



World Organisation Against Torture  
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# State Violence in Chile

AN ALTERNATIVE REPORT  
TO THE UN COMMITTEE  
AGAINST TORTURE

INCLUDING THE COMMITTEE'S CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

A project presented by

I W H R International Women's



Fundación Instituto  
de la Mujer



and coordinated by



Director of Publication: Eric Sottas, Director



## Foreword

Writing alternative reports is one of the main activities of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and a vital source of information for the members of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, including the Committee against Torture.

This alternative report on State violence in CHILE is part of a collection of 18 alternative reports that OMCT has submitted together with a coalition of national non-governmental organisations (NGO) to the Treaty Bodies thanks to the financial support of the European Union and the Swiss Confederation.

With these reports, it is possible to see the situation as objectively as possible and take a critical look at government action to eradicate Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The present alternative report, presented at the 32nd session (3-21 May 2004) of the Committee against Torture, is composed of three parts, including a general description of State violence in Chile, as well as two others parts dealing particularly with violence against women and children. The development made in the report on the situation of women and children allowed the coalition to mainstream women's and children's human rights and bring these issues before the Committee against Torture.

The first-hand information provided in this report was used by the Committee against Torture during their dialogue with the official Chilean delegation, which presented the official periodical report on the implementation of the Convention. In this context, a meeting with the Members of the Committee against Torture was held during the session in order to point out the issues and concerns of the coalition. This meeting, together with this present shadow report, gave a unique opportunity to the Committee against Torture to obtain alternative information and therefore take a critical look on the actions taken by the Government of Chile to implement the Convention against Torture.

The last part of this alternative report includes the Conclusions and Recommendations made by the Committee against Torture which are reproduced in extenso. They reflect the main concerns of the Members of Committee and should therefore be followed by the Government in order to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are fully respected.

Finally, OMCT would like to thank very much the NGOs member of the coalition, which have worked very hard and have produced this alternative report in a very limited time.

**Patrick Mutzenberg**  
*Project Coordinator*

## Presentation of the NGOs part of the coalition

### CINTRAS

The Centre for Mental health and Human Rights – CINTRAS – is a non-governmental organisation, established in 1985 with the fundamental purpose of providing medical and psychological assistance to rehabilitate people who have been damaged by torture and other forms of human rights violations. Beneficiaries of the programs receive integrated care from a multi-disciplinary task force team whose broad approach to the problems assures that comprehensive solutions are offered to the varied and complex pathologies presented by the affected persons. As a non-profit organisation CINTRAS provides professional treatment at no cost.

In addition to assistance activities, CINTRAS develops specific training programmes for health professionals and students, carries out studies, research and analyses on the effects of torture, publishes the results of these studies - as well as the qualified opinions of specialists in this area from different parts of the world- through monographs, essays, papers, and the magazine Reflexion.

Finally, CINTRAS is actively involved in the defence of human rights, the prevention of torture and the fight against impunity. For this purpose, the centre is a full member of national and international organisations and coalitions which work in these fields.

### LA MORADA

La Morada is a women's NGO founded in 1983 to contribute to gender equality and the fulfillment of women's human rights in Chile. Since then La Morada has worked to improve the condition of women in Chile and in the region, bringing international human rights law to the domestic level as well as empowering women to exercise human rights and to demand reparation for its violations.

### FUNDACION INSTITUTO DE LA MUJER

The Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, Women's Institute, founded in 1987, is a non-governmental organisation that promotes humanistic and secular proposals. Its goal is to overcome all forms of discrimination against women, contributing in this way to consolidate Democracy. In 1988, the institution became a private law endowed non-profit institution. This legal form is still in force.

During its nearly 15 years of existence, the Institute has developed a variety of activities. These activities are intended to promote opportunities' equality and to give a strong stimulus to the social and political leadership of women and their organisations in the defense and enhancement of their rights. Training, informing knowledge

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development, spreading and elaborating proposals and basis in areas of main weakness, from the point of view of inequalities affecting Chilean women and the country, were the strategies used to fulfill this goal. During the last years, supervision and follow-up of international agreements and coordinated actions with other NGOs were added to its objectives.

Among the most significant achievements of the Institute are the Chilean Women's Rights Court (1997, 1999, 2001 and 2003) and its active participation in the reformulation and passing of the Law of Sexual Offenses, approved by the Parliament at the end of 1998. So as the working out of five Shadow Reports, some in collaboration with other NGOs, presented by the Institute to the United Nations.

Moreover, the Institute has a long experience in the writing of alternative reports submitted to the Treaty Bodies and alongside the present report has submitted to following :

- \* Alternative report submitted to the Human Rights Committee (HRC) in 1999.
- \* Alternative report submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1999.
- \* Alternative report presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1999, regarding the State's fulfillment of the pertinent Convention.
- \* Alternative report submitted in conjunction with other women's organisations to CEDAW in 2003.

### IWHR

IWHR, the International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic of the City University of New York School of Law, was founded in 1992 to provide scholarly legal support for women's human rights advocacy. Widely recognized for its expertise, IWHR has worked to clarify the egregiousness of and end impunity for sexual violence in international law, including the recognition of various forms of sexual violence as torture in human rights and humanitarian law.

### OPCION

Opportunity and Solidarity Action Corporation OPCION is a non profit institution with 14 years of experience. It promotes citizenship through child and family direct attention in specialised centres and through the design of innovative proposals for public policies. Its main lines of action are:

- Direct Attention Programmes to promote, mend and restore children's rights.
- Contributions to a serious analysis of legislation, public policies and actual institutions for childhood.



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**PART I**

**STATE VIOLENCE IN CHILE**



## 1. Introduction

This general report was drawn up by the Centro de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos, CINTRAS, based on the analysis of the most important and recent studies and publications regarding torture and ill-treatment in Chile, on a general review of the printed press over the last few years, and on interviews with lawyers specialised in this field, as well as with representatives of entities that work on defending the rights of people arrested and imprisoned.

## 2. General context

Chile has a unique political system in the sense that it possesses all the formalities of a democracy but continues to be ruled by the Political Constitution imposed in 1980 by the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990). That Constitution defined a severely restricted and controlled democracy for the “permanent period” following 1990. Its most basic anti-democratic features are the semi-autonomy of the Armed Forces and uniformed Police (Carabineros) from civilian power;<sup>1</sup> the existence of a peculiar binominal electoral system that enables a political minority (Right-wing forces in the case of Chile) to neutralise popular majorities in the composition of both chambers of the national Congress;<sup>2</sup> the existence of a National Security Council composed of the four commanders in chief of the Armed Forces and Carabineros, as well as by four civilians (the President of the Republic, the President of the Senate, the President of the Supreme Court and the General Controller of the Republic) that may be summoned by two of its members and adopt agreements against the opinion of the President of the Republic;<sup>3</sup> the existence of a

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- 1 SoIts most relevant characteristics are found in the impossibility of removing its commanders-in-chief during the four years that they are appointed for by the President of the Republic, out of the five most senior officers in active service; and in the lack of faculties by the President to remove Armed Forces and Carabineros officers in whom he has lost confidence (See Articles 93 and 94).
  - 2 The binominal system means that each electoral constituency – for Deputies or Senators – simultaneously elects two and only two representatives. Thus, in an artificial and anti-democratic manner, the will of 34% of the electorate becomes equal to the will of 66% of the electorate - certainly a unique system in the world.

Constitutional Tribunal capable of deciding that a law is unconstitutional (and thus revoke it) upon the request of only 25% of the members of the Chamber of Deputies or Senators. Out of its seven members, only two come from the Legislative or Executive Powers of the State.<sup>4</sup> Lastly, the need for a high quorum in order to reform the Constitution imposed in 1980<sup>5</sup> makes that possibility impossible without the support of the right-wing minority that, in practice, created that Constitution.<sup>6</sup> Naturally, such a restricted democracy severely impacts the validity of the most fundamental human rights, including the right to physical and mental integrity; especially with the high degree of autonomy that the Armed Forces and Carabineros have from civilian power.

### 3. The practice of torture

Despite the fact that after 1990 the systematic practice of torture by the State - through its security agents - came to an end, this scourge has never ceased to be a factor that has severely impaired the validity of the right to physical and mental integrity.<sup>7</sup> It is true that torture has diminished in intensity and that

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3 Including “presenting the President of the Republic, National Congress or Constitutional Tribunal, its opinion regarding any event, action or matter that in its view severely undermines the basis of the institutional framework or that can compromise national security.” (Art. 96)

4 One lawyer appointed by the President of the Republic and the other elected by the Senate. Of the remaining five, three are Supreme Court judges elected by that Court, and two are lawyers elected by the National Security Council. (See Art. 81).

5 For most of its parts, it requires 60% of active deputies and senators, and two-thirds of all deputies for chapters related to Basis of the Institutional Framework; Constitutional Rights and Duties; Constitutional Tribunal, Armed Forces and Law and Order Enforcement Institutions; National Security Council; and Reform of the Constitution. (See Art. 116)

6 An ad hoc commission appointed by the dictatorship and comprised of right-wing jurists drew up the 1980 Constitution, in force. It was then reviewed by a Council of State, also appointed by the Pinochet regime and comprised of right-wing political personalities. The Government Junta, comprising the four commanders-in-chief of the Armed Forces and Carabineros, approved its final text. Its ratification was via a plebiscite that failed to comply with any of the requirements of a truly free popular election.



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following the disarticulation in the mid-90s of the groups that put up armed resistance against the dictatorship and continued to operate subsequently (Movimiento Lautaro and Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez-Autónomo), and the approval of the new Criminal Procedure Code at the beginning of this decade,<sup>8</sup> its most severe expressions have also tended to diminish. However, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment continues to be frequently used in police work and especially in the activities of prison wardens (Gendarmería).

### 3.1. Torture in prisons

Living conditions of convicts and prisoners awaiting trial in Chilean prisons constitute severe and systematic forms of violation of the right to physical and mental integrity. Firstly, these people live in extremely overcrowded conditions; this became much more severe during the 90s. According to Gendarmería figures, in 1995 there were 22,027 prisoners countrywide, and in the year 2000, that figure had risen to 33,050. This implies roughly a 50% increase in the prison population in 5 years. According to the same source, in the year 2000 the penitentiary system had a capacity to hold 20,791 prisoners – a 50% deficit.

This dramatic reality is especially troubling in the more overcrowded penitentiary centres. In 1999, the prison in the town of Limache, with a capacity for 54 prisoners, held a population of 266 prisoners (a deficit of 393%). The prison in the city of Copiapó held 496 inmates, with a real capacity for 122 (a deficit of 307%). The Santiago prison for women held 623 inmates, but a real capacity for 180 (a deficit of 246%). The prison for men in Rancagua had a population of 787 prisoners, but a capacity for 250 (a deficit of 215%), and

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7 This has been corroborated by successive reports by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Commission of Jurists, State Department of the United States and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture.

8 This replaced the traditional investigative system that dated back to the colonial period, where a single judge conducted the investigation, accused and passed sentence, based primarily on a secret procedure; with a system of oral and public trials where there is a division in the functions of investigation and accusation (prosecutors), supervision of the rights of the accused (guarantee judge) and sentence (sentencing judges). In addition, the right to defence of the accused is guaranteed via a Public Defence Office. However, the Metropolitan Region (Santiago and surroundings) is still operating with the old system, encompassing nearly 40% of Chile's population.

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the prison in Casablanca held 125 prisoners, with a capacity for 40 (213% deficit).<sup>9</sup>

*“At the ex Penitentiary in the Metropolitan Region – the facility with the largest number of inmates in the country (3,506) – one of the alleys (No. 4) holds 450 people, and there are only 36 small rooms. As a consequence, between 15 and 20 people have to sleep in each room, often in sitting position, and the rest outside in the open”.*<sup>10</sup> In addition, *“as a general rule, cells have no adequate ventilation or heating systems, forcing inmates to withstand very low or very high temperatures without any type of assistance”.*<sup>11</sup>

Closely linked to the issue of overcrowding, the precarious hygienic conditions in prisons constitute another factor that severely impairs the right of incarcerated people to physical and mental integrity. So much so that *“very often they have no toilets whatsoever, or have to share one or two among a population of 300 or 400 inmates, as occurs in some of the facilities of the ex Penitentiary in Santiago”.* Thus, *“conditions of cleanliness in cells are precarious, resulting in diseases and infections, and it is very common to find an abundance of bed-bugs and scabies”.*<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, feeding conditions in prisons are very inadequate; food is often provided in a degrading manner, or worse still, provided as in Module Alfa in the Colina II Prison in the Metropolitan Region, *“where in a premeditated manner Gendarmería provided inmates little food in order to create competition among them”;*<sup>13</sup> conditions were so disgraceful that the Courts ordered the prison’s refurbishment.

In addition to the above, we must add the especially degrading conditions of the punishment cells, where a large group of inmates are held in a small and

9 Facultad de Derecho. Universidad Diego Portales, *Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile 2003. Hechos de 2002*, Santiago, 2003, p. 65-66.

10 Facultad de Derecho...(2003), p. 69.

11 Universidad Diego Portales. Escuela de Derecho. y CEJIL, *Tortura, Derechos Humanos y Justicia Criminal en Chile*, Santiago, 2002, p. 71.

12 U. Diego Portales y CEJIL (2002), p. 69.

13 U. Diego Portales y CEJIL (2002), p. 72.

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unsanitary space. In many cases they even have to satisfy their physiological needs, such as urinating/defecating, in that same place.<sup>14</sup>

On top of the appalling living conditions, one must add the very deficient healthcare that inmates receive in the case of illness. Prison infirmaries are located outside the cell areas within penitentiary facilities, and thus the provision of healthcare relies on the willingness or unwillingness of prison wardens to take prisoners to the infirmary. As a consequence, *“on many occasions, especially when fights break out within penitentiary units, [...] many days can go by before prison wardens allow that to happen, even if inmates are in critical condition”*. Also, *“during the night there are no permanent prison guards in the alleys, galleries or towers, and the only way inmates can report the need for immediate healthcare is by knocking on the cell bars to call the attention of a guard”*.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, inmates suffering from HIV/Aids *“do not receive the medicines or therapies – bi-therapy and tri-therapy – that they need to survive”*.<sup>16</sup> In addition, inmates whose cases are dismissed as a result of mental illness often have to remain in prison because of lack of space in the Psychiatric Hospital.<sup>17</sup>

However, the most severe violations of the right to physical and mental integrity within prisons result from the systematic ill-treatment of inmates by prison guards. All the reports drawn up by local and international entities about the human rights situation coincide with that conclusion. The last Amnesty International Annual Report on Chile (2003), which analyses the situation in 2002, states that *“there were continuous reports on the harsh condi-*

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14 A prison guard from ex Penitentiary stated *“punishment cells measure 2.5 by 4 meters and hold between 7 and 15 people. Now they have a place to go to the toilet (till recently that did not exist)”*; Manuel Henríquez, Executive Director of CONFAPRECO (Confederation of Relatives and Friends of Convicts) stated that *“inmates are kept in small cells 1.60 by 2 meters, often in groups of many inmates, and they have to remain in that place without changing clothes or washing; they have to eat in bottles that have been cut or in milk cartons. They are only allowed to go to the toilet once a day, therefore they are often forced to relieve themselves in the same recipients they use to eat, and then empty out and wash them, so that they can eat out of them again”* (Quoted in U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 79-80). The prison warden Chaplain himself declared to the Chamber of Deputies' Special Commission on Citizen Safety that punishment cells were inhuman. (See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 80).

15 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 106.

16 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 106-107. See also Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo (CODEPU), *Informe de Derechos Humanos 1990-2000*, Santiago, 2001, p. 101.

17 See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 107 and CODEPU (2001), p. 101.

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*tions of reclusion and ill-treatment of inmates, including minors*”.<sup>18</sup> The report produced by the Universidad Diego Portales and CEJIL (Centre for Justice and International Law, based in Washington) published in 2002 concludes that “our research reveals the effective usage of abuse and torture, both physical and mental, against inmates in all the prisons we visited” and “we were able to detect [...] the existence of a punishment regime within prisons that exceeds the acceptable international ranges and, what is even worse, a ‘culture’ of permanent hostility towards inmates, translated into permanent harassment (from verbal ill-treatment to brutal beatings), that go beyond the punishments authorised by the Regulations”.<sup>19</sup>

Beatings and cruel treatment are routine when the roll of inmates is called. They also occur during the fairly frequent searches conducted by prison guards to confiscate forbidden elements, such as alcohol, drugs or mobile phones, that inmates may have in their cells. According to Manuel Henríquez, President of the Confederation of Relatives and Friends of Convicts (CONFAPRECO), what occurs on these occasions is “a collective torture that consists in searches involving a large number of special guards that conduct the so-called ‘carpet’, whereby all inmates have to lie on the floor face down with their hands behind their head, while the guards run on top of them beating them at the same time”.<sup>20</sup>

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18 Amnistía Internacional, *Informe Anual 2003*, Madrid, 2003, p. 131.

19 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 77. This is aggravated by the reticence of common prisoners to denounce the torture and ill-treatment they suffer. According to CODEPU this is due to various factors: “the common criminal –generally comes from social sectors where violence forms part of his daily cultural reality, therefore, when he is beaten by a State official, it is normal; –considers ill-treatment, in general, a ‘cost’ within the ‘business’ of crime; –is unwilling to act in coordination with other inmates, with some exceptions; thus, any denunciation is necessarily individual in nature and therefore carries little relative weight, and what is most determinant, the ensuing cost of denunciations expressed in repression by prison authorities also has to be paid for individually; finally, denunciations are not received with good will by most people, given that they come from criminals and do not form part of any ‘popular cause’” (CODEPU, 2001, p. 104).

20 Quoted in U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 83. It is worth noting that despite the fact that during the 90s political prisoners imprisoned in the Santiago High Security Prison – for crimes with political motivations committed after the end of the dictatorship – suffered similar treatment to that described above, as from 1999 this situation has been changing and since 1999 there have been no reported cases of torture. Undoubtedly, international pressure on the government has had an effect, as well as the greater attention paid to them by both the Catholic Church and some Deputies from different political parties.

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One of the most severe cases of ill-treatment took place in January 2002, involving nearly 30 inmates of Module Alfa in the Colina II Prison, a high security installation where convicts regarded as very dangerous are confined for months. The situation became known because on January 18, visiting day, 25 out of the 29 convicts that were in the unit wounded themselves with sharp objects as an extreme measure in order to call attention to the following: *“on the night of January 16, Manuel Iturrieta Muñoz, first convict to be sentenced to effective life imprisonment (i.e. 40 years in prison before enjoying any kind of release), held in Module Alfa, was brutally beaten by a group of prison guards. In view of this situation, the following day, the remaining inmates in Module Alfa demanded an explanation [...] but were answered with a severe beating that left 13 inmates injured, four of whom suffered severe injuries (broken eardrums, back injuries, etc.)”*<sup>21</sup> The prison guards’ version was that the convicts had *“beaten themselves up”*. However, the Supreme Court decided in favour of the convicts and ordered the Module to be closed and reconditioned to guarantee a minimum level of dignity for inmates.<sup>22</sup>

Inhuman conditions of incarceration, together with constant ill-treatment, lead in turn to recurrent mutinies that are mercilessly repressed. As a consequence, the result of every mutiny is people injured and even dead. In these cases, a special anti-mutiny group is in charge of repression. One of the spokesmen for inmates explained to the Universidad Diego Portales and CEJIL researchers that *“reprisals only begin with the arrival of the anti-mutiny group [...] when all inmates, without any exceptions, are attacked from all flanks, and this includes everyone; those that took part in the mutiny and those that did not. We are attacked by a group of sadists, specifically trained for that purpose, armed to the teeth and protected by shields and helmets. They attack us with shotgun pellets, gas, batons, rifle butts, feet, etc. Normally, they corner us in one of the yards or in the gym where they strip us down to our underpants and force us to wait with our faces against the floor while they destroy our places of reclusion and all its contents. In other words, our improvised furniture, television sets, radios, stereo sets, thermos flasks, clothes, suitcases, everything, absolutely everything. After that [...] they return us to our alleys or galleries and we must go through several ‘dark tunnels’, as we call them, where we are beaten, resulting in broken bones, wounds, etc., in some cases also involving the loss of eyesight or*

21 Facultad de Derecho...(2003), p. 71. See also Amnistía Internacional (2003), p. 131.

22 See Facultad de Derecho...(2003), p. 71-72 and Amnistía Internacional (2003), p. 131.

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*open head wounds that we are left with for life*”.<sup>23</sup> Between December 1999 and March 2002, nine serious mutinies took place in prisons in the Metropolitan Region, Valparaíso, Concepción, Antofagasta, San Antonio, Coronel and Ancud.<sup>24</sup> In 2003 several major mutinies took place: in January in the Colina II Prison, where five inmates subsequently wounded themselves with sharp objects because they “*feared for their lives*”;<sup>25</sup> in October a mutiny in the Rancagua prison resulted in eleven injured “*that were transferred to the Regional Hospital because of severe injuries*”.<sup>26</sup> That same month of October, 45 inmates from La Serena prison held an “*indefinite hunger strike to protest against living conditions inside the prison*”.<sup>27</sup> In January 2004 there was a major mutiny, including a fire, in the Rancagua prison that ended with six inmates wounded in the Regional Hospital and with tough repression of relatives of convicts that were protesting outside the prison.<sup>28</sup>

The constant escapes and attempted escapes resulting from the intolerable incarceration conditions generate behaviours among guards that hinder the physical and mental integrity of inmates: “*Escapes create a scenario for prison guards to commit abuses, torture and other degrading treatments against the prison population in order to search their cells and investigate the inmates responsible and their collaborators*”.<sup>29</sup> Between February 1999 and February 2000, the press reported the escape of 58 convicts in Iquique, Calama, Copiapó, La Serena, Limache, Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, Santiago and Victoria<sup>30</sup>. In each case, this led to some degree of repression.

Another very serious form of violation of inmates’ right to physical and mental integrity is the omission or delay by prison guards to control the fights among inmates and, especially, the fires – premeditated or accidental - that break out inside prisons: “*Whenever fights break out among inmates, prison wardens do not intervene until the situation is desperate for those that are fighting*.”

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23 Quoted by U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 95.

24 See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 96-98.

25 See *La Cuarta*, January 15, 2003.

26 *El Mercurio*, October 17, 2003.

27 *La Nación*, October 14, 2003.

28 See *La Cuarta*, January 25, 2004.

29 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 98.

30 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 99-100.

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*What's more, often prison guards are keen to watch fights among inmates*.”<sup>31</sup>

With regard to fires, the negligence of prison guards has caused several tragedies over the last few years. On December 11, 2000, eleven inmates suffocated during a fire in Tower 2 of the San Miguel Preventive Detention Centre. In the appeal for protection presented by CONFAPRECO, it is stated that *“after the start of the fire, prison guards took 50 minutes to arrive, when under normal circumstances it takes them 5 minutes”*.<sup>32</sup>

In the fire that took place on May 20, 2001 in the prison in Iquique, 26 inmates were burnt to death because the prison guards on call allowed the only guard that had a key to the area of the fire to be drunk, lying down in an internal facility.<sup>33</sup> That event had a great impact on the city, because all the fatal victims were young, had no previous police records, and their cases were under investigation. In other words, it was possible that some of the cases would have been dismissed due to lack of evidence.

