States Mission to the OSCE

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 2, 2015

The United States joins other participating States in recognizing June 26 as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. It is a day during which we mark the international community's condemnation of torture through the Convention Against Torture, which came into effect in 1987.

From the first days of his Administration, President Obama has made clear that the United States prohibits torture without exception. The use of torture would not only be inconsistent with our nation's most deeply held values and violate our obligations under the Convention Against Torture, but would also undermine our national security – by emboldening repressive regimes, by serving as a pretext for terrorist recruitment and violent extremism, and by damaging our reputation as a force for good in the world.

Torture is an assault on human dignity and is abhorrent. We renew our pledge to continue the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The United States is the largest contributor to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, and supports a broad range of programs that seek to rehabilitate and reintegrate torture victims. We also back efforts to eradicate torture through human rights training for security forces, and by improving prison and detention conditions around the world.

To the governments, civil society organizations, survivors, and others working worldwide to end torture, we express our gratitude for your efforts. The United States will continue to work with you to achieve the aspirations of the Convention Against Torture, so that we may live in a world without torture.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.