In the fire that broke out in the “El Manzano” prison in the city of Concepción, on September 11, 2003, nine inmates were killed and 18 were wounded. Bernardino Sanhueza, Regional Representative of the Ministry of Justice, tried to explain the events stating that *“when the flames started to appear there was a general power cut in the area next to the prison which could have delayed the help provided by prison guards to the module in question”*.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, in accordance with prison guard figures, in only three years (between 1999 and 2001) there were 56 deaths inside prisons located in the Metropolitan Region, as a result of natural causes, fights, suicides and accidents.<sup>35</sup>

A further form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of inmates is the movement of prisoners, people arrested and convicts, using handcuffs or shackles without the relevant court order and with no need to do so, especially when these prisoners are exhibited to the press. Likewise, there have been many cases where inmates (convicts or those awaiting trial) are

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31 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 81.

32 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 82.

33 See *La Estrella de Iquique*, May 21, 2001.

34 *La Nación*, September 12, 2003.

35 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 80.

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moved from one prison to another without the necessary court order, thus violating their right to be visited by their relatives.

During visits to inmates, their relatives' basic rights are violated by being subjected to degrading body searches: *"Women, especially, have to undress in front of female prison guards and are often forced to bend over to be searched inside their bodies, in the vagina and anus"*.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to the appalling incarceration conditions and the existence of a repressive "culture" among prison guards, in order to have a full picture of the extremely serious violations of the most basic human rights within prisons, we must consider the terrible working conditions of prison guards and the non-existent administrative and judicial control over their behaviour.

For starters, the small number of prison guards is an element that severely aggravates the insecurity in prisons and exacerbates prison guards' weariness, frustrations and aggressiveness towards inmates. Between 1980 and 1999 the prison population increased from 15,230 to 30,051, in other words by 100%, while the number of prison guards increased from 4,663 to 5,339, in other

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36 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 87. Faced with an appeal for protection presented by a woman who during a visit had suffered the introduction of a female prison guard's finger in her anus, while she was forced to strip, the Prison Guard Service justified this practice to the Santiago Court of Appeals stating that *"unfortunately they are obliged and need to adopt all measures to prevent behaviour that may alter the internal regime of any prison [...] and that is finally translated into actions that may eventually be unpleasant or uncomfortable, not only for the person that suffers them, but also for the official that, in turn, is obliged to perform them"*, adding that *"as a consequence, and regarding what was expressed in the appeal, it is impossible to understand that the specific constitutional guarantee of any person has in any way been violated, because on the one hand, the rights of people that for whatever reason go to a prison cannot be violated by the interests of one particular individual, requiring that every person submit, for the benefit of all, to the measures that enable us to provide minimum levels of security"*. The Court finally accepted the appeal stating clearly that *"this action (checking of the anus), with or without anal introduction, must be considered a serious violation or attack against a person and implies severe moral alteration impacting the mental health of the person that suffers it"* and that *"indeed, such an exceptional technique cannot be accepted by someone wishing to visit an inmate, regardless of how dangerous the latter may be; the action in itself runs counter to the essential principles that safeguard human beings, and if there is danger that prison authorities wish to avoid, it must seek other civilised means to prevent them, and if they do not exist, it is better to run that risk than to violate the right of persons to their physical and mental integrity and to their free disposition"*. (Quoted in Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 87-88).



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words by just over 14%. The ratio of 1 prison guard for every 4 inmates in 1980, changed to 1 prison guard for every 6 inmates in 1999.<sup>37</sup>

It must be mentioned that according to the leaders of the National Association of Penitentiary Staff (ANFUP), *“many guards perform administrative tasks in clinics, provide security in Courts, at the Ministry of Justice, and some even act as bodyguards for different authorities. All this on top of working hours as long as 100 hours per week, more than twice the 48 hours established by law for workers.”*<sup>38</sup> Such a pitiful scenario led Mario Riquelme, ex President of ANFUP, to express the following in August 2000 to newspaper “La Tercera”: *“the prison warden staff continues to suffer from inhuman shifts, controlling an overcrowded prison population on the verge of explosion, preventing mass escapes and mutinies with neither the necessary rest period, nor the appropriate remuneration.”*<sup>39</sup>

With regard to the control of staff behaviour, *“within the prison guard service there is no transparent and effective internal control system to verify, investigate and punish behaviour that violates inmates’ basic rights, despite the procedures laid out in the prison Regulations. The due processing of petitions is the responsibility of each prison governor. However, in some prisons the governor never becomes aware of the complaints presented or against whom they were presented. Some comply with the formality of having a book to register complaints, but in practice nothing happens with those complaints.”*<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the acknowledgement made by the Director of the Prison Guard System in March 2002, in the sense that in three and a half years only 20 prison guards had been punished in one way or another, is hardly surprising.<sup>41</sup>

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37 See Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 79. Thus, during the tragedy in the San Miguel Preventive Detention Centre, there were 9 guards on duty, while 30 were resting. In other words, there were 39 guards for 1770 inmates (1 for every 45 inmates). And during the fire in Iquique, there were also 9 guards on duty and another twelve were resting, catering for 1400 inmates (despite the fact that the facilities had been built to hold 500 inmates). In other words, there were 21 guards for 1400 inmates (1 guard for every 66 inmates). (See Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 79).

38 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 79.

39 Quoted in Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 79.

40 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 83-84. In addition, as mentioned, because of fear of reprisals and lack of solidarity among them, inmates are very reticent to the presentation of denunciations.

41 See Facultad de Derecho...(2003), p. 84.

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Nor is there an effective judicial control, because in Chile there are no special courts to supervise the application of sentences. Furthermore, ordinary courts *“tend to avoid getting involved in these cases, as if it were an aspect they are not in charge of supervising [...] this is strengthened by the feeling that it is very difficult to obtain evidence on the commission of these acts”*.<sup>42</sup>

An important factor that enables violence, torture and serious ill-treatment in Chilean prisons today is undoubtedly the fact that the prison guard system as an institution was not purged of its members that were involved with the dictatorship’s secret police DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional) (1974-1977) and CNI (Central Nacional de Informaciones) (1977-1990). In April 2002, the magazine *“El Periodista”* conducted a study evidencing that *“at least nine high officials in active service in the Prison Guard System and three retired, participated in repressive organisations”*.<sup>43</sup> It is significant that two commanders working in the prison Colina II, where the worse ill-treatment occurs, have been recognised as people linked to the dictatorship’s repressive organisations.<sup>44</sup> Carlos Quezada, CONFAPRECO lawyer, states that it is possible to detect a systematic policy of repression, whereby after being beaten, inmates are given cold showers in order to make it very difficult to prove lesions. Quezada concludes that these methods *“bear a curious resemblance to those used against political prisoners during the dictatorship”*. José Orrego himself, President of the National Association of Penitentiary Staff (ANFUP), insists on the need to purge the institution, explaining that *“during the military regime, repression and discipline were privileged over and above the mission of the Prison Guard Service which, at the end of the day, is the rehabilitation of the inmate and his/her reinsertion as a useful person. So far this has not occurred because militarism is still privileged, leading to this state of tension”*.<sup>45</sup>

With regard to the problem of overcrowding, the Chilean government has undertaken a policy of prison construction. However, it is highly probable that with the maintenance of a socio-economic model which, according to various specialised international entities, places Chile among the countries with worse income distribution, crime and therefore the prison population will continue to grow at very high annual rates. We believe that as long as society and the State do not become aware of the serious violations of prison inmates’ right to physical and mental integrity, very little can be achieved in

42 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 86.

43 *El Periodista*, April 15, 2002.

44 Quoted in *El Periodista*, April 15, 2002.

45 Quoted in *El Periodista*, April 15, 2002.

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this respect. In this sense, the expressions of Juan Carlos Pérez, Director of the Prison Guard Service, on May 28, 2003 when he reacted to the critical Annual Report by Amnesty International could not be more ominous, “*I guarantee [...] that in our institution there is neither ill-treatment nor torture of the 37,000 inmates presently held in Chilean prisons.*”<sup>46</sup>

Faced with this reality, it would be extremely important for Chile to ratify the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture, enabling visits to any prison in the country by impartial local and international commissions. It is well known that representatives from the Chilean government participated in the Working Group that prepared the text of that protocol and that Chile acted as one of the co-sponsors.<sup>47</sup> However, following the approval of the Optional Protocol by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 2002, nothing has been done to disseminate its contents among the public in Chile or to ratify it in Congress. Once again, this confirms the vision of human rights organisations such as CINTRAS, in the sense that despite the fact that the Chilean government is interested in promoting an international image as a defender of human rights, reality within the country differs enormously from the official discourse.

### 3.2. Torture during police procedures

It is important to highlight that in areas of the country where the Criminal Procedure Reform is already underway (to date, the only exception is the Metropolitan Region), there has been a significant drop in torture and ill-treatment aimed at obtaining information and confessions from the accused. The substitution of an investigative system by oral trials, where investigative, precautionary and sentencing functions are separated, one of the most important incentives for the police to use ill-treatment, has been eliminated. As a result, confessions from the accused may be accepted by the investigative-accuser-sentencing judge. Moreover, there is also the effectiveness of the regulation that establishes a summons of the accused to control the arrest before the Guarantee Judge, 24 hours following the arrest at the most.<sup>48</sup>

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46 El Mercurio, May 29, 2003.

47 See Margarita Mondaca, “Protocolo Facultativo de la Convención contra la Tortura. La urgencia de su aprobación”. CINTRAS publication, magazine *Reflexión* 29, p. 25-28.

48 See Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 35-43.

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However, there is still a concerning degree of physical ill-treatment and psychological torture at the moment of the arrest of the accused. Thus, *“for most of the judges and defenders that were interviewed, this situation prolongs itself in subsequent stages, motivated by a sort of reprisal against resistance [...] They describe that at that moment, slaps in the face, kicks, violent squeezes, etc. are frequent”*.<sup>49</sup> Likewise, threats and false promises to promote the handover of information in police stations are also frequent, especially in drug-related cases.<sup>50</sup>

The continuation of these practices is undoubtedly influenced by the survival of a “culture of violence” that has long characterised Chilean police institutions, as well as the previously discussed prison guard system. In this sense, it is even possible to show an increase in the reports of unnecessary violence by Carabineros (the institution that by far makes the most arrests) during the 90s. According to a study conducted in the Metropolitan Region, as well as in Regions IV, V and VI (which includes more than half the country’s population): *“The number of reports of unnecessary violence increased two-fold during the period 1990-2000 (from 803 to 186 reports per year respectively), and the allegations of unnecessary violence when the police claimed physical ill-treatment against them increased three-fold during the period 1990-1998 (from 102 to 331 reports); in all of them there is an important increase since 1995-96”*.<sup>51</sup> The study states that the general magnitude of reports during the decade as a whole is very alarming, considering that given the culture of violence that criminals live in, most ill-treatment is not even reported: *“The number of reports of unnecessary violence during the period March 1990 - December 2000 totals 1,349 cases, equivalent to an average of 10.45 reports per month. Reports of unnecessary violence when Carabineros claimed ill-treatment against them total 2,528 cases, equivalent to an average of 19.6 reports per month. The total added number of both types of reports is 3,877 cases, equivalent to 30.05 cases per month. In other words, approximately once a day a citizen of Regions IV, V, VI or Metropolitan alleges having been subjected to unnecessary violence by Carabineros between March 1990 and December 2000”*.<sup>52</sup>

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49 Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 44.

50 See Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 46

51 Claudio Fuentes, *Denuncias por Actos de Violencia Policial*, Santiago: FLACSO-Chile, 2001, p. 52.

52 Fuentes (2001), p. 52.

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Apart from these cases, the study also registers the following reports during such a period: 4 homicides, 5 quasi-homicides, 57 bullet wounds, 13 cases of rape or sexual abuse, 52 deaths in cells, 19 suicides in cells, 37 deaths during police procedures and 9 unspecified deaths.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, data revealing an increase in violence by Carabineros match the reports made by two ex-officers of that institution (husband and wife) that sought political asylum in the United Kingdom<sup>54</sup>. These ex-officers stated that torture is frequently applied against those arrested using the following methods: “*dry submarine*’ (plastic bag over the head to suffocate); ‘*wet submarine*’ (submerge the head of the person arrested in a container with putrid liquid); *electricity applied to different parts of the body*; ‘*Russian roulette*’; ‘*crucifixion*’ (handcuffs in both hands to hang the person arrested from the cell bars); ‘*the telephone*’ (hit both ears with open palms); *psychological torture* (threaten to harm the arrested person’s family); *denial of the use of a toilet; food deprivation and beatings (using clubs)*”.<sup>55</sup> It is important to specify that neither of the two had direct experience with the new Criminal Procedure Reform system, since they

53 See Fuentes (2001), p. 32.

54 In the case of Julio César Pino Ubilla, his asylum request was accepted by the Birmingham Court on August 13, 2003, stating that “if he returns to Chile now, there is a real risk that his rights will not be protected”. (*La Tercera*, September 11, 2003). With regard to his wife, Miriam Alejandra Solís Fernández, her request is presently being assessed.

55 *La Nación*, September 14, 2003. They also reported that during the last few years the following detainees had died as a result of torture committed by Carabineros: Miguel Vallejos Palma in February 1995, in the Panimávida Police Station; Rubén Bascur Jäger in July 1995 in the Futrono Police Station; Ricardo Parra in the Lebu Police Sub-Station; Eric Silva Retamal; José Luis Oyarzún; Juan Pablo Acevedo in the Constitución Police Station; Rigoberto García Alfaro and Fernando Orellana in the José Santos Ossa Police Sub-Station; Paola Olivares Reveco in the Quilicura Sub-Station; Luis Canuilag Toro in the Lo Lillo Police Sub-Station; and Cristián Abarca Abarca in the Juanita Aguirre Police Sub-Station in Conchalí (*La Nación*, September 11, 2003). These reports were not contradicted by the institution whose director general only said that Julio Pino “is a corporal that had received long medical leave, of a psychiatric nature, that deserted, travelled to London, and from there the Consul informed us through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We proceeded as appropriate and reported him to the courts for desertion. Finally, he decided to stay in London. His wife, also a Carabiniero, subsequently asked for voluntary retirement and travelled to be with him. That is all; it is more of a personal situation”. Asked about allegations of death threats against these two ex police officers, he answered: “No, that is false, there is nothing in that respect. I think those are very premature opinions, mere justifications to obtain some benefit, asylum and all the rest”. (*La Nación*, September 11, 2003)

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worked in Santiago police stations between 1995 and 2002 (when they resigned).<sup>56</sup>

Likewise, in its latest Annual Reports, Amnesty International states that one of its main concerns in the case of Chile is the subsistence of torture and ill-treatment, both by the police and in prisons. In the 2001 report (that refers to the year 2000), it states *“we constantly received reports of torture and ill-treatment by Carabineros against presumed criminals they had arrested. Some victims needed hospital treatment as a result of the injuries they suffered and others presented official accusations”*.<sup>57</sup> In 2002, Amnesty stated *“according to the reports, Carabineros made use of excessive force in a series of cases; among them, while breaking up peaceful demonstrations [...], scores of demonstrators were maltreated when arrested and while held in Santiago police stations”*.<sup>58</sup>

The large majority of people that suffer these forms of violence and ill-treatment are the poor and, especially, young people. This is due, on the one hand, to the extreme social inequality that strongly encourages these sectors to commit various crimes against property and, on the other hand, to the deep-rooted social class hatred within Chilean society, especially among the police and judiciary.

The recurrence of torture and ill-treatment by Carabineros is highly influenced by its strong military nature acquired during the 17 years of dictatorship and its ensuing absorption of the “national security” doctrine. This is made worse by the fact that its organisation *“is structured around the idea that the operational staff working in the streets is primarily an army of policemen with very little training, badly paid and subjected to a very strong discipline”*<sup>59</sup>; and the fact that it maintains its autonomy from civilian power.

Other factors that influence its authoritarian and aggressive nature are its own internal regulations that violate its members’ rights to personal liberty and to marry. Thus, Article 25 of its disciplinary regulations includes – among the disciplinary sanctions that can be applied to Carabineros personnel in an

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56 See *La Nación*, September 14, 2003.

57 Amnistía Internacional, *Informe 2001*. Madrid, 2001, p. 137-138. The same report mentions that in October 2000, a delegation from the world organisation presented the government of Chile reports of torture or ill-treatment received during 1999 and the first half of 2000 by 141 people. (See Amnistía Internacional, 2001, p. 138)

58 Amnistía Internacional, *Informe 2002*. Madrid, 2002, p. 133.

59 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 37.

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administrative manner – the arrest up to 30 days in the case of non-commissioned officers.<sup>60</sup> In addition, articles 67, 68 and 69 of its personnel selection and promotion regulations stipulate violations of the basic right to marry.<sup>61</sup>

The subculture of police violence has historic roots so strong that even within the framework of the new criminal procedure, reform will require tremendous effort to reduce it. In this sense, if police personnel are not re-socialised, the “new” prosecutors will end up adapting to the “old” police, and not the other way around. The attitude of most prosecutors of justifying the actions of the police is already a cause for concern.<sup>62</sup> A prosecutor interviewed about injuries

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- 60 That article defines arrest as “depriving the detainee of the right to enjoy the benefit of permission to leave the Station or the place established for the arrest by the superior that applied the sanction;” this will be imposed for “full and successive days, and for a period no shorter than one day”. That same article establishes that “in special cases resulting from the dangerous nature of the detainee, or as a security measure [...], the detainee may be kept in an Arrest Room; not in a normal cell”; that the personnel under arrest in the police station may be visited by his/her relatives during the hours established by his/her superior; and that the arrest of Officers shall be notified by the superior that imposed the sanction or by another Officer of higher rank or of the same rank, but greater seniority than the detainee and will always be done in writing” (See “Reglamento de Disciplina de Carabineros de Chile, N° 11).
- 61 Article 67 states that Carabineros may not get married. Non-compliance shall be sanctioned with an arrest of at least 15 days. The provision outlined in the previous paragraph is not applicable to Sub-Lieutenants from the Order and Security and the Quartermaster area that for whatever reason reach the age of 30 with that rank or receive a salary assigned the rank of Capitan, nor female Sub-Lieutenants from the Order and Security area who may marry following approval of the relevant request that must comply with the requirements outlined in Article 69, where it is stated that “the marriage application shall be processed in a reserved manner and shall be accompanied by the following documents: a) Of the contracting party: 1) Birth, marital status and health certificates; 2) Consent of the parent, guardian or legal representative in case of a minor; and 3) Confidential report of the Prefect Commissar of the contracting party’s sector of residence regarding her honesty and, whether in his opinion, she deserves to be the wife of a Carabineros Officer ... b) Of the applicant: 1) Medical certificate of health condition compatible with marriage; and 2) Report by his superior on the economic situation and moral conditions for their marital life”. In turn, Article 68 states “Carabineros Officers, excluding those with ranks between Lieutenant-Colonel and General, will need the written authorisation of the General Directorate in order to get married. Civilian employees with ranks equivalent to those between Second Lieutenant and Major and professionals subject to the salary regime established in Law No. 15.076 (Medical Surgeons, Pharmacists, Chemical Pharmacists, Biochemists and Dental Surgeons)” (See Regulations for the Selection and Promotion of Personnel in Carabineros de Chile).
- 62 See Facultad de Derecho...(2003), p. 46-47.

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caused by police ill-treatment even stated that “*they are minor injuries and we do not conduct any type of investigation because we understand that the rigor of police work can cause this type of injury; they are reasonable. Since I have been a prosecutor, I have become familiar with police procedures; this makes us aware that police work is of tremendous importance and that we are facing a type of criminal that is very far from deserving a different type of treatment. If the rights of the accused were impinged upon, I would accept that as part of the work. A slap in the face is the least that can be expected by someone who has raped or sexually abused a child*”.<sup>63</sup>

In the case of Investigaciones (plain-clothed civil police force), there has been a favourable evolution since 1990, resulting from their effective subordination to civilian power. This has led to a profound purification of its members, a change in values within their training and the existence of effective internal control mechanisms. As a consequence, between 1990-94 and 1995-2000, reports of torture or ill-treatment per capita increased in the case of Carabineros from 0.003 to 0.008, while in the case of Investigaciones they dropped from 0.009 to 0.007.<sup>64</sup> However, the level of reports in the latter institution still remains high and it is only due to the enormous disparity between the number of agents in Carabineros (35.000) and Investigaciones (3.000) that this seems significant.<sup>65</sup>

The complex psychosocial phenomenon underlying police actions has been analysed by institutions such as CINTRAS in order to contribute towards overcoming a situation that is extremely negative for society as a whole. In a paper presented at a forum in Universidad ARCIS, we expressed that “*the social system tends to find in juvenile behaviour the most important cause of social violence. Official strategies have a clear repressive nature and focus preferably on this sector of society. The more profound causes of violence and citizens’ insecurity are undermined. In our opinion, these causes are, on the one hand, the economic, social, political, cultural and environmental conditions imposed by an economic and societal model that gives rise to highly contrasting living conditions, unemployment, poverty, impoverishment, environmental degradation, cultural counter-values, severe limitations to health and education, etc. On the other hand, these causes result from a series of psychosocial processes inherited from the military dictatorship, underlying peoples’ spontaneous consciousness, determining certain behaviours of*

63 Quoted in Facultad de Derecho... (2003), p. 48.

64 See Fuentes (2001), p. 28.

65 See Fuentes (2001), p. 28.



*human groups by encouraging social apathy, a lack of social solidarity, individualism, fear, the reproduction of violent behavioural patterns at the level of primary social sub-systems, etc.*” The paper concludes that “*a strategy of citizens’ security that as a State policy underestimates the real causes of social violence will not resolve the problem; on the contrary, it will contribute to encourage polarisation and belligerence between this sector of civil society and the State levels responsible for the implementation of such a strategy.*”<sup>66</sup>

### 3.3. Torture and ill-treatment in the conflict with the Mapuche ethnic group

The so-called conflict with the Mapuche Indians has its origin in the various oppressive forms of exploitation and plundering of the land and resources of this indigenous people of the south of Chile, since the XVI Century until the present day.<sup>67</sup>

Following his official visit to Chile in July 18-29, 2003, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental liberties of Indians, stated in his report on the Mapuche Indians that this ethnic group suffers from “*a high index of poverty and a low index of human development, resulting from the long history of discrimination and social exclusion, especially during the military dictatorship.*”<sup>68</sup> Indeed, that was the period during which forestry companies were able to expand most, gradually plundering the Mapuche Indians’ land.

The main problems he identified were: “*a) land owned by the Mapuche is extremely scarce and over-exploited; b) land owned by communities is isolated within privately-owned land, especially extensive forest plantations, [...]; c) as a result of the development of forest plantations, the soil in the Mapuche land has lost its sources of water [...], wild fauna has diminished or disappeared [...] as has the undergrowth [...]; d) the use of herbicides [...] and pesticides [...] has various impacts upon health and crops; e) the extraction activities in mature forests leads to*

66 Carlos Madariaga, “Tortura en Chile ayer y hoy: el problema de la prevención”. Publicación de CINTRAS publication, Magazine *Reflexión* 25, p. 27.

67 Additional information regarding this conflict may be found in the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation and fundamental liberties of the native population drawn up in November 2003 following his visit to Chile. (E/CN.4/2004/80/Add.3)

68 United Nations, E/CN.4/2004/80/Add.3, § 8.

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*the contamination of lakes, rivers and waterways, causing important losses in its ichthyologic potential (fishing)*”<sup>69</sup>

Faced with this reality that has become increasingly severe over the last decade, as from 1997, some Mapuche communities have reacted with strong demonstrations in order to stop the expansion of forestry companies in their territories and demand recognition and respect for their territorial and political rights from the Chilean State. On repeated occasions they have seized land that belonged to them in the past and whose ownership they are now claiming.

The government has reacted to these events by increasing the police contingent in the area, ordering the forced eviction of occupants and the arrest of the main leaders of the communities involved in territorial disputes with forestry companies and of organisations that demand political autonomy for the Mapuche people. By and large, those arrested have been charged with violating the State’s Internal Security Law and even of violating the Anti-Terrorist Law, still in force from the period of the dictatorship. This ‘criminalises’ their protest expressed as a just agrarian vindication and a fundamentally political demand for a new treatment by the State.

Especially during the first years of the conflict, organisations such as Coordinadora Mapuche Arauco-Malleco reported numerous cases of both torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, not only of those under arrest, but also of many members of their communities whenever the police conducted searches to find their leaders.<sup>70</sup>

In subsequent years, police violence and ill-treatment was used especially during evictions from land occupied by Mapuche groups or against their demonstrations. In its report of 2001, Amnesty International noted that *“long-lasting land disputes in the southern regions led to increasing tension between the police and members of indigenous groups. Agents [...] used excessive force during demonstrations and other police operations”*.<sup>71</sup>

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69 United Nations, E/CN.4/2004/80/Add.3, § 19.

70 See Coordinadora Mapuche Arauco-Malleco, Oficina de Derechos Humanos. *Wallmapuche. Informe anual de derechos humanos 1999*. Cañete, 2000. Unpublished document.

71 Amnistía Internacional, 2002, p. 134.

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In 2002 the situation was similar: *“there were new confrontations, and reports were received of excessive use of force by Carabineros within the context of land rights disputes that continued to take place in the south of the country”*.<sup>72</sup> On November 13 of that year, during a protest demanding the recovery of a farm from an important forestry company in Ercilla, Alex Lemún, a 17 year-old young Mapuche was shot several times by the Carabineros in charge of repressing the demonstration and died a few days later.<sup>73</sup> Rodolfo Stavenhagen, UN Special Rapporteur also registered this event in his report and *“regrets that to date no measures have been taken to punish those responsible or compensate the family, and calls upon the government to adopt the measures necessary to clarify this case”*. He also states that *“it is troubling that in September 2003 the Carabinero responsible for the death of young Lemún was freed”*.<sup>74</sup>

Despite the fact that the Araucanía Region, with the largest concentration of Mapuche population, has been one of the first to implement the Criminal Procedure Reform, this situation has not really benefited the community leaders accused of illegal terrorist association (a law that, for example, permits the existence of faceless witnesses) or indicted by military tribunals under their own procedures. According to the Special Rapporteur *“this is cause for concern [...] in terms of their right to a due process”*.<sup>75</sup>

Since their territories were incorporated into the Chilean nation in 1883, the Mapuche Indians have suffered violence, impoverishment and racial discrimination; this has also become evident in the treatment they have received from State agents, especially the police. As a consequence, we believe that respect for their fundamental human rights, especially for their right to life and physical and mental integrity, deserves special attention by the government.

### 3.4. Ex-Colonia Dignidad: a slave State within the Chilean State

Last century, in the early 60s, what was virtually to become a State-within-a-State was created in the centre-south of Chile by a score of German citizens. Under the guise of a welfare society, they created a small slave society that has

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72 Amnistía Internacional, 2003, p. 132.

73 Amnistía Internacional, 2003, p. 132.

74 United Nations, E/CN.4/2004/80/Add.3, § 29.

75 United Nations. E/CN.4/2004/80/Add.3, § 37.

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subjugated a few hundred German settlers and scores of Chilean children. This society, commonly known as *Colonia Dignidad*, has become self-sufficient in an area that at the end of the 80's totaled around 5,000 hectares and which possessed all the infrastructure necessary to develop itself separately from the national community, from industries and a hospital to a cemetery and an airstrip. In the Colony, the tiring and virtually forced labour of hundreds of people has been exploited mercilessly for decades.<sup>76</sup> In addition, the perimeter of the Colony has been closed in such a way that it is almost impossible to get in or out without the explicit authorisation of its leaders.<sup>77</sup> Among these leaders, Paul Schäfer, a German ex-sectarian-preacher has exercised tyrannical and unchecked control. To make matters worse, Schäfer has been a contumacious paederast, accused of that crime by German justice at the beginning of his sect in Gronau (Germany) in the late 50s.<sup>78</sup>

In Chile, the organisation became popular in the surrounding area as a result of the hospital services it provided freely to the poor peasants in the region, and as a result of an effective policy of cooptation of political authorities and the social elite in that zone (Parral). However, within the Colony, a small closed society developed, seriously violating all fundamental human rights in the most comprehensive and despicable manner. Not only because of its use of slave labour, but also because of its attempt to completely control the minds of its members by – among other means – prohibiting all means of external communication (press, radio, television); implanting unconditional devotion for Schäfer, including the “confession” of their faults to the leader and the provision of children for his permanent paedophilic practices; preventing all independent contact with the external world, establishing strict censorship of the mail; separating children from their parents in daily life; prohibiting all social relationships among youth of both sexes; and granting Schäfer the authority to exceptionally authorise marriages.<sup>79</sup>

The natural escapes (in the most literal sense of the word) that an entity of this nature provokes, led Schäfer and his followers to increase physical and mental repression, including beatings, torture using electricity, solitary confinement, electroshocks and drugs used in a sufficient dosage to eliminate

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76 Gero Gemballa, *Colonia Dignidad*. Santiago, Ediciones CESOC, 1990, p. 69-72.

77 Gemballa (1990), p. 88; 146 and 178.

78 Gemballa (1990), p. 60-61.

79 Gemballa (1990), p. 73-82.

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all physical capability and especially the will to escape.<sup>80</sup> In the few cases of successful escape, commandos were sent out to recapture settlers, emotional pressure was exerted on them using the relatives that had stayed behind; the complicity of the authorities, police and professionals was sought so that they would return 'to their home'; or a ferocious campaign was launched to discredit those that had managed to escape, using a Machiavellian combination of promises and threats.<sup>81</sup>

What was most serious was the complicity or negligence evidenced by the Chilean and German public powers when confronting that horrendous situation. First of all, in the case of Chile, we note the absolute irresponsibility of governments that welcomed an evidently sectarian group, whose maximum leader already faced serious legal accusations in Germany. Secondly, the grotesque attitude of Chilean courts that sentenced the first notorious escapee, Wolfgang Müller (who subsequently changed his surname to Kneese) to five years and one day in prison for the crime of libel and the theft of a horse used in his escape.<sup>82</sup> Lastly, the shameful attitude of the Chamber of Deputies that, after an investigation conducted by an ad hoc commission in 1968, approved a resolution in favour of the Colony, almost completely dismissing the numerous charges that various local entities were already leveling against it.<sup>83</sup> In the case of Germany, the negligence of its government was evidenced from the very beginning by failing to duly process the numerous reports that by the mid-60's they were already receiving from inside the Colony or from their relatives in Germany.<sup>84</sup> In any case, as a way to avoid additional scandals, the Colony officially announced that Paul Schäfer had disappeared from the Colony leaving behind a letter expressing his intention to commit suicide.<sup>85</sup>

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80 Gemballa (1990), p. 109-112; 122-123; 130-131 and 134-144). Various settlers that have escaped from Colonia have made testimonies of such torture techniques, official in various judicial and parliamentary entities in Chile, Germany and Canada.

81 Gemballa (1990), p. 109-122.

82 Gemballa (1990), p. 116. Subsequently, after a new successful escape, the situation of slavery became so evident that the Chilean and German governments managed to get him released and finally travel to Germany.

83 Gemballa (1990), p. 127.

84 Gemballa (1990), p. 118 and 123-127). In addition, in 1974, Paul Schäfer was able to visit the German Federal Republic despite the existence of a warrant for his arrest. (Gemballa, 1990, p. 119).

85 Gemballa (1990), p. 118-119 y 254-255.

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Following the military coup in 1973, the Colony also became a torture and execution centre for political prisoners, as formally accredited by the Report of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (Rettig Commission) drafted in 1991.<sup>86</sup> The Colony also became a recreational destination for members of the dictatorship's military and civilian elite, especially for its security services.<sup>87</sup>

The Colony acquired such a sinister national and international image – especially after the escape and subsequent declarations made in 1984 and 1985 by Hugo Baar, co-founder of the sect with Schäfer, and by Georg and Lotti Packmor, a married couple that also formed part of the Colony's privileged elite – that after the end of the dictatorship it became once again the subject of a legal investigation. As a result of that investigation, Hernán Roberts, special judge from the Talca Court of Appeals concluded that in the Colony *“children are separated from their parents when they are born [...] This violates Article 1 of the Constitution that stipulates that the family is the fundamental nucleus of society”*.<sup>88</sup>

Since 1990, numerous reports have been made public from people such as Adriana Bórquez, teacher Iván Treskow and psychiatrist Enrique Peebles, who were all tortured in Colonia Dignidad during the first years of the dictatorship.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, various legal testimonies have established the existence of a clandestine cemetery hiding the remains of more than one hundred disappeared political prisoners.<sup>90</sup> Testimonies have also come to light of people who assure having seen alive, inside the Colony, agricultural workers that had been arrested in Parral at the end of 1973 and who have remained disappeared political prisoners since that date.<sup>91</sup> Despite the presentation of

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86 *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación*, Santiago, 1996 (Re-edition), Volumen I, Tomo 2, p. 469-470.

87 Gemballa (1990), p. 214-218.

88 Felipe Portales, *Chile: Una Democracia Tutelada*. Santiago, Editorial Sudamericana, 2000, p. 299. Even Hernán Felipe Errázuriz, Pinochet's Minister for Foreign Affairs, concluded, *“by studying and analysing the report in question, it can be concluded that Colonia Dignidad possesses the characteristics that are appropriate of a sect, and an intentional manipulation of its members cannot be ruled out”*.

89 See *El Siglo*, May 15, 1998; *Punto Final*, May 1990 and *Punto Final*, August 1997.

90 See *El Siglo*, August 15, 1997.

91 See magazine *Ercilla*, October 6, 1997; *Ercilla*, October 20, 1997; *Las Últimas Noticias*, October 22, 1997 and *La Tercera*, May 5, 1998.

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numerous charges in order to conduct the relevant legal investigations, to date, not a single report has actually been resolved, and those responsible for these actions continue to be protected by a shield of impunity.

The present Chilean democracy, restricted and limited to 14 years has been unable to terminate that slave State where ill-treatment and horror are manifest. President Aylwin's administration cancelled its legal status as a welfare corporation, but this had practically no effect because its assets are in the name of its leaders. Different charges were also brought to bear on the Colony by the Aylwin administration for different reasons (taxation, labour, etc), but nothing has yet been resolved by the Judiciary. To the extent that the populations in the neighboring areas are no longer afraid, an increasing number of charges have been leveled against Schäfer for rape and sodomy of children. As in the 60s he has 'disappeared'. As a result of the above-mentioned situation, the prestige of the Colony has suffered and the successful escape of settlers has increased.

However, in concrete terms, the small slave society where all the rights of its inhabitants – especially the right to physical and mental integrity – are violated every day continues to exist. And very probably its leader Paul Schäfer continues to abuse Chilean and German children as he has done for more than 40 years. Shame and disgrace on Chile and Germany.

### 4. Legislation, prevention and sanction of torture

Chilean legislation is very contradictory with regard to torture. Thus, despite the fact that the Chilean State ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in November 1988, its incorporation into internal legislation is still very far from effective.

#### 4.1. Non-Compliance with the Convention against Torture

First of all, this is the result of the fact that the definition of the crime of torture in Chilean legislation is more restrictive than that of the Convention. For the latter, torture is *“any act whereby severe pain or suffering is inflicted on a person, be it physical or mental, with the purpose of obtaining information or a*

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*confession from the victim or from a third party, as punishment for an act he/she has committed or is suspected of having committed, or to intimidate or coerce that person or others, or for any reason based on any type of discrimination, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by a public official or any other person in the exercise of public office, instigated by him/her or with his/her consent or acquiescence”; and in its Article 4 it is stipulated that “every State that is a Party to this Convention shall ensure that all acts of torture constitute a crime in accordance with its criminal legislation. The same shall apply to any attempt to practice torture and to all acts by any person that constitutes complicity or participation in torture”.*

However, in Article 150 A of the Criminal Law, Chilean legislation only establishes that *“the public official that subjects a person deprived of his/her freedom to torture or unlawful coercion, physical or mental, or orders or consents its application shall be punished [...]”*. In other words, it sets forth in a restricted manner that the crime is committed against people ‘deprived of their freedom’ and does not include ‘any attempt to practice torture’.

A second element is the lack of severity of sentences that sanction torture in Chile. Despite the fact that the Convention does not stipulate maximum or minimum sanctions, in Article 4 it states *“Each State Party shall make these offences punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account their grave nature”*. Article 150-A of the Chilean Criminal Law, however, establishes that the public official that tortures *“shall be punished with the sentence of minor imprisonment or reclusion at a medium to maximum degree (between 541 days and 5 years)”*. That article also includes a criminal sanction of the superiors of the person that commits torture, lowered by one degree. In addition, if the specific objective of the torture is to force a confession, statement or the provision of some type of information from the victim, the sentence increases to major imprisonment or reclusion at a minimum degree (between 3 years and a day and 10 years); and if torture results in severe injury or death of the victim, sentences increase to major imprisonment or reclusion in minimum or medium degree (between 5 years and a day and 15 years), but *“only if that result can be attributed to negligence or carelessness by the public official”*.

Clearly, minimum and maximum sentences are light. In Chile, a sentence of up to three years imprisonment can in practice become the mere obligation to sign once a week in a specific place (“remitted sentence”). Therefore, a policeman that applies severe torture simply in order to frighten or punish, without causing severe injuries to his/her victim, could receive a sentence that does not even imply one day in prison. On the other hand, the fact that after terribly torturing a victim, a policeman may leave a person in agony for days, and not



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receive a sentence higher than 15 years imprisonment (with good conduct in prison the convict may be paroled after seven and a half years), makes a mockery of the idea of justice and clearly contradicts Chile's own internal legislation that sanctions the more serious homicides with life imprisonment without any possibility of benefits during the first 40 years of the sentence.

A third factor, closely linked to the previous one, is that in Chile's internal legislation the crime of torture is still cancelled after 5 years in those cases in which it is practiced as intimidation or punishment. This has increased to 10 years in the case of torture inflicted in order to obtain information or confessions and for those cases resulting in death.<sup>92</sup> In other words, ratification of this treaty by the Chilean State has not meant major changes in the period in which the crime can no longer be prosecuted, an aspect that is so very important in the conception of the severity of the crime. The fact that Chilean courts still favour domestic legislation whenever a contradiction arises with international law, even in the case of treaties fully ratified by Chile, makes the above-mentioned situation even worse. The most representative example of this is the priority that courts have given to the 1978 amnesty decree-law (passed by the dictatorship in order to grant impunity to the crimes of torture, executions and forced disappearances of political prisoners carried out by its own security agents) over and above the Geneva Convention.<sup>93</sup>

A fourth, extremely serious element, is the flagrant violation of Article 2 that states, *"orders from a higher official or public authority cannot be invoked to justify torture"*. This is in contradiction with the principle of due obedience that is still in force in the Chilean Armed Forces and Carabineros. Thus, Article 7 of the Disciplinary Regulations of Carabineros states that *"on reception of an order from a competent superior, it must be carried out without any objection [...] except when the order notoriously tends towards the committal of a crime, in*

92 Article 94 of the Criminal Code stipulates that *"criminal action is annulled: in the case of crimes that the law sanctions with the death penalty or life imprisonment, after 15 years; in the case of other crimes after 10 years; in the case of minor violations after six months"*. In accordance with Article 21 of the same code, crimes are those sanctioned with major imprisonment, life imprisonment or death (that is, as from five years and one day); and simple crimes, those that can be sanctioned with minor imprisonment (that is, a maximum of five years).

93 Court proceedings for crimes committed between 1973 and 1978 have only been possible since they have been classified as "permanent kidnappings", assigned to the forced disappearance of people, to the extent that such people have not appeared, neither dead nor alive.

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*which case the subordinate may not carry out such an order or modify it, according to the circumstances, immediately notifying his/her superior. Should the latter insist on his/her order, the subordinate shall carry it out as ordered, but receive written confirmation*". In other words, it is a duty to commit a crime such as torture so long as a superior repeatedly orders it.

A fifth factor is the non-applicability in Chilean domestic legislation of Article 5 of the treaty that establishes the extra-territoriality of criminal action in the case of torture "*when the presumed criminal is a national of that State*" and "*when the victim is a national of that State and the latter considers it to be appropriate*". Even more so, during the evolution of the "Pinochet case", when he was arrested in the United Kingdom and his extradition was requested by Spain, all the Chilean public powers (executive, legislative and judiciary) adopted an extreme interpretation of the principle of territoriality, clearly contradicting the precepts of Article 5.

A sixth failure to comply with the treaty is related to Articles 6, 7 and 8 regarding the granting of extradition in cases of people accused of the crime of torture. In effect, according to domestic legislation and jurisprudence, extradition may only be granted to torturers that have committed their crimes less than 5 years prior (in cases where torture sought exclusively to punish and instil fear) or less than 10 years prior (in cases of torture aimed at the extraction of information or confessions); otherwise, their criminal responsibility would be considered annulled. If existing legislation and jurisprudence is maintained, Chile could become a 'sanctuary' for old torturers, as it was for Nazi war criminals.<sup>94</sup>

A seventh element is the very relative compliance with Article 10 that refers to "*full education and information on the prohibition of torture in the professional training of law enforcement officials, be they civilian or military, of medical staff, public officials and other people that may participate in the custody, interrogation*

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94 Thus, in 1963 the Supreme Court rejected the extradition request to Germany of Walter Rauff, the notorious creator of the "death trucks" (precursors of the gas chambers), where tens of thousands of Jews are believed to have been murdered. The Supreme Court itself admitted that all the judicial elements to grant the extradition were present, but it was denied because it was deemed that Rauff's criminal responsibility had extinguished, given that more than fifteen years had gone by since he committed his crimes. Thus Walter Rauff lived peacefully and "honourably" in Chile until he died of natural causes in the mid 80s. (See *El Mercurio*, February 15, 2004).

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or treatment of any person subjected to any type of arrest, detention or imprisonment". For starters, the virtual autonomy of the Armed Forces and Carabineros makes the introduction of this type of training impossible without the acquiescence of its maximum authorities. In 1991, in a statement regarding the Report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, Carabineros generals questioned various recommendations of the report aimed at preventing future violations of human rights, pointing out that "*without doubting your good intentions, this implies limiting police action, especially preventive action*". Among others, Carabineros challenged the recommendation to end their faculty to arrest people based on suspicion, to deprive extra-judicial confessions of all legal value, and to incorporate "*human rights subjects or contents and international humanitarian law*"<sup>95</sup> in the Carabineros curriculum. Despite the fact that lately the Armed Forces and Carabineros have revealed greater willingness to introduce such subjects into their training material, its scope will depend, as in 1991, on the willingness of their authorities, since in constitutional and legal terms they still maintain the same independence they had then.<sup>96</sup> Certainly, it is difficult to expect a major change in this direction in institutions which continue to highly value the acts they carried out during the 17 years of the dictatorship; these acts included the systematic practice of torture and which maintain principles like due obedience that greatly undermine basic human rights.

An eighth factor is the lack of special legislation to enforce Article 14 of the Convention, one which "*guarantees the victim of an act of torture reparation and the right to fair and adequate compensation, including the means for his/her rehabilitation, as comprehensive as possible*". There is only one general constitutional regulation which states that "*any person whose rights are violated by the State Administration, its entities or local authorities, may complain before the courts established by law, regardless of the responsibility of the official that caused the harm*" (Article 38); regulations of the Organic Constitutional Law on State administration regulate this right.

Given the unwillingness on the part of the Chilean State to effectively incorporate the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment into its legislation, it is not surprising

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95 *La Epoca*, March 29, 1991.

96 In the year 2000, the Carabineros School incorporated the subject Human Rights in the curriculum for Officers. As reported by the institution, the issue was analysed in courses of Professional Ethics, Application of the Law and International Law. (See *La Tercera*, March 12, 2001)

that to date it has abstained from making the optional Declarations of Articles 21 and 22, which grant competency to the Committee against Torture to receive communications from a State that is party to the Convention against another State that is party to the Convention, and to receive reports of individuals subjected to its jurisdiction.

#### 4.2. Other regulations regarding torture or ill-treatment

In the legislative field, a further factor related to police torture and ill-treatment is the faculty that the police have had to make arrests simply based on suspicion (until 1977) and, since the year 2000, the faculty to ‘retain’ (euphemism for detention) for up to four hours people who do not carry their identity card.<sup>97</sup> These faculties have a great impact on the occurrence of police ill-treatment, because more than half of the reports about such ill-treatment state that it occurs in public spaces at the moment of the arrest.<sup>98</sup> Thus, despite the increasing introduction of the new criminal procedure reform that has had a positive impact on reducing torture and ill-treatment during police interrogations in police stations, reports of ‘unnecessary violence’ increased significantly at the end of the 90s, especially concerning Carabineros, in charge of detaining or ‘retaining’ on the basis of suspicion.

What is even more alarming is the fact that there have been recent legislative motions aimed at expanding detention periods on the grounds of suspicion, with the pretext that the person is not carrying his/her identity card. The initiative, presented by Right-wing Senators Alberto Espina, Baldo Prokurica, Mario Ríos and Hernán Larraín, and seconded by the Socialist Senator José Antonio Viera-Gallo, at the beginning of September 2003, established that *“the police may ask to see the identification of any person whenever there are signs that the person committed is poised or tries to commit a crime, simple felony or*

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97 In 2003 this faculty was expanded to six hours. It is important to bear in mind that despite previous public announcements by Carabineros against the elimination of that faculty, this reform was later publicly questioned by the uniformed police (See Fuentes 2001, p. 62). So much so, that *“a few months after this law came into force (eliminating arrests on the grounds of suspicion), Carabineros produced a report very critical of its operation and a public debate resulted in the passing of a new law modifying some aspects of identity control that replaced arrests on the grounds of suspicion”* (Facultad de Derecho...2003, p. 112)

98 See Fuentes (2001), p. 46-7.

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*offence”, that “the police may also ask to see the identification of any person that can provide useful information for the investigation of a crime, simple felony or offence”, and that “such identification may only be through documents issued by public authorities; that is, identity card, driving license or passport”. The Bill adds that “if more than six hours have passed since the beginning of the identity control procedure and it cannot be ascertained, despite the fact that all due facilities have been provided for that effect, fingerprints will be taken and the suspect will be detained and placed at the disposal of the Court as author of the fault established in Article 5 of the Criminal Code that sanctions whoever ‘hides his/her real name from the authorities [...] or refuses to provide it or provides a false address’”.*<sup>99</sup>

Another troubling aspect is that positive legal modifications, such as Law No. 19,567 dated July 1998, which makes it mandatory for the police to inform the person arrested of the reason for his/her arrest as well as his/her rights, are hardly applied in practice<sup>100</sup>. Thus, given their ignorance on these issues, detainees are left defenceless. In addition, in those aspects of the Law related to the appointment of a defence lawyer (within the framework of the old procedure system), this is only guaranteed when the detainee is effectively indicted; yet the key police interrogation is conducted before the actual judicial procedure.<sup>101</sup>

In view of all this, there is also great concern about the Bill presented by the government last January (2004), as it expands the faculties of the Carabineros to investigate and arrest people. If approved, its agents will be authorised to enter closed premises without requiring a court order to prosecute presumed criminals (at present they can only enter if there was a prior call for assistance); they could obtain a verbal arrest warrant (at present they can only act with a written warrant); they would be authorised to arrest a person violating a precautionary measure without having to resort to a guarantee judge for that purpose (as is presently the case); they could apprehend a person and take him/her to the nearest guarantee court, even if outside of its jurisdiction (at present the police has to present the detainee to the judge who ordered his/her

99 *El Mercurio*, September 8, 2003

100 See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 23 and CODEPU (2001), p. 97.

101 See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 23. Thus, in a study conducted by Universidad Diego Portales, published in 1998, on 264 criminal cases in the Metropolitan Region that concluded in verdicts of guilty, it is established that there were contradictions between the extra judicial and judicial statements in 52.2% of cases, and that in 84.8% of cases judges attached greater value to the former. (See U. Diego Portales and CEJIL, 2002, p. 23-24)

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arrest within 24 hours); and they could conduct independent investigations of the most commonly committed crimes (today the police has to contact the prosecutor who will then issue instructions).<sup>102</sup>

Concern about these changes impacting the fundamental rights of citizens was expressed by Diego Simpertegui himself, president of the Association of Magistrates (judges), and by Nelson Caucoto, Human Rights Director of the Judicial Assistance Corporation, who pointed out that *“every time police faculties are increased, citizens’ rights are weakened”*, and if these changes are introduced *“we will face a sort of law of the jungle”*.<sup>103</sup>

#### 4.3. Lack of prevention by the State on this issue

The work undertaken by the Chilean State to prevent human rights violations – specifically violations of the right to physical and mental integrity – is very weak. Firstly, because there have been no communication campaigns aimed at informing citizens about human rights and the mechanisms they can resort to in order to defend them. Nor have there been campaigns to inform the population about the new laws, which improve their defence and are especially important when it comes to respect for the right to physical and mental integrity.<sup>104</sup>

Secondly, there has been no introduction in the school curriculum of subjects that socialise human rights and its respect, and highlight the importance for children to develop behaviours that assert their own rights and promote the respect for the rights of others. Attempts have been made to mitigate this serious vacuum via the introduction of human rights as a ‘transversal objective’

102 *El Mercurio*, January 23, 2004.

103 *El Mercurio*, January 24, 2004.

104 Thus, for example, the information poster about the rights of the detainee that the Supreme Decree No. 668 (dated October 31, 1998) (enforcing Law No. 19.567 dated July 1998) mandated be displayed in police stations has not been disseminated by television, radio or press. The poster entitled Rights of the Detainee states: *“The right to know the reason for the arrest; to keep silent so as not to incriminate oneself; to have a relative or other person informed, in the presence of the detainee, that: He/she has been arrested. The reason for the arrest and place of detention; to meet his/her lawyer. If he/she does not have a lawyer and is charged, the State shall provide legal defence; and receive visits if not incommunicado by court order”*. (U. Diego Portales and CEJIL, 2002, p. 23)

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within the educational system, seeking to ‘permeate’ the contents of various subjects with such principles. Even if this is something positive, it is also absolutely insufficient if one is to attain a civic education where human rights are at the very core of the values held by youngsters who will become citizens.

In this sense, the proposal made by Ricardo Lagos in 1991 when he was Minister for Education (today he is President of the Republic) of using the Report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation (Rettig Report) as a school text, was discarded in view of the clear opposition of the Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI), the extreme right-wing political party most closely akin to the dictatorship.<sup>105</sup>

At the higher education level, only a few universities have begun to incorporate the subject of human rights, especially in law degree courses, despite the fact that it should also be of great importance in degree courses relating to medicine, nursing, social work, psychology and sociology.

With regard to the health sector, psychiatrist Carlos Madariaga, clinical director of CINTRAS, has stated that, faced with the challenge of preventing torture, the attitude of the government has been to *“distance itself and delegate responsibility to other sectors which it mistakenly perceives as closer to these issues”*. Thus, already in 1996, it suggested *“deploying a permanent integration effort among sectors and communities to design this type of initiative”*. In this sense, Dr. Madariaga suggested specific actions the State should implement and promote, among them: *“-Promote the development of an ethic to reject torture in professional associations of the health sector, preventing the participation of these professionals in the practice of torture and encouraging an active denunciation of the practice. -Promotion and dissemination of medical-psychological and psychosocial research on torture [...]. -Support the role of non-governmental organisations working in the field. -Development of collaboration strategies with public health areas”*.<sup>106</sup>

105 See *El Mercurio*, March 7, 1991. There was such lack of interest on the part of the Concertación government (Aylwin) in disseminating and socializing the Rettig report, that it was never even registered in the Intellectual Property Register and, thus, left out of public libraries, until 1996 when a new edition was duly registered. (See Portales, 2000, p. 104)

106 Carlos Madariaga, “La prevención de la tortura como problema de salud pública” in *Reflexión*, 24, p. 8. To date, none of the recommendations have been adopted, except for some recent training initiatives for PRAIS (Reparation and Comprehensive Healthcare and Human Rights Programme) teams implemented by the Ministry of Health’s Mental Health Unit, where CINTRAS has played an active role.

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A further aspect that contributes to the lack of effective action to prevent human rights violations is the inexistence of local institutions, working to protect and promote human rights, as defined by the United Nations system. In this sense, Chile is a regrettable exception within Latin America, where most countries have a peoples' defender or a national human rights commission concerned with the education of these rights, the study of their validity at a national level, acting in favour of victims in cases of specific violations of those rights, and promoting the improvement of regulations in order to achieve a more effective respect for human rights.

It is true that since 1990 Concertación administrations have presented various constitutional and legal bills aimed at the creation of the Peoples' Defender, or other similar institutions. However, these initiatives have not succeeded because the right-wing political parties have opposed them. As has already been explained, in a clearly anti-democratic fashion, they hold a majority in Congress despite the fact that they are a minority in terms of the votes cast in their favour. Nevertheless, it is also true that Concertación governments have attached a very low priority to these bills, doing little or nothing to disseminate the importance of its contents among the population, to obtain the approval of the Right and to clarify the doubts that have arisen within the judiciary.

The government has developed two entities with very specific aims within the field of promotion and defence of human rights. Due to the fact that they are absolutely dependent entities, they are not non-governmentally public national institutions. One is the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of the Interior, aimed exclusively at the promotion of actions and measures to find the disappeared political prisoners or their remains in the very probable case that they were murdered, and to collaborate with the judiciary in that task.

The other entity is a Presidential Advisory Commission for the Protection of Peoples' Rights, created as the precursor of the Peoples' Defender, but that in practice has been limited to the final reception and processing of complaints by people that feel they have been harmed by the behaviour of entities belonging to the central administration of the State.

By omission, the State is also failing in its prevention work when it leaves out the issue of human rights, or any of its aspects (education, legal defence, research, mental healthcare, etc.), from its priorities for the development of civil society contestable projects. As a side effect, this also contributes to the severe financial weakness suffered by domestic non-governmental



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organisations that defend human rights, as a result of the drastic cutbacks in international cooperation<sup>107</sup> and because major corporations and private foundations in Chile make absolutely no contribution whatsoever to human rights NGOs.

In order to achieve truly effective results, prevention of torture must be taken on board by the State in an active, global and comprehensive manner. In this sense, psychiatrist Carlos Madariaga expressed the following in an article published in 1996 in the CINTRAS institutional magazine: *“An effective prevention strategy needs to satisfy certain basic theoretical and methodological principles, such as its full support of the doctrine of human rights; applying a comprehensive and global vision of the problem; incorporating inter-sector work and designing State social policies that obtain resources and open all the necessary doors – for example, in the educational system and the media; finally, incorporating all social actors, at different levels, promoting social participation both in the design of the prevention objectives, as well as in the implementation of specific working techniques”*.<sup>108</sup>

#### 4.4. Non-sanction of torture

Regarding sanctions imposed by the Judiciary on torture and police or prison guard ill-treatment, they are only very exceptionally applied. We have already referred to the reticence of courts to conduct serious investigations of reports received from prison inmates. A very positive exception is the investigation conducted on the serious violations of the right to physical and mental integrity produced in Module Alfa of the Colina II prison.

As stated, the work of the Judiciary has been completely ineffective in eradicating the slave regime that violates the dignity and the physical and mental integrity of people subjugated within Colonia Dignidad.

107 Cutbacks that have valid reasons given the end of the tragic situation of the period 1973-1990 and the emergence of dramatic situations in other parts of the world. However, those drastic cutbacks have not taken into consideration that within the framework of a democracy restricted by the 1980 Constitution, severe violations of the right to political participation, of the freedom of association and expression, of labour and union rights, of the rights of the indigenous population and, in general, the economic, social and cultural rights of a large part of the Chilean population continue to be seriously violated.

108 Carlos Madariaga, “Tortura en Chile ayer y hoy: el problema de la prevención”. In *Reflexión*, 25, p. 28.

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Insofar as the sanctioning of police abuse is concerned, it is important to draw a distinction between the work of courts under the old investigative system (presently being abolished and only operational in the Metropolitan Region) and their work under the new criminal procedure code. In the old system, impunity was practically total. For starters, the ‘effectiveness’ of the police to obtain confessions is very ‘useful’ for an investigative-prosecutor-sentencing judge overwhelmed with legal cases, and under pressure to obtain ‘results’ by a society increasingly fearful of the rise of crime. For this reason, judges (in Santiago) tend to ignore the methods used by the police to obtain confessions of crimes. Within this context, the ineffectiveness of the protection recourse in the country can be easily understood. Originally, this recourse was designed to allow the detainee to be brought before the judge, so that the latter could verify his/her condition firsthand. However, in Chile, *habeas corpus* has been reduced to a judicial procedure, which consists of the provision of paperwork and the control of legal resolutions, rather than an effective instrument to prevent situations of arbitrary arrest and the violation of the physical integrity of detainees. Indeed, Articles 309 and 310 of the Criminal Procedure Code establish “*as something exceptional*” that “*a magistrate (judge) goes to the detainee or that the latter is brought to him/her*.”<sup>109</sup>

In addition, courts tend to grant absolute impunity to Investigaciones (civil police) when they are accused of torture or ill-treatment.<sup>110</sup> When these violations are committed by Carabineros, the experience of the Judicial Assistance Corporation reveals that “*most civilian judges do not even open an investigation declaring themselves incompetent and transferring the case to military justice*.”<sup>111</sup> Military justice, however, as a result of the subordination of its members to their superiors, the ideology of ‘national security’ that characterises them and their old institutional practice of torture and ill-treatment, lacks the necessary characteristics to effectively sanction these crimes. Thus, according to a study conducted by CODEPU in 2001, of a total of 173 cases, military justice had passed a guilty verdict in only 6 cases (3,4%).<sup>112</sup> In another study related to reports presented by CODEPU and the Judicial Assistance Corporation between 1990 and 1997, it is concluded that military courts only passed a

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109 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 34.

110 See CODEPU (2001), p. 97 and U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 33.

111 U. Diego Portales and CEJIL (2002), p. 33.

112 See CODEPU (2001), p. 97.

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guilty verdict in 4.7% of cases.<sup>113</sup> If one analyses cases received by military courts between 1990 and 1997 and compares sentences for reports of civilian ill-treatment by Carabineros and of unnecessary violence used by Carabineros, guilty verdicts were returned in 11.7% of the cases presented by the Carabineros, but only in 0.2% of the cases presented by civilians against the Carabineros.<sup>114</sup>

Looking ahead, there are two factors of special concern regarding the non-sanction of torture. The first factor is the maintenance of military justice with wide-ranging faculties that in many cases enables it to try civilians, a composition that prevents it from being effectively independent; and what is even worse, as established by the Constitution, it is excluded from the new criminal procedure regulations.<sup>115</sup>

The second factor is the negligence evidenced within the new criminal procedure system regarding police ill-treatment reports. The 2002 Report on Human Rights in Chile, produced by the Law School of Universidad Diego Portales, states that *“the opinion of all judges interviewed is that almost always the police reports that the blows against the detainees were necessary due to the circumstances of the arrest. With this information, if the accused chooses to proceed with the report, some judges send these cases to the public prosecutor to open an investigation that, in practice, is never opened. In some cases involving personal injury, the principle of opportunity has been applied and the facts have not been investigated. In others, prosecutors point out that victims of ill-treatment should present their report to the public attorney’s office, because minor injuries constitute a crime dealt with prior to an individual action, and because that report is not presented, they do not investigate it. In any of these options, all interviewees stated that they were unaware of the results of the investigations and ignored if sanctions were applied. Another option for prosecutors, in cases of police ill-treatment, is to*

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113 See Fuentes (2001), p. 40. It is important to highlight that none of the studies specify whether verdicts of guilty refer to cases of torture or unnecessary violence resulting in death or serious injury.

114 See Fuentes (2001), p. 42.

115 Thus, Article 80 A of the Constitution, regarding the Prosecuting Authority explicitly states that *“the exercise of public criminal action and the direction of investigations of the facts that constitute a crime, of the ones that establish punishable participation and those that prove the innocence of the accused in cases seen in military courts, as well as the adoption of measures to protect victims and witnesses of those events, shall lie in the hands of the entities and people established by the regulations of the Code of Military Justice and respective laws”*.

*declare themselves incompetent and to send the cases to the military prosecution service, but again they stated they were unaware of the results. Some judges send these cases directly to the military justice, but they also stated they were unaware of the results. [...] Defenders stated they were unaware of the procedures followed subsequently, and some replied they believed it was necessary for other lawyers to represent them as victims in those cases”<sup>116</sup>*

Given that the new procedure system will soon be applied throughout the country (it is only in the Metropolitan Region that it has been postponed for a year), it is crucial to establish a clear and effective system to process a report, so that police torture and ill-treatment can be adequately sanctioned in the new system.

#### 4.5. Lack of reparation for the victims of torture suffered during the dictatorial period

From the very onset, Concertación governments adopted an attitude of omission with regard to torture systematically used by the dictatorship. As a consequence, and despite the fact that torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment were all key elements of the regime’s repressive policy, the registration of people arrested and tortured was left out of the tasks undertaken by the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation (Rettig Commission)<sup>117</sup>

116 Facultad de Derecho... (2003) 49. In the case of psychological torture, the procedure is even more unclear, despite the fact that few reports had been made: *“An interviewee (defendant lawyer) stated that in a summons for the control of detention, he had revealed certain threats made by a prosecutor, but there were no consequences. Another defender had reported certain ill-treatment by the police and the prosecutor firmly denied that, threatening him with legal proceedings for libel”*. (Facultad de Derecho... 2003, p. 49)

117 See Beatriz Brinkmann, “Tortura: crimen que espera castigo”. CINTRAS Publications, Magazine *Reflexión* 26, p. 10-12. The only consistent policies developed by the Concertación in favour of victims of the worst abuse by the dictatorship, has been the registry of executed and disappeared political prisoners aimed at providing reparation to their relatives; support for judicial tasks aimed at establishing the whereabouts of the remains of people disappeared and the pardons and commutations of sentences for those that committed politically motivated crimes in their struggle against the dictatorship.

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The government also failed to adopt an adequate attitude after the Rettig Report itself highlighted in its analysis and conclusions the ferocious extension of the phenomenon of torture between 1973 and 1990. It is estimated that some 300 thousand people were subjected to some kind of torture during Pinochet's dictatorship.

Domestic and international organisations working in the field of mental health and human rights have outlined in countless written documents the severe sequels of this cruel form of repression. In an article published in 1996, the clinical director of CINTRAS emphasised not only the personal, but also the social damage caused by this scourge: *"Torture as a personal human experience is a traumatic event with serious consequences that invariably damages the bio-psychosocial unit of the individual. Likewise, as an experience of large human groups, torture triggers serious psychosocial problems which impact the behaviour of society as a whole"*.<sup>118</sup>

Despite evidence of this damage and the need for reparation, until 2003 the only thing done by the successive Concertación governments in favour of people arrested and tortured was to provide precarious healthcare, free of charge, through the Ministry of Health's Reparation and Comprehensive Healthcare and Human Rights Programme (PRAIS). No steps had even been taken to eliminate the police records of people arrested, tortured and imprisoned for political reasons during the dictatorship, nor for the restitution of their civil and political rights, such as the right to vote and be elected to public office.

As a result, to date many ex-political prisoners, survivors of torture, have been unable to achieve their social and professional reinsertion; they feel stigmatised, outcast, and live in precarious conditions, thus worsening the psychosocial consequences of torture.

As a result of the repeated demands of local and international human rights organisations<sup>119</sup> and, especially, of those made over the last few years by the

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118 Carlos Madariaga, "La prevención de la tortura como problema de salud pública". CINTRAS publications, Magazine *Reflexión*, 24, p. 5.

119 One of its expressions was the inclusion of the demand for reparation of victims who survived torture in the Open Letter to President Frei, sent by the Chilean Section of Amnesty International, CINTRAS, the Chilean Human Rights Commission, CODEPU, FASIC, the Documentation and Archive Foundation of Vicaría de la Solidaridad, PIDEE and SERPAJ-Chile, on occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (See CODEPU, 2001, p. 328-329).

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Ethical Commission Against Torture,<sup>120</sup> in August 2003 President Ricardo Lagos finally announced the creation of a government commission to officially accredit people detained and tortured during the dictatorship, in order to subsequently provide reparations.

Unfortunately, in accordance with the aims outlined in an official document entitled “There is no tomorrow without yesterday”, such certification will only “entitle people holding it, and who have received no other form of reparation, to an austere and symbolic reparation established by the Executive (power)”.<sup>121</sup> It is worth noting that in accordance with what is stipulated by the United Nations Convention against Torture, what is appropriate is fair and adequate reparation considering the physical, mental, moral and material damage caused. This is what had been pointed out previously to the government in various documents prepared by CINTRAS, CODEPU and other human rights organisations, including the Ethical Commission Against Torture.<sup>122</sup>

As has already been pointed out, survivors of torture, in general, are people who not only suffered greatly during the period they remained in detention, but also suffered subsequently due to exile or severe discrimination in the field of employment or as students, leading to various forms of permanent damage, resulting in extremely negative psychological or material conditions for many. Granting survivors of torture compensation that is merely symbolic would imply additional suffering for the victims. It would also be damaging to offer this compensation on the condition that no other form of reparation be received.<sup>123</sup> A matter of this importance should not be left to the discretion of the Executive, but become a Law of the Republic. In addition to an equitable compensation, it would also be just to provide victims with other forms of moral vindication, effectively extolling them before the rest of society. As a result of the fact that this omission by the Concertación governments has lasted for many years, a significant portion of victims have already died.

120 Commission that coordinates the work in this field conducted by various organisations and people committed to the defence of human rights.

121 Government of Chile, 2003, p. 27

122 See CINTRAS, “La reparación para sobrevivientes de tortura en Chile”. In *Reflexión*, 27, p. 33-34. (ANNEX 1)

123 Because no reparation has been granted for torture, that could only be interpreted in the sense that not even this austere and symbolic amount would be awarded to those who have received reparation as relatives of executed or disappeared political prisoners; or as beneficiaries of the meagre benefits granted people dismissed from their work for political reasons or those people who have returned from exile.

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Therefore, it would also be just to make all possible efforts to accredit their situation<sup>124</sup> so as to morally vindicate them, and grant reparations to their descendants.

Based on the contents of the document “There is no tomorrow without yesterday”, the government presented various Bills containing some positive measures, such as the elimination of criminal records of ex-political prisoners and improvements in healthcare, but also exhibited serious mistakes relating to the right to justice. In this sense, and responding to a direct petition of the Chamber of Deputies Commission on Human Rights, CINTRAS prepared a document on what it believes to be the fundamental principles for effective reparations: comprehensiveness, universality, simultaneousness, efficacy, legality and legitimacy.<sup>125</sup>

What would evidence a new attitude towards reparations for torture victims is if the Council for the Defence of the State was to put an end to the clearly unjust and fallacious defence of State patrimony against civil proceedings seeking compensation from the State, initiated by survivors of torture and relatives of disappeared or executed political prisoners.

So far, that institution has made such an absolute defence of the financial interests of the State that it has gone to the extreme of: denying that the Report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation constitutes valid evidence with regard to the accreditation of fatal victims of the dictatorship<sup>126</sup>; accepting the version of the military patrol which claims that Carmen

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124 Given the rigor of archives belonging to Chilean human rights NGOs, in many cases this would be completely feasible. Their rigorous work has meant that UNESCO itself has officially declared these archives a memory of humanity.

125 CINTRAS, *Los proyectos de ley de reparación del gobierno de Chile*. Unpublished text. (ANNEX 2)

126 See *El Mercurio*, July 28, 2000; *El Mercurio*, May 28, 2003 and *La Segunda*, May 15, 2002.

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Gloria Quintana accidentally burnt herself<sup>127</sup>; denying that executions took place during Operación Albania, claiming that there were armed confrontations<sup>128</sup>; denying the existence of detention and torture camps during the dictatorship; and even, on some occasions, denying the existence of a dictatorship!<sup>129</sup>

With regard to claims leveled against the State by torture victims for civil compensations, the Council for the Defence of the State has also adopted an extreme attitude aimed at completely blocking these proceedings. It has argued that there is no evidence that public officials inflicted such ill-treatment, and that such crimes no longer exist. It concludes that, in the case of a contradiction, domestic legislation must rule over international law. Finally, it has sought the dismissal of complaints presented as a group, so they may be replaced by individual claims. This would make it impossible for claimants to even initiate legal proceedings because the mere notification to the defendant (in this case the State) would cost the plaintiff Ch\$80,000, equivalent to more than US\$130.<sup>130</sup>

127 Together with Rodrigo Rojas (who died as a result of his burns) during a national protest in 1986 she became a victim of an atrocious form of repression by a military patrol: to be burnt alive. Carmen Gloria Quintana survived, but her completely disfigured face had to undergo numerous surgical operations abroad thanks to international solidarity. During the subsequent legal proceedings to obtain compensation from the State for moral and material damage, the Council for the Defence of the State reached this outrageous conclusion. Later, the case was submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and several years later this Commission was able to convince the Chilean State to grant her compensation. It is important to bear in mind that the Chilean judiciary – during the dictatorship – had accepted the arguments put forward by the military patrol and only sentenced the officer in charge of the patrol for criminal negligence because he had not driven this victim of an “accident” to a hospital.

128 Operación Albania was an infamous massacre of 12 people carried out by CNI in one single day in June 1987. As usual, that security agency fabricated the version that these people had died during armed confrontations with the police, something that was completely discarded as a result of the legal investigation conducted by judge Milton Juica. In what was virtually schizophrenia, the Council for the Defence of the State that had successfully argued – as a plaintiff in the trial – that the thesis of confrontation was false, finally supported this same thesis when some relatives of victims of Operación Albania initiated civil proceedings against the State. (See *El Mercurio*, July 28, 2000.

129 See *El Mercurio*, May 28, 2003.

130 See *El Siglo*, October 11, 2002.



This situation becomes even more serious when contrasted with the Chilean State's attitude of promoting the right to reparation, which it has demonstrated at the international level. Since 1994, the government has submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights a proposed resolution on this matter, approved by consensus, in which it calls on all States to repair and rehabilitate victims of severe violations of human rights.

## **5. Policy of impunity after 1990 regarding torture and other serious violations of human rights committed during the dictatorship**

Despite the fact that the Chilean State abandoned its policy of systematic torture applied between 1973 and 1990, it has continued the systematic policy of seeking impunity for the most severe human rights violations, especially in the case of torture. This policy has manifested itself in the following main areas.

### **5.1. Confirmation of the 1978 Amnesty Decree-Law**

Despite the fact that the Programme of Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia (coalition of political parties in government since the end of the dictatorship) clearly expressed the idea of repealing or revoking this decree-law<sup>131</sup> (consistent with its strong criticism expressed during the dictatorial period), Patricio Aylwin's administration discarded this idea from the onset, as explained by Edgardo Boeninger, one of its most important Ministers, in a detailed book published in 1997.<sup>132</sup> In addition, and in line with this attitude of unwillingness to be consistent with the most conflictive points in its Programme, the Concertación coalition conducted a paradoxical negotiation of the 1989 constitutional reforms, whereby it accepted the loss of the parliamentary majority that awaited Aylwin if the Constitution imposed in 1980

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131 "The democratic government will promote the annulment of the (1978) Amnesty Decree Law" (Part II: Human Rights; Point 2: Truth and Justice)

132 See Edgardo Boeninger, *Democracia en Chile. Lecciones para la gobernabilidad*. Santiago, Edit. Andrés Bello, 1997, p. 400-402.

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remained unchanged.<sup>133</sup> As a consequence, in 1990, it was unnecessary to acknowledge the above-mentioned situation, which Boeninger acknowledged years later. It was enough for the government to state that it lacked the parliamentary majority required to repeal the amnesty decree-law. This same argument was also used in defence of the Chilean State, when faced with reports of denial of justice presented to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.<sup>134</sup>

That this strange renunciation of a parliamentary majority went by unnoticed is, on the one hand, explained by the fact that in the plebiscite that ratified this aspect, a vote was cast for a 'package' of 54 reforms. On the other hand, it is also explained by the completely authoritarian manner in which the leadership of the Concertación was already defining its future position.<sup>135</sup>

The lack of political will to repeal or revoke the amnesty decree-law has been maintained despite the categorical declarations of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and of the Human Rights Committee of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stating that the maintenance of such a provision implies an infringement by the Chilean State of the

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133 In the understanding that Pinochet would win the plebiscite in 1988 and remain as Head of State until 1997, Articles 65 and 68 of the 1980 Constitution stipulated that the government could approve all ordinary legislation with an absolute majority in one Chamber of Congress and just a third in the other Chamber. Because it was quite rightly foreseen that the pro-Pinochet right-wing forces did not possess a popular majority, an additional article guaranteed an absolute majority in the Senate by means of the previously mentioned binominal electoral system and with nine Senators directly or indirectly appointed by Pinochet himself. At the same time, thanks to the binominal system, it was also certain that it could easily obtain more than a third of the Deputies. But with the defeat of Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite, the situation turned upside down. The easy victory of the Concertación presidential candidate was to be expected (Aylwin) and, likewise, that this political coalition – that would obtain an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies and a third in the Senate – would then benefit from those Articles. (See Portales, 2000, p. 35-37)

134 See Portales, 2000, p. 32-33. This argument lost validity with the change of millennium, because the Lagos administration fortuitously obtained an absolute majority in the Senate between August 2000 and May 2002 (because Pinochet and Francisco Javier Errázuriz were suspended as Senators), but failed to submit a Bill to Congress during this period aimed at repealing or revoking the 1978 Amnesty Decree-Law.

135 See Rafael Otano, *Crónica de la Transición*. Santiago, Edit. Planeta, 1995, p. 84.

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American Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>136</sup>

On several occasions, Concertación governments have tried to consecrate the amnesty decree-law submitting Bills to Congress, which, in practice and after a certain period, lead to the closure of cases regarding disappeared political prisoners in the period 1973-1978. These Bills are the 1993 Aylwin Bills, the 1995 Frei Bill and the Figueroa-Otero agreement of that same year. These Bills received the enthusiastic support of the Armed Forces and the Right-wing political parties, but were rejected primarily due to the moral impact of the strong opposition of human rights organisations, and associations of relatives of victims.<sup>137</sup>

At the end of 2003, the Lagos administration presented a Bill on human rights in which, once again, the Concertación's promise to repeal or revoke the decree-law was broken.<sup>138</sup> Of greater concern is the fact that Clara Szczaranski, president of the Council for the Defence of the State, in public statements made in July 2003, expressed that she was in favour of the application of such a decree-law. She explained that, when in conflict with human rights treaties ratified by Chile, the decree-law should prevail by virtue of the "pro reo principle".<sup>139</sup>

Another troubling element in presidential announcements prior to the presentation of its Bill, is their good disposition towards pardoning the handful of

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136 See CODEPU (2001), p. 201-206 and 219-227.

137 See Beatriz Brinkmann, *Itinerario de la impunidad: Chile 1973.1999. Un desafío a la dignidad*. Santiago, Edic. CINTRAS, 1999, p. 115-120 and 131-137; Andrés Allamand, *La Travestía del Desierto*. Santiago, Edit. Aguilar, 1999, p. 435-438, 440-448, 451-453 and 462-464; and Portales (2000), p. 245-250, 332 and 338-341.

138 Despite this, ten Concertación Deputies, headed by Juan Bustos (Socialist Party) and Gabriel Ascencio (Christian Democrat), submitted a Bill that in practice cancels the effects of the amnesty decree-law, stating that actions classified as torture or forced disappearance of persons cannot be included in an amnesty or pardon because these crimes represent genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. (See *El Mercurio*, September 5, 2003).

139 See *El Mercurio*, July 19, 2003. Argument that was strongly opposed by several human rights lawyers, among them Nelson Caucoto who highlighted the fact that the pro-reo principle can never grant more rights to the perpetrator than the victim. (See *El Mercurio*, July 24, 2003). Although, on the other hand, he was significantly supported by Aylwin who said that "it is unreasonable to create a scandal because there is a possibility that the amnesty law may operate [...] this is a law that is in force" (See *El Mercurio*, July 23, 2003).

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State agents convicted of premeditated and perfidious homicides preceded by torture, committed between 1978 and 1990, if *“they have genuinely expressed their regret, have already been in prison for a long time and have acknowledged their crimes cooperating with the truth and Courts of Justice”*.<sup>140</sup> This view is supported by Clara Szczeranski, who crudely stated the convenience of pardoning violators of human rights, arguing that *“we are dealing with crimes that have a historical, political and social reason, where there is no personal relationship between the offender and the victim. In addition, these were committed not by disorderly mobs, but by highly hierarchical and disciplined institutions. Thus, when it comes to assessing guilt, it is absolutely necessary that we take into account the duty to obey and to express reservations”*.<sup>141</sup> In other words, literally the same defence could have been made for the material executors of the Nazi holocaust. The president of the Council for the Defence of the State went even further, as she stated *“the Chilean military are innocent, regardless of the command that led them astray, instigated by civilian interests, external and foreign to military life. These institutions need to free themselves from the unjust weight that overwhelms them today. Chile needs them free of this burden”*.<sup>142</sup>

This implies that in addition to the implicit confirmation of impunity for the period 1973-1978, we are now witnessing an emerging impunity for the period 1978-1990.

## 5.2 Government attitudes favouring impunity in cases with special international relevance

Governmental promotion of impunity for crimes committed by the dictatorship has gone so far that it has even impaired justice in cases especially relevant for other countries or the international community in general. Relevance results from the victim's prominent role in society and because the violation constituted a case of international terrorism. Examples of such cases include the attempted murder of Bernardo Leighton in Italy in 1975; the torture and

140 Gobierno de Chile: *No hay mañana sin ayer*, Santiago, 2003, p. 35.

141 *El Mercurio*, July 19, 2003 and *La Nación*, July 29, 2003.

142 *El Mercurio*, September 7, 2003. In a revealing coincidence with his expressions, Juan Emilio Cheyre, Commander-in-Chief of the Army had previously declared that “today politicians face a new challenge in this matter (human rights)”, after saying that politicians in 1973 “and in all these years were incapable of controlling the crisis they provoked”, hopeful that they will be able to close “this chapter that they themselves opened”. (*El Mercurio*, July 19, 2003)

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murder in 1976 of Carmelo Soria, a distinguished Spanish-Chilean United Nations official; and the case of the ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet himself, as the person with greatest responsibility for crimes against humanity committed between 1973 and 1990.

In the Bernardo Leighton case, following a long trial in Italy, the ex-head of DINA, retired general Manuel Contreras, and the ex-head of DINA's foreign department, retired colonel Raúl Iturriaga, were sentenced to 20 and 18 years imprisonment respectively as intellectual perpetrators. Despite the fact that the Chilean government had been one of the plaintiffs in this trial, it completely ignored the extradition request. At the request of Human Rights Watch, the Italian government finally asked for their extradition at the end of 1999. The Chilean government did not become a party to the procedures, and the Supreme Court rejected the extradition request without even initiating legal action in Chile. However, the Supreme Court initiated these legal proceedings after dismissing several extradition requests presented by Argentina in the trial of the murder of general Carlos Prats and his wife in Buenos Aires in 1974. Faced with this situation, the Lagos administration has, to date, remained impassive.<sup>143</sup>

In the Carmelo Soria case, legal proceedings progressed as a result of pressure exerted by the Spanish government, resulting in the appointment by the Supreme Court of a special judge from its own ranks by virtue of a law passed in the early 90s, which allows this in legal cases that can impact Chile's international relations. In addition, because the Chilean State had signed an international convention in 1977 protecting diplomats and international officials, the amnesty decree-law was not applicable in this case. However, the Supreme Court exculpated those responsible for Soria's torture and murder with the application of the amnesty law, echoing a government report that deceitfully denied his status of international official. Subsequently, based on a 1999 resolution by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights calling upon the Chilean government to effectively sanction those responsible for Soria's murder and repair his relatives within the framework of an amicable solution envisaged within the Inter-American system for the protection of human rights, the government has expressed that it is willing to advance in both directions. However, no tangible progress has been made to date.<sup>144</sup>

143 See Patricio Mayorga, *El cóndor negro. El atentado a Bernardo Leighton*. Santiago, Edic. El Mercurio-Aguilar, 2003, p. 190-197; Human Rights Watch, *When Tyrants Tremble. The Pinochet Case*. New York, 1999, p. 40 and Portales (2000), p. 295-297.

144 See CODEPU (2001), p. 224-227 and Portales (2000), p. 292-295.

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In the case of Augusto Pinochet, we have to bear in mind that already in 1998 – when various Concertación Deputies presented a constitutional accusation against him to prevent him from becoming a Senator for life after leaving his post as Commander-in-Chief of the Army in March 1998 – the Frei administration had put up a strong defence in his favour.<sup>145</sup>

Later, following his arrest in London in 1998 in response to a request by Spain's Justice, the Chilean government made frantic international efforts to prevent the only effective possibility of putting Pinochet on trial for his crimes, as quite rightly expressed by various local and international human rights organisations. For this purpose, the Chilean government used almost exactly the same arguments that Pinochet used against the United Nations when the UN began to condemn his regime in 1974 for severe and systematic violations of human rights. These arguments claimed that Chilean sovereignty was being violated; that a double standard was being used against Chile; that none of the domestic progress was recognised; and that a precedent was being established, which would impact small nations within the international community.<sup>146</sup>

Justifying Pinochet's return to Chile, José Miguel Insulza, Minister of the Interior, went as far as to state that it was far more possible to put Pinochet on trial in Chile than in Spain: *"Following the verdict of the Chamber of Lords, in Spain Pinochet can only be tried for torture or conspiracy to commit torture in crimes committed after 1988. In Chile there is no immunity or amnesty that prevents him from being tried for his actions. The possibilities of putting him on trial are far greater than in Spain. A trial in that country (Spain) may be of greater interest for those that only want a symbolic trial"*.<sup>147</sup> As had already been explained by Jorge Schaulsohn, ex-Deputy and president of PPD, this argument was absolutely deceitful: *"The whole world knows that he is not going to be put on trial in Chile. And if he were ever to be tried, the case against him would*

145 Given the fact that in constitutional terms he could not be charged for his actions during the dictatorship, he was charged with reiterated actions that - in his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Army since 1990 – represented violations of the Constitution imposed by himself in 1980; and of embarrassing international episodes that seriously damaged Chile's prestige. Despite the fact that such an accusation was destined to be finally defeated in the Senate (because of the right-wing majority), the Frei administration succeeded in exerting great pressure on Concertación Deputies so that the accusation not be passed in the Lower Chamber. This was achieved thanks to the negative vote of over a score of Concertación Deputies, almost all Christian Democrats. (See Portales, 2000, p. 358-378).

146 See Portales (2000), p. 17-19.

147 *El Mercurio*, March 28, 1999.

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*be dismissed with the application of the Amnesty law or by declaring that the crimes he is accused of are no longer considered crimes. It is deceitful to state that he will be put on trial in Chile, because he is not going to go to Court here for the same reasons that he has never gone to Court in all this time*".<sup>148</sup>

As a further mechanism to convince the international community that Chile had its own methods to face up to its past and that Pinochet should therefore be returned to Chile, the Frei administration created the "dialogue table on human rights" that sought ways to find the remains of disappeared political prisoners and shed light upon the circumstances of their deaths. The basic assumption was that the military and the police would provide the information necessary to reach this objective. The dialogue table consisted of representatives from the different branches of the armed forces and Carabineros, together with personalities from different sectors of civil society. However, due to their mistrust in this mechanism, associations of relatives of victims chose not to participate because they were seeking the maintenance of judicial proceedings to resolve and sanction these crimes against humanity.<sup>149</sup>

Lastly, having achieved Pinochet's return to Chile, the Lagos administration conducted an intense public and private campaign aimed at judge Juan Guzmán and the judiciary, to prevent Pinochet from being tried due to health "reasons". The convenience of this was upheld by the Minister of the Interior Insulza,<sup>150</sup> the ex-President Patricio Aylwin<sup>151</sup> and the President of the Senate Andrés Zaldívar.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, President Ricardo Lagos himself justified their statements.<sup>153</sup>

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148 *Qué Pasa*, November 14, 1998. Insulza himself, as Minister for Foreign Affairs during the Frei administration, had stated in November 1997 in relation to the trial of Pinochet in Spain, that "I am unaware of legal proceedings against Pinochet or the members of the Chilean Military Junta. The only legal proceeding of that nature was presented in Spain. The question is whether it would not be more reasonable, from a strict legal viewpoint, to present legal proceedings in Chile. And this is where we move into politics: why aren't those legal proceedings presented in Chile? Because everyone knows that this would seriously endanger the transition". (*La Epoca*, November 21, 1997)

149 See Brinkmann (1999), p. 191-193 and Beatriz Brinkmann, "Cálculo político y conciencia ética frente a la impunidad". In *Reflexión* 28, p. 26-30.

150 See *La Nación*, August 10, 2000; *Caras*, August 18, 2000; *Qué Pasa*, September 2, 2000 and *La Nación*, April 16, 2001.

151 See *Caras*, August 18, 2000.

152 See *La Segunda*, June 2, 2000.

153 See *La Segunda*, June 5, 2000.

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On the other hand, judge Guzmán himself publicly denounced private government pressure on several occasions.<sup>154</sup> Likewise, The New York Times ran a report in December 2001 on the private pressure exerted by the Lagos administration on the Supreme Court for the same purpose.<sup>155</sup>

Lastly, in order to relieve Pinochet from his situation, the government submitted an ad hoc constitutional reform proposal – which was quickly approved – enabling him to resign to his post as Life Senator and to accept a statute for ex-Presidents of the Republic that ensures him the same privileges, including judicial prerogatives, as those of Life Senator.

This attitude of concern for the wellbeing of Pinochet and other human rights violators contrasts sharply with the government's lack of concern for the effects that the guarantee of impunity has and continues to have on the victims of crimes against humanity and their relatives. In this sense, a CINTRAS study states: *“The psychosocial trauma produced by the military dictatorship has a recurrent and episodic character, pointing to the fact that it evolves over time with exacerbations that are very acute on certain occasions, in accordance with situations that have a relationship of meaning with these traumatic experiences. That is the case of impunity for crimes committed. It results in the daily increase of the suffering of those that seek truth and justice for their dead. Impunity is the fundamental mechanism in the recurrence of the trauma: every new circumstance or event that exhibits impunity triggers mental suffering in the minds of victims and their relatives”*.<sup>156</sup> This aspect was also highlighted in a public statement issued as a result of the severe damage inflicted on relatives of victims by the publication of the report on the fate of disappeared political prisoners – prepared by the Armed Forces in 2001 as a result of the “dialogue table” – that was full of mistakes and lies: *“The fragile psycho-emotional stability that relatives achieve in some periods rapidly weakens, and depressive and anguished symptoms are reactivated, hidden pains and suffering accumulated in nearly 30 years. The maintenance of this tragic psychosocial damage is an iron gate in the way of reconciliation between Chileans”*.<sup>157</sup>

154 See *La Nación*, August 28, 2002; *La Nación*, August 30, 2002 and *El Mercurio*, January 18, 2004.

155 See *El Mercurio*, December 15, 2001.

156 Carlos Madariaga, “La Mesa de Diálogo y sus efectos psicosociales en la provincia de Iquique”. In *Reflexión* 26:5

157 “CINTRAS ante el Informe de las Fuerzas Armadas”. In *Reflexión* 26, p. 9.



### 5.3 Appointment to high public office of people involved in torture or other serious violations of human rights

A further factor that reflects the State's attitude favouring impunity are the reiterated appointments or maintenance in their high public posts of military or Carabineros officers involved in the execution or cover-up of serious violations of the right to physical and mental integrity, and even the life, of opponents of the dictatorship.

On many occasions, this has seriously damaged Chile's international image. The appointment of military attachés or ambassadors to represent Chile abroad, has led to embarrassing reactions in various parts of the world, including from the United Nations. These were all people that held positions of responsibility in the secret police DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional) – which changed its name to CNI (Central Nacional de Informaciones) in 1978 – the main repressive agency of the Chilean military dictatorship, renowned for the terrible acts of torture it carried out against the people it arrested.

One example is retired Brigadier Jaime Lepe (member of DINA's Mulchén brigade that tortured and murdered Carmelo Soria). The government tried to appoint him to the military mission in Spain, but ran into opposition by Spanish authorities.<sup>158</sup> Also in Spain, in 1997, Carlos Parker, socialist official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recognised Héctor Barrientos, the Air Force Attaché, as his ex-torturer; despite his denunciation, the air force officer remained in his post.<sup>159</sup>

Similar situations to the Lepe case also occurred in Ecuador and El Salvador in 1996, when the Chilean government successively tried to appoint retired Brigadier Pablo Belmar, another member of DINA's Mulchén Brigade, as military attaché in those countries. This resulted in a clear rejection by the

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158 See Ascanio Cavallo, *La Historia Oculta de la Transición*. Santiago, Edit. Grijalbo, 1998, p. 350.

159 See *El País* (España), November 4, 1997. Government attitude revealed such lack of social sensitivity that José Miguel Insulza, Minister of the Interior, declared that "if all types of accusations are levelled against a diplomat in the newspapers of the country where he lives, that can unfortunately be an injustice for that diplomat, but he is no longer appropriate for the job entrusted to him and a decision would have to be taken in that respect". (*La Epoca*, November 21, 1997). In any case, "the Air Force Attaché was not removed from his post and abandoned Spain at the end of his normal term". (Portales, 2000:301)

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authorities and the public in both countries.<sup>160</sup> In addition, there was further controversy in El Salvador in 1996, when Argentina accused George Willeke, Chilean military attaché in El Salvador, for his participation in the assassination of General Carlos Prats.<sup>161</sup>

The same thing happened at the United Nations when in 1998 it became known that General Sergio Espinoza, head of the Mission of Observers in the India-Pakistan border, had formed part of a court martial in the north of Chile that sentenced four Socialist Party leaders from the city of Iquique to death in 1973.<sup>162</sup>

In 1994 the Frei administration tried to appoint Luis Winter as ambassador in Switzerland. This official had been accused in 1977 by that country's Solidarity Committee with the People of Chile (while acting as Chilean representative before the United Nations in Geneva) of having ordered torture after the military coup in 1973 when he was Naval prosecutor in Valparaíso. The Swiss government directly asked for the withdrawal of that appointment, and the Chilean government appointed him Consul General in Houston.<sup>163</sup>

Within Chile, undoubtedly the most relevant case is the present appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of General Juan Emilio Cheyre, publicly accused of having taken part in the "death caravan" executions in La Serena; in the cover-up of those crimes; in the practice of torture in that city after the military coup; and in the cover-up of torture in Copiapó in 1988.<sup>164</sup> Both the debate and the investigation of this case came to an end the day after *El Siglo* published a report, in which Michelle Bachelet, Minister of Defence, stated: "[...] *I want to say that the government, President Lagos, and myself as Minister are absolutely convinced that General Cheyre is an honest person who has committed no type of violation or crime of concern [...] we are certain and fully convinced of that*".<sup>165</sup> On the other hand, a few days later Adriana Muñoz (PPD),

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160 See *La Nación*, January 31, 1996 and *La Tercera*, February 17, 1996.

161 See *La Nación*, January 31, 1996.

162 See *La Nación*, September 18, 1998.

163 See Portales (2000), p. 302-303.

164 See Jorge Escalante, *La misión era matar. El juicio a la caravana Pinochet-Arellano*. Santiago, Edit. Lom, 2000, p. 18, 122-127, 133, 137-140 y 147; *El Siglo*, March 15, 2002 and *La Firme*, April 2, 2002.

165 *La Tercera*, March 16, 2002.

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President of the Chamber of Deputies, stated: *“The truth is that I am unaware of his situation, but I believe that today we must look ahead and work to reconstruct relations and trust between the Army and the country as a whole”*.<sup>166</sup>

Nor was there any apprehension or public debate when Jaime Krauss, at present aide-de-camp at the Chamber of Deputies, and brother of Jaime Krauss, Minister of the Interior during the Aylwin administration and presently Chilean Ambassador in Spain, was accused by one of his subordinates at the time of having ordered executions at the Pisagua concentration camp in the months following the military coup.<sup>167</sup>

Another important case is that of Nelson Mery, director of Investigaciones (civil police) between 1992 and 2003, who after the military coup acted as Investigaciones delegate in the Linares Artillery Regiment that became a notorious detention and torture camp. Mery resigned last year after well-publicised reports of torture against him came to light. It is noteworthy that shortly before his appointment in 1992, leaders of the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Political Prisoners discussed their strong questioning of this policeman’s repressive actions with the government, but had no effect on the government’s decision.<sup>168</sup>

Lastly, it recently became known that Colonel Rodolfo Ortega, military attaché at the Chilean Embassy in Spain, was head of CNI in the city of Punta Arenas between 1986 and 1989 and, by virtue of his position, was responsible for the execution of young socialist Susana Obando, found dead on a beach hours after her arrest on July 26, 1988. Asked about this case, Enrique Krauss, Chilean Ambassador in Spain, answered very naturally that the accusation against Ortega in Chilean courts was “an old subject”, already known to him for several months.<sup>169</sup>

#### 5.4. The illustrative case of the training ship “Esmeralda”

The creation of a real domestic culture of impunity can be illustrated perfectly by the manner in which the Chilean government and various institutions have

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166 *La Nación*, March 23, 2002.

167 *Siete más 7*, May 23, 2003.

168 *El Mercurio*, July 19, 2003.

169 See *La Nación*, February 29, 2004 and *La Nación*, March 1, 2004.

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tackled the case of the Navy training ship “Esmeralda”, which undertakes a long training voyage every year, stopping in many ports on all continents.

After the military coup in 1973, this ship was used as a detention and torture centre, as stated in the Report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation and confirmed by various reports and publications in Chile and abroad.<sup>170</sup>

However, neither the Navy nor successive governments after 1990 have conducted any act to purify the vessel or repair and vindicate its victims. Even worse, the training ship has continued to sail around the world, and is bid farewell every year by the President of the Republic as an “ambassador” of good will, as if nothing had happened aboard.

With regard to the media in general, in the 14 years since the end of the dictatorship, it has failed to report the demonstrations against “Esmeralda” when it has stopped in ports of countries with active human rights organisations and colonies of Chilean exiles.

During the commemoration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the military coup last year, an increase of demonstrations in Europe was to be expected. Despite this, however, President Lagos still bid the training ship and its crew farewell, stating that *“part of our motherland, of Chile’s traditions and history, as well as the spirit of the Navy sets sail with you, and you will reach other territories with the pride of representing a country that is a small star in the south of the world, respected for its democracy and human rights”*.<sup>171</sup> Subsequently, on June 21, 2003, after the strength of demonstrations led to the cancellation of stop-overs of “Esmeralda” in several European ports, President Lagos said, in statements made to Radio Bío-Bío, that he did not regret having officially bid the vessel farewell: *“I believe we must accept history as it is. I think that if transgressions and violations of human rights, and even murders and deaths, as stated in some countries, were committed aboard Esmeralda – something that I have no proof of – that is something that has nothing to do with the youngsters that had not even been born at the time of the coup”*.<sup>172</sup> However, on July 15, in statements made during the BBC programme Hard-Talk, he stated that *“this time I think it was*

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170 *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación*, 1996, p. 292-295 and Edward Crouzet, *Sangre sobre la Esmeralda. Sacerdote Miguel Woodward. Vida y Martirio*. Santiago, Edic. Chile América - CESOC, 2000, p. 173-189.

171 *La Segunda*, July 16, 2003.

172 *La Segunda*, July 16, 2003.

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*a mistake*” for Esmeralda to have made this tour.<sup>173</sup> When the Navy was asked about these last statements, a Navy spokesman answered, *“that is the opinion of the President and he is free to say whatever he likes. The Navy does not comment on his opinions”*.<sup>174</sup>

### 5.5. Government attitudes favouring impunity for torture

When it comes to criminal trials of torture, the government has emphatically adopted a negative attitude. Thus at the beginning of 2001 – when a debate was opened as a result of responsible reports against General Hernán Gabrielli, at that time Vice-Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force - José Miguel Insulza, Minister of the Interior, expressed that: *“We have to say it frankly. In this country there was a wide-ranging situation of repression in 1973. Therefore, acts of violence, indiscriminate imprisonment of people, and exile were common and frequent events. If we start to pursue the whole of this matter, we would certainly find ourselves in a different and difficult situation. [...] I am concerned that everyone will start to make denunciations in this country, because I feel it would be negative. [...] Do we want to go out looking for 5 or 20 thousand perpetrators? Do we have to take to court all those that beat people? My concern is for tension in our country and not for tension with the Armed Forces”*.<sup>175</sup>

Along these same lines, influential socialist Senator José Antonio Viera-Gallo, expressed the following: *“[...] if torture trials were to multiply, courts would be jammed and it would be impossible to deal with this because there would be thousands of cases. [...] I believe that today it is really pointless to open this judicial debate on torture [...] The cause of human rights [...] must focus on the events that caused the death or disappearance of people. In this sense, there were many other types of abuse or crimes that are impossible to prosecute”*.<sup>176</sup>

The little importance paid by the State and its main institutions to the systematic application of torture during 17 years, has had very negative repercussions on the morale of Chilean society as a whole.

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173 *La Segunda*, July 16, 2003.

174 *La Segunda*, July 16, 2003.

175 *La Nación*, February 15, 2001.

176 *El Mercurio*, February 14, 2001.

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This has led its victims to feel doubly violated, firstly by a dictatorial State that savagely damaged and humiliated them, and secondly by a limited democratic State that has upheld the impunity of perpetrators, and in some cases even promoted them to high public office.

As a consequence, the issue of the effects of torture has been cast aside and has strongly deterred victims and society as a whole from searching for truth, justice and reparation. Very few have dared to denounce perpetrators, and – significantly – in many of these cases victims have been sued for damages and libel, receiving no support from government that has remained absent.

Thus, Hernán Gabrielli, Vice-Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, began legal proceedings in 2001 against ex-political prisoners Carlos Bau, Juan Ruz and Héctor Vera, for publicly denouncing him as the torturer of Eugenio Ruiz-Tagle, young leader of the MAPU Party, executed in Antofagasta shortly after the military coup. In view of this situation, the ex-political prisoners presented a legal accusation of torture against Gabrielli, supported by other witnesses of his violent repressive actions.<sup>177</sup> As normal, both legal proceedings were closed without any tangible results.

This is the same situation that involved Emilio Meneses, political scientist and university lecturer, who in 2001 began legal proceedings against another academic, Felipe Agüero, because the latter denounced him as his torturer when he was imprisoned in the National Stadium after the military coup. In this trial, many other victims have come forward in support of the accusation presented by Agüero.<sup>178</sup> Faced with this situation, the director of the Catholic University's Institute of Political Science suspended the professor for one year, but soon came under pressure from Rector Pedro Rosso to reinstate the expert on defence to his academic activities.<sup>179</sup> This is an example of the little importance that even the highest educational levels give to a horrendous crime such as torture.

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177 *Sea Nación*, February 13, 2001, *La Tercera*, February 18, 2001 and Beatriz Brinkmann, "Tortura: crimen que espera castigo". In: *Reflexión* 26, p. 10-12. It is worth noting that at the end of the 90's Gabrielli was appointed Chilean Air Force Attaché in the United States.

178 See Fernando Villagrán, *Disparen a la bandada. Una crónica secreta de la FACH*. Santiago, Edit. Planeta, 2002, p. 249-258.

179 See *Reportajes de La Tercera*, April 8, 2001. Eventually, he lost so much prestige before his peers that he had no choice but to leave the University.

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Likewise, previously mentioned ex-director of Investigaciones, Nelson Mery, also initiated legal proceedings against ex-political prisoner Odette Alegría who had denounced him for torture and humiliating treatment. This, in turn, led to the presentation of legal proceedings for torture, that are still underway— supported by the Association of Ex-Political Prisoners in Linares – against Mery and seven other people that had been active in the Linares Artillery School after the coup<sup>180</sup>.

To the extent that we fail to deal with the phenomenon of torture during the dictatorship, with truth and justice, the message effectively conveyed to State agents and society as a whole is that beyond speeches, the signature of international treaties and established legislation, torture does not constitute a serious transgression of ethics and morality for Chilean society.

## 6. Conclusions

We close Part I of this report with the conclusions of an analysis on the existence of torture in Chile, conducted by CINTRAS in 1996 and that are, sadly, still valid today.

*“People are still tortured in this country for several reasons that are all interlinked: because the military regime’s repressive apparatus and underlying doctrine was never dismantled; because military and police forces have never been democratised; as a consequence, the repressive model, coercion techniques and same actors are still in place; because Chilean society has still been unable to deny legitimacy to a certain ethic upheld by the Armed Forces that does not question, but on the contrary, supports and becomes an accomplice of criminal actions perpetrated in the name of this doctrine”.*

*“Also, people are still tortured because the transition to democracy has not been able to provide a political and judicial solution regarding the problem of impunity towards human rights violators. The Chilean State still has to face up to the challenge of providing reparations for the psychosocial trauma at all levels, the*

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180 See *La Nación*, July 14, 2003; *La Segunda*, July 17, 2003; *El Mercurio*, August 17, 2003; *La Nación*, September 12, 2003; *El Mercurio*, October 3, 2003; *El Mercurio*, October 21, 2003 and *El Mercurio*, November 15, 2003.

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*material, social and moral reparation of each one of the victims, and bringing criminals to justice. As occurs in the psychological conflicts of an individual or a couple, a society that does not repair the damage produced, risks making the same mistakes that were made in the past. Additionally, this contributes to the generation of conditions that upset human coexistence”.*<sup>181</sup>

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181 Carlos Madariaga, “Tortura en Chile ayer y hoy: el problema de la prevención”. In: *Reflexión* 25, p. 28.



**PART II**

**STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN  
IN CHILE**



## 1. Definition of the child

According to Chilean legislation<sup>182</sup>, a person reaches the age of majority at the age of 18 years, which corresponds to the age of legal capacity.<sup>183</sup>

Article 26 of the Civil Code states that anyone below the age of 7 is considered an infant or child; boys and girls reach puberty at the ages of 14 and 12 respectively, and are thus considered “adults” from then on. In Chilean civil legislation, however, adults (i.e. boys older than 14 and girls older than 12) are not necessarily legally major; a person may be both a minor and an adult. Finally, a person who has reached the age of 18 is considered legally major.

Regarding sexual consent, in the absence of an expressed norm regarding the legal age of consent, it is nonetheless considered rape to engage in sexual activity with those under a determined age. Until January of 2004, vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a minor less than 12 years of age was considered rape. After that date, a new law went into effect increasing the age to 14. This effectively established a legal consensus that the age of sexual consent is 14.

In terms of criminal responsibility, the law will apply to majors (18 years old). For perpetrators below 18, distinctions must be made:

- Those younger than 16 years old are not considered to be legally responsible, that is, they cannot be tried as adults for a crime, according to article 10 of the Chilean Penal Code; in the event that the minor is accused of associated criminal activities, those legal situations will be addressed in the juvenile justice system, as is stipulated under the Minors Law.
- Those older than 16 and younger than 18 years of age are in principle not considered legally responsible subjects, but if it is determined that they acted “with discernment” of the illegality of their actions, they are to be tried as adults. Otherwise, if it is considered that they acted “without discernment”, they are legally treated as minors under age 16, and their legal outcome will depend on the decision of the minors court judge.

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182 Act n°19, 221 of 1st June 1993.

183 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 12 (25 June 2001).

## 2. Torture

### 2.1. International framework

In addition to the Convention against Torture, Chile signed on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1990 and ratified on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1990 the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which protects children from being “subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (article 37 a), “deprived of his/her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily” (article 37 b), especially children who have infringed the law (article 40).

Like the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has constitutional status.<sup>184</sup> However the self-execution of the CRC is doubtful since there is no real consensus on the doctrine and jurisprudence concerning the constitutional rank of the CRC.<sup>185</sup>

### 2.2. National framework

Article 150 A of the Criminal Code<sup>186</sup> characterises torture as an offence, and establishes special penalties for public employees who practice torture causing physical or mental injury. Furthermore, certain acts characterised as crimes (castration, mutilation and bodily harm), even if they are not considered as ill-treatment, can be sanctioned. However, neither of these provisions makes specific reference to children as victims.

In cases of ill-treatment of a child, which does not qualify as torture, a State agent who has mistreated a child may be prosecuted for ill-treatment as “child abuse by a non-family member”.

According to article 62 of the Juvenile Act<sup>187</sup>, child abuse committed by a non-family member is any act or omission damaging the physical or mental

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184 Article 5.2 of Chilean Constitution: “It is the duty of the State organs to respect and promote such rights, as guaranteed by its Constitution and by International treaties ratified by Chile which are in force».

185 CAT/C/39/Add.14 Periodic report of the Chile § 3 (28th October 2002).

186 Introduced by Act n° 19567 of 1st July 1998; CAT/C/39/Add.14 Periodic report of the Chile § 21, 54, 55 (28th October 2002).

187 Ley de Menores n°16618, also called Minors Law.

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health of a minor. Thus, the expression potentially includes a broad set of behaviours, such as injuries to a minor, forms of mental violence, deliberate humiliation, neglect or exploitation. Furthermore, every person not considered to be a member of the family of the child victim falls within the scope of this provision. Thus one can infer that a State agent could be punished on the grounds of this provision for child abuse.<sup>188</sup>

Nevertheless, State agents are not specifically targeted as potential offenders. The penalties incurred in cases of child abuse<sup>189</sup> are not really dissuasive, since they would have no effect on the State agent's career.

The Criminal Code has been recently amended by the Act n° 19927 of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004 concerning sex abuses against children, which may be included in the definition of torture of the Convention against Torture. Its main improvement is to raise the age of sexual consent from 12 to 14. Some of the new provisions expressly include State agents as potential offenders, whereas others include any person.

Firstly, according to article 361 of the Criminal Code, any vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a person under the age of 14 is considered rape and is punishable. Article 362 of the Criminal Code considers that a minor over 14 is raped when force or intimidation is used, where there is absence of sense, inability to resist, or where the victim has a mental disorder.

Secondly, articles 363 concerning rape and 366.2 concerning abuses (excluding rape and prostitution) of the Criminal Code establish other cases which involve more severe penalties, particularly where the offender exploits his relationship with a minor between the ages of 14 and 18, whose custody, education or care he is in charge of.

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188 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic Report of Chile § 380-385 (25 June 2001).

189 As stated in CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 385 (25 June 2001): Extra-family child abuse may be punished by all or some of the following measures:

- (a) Attendance by the perpetrator at therapeutic or family counselling programmes. The Act does not specify a term for this measure, and its duration is determined by the institution which the court deems most suitable, for example the National Service for Women, the National Service for Minors (SENAME), the diagnosis centres of the Ministry of Education, or the community centres for family mental health;
- (b) Performance of work for the community, municipality or municipal corporations in the commune of residence similar or related to the occupation of the offender, at his express request;
- (c) A fine equivalent to one to 10 times the offender's daily income.

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Furthermore articles 367 and 368 of the Criminal Code<sup>190</sup> also set up aggravating circumstances for the penalty in cases where the offender, i.e. the person who asks for money or other services in exchange for the prostitution of a 14-18 minor, is a State agent, a teacher or a guardian, or in cases where there is a breach of authority or trust.

Finally article 366 of the Criminal Code prohibits any production, distribution, acquisition or storing of pornographic materials involving all persons under 18.

In September of 2002, a highly controversial case involving child abuse and paedophilia was discovered in Santiago. The case is relevant not only because of the large number of minors involved for over nearly a decade and allegations that some were possibly drugged to death, but also because of the involvement of influential Chileans. Initial investigations have already revealed the involvement of a sizeable network of Chileans in a variety of socio-economic contexts. There are also allegations of the attendance of congressmen at parties, and the substantiated claim of the complicity of a high-ranking uniformed police officer.

This case is still under investigation, and the responsible parties have not been officially determined.

### **2.3. Complaints procedure**

There is no separate procedure for a minor's complaint of torture or ill-treatment committed by a State agent in Chile. General procedures may be used:

- When the situation of abuse of children can be subsumed under a defined criminal code, the court considers that the case deals with “abuse constituent of a crime”, and the processing of the child will correspond to the criminal activity involved: physical injury, kidnapping, murder, etc.
- Abuse committed by family members is regulated, according to the legal definition, procedure and sanctions, by a special law called “Domestic Violence Law.”

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190 Introduced by the Law n°19617 of 12th July 1999.

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- Abuse against children by non-family members is addressed under article 62 of the Minors Law. However, up until this date there has never been a prosecution under this law.
- The recourse to *amparo*<sup>191</sup> (habeas corpus) may be used by any person arrested, taken into custody or put into jail unlawfully or with infraction of the Constitution. It is considered to be an expedited legal resource that can be presented to the corresponding Appellate Court, by the affected person or by whomever on his/her behalf, and obligates the court to immediately adopt the necessary measures to provide protection to the affected person. This procedure has constitutional status and, even if there is no particular reference to minors, both doctrine and case law recognise that *amparo* is available to all minors.<sup>192</sup>

In 2003 the Adolescent Legal Defence team of the NGO Opción presented 20 habeas corpus actions for protection of girls, boys and adolescents in situations of unlawful deprivation of their liberty, obtaining positive results in the majority of instances.

- There is a right to lodge a complaint against a decision of the juvenile judge; nevertheless the child in question cannot contest such a decision, only his parents or guardians may do so. Moreover, the procedure is very constraining.<sup>193</sup>
- The National Service for Minors (SENAME) asks any person with knowledge of child abuse in its system to report it. Complaints may be lodged also by children against any person working for the SENAME network both in public and private establishments.

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191 Article 95 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

192 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1038 (25 June 2001).

193 “The admissibility of complaint proceedings in juvenile cases requires: (a) That a jurisdictional decision has been made by a juvenile judge; (b) That in handing down this decision the juvenile judge has committed a serious error or abuse; (c) That the decision in question is a final decision or an interlocutory decision terminating the case or making its continuation impossible; (d) That this final or interlocutory decision is not subject to any other remedy, either ordinary or extraordinary.”CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 410, 419-423 (25 June 2001).

### 3. Children in conflict with the law

#### 3.1. Administration of juvenile justice

Concerning the age of criminal responsibility, the law is as follows:

- Persons aged 18 and older are treated as adults under the Chilean justice system.
- Persons over 18 and those under that age declared “with discernment” are tried under the ordinary justice system, in accordance with the laws and criminal procedures applicable to adults. Those minors in “deprivation of liberty” are taken to adult penitentiary facilities. The only difference between the criminal treatment of adolescents and adults is outlined by Penal Code 72, which, for the adolescent, calls for “the minimum sentence and the least degree of those penalties specified by the law for crimes of which the person is responsible.”
- Those minors less than 16 years of age or between 16 and 18 years of age are determined to be “without discernment”; they remain subject to the minor legal justice system, regulated in general by the Minors Law.

It is within the juvenile justice system where the most severe cases of torture and abuse have been detected. These occur primarily when the juvenile is arrested by police officials, and also afterward in various detention facilities. These instances were documented in a report, *Tortura, Derechos Humanos y la Justicia Criminal en Chile* (Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile) prepared by the Universidad Diego Portales/Centre for International Justice, 2002. This report had a specific chapter on the topic, entitled “Adolescents and Children: Police and Centres of Detention.”

Additionally, *the Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile 2003* (Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile, 2003) published by the Universidad Diego Portales, signals that “while ‘severe’ mechanisms of torture have decreased during the 90s in the case of adults, in the case of children these mechanisms are increasingly being used.”



### 1/ The Minors Law system

The first regime is, according to the Chilean government, a regime of protection<sup>194</sup> ruled by the Juvenile Act<sup>195</sup>. It is a juvenile justice system with specific rules, courts, procedures and “protective measures applicable to children in ‘irregular situations’”; that is, children in need of protection and children in conflict with the law. Thus, in theory, every person under 18 who has infringed upon the law may be submitted to this regime of “protection”.

The main actor of this regime is the juvenile judge. Having broad powers, he/she is generally competent to decide and apply the appropriate measures of protection<sup>196</sup> and also to hear and investigate criminal acts committed by juveniles.<sup>197</sup>

Until 2002, there was only one set of protection measures for this regime. It was contained in Article 29, which consisted of a range of measures including: the return of the minor to his/her guardians with prior judicial reprimand, a programme of supervised liberty; the assignment of the child to special educational establishments (correctional facilities); the entrusting of the child to some person who agrees to the legal conditions, and ensures strict adherence to the supervision regime.

The existence of only one set of protection measures, as outlined by Article 29, signified that these measures would apply “in cases of the present law” and would not guarantee no differentiation between cases of a child’s infraction of the law and other situations (the same Article specified that these measures were applicable to child victims of abuse). Nonetheless, given the judge’s broad discretion when applying the law, it was possible to creatively apply another type of measure (Article 26, item 7 authorised the judge “to make a decision based on the future of the minor”, when he/she would be in “physical or moral danger”).

In May of 2002<sup>198</sup> a law was passed called “*Normas Adecuatorias*” (Appropriate Norms) in order to monitor the current judicial reform process

194 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1020 (25 June 2001).

195 Ley de Menores n°16618 (3 February 1967), also called Juvenile Law.

196 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 403, 404, 407 (25 June 2001).

197 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1054 (25 June 2001); article 26.8 of the Minors’ Law.

198 Ley 19.806, contains appropriate norms of Chilean legislation regarding the procedural reform of the penal justice system.

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and update any laws that were not in synchrony with the reform. In the case of juvenile justice, this law is used to make new distinctions between those measures applicable to children guilty of legal infractions and minors who are victims of a crime. In this way, Article 29 was retained to address specifically infractions of the law, and Article 30 was established to address the applicable measures for situations involving a violation of the minor's rights.

The heading of Article 29, whereas before it addressed all matters before the Minors judge, now addresses only infractions (the cases outlined in Article 26, item 10 of this law), specifically "those matters in which a punishable crime is attributable to a minor less than 16 years old, or those between the ages of 16 and 18, who have acted "without discernment." As stated before, the new Article 30 has been added to address specifically those situations where the minor's rights have been violated.

Measure number 3 of Article 29 is now phrased in the following way: "The minor is to be assigned to those special transit or rehabilitation centres that the law indicates, according to how the situation corresponds to the law." An aside was also incorporated, stating that the protective measures will "be in effect for the duration determined by the presiding judge for minors, who may reverse or modify the protective measures, if the circumstances change from the time that they were issued, according to the testimony of the director or person in charge of the centre or respective program."

According to the Minors Law proceedings, a juvenile judge has no obligation to hear the child in question in an irregular situation prior to ruling on the case, and most often he/she bases his/her decision only on police or professional reports and not according to the law.<sup>199</sup> In addition the right of a minor to get legal counsel for his/her defence is not fully implemented: "in criminal and juvenile cases the judicial practice allows minors (under 18) to issue such instructions"; however, "with regard to appearance, a minor does not require legal counsel when appearing before a juvenile judge".<sup>200</sup>

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199 NGO Initiative Committee on the Rights of the Child, comments on the second report of the Chilean State (1993-1998) on the measures adopted to make effective the fulfilment of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child § 133, March 2001.

200 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 200, 1038 (25 June 2001).

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The OMCT and *Opción* deem that a juvenile judge should hear, in every case, the child in question prior to giving a ruling, and take the interest and the opinion of the child into consideration as the highest point of comparison with other statements.

### 2/ Application of the ordinary criminal system

There is also a second regime normally applicable to young offenders under 18 but over 16 who are deemed to have acted with discernment when committing an offence. These minors are submitted to the same procedure as adults. They face the ordinary justice system governed by the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, in all matters ranging from their arrest to their imprisonment. The only exception relates to the sentence, which has to be less than the minimum sentence provided for the offence when committed by an adult.<sup>201</sup>

The discernment decision is made by the juvenile judge.<sup>202</sup>

However, ordinary criminal judges are competent to conduct the initial investigations into the case, and it is only when it is certain that the person in question is under age 18 that the case is handed over to the juvenile judge.<sup>203</sup>

The latest data that the NGO *Opción* collected reveals that in 2001 there were 5,642 declarations of discernment, requiring a Minors judge's determination of whether the minor acted with or without discernment; 1,872 were found to be situations "with discernment" (33.2%).<sup>204</sup>

### 3/ Juvenile justice reform

There is a project of legal reform underway; its main purpose is to establish 14 as the minimum age of criminal responsibility. It would therefore establish a juvenile justice system with procedures and sanctions applicable to all minors

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201 Article 10.3 of the Criminal Code.

202 The procedure for declaration on discernment is ruled by articles 10§3 and 347 bis a) of the Criminal Code and articles 16, 26§8, 28, 51 of the Minors' Act.

203 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1035 (25 June 2001).

204 SENAME Database.

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between ages 14 and 18 and thus abolish the doctrine of the child in an irregular situation<sup>205</sup> as well as the discernment decision for minors over 16.

The stated intention of the proposed bill is to bring Chilean laws into compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially article 40. Nonetheless, there is also significant political and cultural pressure that this law also serve to combat juvenile delinquency more effectively. As a result, the reform is perceived almost unanimously as a measure to reduce the age of criminal liability, and serves to harden the State's position toward juvenile offenders.

NGOs specialising in juvenile offender services, like Opción and Hogar de Cristo, have expressed their rejection of these specific aspects of the bill on the grounds that it tends to make more rigid the treatment of young offenders than is recommended by Articles 37 and 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>206</sup>. Their criticisms in general refer to the weakening of minimal guarantees specified by the international agreement with respect to children's rights, and the progressive departure from the type of juvenile justice system that the CRC intends to foster.

### 3.2. Grounds of arrest and police custody

It is in the initial stages of the minor's contact with the juvenile justice system, during the arrest of the minor by the police, when the child is typically most helpless and vulnerable to grave abuses to his/her physical and psychological

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205 "Doctrina de la situación irregular" (Doctrine of the Irregular Situation) is the name which refers to the model of law widely used to address children in Latin America. It was designed in the first decades of the 20th century and is characterised by the State's tutelage of minors in "social risk", which in large part formally denies the punitive nature of the State's response to children, and by the overwhelming discretion of the minor judge to make decisions regarding the child's detainment and all types of interventions into the lives of these children.

206 Many of these criticisms can be found in the publication "Penal Responsibility of Minors" published by the NGO OPCION, which is a collection of presentations from a 2002 seminar on the Bill.

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integrity. Various investigations have revealed the frequent ill-treatment of children by police.<sup>207</sup>

According to the various reports, the most common types of violations of children's rights by the police include beatings using the fist, police wands or other metal objects, and repeated kicking. There have also been reported cases of suffocation with plastic bags or by holding the minor's head in a bucket of water, the application of electric shocks, and other practices constituting torture (Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile, UDP/CEJIL, 2002). These same investigations indicate that the minor's treatment significantly improves when under the custody of the designated police unit for minors.

"The majority of youths (81.0%) characterised their treatment by police as bad, 7% as average, and barely 12% described their treatment as good. When in custody of the officers assigned to the special unit for minors, the results are the opposite. Only 11.3% of those interviewed characterised their treatment as bad, 27% responded that the treatment was average and the majority (61.7%) reported that their treatment was good".<sup>208</sup>

The most common types of police abuse according to data collected by Jimenez's study include: repeated kicking, beatings with the fist, police wands, and metal sticks (120 cases); drenching with hoses during the night (33 cases); suffocation by applying plastic bags over the head (27 cases); hanging the minor naked by his hands and feet to a tree (17 cases); forcing the minor's head into a bucket of water (14 cases); the use of electric rods (11 cases).

One of the main powers of the Juvenile Police is to arrest "any children in irregular situations who require assistance or protection".<sup>209</sup> Since children in irregular situations include "children who have no one to exercise guardianship over them" and "children [with] behavioural disorders and in a situation of social risk". The majority of persons less than 18 years of age are appre-

207 Riego y Tsukame, Estudio de circuito de atención a niños y adolescentes vinculados al sistema de justicia (1998); Jiménez, Adolescentes privados de libertad y justicia de menores (2000); UDP/CEJIL, Tortura, Derechos humanos y justicia criminal en Chile (2002); Facultad de Derecho UDP, Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile (2003); Defensa del Niño Internacional-Chile/Corporación OPCION, Diagnóstico sobre Justicia Juvenil (2003).

208 María Angélica Jiménez, Adolescent Detainees and Minor's Justice, UDP, 2000. The percentages cited are based on sample of 160 youth interviewed.

209 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 403 (25 June 2001).

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hended due to “the necessity of protection.” Surveys published by the Justice Ministry indicate that of the total of minors apprehended between 1995 and 2001, 20.1% correspond to circumstances of protection, and 32.5% correspond to reports of minor juvenile offences, for a total of 52.6%. The same report on torture and criminal justice contains numbers of apprehensions carried out by Police Unit 34 of Santiago, the designated police unit for juvenile males. Their data indicate that in 2000 29.8% of apprehensions were for protective custody (3,692) and 9.9% (1,375) were based on minor juvenile offences. Based on the high percentage of cases of children released to their parents in the same police unit, and the fact that so many do not correspond to a situation of criminal wrongdoing, this practice seems to contradict the mandate of the CRC which states that a child’s detention should be used as a last resort, for the shortest time period possible.

Despite their potentially broad powers, the Juvenile Police has to comply with several duties:

- Some are specific to children:
  - They may not hold persons under 18 in the same premises as adult offenders. If an agent disregards this prohibition, he should be subject to sanctions.<sup>210</sup>
  - When a child may be easily located, the police should immediately release him/her and order him/her to appear later.<sup>211</sup>
- Others apply to every person, regardless of age:
  - They have to immediately present the person under arrest to the judge. If this is not possible, officers must not keep the minor in police custody for more than a maximum of 24 hours<sup>212</sup>. In regions of Chile where the procedural reform of the justice system has been implemented, the turnaround time has been reformed, and in theory the minor must be presented “immediately.” This has resulted in presentations occurring in considerably less than 24 hours in most cases, but never exceeding the maximum of 24 hours.

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210 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 285 (25 June 2001).

211 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 285 (25 June 2001).

212 Article 131 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

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- The police must immediately inform the person under arrest of the reason for his arrest and detention, and of his rights.<sup>213</sup>
- A person under police custody, even if held incommunicado, also has the right that his family, lawyer or another person designated by him be informed of his situation as soon as possible.<sup>214</sup>

However, according to several local NGOs<sup>215</sup>, Carabineros “practice torture on children as a method of forcibly gaining information, sanctioning or provoking self-inculpation”. “When such situations are denounced, there are no consequences or sanctions for the parties responsible (...). The courts of justice rarely respond to these denunciations either. Furthermore, children who are taken from specific minors’ centres to police premises and vice versa, are handcuffed or put in irons, and kept under custody of armed guards”.

### 3.3. Deprivation of liberty

#### 1/ The situation of children in need of care and protection

Every minor “in material or moral danger” may be deprived of his/her liberty in two situations:

- during the determination of the measure by the juvenile judge;
- upon the judge’s decision of a protection measure in a “special educational centre”.

The first case refers to internment for the purpose of performing a diagnostic analysis of the child, and the second deals with detention in order to provide a measure of protection.

Recently, Law 19,806, which brings various Chilean laws into compliance with the reform of penal processes, has introduced the possibility of differentiation into the Minors Law, addressing the type of measures at the Minors

213 CAT/C/39/Add.14 Periodic report of Chile § 34 (28th October 2002); CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 45 (25 June 2001).

214 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 46 (25 June 2001).

215 NGO Initiative Committee on the Rights of the Child, Comments on the second report of the Chilean State (1993-1998) on the measures adopted to make effective the fulfilment of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child § 61, March 2001.

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judge's discretion for situations of infractions of the law by minors or cases of abuse against them. The protection measures applicable to minors "extremely vulnerable or whose rights are gravely threatened" are contemplated in Article 30. In principle, the Minors Judge has ample discretion, considering that he/she "would be able to determine the measures necessary in order to protect minors who are gravely or extremely vulnerable or whose rights are gravely threatened." However, some specific measures are included:

- "The ordering of programme attendance or other support actions, reparation and counselling to minors, their parents or legal guardians in order to confront and overcome a situation of crisis, by providing the appropriate guidelines and instructions."
- "The ordering of a child to a "*Centro de Tránsito o Detención*" (transit or allocation centre), temporary shelter or other boarding facility."

Therefore, the judge retains the option of detaining the minor for protective motives but the law does offer safeguards. As such, it specifies that the internment will only take place when the physical or psychiatric integrity of the minor is jeopardised by his/her presence in the home, and it becomes impossible to entrust the care of the child to parents, family members or others in the home. Furthermore, the measure will necessarily be temporary, without putting a decree for any span of time exceeding a year, and the minor's case should be reviewed after six months.

The OMCT and Opción regret that the Chilean law does not respect article 37 (b) of the CRC, which requires that the detention of a child be used only as a measure of last resort. It also regrets that the regime applicable to children does not separate penal and tutelary criteria when it allows the adoption of measures of deprivation of liberty. Thus, it adopts such measures on the basis of a social situation. This system blurs the distinction between sanction and protection, tends to weaken the requirement of culpability and the presumption of innocence in the judiciary process of legal requirements protected under article 40 of the CRC.

## 2/ Pre-trial and pending-trial detention

In the Chilean juvenile criminal system, pre-trial detention mainly corresponds to the time when the discernment decision is pending, for children aged between 16 and 18.



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According to the Code of Criminal Procedure, the judge has no more than 15 days to make a discernment decision for cases involving criminal offences of minors between ages 16 and 18. Nevertheless, according to local NGOs, this time limit is not respected in practice.<sup>216</sup> What is worse, this represents only one aspect of the procedure as the case must then go to the Appellate Court and the minor often remains in detention much longer than one month. The OMCT and Opción believe this provides strong evidence that a maximum time-period should be established not based on the decision of discernment, but rather corresponding to a maximum period the minor can be detained awaiting a discernment decision.

During proceedings pending a discernment decision or a trial, a young offender, in principle, should only be detained in an Observation and Diagnosis Centre. If there is no ODC in the locality he must be detained in an alternative facility expressly determined<sup>217</sup> or in separate sections of an adult prison too; in such cases a minor has to receive support from the SENAME.<sup>218</sup> Otherwise if the detention is not necessary, a child may receive care in a Transit and Allocation Centre.<sup>219</sup>

### 3/ Imprisonment

Beyond detaining persons older than 16 and younger than 18 during the determination of discernment, in the Chilean juvenile justice system, the deprivation of liberty of minors can be the result of other situations:

- Arrest by minors' police of juveniles caught in the act of an illegal activity;
- Detention (called "retention" by the Minors' Law) of children in situations of irregular need of assistance and protection.

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216 NGO Initiative Committee on the Rights of the Child, comments on the second report of the Chilean State (1993-1998) on the measures adopted to make effective the fulfilment of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child § 133, March 2001.

217 The relevant places are determined by a Supreme Decree of the President of the Republic pursuant to article 71 of the Minors Law.

218 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1034 (25 June 2001).

219 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1034 (25 June 2001). In practice, many STDs also function as centres of liberty deprivation.

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- Internment of those more than 16 years old and less than 18 years old declared to be without discernment in correctional facilities. Judges can also sentence juvenile offenders between the ages of 14 and 16 to these centres.
- Internment of minors of 16 years of age to a transit, allocation or diagnostics centre.

As was already mentioned, those older than 16 years with discernment are tried as adults and detained in adult jails.

The guarantee of human rights in premises where a person may be deprived of his liberty is enshrined both in international and national instruments included in the Chilean Constitution. More precisely, in 1994 the Juvenile Law was amended to remove children from adult prisons.<sup>220</sup> It prohibits the detention of children under 16 in adult prisons “in any circumstances”. Of course, as far as minors aged 16-18 are concerned, this is contrary to the CRC provisions concerning all persons under 18 whom “the arrest, detention or imprisonment [°] shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time” (article 37 b), and according to which “a variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders, counselling, probation, foster care, education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care, shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their wellbeing and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence” (article 40.4).

The OMCT and Opción note that there are still some minors aged between 16 and 18 who live in adult prisons<sup>221</sup>, even if it is in separate sections.

Moreover, Antonio Frey, a sociologist in the Minors’ Department of the Chilean Justice Ministry, stated on September 2003 during a session with the Committee on the Rights of the Child<sup>222</sup>, “minors [are] judged as adults and [are] held in the same penal institutions” even if it is in different sections with specific regimes.

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220 Act n°19343 of October 1994.

221 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1039 ( 25 June 2001).

222 CRC/C/SR.764 Consideration of Chilean report by the Committee on the Rights of the Child § 14 (25 September 2003).

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Furthermore, the same law 19,343, despite the fact that it tends to eradicate the presence of children in adult prisons, also authorises that in those places where there are no special facilities for minors, the President of the Republic, by decree, will determine where the minor should be placed, which includes reclusion in adult facilities. In practice, this decree is used too often to place minors in adult penitentiaries as a place of reclusion, and there have even been documented cases of internment of children in adult prisons for protective purposes.

As reported by Amnesty International<sup>223</sup>, on September 2002 a court found the Chilean authorities guilty of having infringed upon the CRC by permitting some minors to be detained with adults and also by holding them in punishment cells.

This sentence was pronounced, resolving an “amparo” action authored by attorneys at the Hogar de Cristo, due to a series of violations suffered by minors detained in the Preventative Detention Centre of Santiago-South (an adult jail). In this instance, the Court pronounced the illegality of the practice of sending adolescents to tribunals along with adults, and also declared the illegality of the solitary confinement of children, established in the Regulation applicable to minors who are interned or in establishments administered by the Gendarmería of Chile (specific division of police responsible for the management of prisons), conflicting with international norms of the same regulation cited (principally the Beijing Rules and those of Riyadh).

Furthermore, it has been reported that “in the 13 years that have followed the ratification of the CRC, about 40 children have died in prisons, most of whom in adult prisons, others in special detention centres where children are supposed to be protected rather than sanctioned”.<sup>224</sup>

SENAME has a Programme for Legal Defence and Psychological Support to Young Offenders. It concerns young offenders in minors’ sections of the

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223 Amnesty Report 2003 on Chile, <http://web.amnesty.org/report2003/chl-summary-eng>.

224 Dr Julio Cortés (*Coorporación OPCION, Chile*), Derechos Humanos del Niño, enfoque crítico de las penas de los niños, Taller de análisis, Montevideo, September 2003. The newspaper « El Mercurio » reported on May 30, 2000 that over the past decade 74 minors had died in similar facilities throughout the country. The already mentioned UDP/CEJIL report confirmed the death of 38 children in “deprivation of liberty” between 1998-2002

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detention centres of the Gendarmería, and is directed at both young offenders waiting for a discernment decision and those who have been formally accused. According to the Chilean Government, this programme has improved the situations of detained young offenders. For instance, procedures for an earlier release have been expedited, and life conditions have improved due to increased contact with the family and support from professionals. Nevertheless, despite this programme, the Chilean authorities acknowledge that segregation from adults remains a problem. Moreover there is a lack of human and material resources, and also symptoms of drug withdrawal.<sup>225</sup>

Although there have been some targeted experiences including specific training with respect to children in recent years, Gendarmería agents in contact with young people are not trained adequately.

#### **4. Schools**

According to local NGOs, “generally speaking, the school system is not able to protect and warrant the school children’s rights”. Furthermore they denounce the fact that the “Chilean educational system is disciplinary and punitive” and that “physical and psychological violence by teachers is a frequent occurrence”.<sup>226</sup>

In its consideration of the last Chilean report<sup>227</sup>, the Committee on the Rights of the Child notes that corporal punishment for children is not expressly prohibited and that it further remains socially acceptable and practiced in schools.

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225 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 1078, 1081 (25 June 2001).

226 NGO Initiative Committee on the Rights of the Child, Comments on the second report of the Chilean State (1993-1998) on the measures adopted to make effective the fulfilment of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child § 26 *in fine*, 55, 61, March 2001.

227 CRC/C/SR.764 Consideration of Chilean report by the Committee on the Rights of the Child § 31 (25 September 2003).

**PART III**

**STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
IN CHILE**



## General observations

Gender often has a determinative impact on the form of the torture and ill-treatment, the circumstances in which the torture and ill-treatment occur, the consequences of the torture and ill-treatment, and the availability of and accessibility of reparation and redress. Torture and ill-treatment of women often has a sexual nature, including rape, sexual abuse and harassment, forced virginity testing, or forced abortion or sterilisation. Although men are also targeted with rape, the threat of rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual forms of torture and ill-treatment are more consistently perpetrated against women.

The use of sexual violence against women by a State agent may have a particularly negative impact on women's access to redress and reparation. In certain societies, victims of rape or other forms of sexual violence are threatened with expulsion from their home or community, are at risk of being killed or subjected to further violence at the hands of members of their family or community, or are forced into marriage. In other countries, women victims of rape run the risk of being charged and punished with adultery. Faced with these consequences, women victims of sexual torture and ill-treatment at the hands of State officials or politically organised groups in these societies are even more reluctant to report their case due to fear and shame.

## 1. Introduction

This report is submitted by La Morada Women's Development Corporation and the Woman's Foundation Institute, both renowned non-profit organisations in Chile, together with the International Women's Human Rights Clinic of the City University of New York School of Law, all bringing vast experience in the promotion and defence of women's human rights. In 2002, La Morada obtained consultative status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations and is currently registering before the Organisation of American States.

The information used to produce this report was culled from government statistics, existing legal bodies, research carried out by NGOs and universities, relevant jurisprudence, as well as from work carried out by the two

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organisations submitting the report to the Committee against Torture. However, there are still obstacles to collecting valid information regarding some of the aspects covered by this report, which constitute cause for concern among human rights organisations in general.

The methodology used follows the same pattern as parallel reports submitted to treaty and convention bodies, in particular before the Committee against Torture. This report submits a juridical analysis of legislative measures, public policies and institutionalised measures that the Chilean State has taken over the last five years as a member of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and stemming from the international juridical obligations said status implies.

Specifically, this report aims to analyse the Chilean State's compliance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment from a gender perspective, that focuses principally on the difference in treatment of men and women regarding legal actions, public policies and practice, which result in forms of discrimination against women. It also focuses on the analysis of the specific interests and needs of women, which have received little attention and which at times, are practically omitted by State practices. Indeed, the fact that women continue to assume traditional roles in the private sphere; the fact that torture is understood to constitute an explicit action by State agents in the public sphere; the low number of women imprisoned in relation to men, and thus their relatively low criminal incidence and their general "under-representation" in the areas related to this report, all have led to the reality that women are frequently ignored and are made invisible. This is often in breach of the international human rights framework and the principle of non-discrimination.

This report emphasises aspects which affect women particularly, and which constitute conducts that fall within the definition of torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, according to the International Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, of which Chile is a member State. These are:

- a) The absence of information on the number of women who suffered Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment during the dictatorship; the existence of impunity in the spheres of investigations, verdicts and sentences; and inadequate mechanisms of victim reparation within the framework adopted by Chile to overcome the violations that took place in the 1973-1990 period.



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- b) Torture, and cruel, inhuman, degrading or intimidating treatment towards women who are hospitalised (in public sector hospitals) as a consequence of clandestine abortions.
- c) Torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of female sex workers, upon being arrested by Chilean police.
- d) The absence of sex-disaggregated data, which would allow researchers to establish the existence of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of women deprived of their freedom.

The analysis of each of these aspects will establish conclusive data regarding the practices that fall under the definition of torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the measures currently in place to prevent them; the practices and conducts of State agents, and the juridical basis which enables its presentation before the Committee against Torture.

## **2. General background**

Chile began its process of political reconstruction in 1990, following 17 years of military regime. The transition was based upon a series of agreements between the outgoing administrators and the new ones. These agreements have conditioned the structure of the political system as well as democratic practices. Indeed, despite Chile's political constitution<sup>228</sup>, which establishes a presidential based civilian government, a series of obstacles remain which, contrary to Chile's constitutional traditions, hinder the application of a democratic system based on the representation of the majority. Thus, this *sui generis* electoral system favours the second largest majority; establishes designated and life-long senators; guarantees the immobility of the Armed Forces' Commanders-in-Chief, and appoints a National Security Council, a body composed mainly of the Armed Forces' Commanders-in-Chief and empowered to oversee the administration of the country's democratic system.

The changeover from dictatorship to democracy implied the restoration of human rights and freedoms for all Chilean citizens, and the abolition of

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228 Approved in 1980, during the military regime, through a national plebiscite.

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practices that violate human rights, such as summary executions, detentions and disappearances, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, exile, relegation, etc. In this aspect, one of the key reforms was the amendment of Article 5 of Chile's Political Constitution. This reform incorporated international human rights treaties into Chile's juridical system, once formal observations had been met as established by Chilean law.

Chile is currently a member State of various international and regional treaties besides the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, the American Anti-Torture Convention, and the International Convention against Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Ratification of other international juridical instruments is still pending, reflecting the inner difficulties Chile faces regarding International Law of Human Rights. These include the Rome Statute, the Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearances of Persons and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, among others.

Even so, Chilean society, like other societies which have undergone similar experiences, is still experiencing tension between past grievous human rights violations, and the present, with its new conflicts that reflect the disadvantages in the area of human rights that specific groups in society experience. The high degree of impunity regarding some of the worst human rights violations carried out in the past is one of the consequences of this experience that has an impact on Chilean culture. In the present day, impunity also hinders the full exercise and satisfaction of the rights of other groups and social categories, including women and ethnic groups, in a democracy.

According to the most recent Population and Housing Census, Chile's current population stands at 15,116,1435, with women constituting 50.73% of the population. The economically active population stands at 5,948,830, of which 1,982,620 are women<sup>229</sup>, equivalent to 35.6% of the work force, a

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229 National Statistics Institute (INE), National Employment Survey, 2001.

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relatively low figure for the region. Female participation in power, particularly in the political sphere, is also lower than the regional average. In effect, although the rate of female participation in high profile positions such as heads or undersecretaries of Ministries varies, it currently stands at 5.47%, while female participation in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies stands at 5.26% and 12%, respectively. With regard to the judicial sphere, with one woman currently participating in the Supreme Court, female participation is so low that it is impossible to conclude that women participate on an equal footing with men.

Despite the measures taken by Chile's successive governments since 1990, the violence women in Chile are subject to, along with its invisibility, is a concrete reflection of the cultural environment surrounding women. It reflects a highly discriminatory society that in general terms influences the full exercise of women's rights as well as the abiding lack of information that exists in many spheres regarding women. The most recent survey carried out by the National Women's Service on violence against women, shows that 50.3% of married women or women that cohabit, currently or in the past, have been subjected to violence by their partners, while 34% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, and 16% psychological abuse. In 88% of these cases, the aggressor is the partner<sup>230</sup>. However, this data, which reveals women's reality in the home, cannot be used to analyse episodes of violence experienced by women in the public sphere, and carried out by State officials and non-State particulars. Furthermore, there is no data available to establish how many women die every year as a result of gender violence. This not only makes it impossible to design concrete measures regarding the problem, but also contributes to maintaining high levels of impunity regarding the perpetrators of violence, both in the private and public spheres, in the past and in the present. This report aims to record the more extreme forms that this discrimination takes, and contribute to overcoming it.

Chile returned to democracy in 1989, following 17 years of a military regime that violated the fundamental rights and liberties of Chilean citizens. A number of official studies, by both the United Nations and Chile have acknowledged that during the 17 years of the military regime, its repressive State

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230 "Detección y Análisis de Prevalencia de la Violencia Intrafamiliar" ("Detection and Analysis of the Prevalence of Domestic Violence"), Centro de Análisis de Políticas Públicas (CEP), written at the behest of the Chile's National Minor's Service, (SER-NAM), Universidad de Chile, 2001.

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agents carried out a systematic and generalised policy of human rights violations, which included summary executions, forced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, and other violations of International Human Rights Law.

The process of transition that began in 1990 was based on a series of agreements that have constituted the framework of said transition. The main human rights-related accord is the continuation of the Amnesty Law and the modification of Article 5 of Chile's Political Constitution, which incorporates international human rights into Chile's sovereign framework. This is one of many agreements that currently prevents the political system from operating in the style traditionally exercised in Chile. In effect, the 1980 Constitution, a key set of laws created and ratified by the military regime, still preserves elements that hinder the consolidation of a political system that drew from past Constitutions and formed part of Chile's political biography. Among these is the creation of the National Security Council, which oversees the workings of Chile's democracy and which is made up of the Commanders-in-Chief of the four divisions of Chile's Armed Forces; the preservation of designated and life-long senators; an electoral system that punishes the first majority in favour of the second majority; quorums that impede significant reforms of the constitution; and the fact that the government is prohibited from naming or removing the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

In 1990, Chile, principally through the government, assumed the task of acknowledging the human rights violations that took place during the dictatorship. "During the first stage, the government created the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, known as the Rettig Commission<sup>231</sup>, charged exclusively with investigating the most grievous human rights violations, which categorically refers to those persons who died during the period of the dictatorship, including the disappeared. Made up of figures from across the political spectrum, the said commission did not enjoy the faculties to either determine individual responsibilities or pass judgment, and so those cases that could be further investigated were sent to the tribunals. The Commission came to the conclusion that there was a total of 2,279 individual victims, of which 2,115 are cases of human rights violations and 164 are victims of political violence"<sup>232</sup>.

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231 Created by Supreme Decree number 355, April 25, 1990.

232 "El mal Estado de los Derechos Humanos" ("The Poor State of Human Rights"), Citizenry and Human Rights Division, Corporacion La Morada, Santiago, 2003.

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The Commission's final report established a series of recommendations, including the creation of the National Reparation and Reconciliation Corporation<sup>233</sup>. This organisation was charged with driving forward a human rights and reparation policy for the victims through the concession of certain benefits. These included a monthly re-adjustable pension of US\$ 200, plus a percentage destined to the payment of health security for the relatives of the victims named by the report and other victims identified as such by the corporation; free access to public health services through the PRAIS; educational benefits up to age 35, and inclusive of higher education; and exemption from Chile's obligatory military service for the offspring of the victims.

The Frei government (1996-2000) introduced the gradual elimination of initiatives in the area of human rights that had been driven forward by the Concertación's first government, leaving the main prospect of development in the said area in the hands of the law tribunals. The case against Pinochet brought to light Chile's unresolved past. Pinochet was detained October 16, 1998 following an order from a British judge in response to a petition from Judge Baltasar Garzón<sup>234</sup>. Beyond its well-known outcome, in Chile the episode generated the creation of the Dialogue Table<sup>235</sup> driven forward by the government, and in particular by the Defence Ministry.

The principal aim of the Dialogue Table, made up of persons from the human rights sphere, the Armed Forces, and the academic and religious spheres, was to investigate the whereabouts of the disappeared, a minimum obligation for the authorities following the demands unleashed by the Pinochet case. The results of the work carried out by the entity, which did not have the support of the associations of the relatives of the disappeared and executed, were a step forward. However, this progress corresponded more to an agreed perspective regarding the historical context in which the violations took place and the expression of an aspiration that such violations would never again occur, rather than a gathering of concrete information on the whereabouts of the disappeared. The information handed over by the representatives of the Armed Forces through the Dialogue Table was not significant, as it only alluded to 180 cases out of a total of 1,234 cases recorded by the Rettig Report and the Reconciliation and Reparation Commission. Furthermore, the information

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233 Law 19.213, February 8, 1992.

234 Pinochet was under investigation by the Spanish National Audience in relation to the disappearance of Spanish citizens, and also by Judge Garzón in relation to Operation Condor.

235 Created August 21, 1999.

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was not necessarily accurate. One of the measures consequently adopted was the appointment of special judges charged with studying those cases, which according to the information handed over seemed to be making advances with regard to their investigation. For the rest of the cases, and considering that according to the Dialogue Table report the corresponding bodies had been thrown into the sea or rivers, the trials continued their slow and uncertain development<sup>236</sup>. Faced with the impasse generated by the doubts shed over the results of the Dialogue Table, the government, through the Justice Minister José Antonio Gomez, compelled the Supreme Court to name nine judges exclusively committed to the investigation of 49 human rights trials for a three-month extendable period. It also appointed another 51 judges with special commitment charged with investigating 51 trials<sup>237</sup>. In July 2002, following successive time extensions on the work carried out by the exclusive commitment judges, the totality of the Supreme Court approved an Interior Ministry petition to increase the quantity of said judges by six judges who were charged with investigating 600 trials on the disappeared. The end results of these efforts have not managed to satisfy the demands for justice made by human rights organisations. Furthermore, they omit a huge range of human rights violations that have not been considered by the government.

The Interior Ministry's Human Rights Programme, created by Law 19,213, is one of the few Interior Ministry entities charged with dealing with past human rights violations. It encompasses necessary reparations of human rights violations, in part inherited from the Rettig Report. It is not a human rights policy, rather, it is a condensed version of human rights violations that took place during the dictatorship at the hands of State agents, and by no means does it aim to face the challenges posed by the need for a human rights policy. Said reparations comprise: "a material reparation established by law including economic benefits, pensions, etc., for the relatives of victims... symbolic reparations seek to repair the good name of the victims, and restore their quality as people with ideals... and reparation as justice, that is, the investigation of the truth to determine, as established by law, the whereabouts of the victims and the circumstances leading to their disappearance or death"<sup>238</sup>. During the Frei

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236 Judges Carreño and Valdovinos.

237 Report on Human Rights 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, p. 176.

238 Interview with Luciano Foullieaux, Director of the Human Rights Programme, in the context of the report written by the Citizenry and Human Rights Division of La Morada Corporation, "The Poor State of Human Rights 2003," 2003.

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government, when the issue of human rights and their past violations was not included in the government agenda, the allocation of human and economic resources was closely linked to the need to solve pending problems regarding the disappeared. The inauguration of President Ricardo Lagos' government, and more categorically the month of June 2001, marked the beginning of a process aimed at extending the said programme. This mainly incorporated the restoration of the social considerations that existed with the National Reparation and Reconciliation Corporation, and the analysis of the concept of reparation from a perspective that goes beyond the juridical aspect. The latter grants the concept a greater time permanence as opposed to the transient nature bestowed upon it by the previous government.

However, as a result of the absence of a perspective that took into account the experiences of female victims eligible for benefits for the death or disappearance of their loved ones, the mothers of illegitimate children had no rights to pensions. Likewise, the mothers of legitimate children who had already annulled their matrimony at the time that the victims were qualified as such, were also denied reparation<sup>239</sup>. Furthermore, the lack of personnel trained in gender issues in these entities, made and make it even more difficult to overcome the discriminatory consequences of the application of said policies and benefits.

“On November 11, 2003, the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (CNPPT) began operating after being established by a government mandate<sup>240</sup> in the context of the commemoration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the military coup. The commission, principally made up of persons involved in the defence of human rights during the dictatorship and in particular through the Pro Paz Committee and the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, was given the mandate to *“determine the identity of those persons who were deprived of their freedom or underwent torture for political reasons, at the hands of State agents or people at their service, in the period beginning 11 September 1973 and ending 10 March 1990. It must also propose, upon ending its mandate in May 2004, the establishment of the conditions, characteristics, forms and modes of reparation measures, both austere and symbolic, that may be granted to those persons recognised as political prisoners and who underwent torture”*.

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239 Report on Human Rights 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago, 2003, p. 149 – 150.

240 Supreme Decree number 1040.

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24. The main problem currently faced by the CNPPT is the small amount of people who have proceeded to denounce torture or imprisonment endured during the military regime. Originally, the commission calculated it would record 70,000 cases, yet to date, it has recorded 14,000 cases, less than 25% of the initial estimate.

The CNPPT must, at the end of its mandate, make recommendations to the President of the Republic regarding measures to be taken to meet the objectives of reparation. However, the commission is limited by its own constitution, which was shaped by the criteria put forth by the president, and which states that reparations should be “austere and symbolic”. According to International Law, the concept of reparation goes beyond monetary compensation, which in any case should cover the damage inflicted and the total earnings lost through said damage: it includes a set of measures that rehabilitate the victim and reinsert him/her into society. In the case of female victims of sexual violence in the form of torture, the law requires that reparation be in accordance with the type of violation endured, in this case, torture based on gender discrimination, which calls in the first place for the acknowledgement that sexual violence is used as a form of torture inflicted upon women because of their gender. No assurance exists, however, that this will be the case. Initially, the CNPPT did not consider the necessity to provide differential treatment to women victims of sexual torture, nor did it consider the need to train its personnel to ensure that the data be effectively recorded. Moreover, the questionnaire given to those who decide to make the denunciations (accessible via Internet), only asks the person to state his/her quality as detained and/or tortured, it does not include acts of sexual violence, which could help women victims identify the said violence with torture.

Alongside the said acknowledgement, there exists a number of measures which contribute to the reinsertion of the victims and which also highlight the importance of ensuring that cases of sexual torture and/or ill-treatment, at the hands of State agents and third parties acting with their acquiescence, never take place again. Legislative measures which prohibit and sanction this type of conduct; the production of data regarding sexual and gender violence taking place currently and that took place during the military regime; the approval of official documents on truth etc., are all exemplary actions for society and contribute to decreasing the levels of impunity with regard to sexual and gender violence in Chilean society.

An important consequence of the return of democracy was the normalisation of the tasks carried out by the State and the permanence of a set of guarantees



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and freedoms for the country's citizens, which although feebly protected by the Constitution, permit a normal development of Chile's institutions. In this initial stage and as part of the process of democratisation, the government created a series of entities, which, inspired by international human rights treaties, seek to develop public policies aimed at different sectors of society which are targets of discrimination and/or experience vulnerability in the exercise of their rights, including young people, women and indigenous peoples<sup>241</sup>.

The National Women's Service created by Law 19,023 on January 3 1991, uses the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as the basis for designing social policies aimed at women, with the goal of helping overcome the ways in which gender discrimination is expressed in Chilean society. In practice, and despite its achievements, this institution has been unable to intervene in certain spheres due to its unsubstantial political weight. For instance, it has been unable to intervene in reparation policies for women victims of human rights violations including torture, nor has it been able to intervene in the penal reform process, one of the most important reforms carried out by the Chilean State, and which this document will look into in more detail below. Thus, the major developments the government has generated in this area, apart from a series of legal reforms aimed mainly at achieving greater equality between men and women in the family and the workplace, include the collection of sex-disaggregated data, the incorporation of positive gender discrimination in social investment projects, and the application of gender indicators to measure the impact of sectorial policies. The political limitations of the Chilean State's gender policies have not allowed the transversal and specific development of women's themes, interests and necessities. This contributes to maintaining the invisibility of discriminatory conduct at an institutional and societal level, which affects the comprehensive exercise of their rights.

The process of social reparation for victims of systematic and generalised torture and other inhuman treatment has been unable to create an institutional basis reflecting a political will to ensure this does not happen again. In this

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241 This generated protection and/or recognition bills aimed at these sectors, as well as the establishment of institutions charged with designing and/or implementing policies aimed at said sectors, such as, the Youth Institute, the National Indigenous Development Corporation and the National Women's Service.

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context, 1990 saw the beginning of a debate regarding the creation of an Ombudsman or Public Defender. However, this has yet to materialise institutionally. What currently exists is the Presidential Commission for the Protection of the Rights of Persons, created by Supreme Decree and which began functioning 26 July 2001, faced with the paralysis of the bill to create the Citizens' Defender and which has lain dormant in the Senate since 2000. On 15 April 2002, seven senators<sup>242</sup> introduced three amendments to the constitutional reform bill mentioned above, generating such major modifications that they constitute a text in itself that substitutes the original bill. On 30 January, the Citizens' Defender was incorporated as a result of an agreement between opposition and government parties, which materialised as a constitutional reform bill aimed at promoting integral legislation regarding the modernisation of the State and transparency.

Moreover, it is evident that as a result of the return to a democratic political system, the composition and magnitude of human rights violations have changed, as have the institutional spaces where these are expressed. This is specifically true in the case of Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; these currently materialise in the penal system, and it is thus police personnel and other related State officials that are now responsible for human rights violations. Nevertheless, despite current information available to determine the existence and magnitude of such practices in Chile, there is relatively scarce data regarding women who for whatever reason fall into the hands of State agents. This report refers specifically to women deprived of their freedom, women who as a result of clandestine abortions end up in public health centres suffering serious complications, and the situation of female sex workers. In these cases, the problem is the application of institutional norms and practices that reflect the gender prejudices that State officials harbour regarding women and the role that is attributed to them. Thus, rather than delve into the pertinent existing institutional structure, this report emphasises the lack of data that would allow measures to be taken regarding the treatment of women in these situations. Reliable information however, does indicate that women are exposed to torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

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242 Senators Naranjo, Ominami, Gazmuri, Nuñez, Flores, Muñoz Barra and Viera-Gallo.

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Currently, torture is a much less extreme problem in Chile than it was in the past<sup>243</sup>. The information available is mainly confined to the Penal Reform Process, which is being implemented in some of Chile's regions. According to the data available, in general, the practice of torture is carried out at the time of detention. In the majority of cases, judges and defenders claim that beating, kicking and blows are continued beyond prosecution and arrest of the accused person, and are used as punishment for eventual resistance or to obtain desired information. In general, these aggressions occur mainly in police vans and in police stations, and the totality of perpetrators are police officials from the Chilean Carabineros corps. The magistrates deny these claims on the basis that under the new penal legislation police agents are compelled to immediately inform the magistrates of a person's detention. In any case, there are currently no denunciations of so-called traditional torture practices, although in those regions of the country where the penal reform project was first introduced, some defenders claim that "at the beginning there were more serious complaints, for example, claims that prisoners were put into cells naked, and beaten, but nothing as severe as disfigurement or mutilations". Said cases disappeared gradually with the consolidation of the reform and the new role that the Chilean Carabineros police have been compelled to assume regarding the rights of the accused.

Although current studies<sup>244</sup> do not include information on women on this matter, testimonies from women indicate that State officials do carry out torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment against women, based on their gender.

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243 Annual report on Human Rights in Chile 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago, 2003, and Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile, Law Department, Diego Portales University and CEJIL. August, 2002.

244 Report on Human Rights 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, and Alternative Report on Torture in Chile 2003, CEJIL, Chile.

### **3. The practice of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of women, during the 1973-1990 period**

#### **3.1 The facts, and institutional, legislative and administrative measures**

A key element of past human rights violations is that those which correspond to Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment were not included in the Rettig Report, nor in the report by the Dialogue Table. Furthermore, torture, as a consequence of political repression during the dictatorship, only became recognised as a problem as a result of the commemoration of the 30 years that marked the military coup, when Chilean society and human rights organisations, alongside the gradual progress that was being made in the legal area, brought this reality to light. During the two previous administrations, no initiatives were developed to reveal past situations of torture, which affected an estimated 300,000<sup>245</sup> Chilean citizens. Victims of torture have had to present their cases before ordinary tribunals, subject to the restrictions that exist in this respect in Chile. The only exception, which was an initiative by the Health Ministry that offered psychological and physical attention to the victims<sup>246</sup> via the public health system, was not applicable to torture victims but to the relatives of people executed and/or disappeared by State agents.

The current government<sup>247</sup> announced the creation of the National Political Imprisonment and Torture Commission<sup>248</sup>, the aim of which is to “identify those persons who were deprived of their freedom or underwent torture for political reasons, at the hands of State agents or people at their service, in the period beginning 11 September 1973 and ending 10 March 1990; and to propose reparation measures according to the criteria established by the President of the Republic”. The Commission was given a six-month period beginning 11 November 2003, at the end of which it has to present a report with conclusions and recommendations.

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245 There exists a consensus on this figure among human rights organisations.

246 Integral Health Assistance Programme (PRAIS)

247 President Ricardo Lagos (2002-2006)

248 Created by Supreme Decree number 1040, 2003.

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It is worth mentioning, however, that after 30 years, it is somewhat difficult to establish the extent to which torture was inflicted in Chile during the military regime. The existing records on torture are not necessarily reliable, and only some cases of torture were denounced given the fact that for a prolonged period of time, making such statements meant taking a life risk. During the military regime, behind the recording of said experiences was a pressing need to obtain testimonies that would reveal the State and whereabouts of persons who had been detained under illegal circumstances and who ran the risk of “disappearing”, rather than a need to merely record torture cases.

In effect, professionals from the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*<sup>249</sup> organisation have stated in interviews that they focused on the urgent need to locate persons who had been detained and who were in danger of disappearing, relegating torture to second place. This can currently be appreciated in the form in which the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* data is structured, given that it does not help to establish the extent nor the type of torture inflicted upon Chilean citizens. Another element that hampers the viability of determining the extent to which torture was inflicted in Chile, is the fact that during the period in question there existed a wide range of organisations dedicated to defending and assisting victims of repression. The diverse systems of recording, as well as the lack of continuity in said systems, with some organisations terminating their operations and others initiating them at different stages of the dictatorship, hinder the possibility of constructing an accurate universe of torture victims. Thus, current estimates place the figure between 70,000<sup>250</sup> and 500,000<sup>251</sup> persons.

Women were also subject to political repression in Chile during the military regime. The number of women executed, killed and disappeared is lower than the number of men, a fact which makes it possible to conclude that the same situation applies to torture. The differences in the number of men and women affected can be explained by the unequal participation of women in the structures and spaces that constituted the political sphere; women did not have the same access to these as men. Thus, the gender of the victims, be they from the government, parliament, official political parties and trade unions, reflects the

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249 Lawyer, Roberto Garretón and social worker, Maria Luisa Sepulveda.

250 Data collected by the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture. Press clippings attached.

251 Data from the National Report on Torture produced by the Ethical Commission on Torture, a coalition of human rights organisations historically involved in the issue.

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period's gender priorities<sup>252</sup>. In the context of a study carried out on sexual violence as a form of torture during the military regime, one of the women interviewed stated: *"...the majority of women, I would say almost 90% of women kidnapped, were subject to sexual violence. As they were transferred from one place to another, and once interrogation sessions were over, they were raped not just by one person, but by many"*<sup>253</sup>.

The most common forms of this practice are described in a series of testimonies given by women who underwent such treatment. These forms include: being stripped naked; insults with sexual connotations ("you're worth nothing, you're ugly, whore, you're not even worth raping, you must have gone to bed with who knows how many men, trollop, bitch"); rape threats, be these by one individual, a gang, using animals and/or objects; sexual touching up all over and especially on the breasts and genitals; individual rape; gang rape; rape using animals and/or objects; continuous or irregular rape; rape in front of loved ones and children; being cleaned up before raping; application of electricity on the womb of pregnant women; being forced to participate in "sexual games"; abortions as a result of rape and torture in general; placing rats in the vagina; human biting of the breasts and nipples; gynaecological check-ups by unqualified personnel; forcing victims to touch and suck the genitals of animals; groups of men masturbating over the body of a woman tied to a bedstead used to apply electricity to victims; forcing women to touch the genitals of their wardens; applying the vaginal fluids of animals on women to incite the male to copulate with them.

With regard to this, the victims state<sup>254</sup>:

*"...I was 14 years old, still a child, just beginning to live my life. It was September 9, 1975, when they came to get me at my house at 2.30 a.m.... I was a student. I was arrested in my house along with many others... When they arrested me, they*

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252 For a more in depth analysis, see: "Memoria y género" ("Memory and Gender"), Elizabeth Jelin, Siglo XXI, 2000.

253 The woman interviewed, is a victim of sexual violence as a form of torture, and is a professional working with a human rights organisation that since 1980 offers legal aid to victims of repression during the dictatorship.

254 Interviews from research carried out by the Corporación La Morada and the Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, as part of the "Violencia sexual como tortura ejercida contra mujeres en el período 1973-1990: Un secreto a voces" ("Sexual Violence as a Form of Torture Against Women from 1973 to 1990: A Loud Secret") research, Corporación la Morada and the Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, 2003-2004.

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*took my name and surname; they took me in a white Peugeot, which I'll never forget because it was parked in the square near my house. They blindfolded me, they threw me to the ground, there were many vehicles, they were transporting people from all over the place. Once we arrived, I knew I was in the Villa Grimaldi detention centre because they were talking about it. I was arrested by people from the DINA. We got there and the interrogations started at once. I spent four months in solitary confinement in a small room, they would take me out day and night, I never knew whether it was day or night. They applied electricity, torture, blows, but because I was too young, they didn't rape me, but they did force me to go and watch others being raped, it was very shocking... One thing followed another. ... For instance, first it was electricity, then blows, then they took me to see, well, I had never seen a naked man before, so imagine what it's like to be placed on the electricity bedstead and have 20 men masturbating over you. I was tortured by Romo, the so-called Fatso Romo; Moren Brito was also there, he was there with three other men, and a group from Investigations police, military officers. I had really long hair at the time, and they chopped it off with a knife... The other thing that really shocked me were the rapes using dogs carried out by Major Olderock; they were massive Dobermans, and they raped men and women with the dogs, it was hard to comprehend, her manner... I saw many kinds of torture, they took me to see many forms of torture, it was a form of intimidation, for instance, when women were menstruating they would place mice in their vaginas, and they would bite all over"<sup>255</sup>.*

*"I was arrested on September 16, 1975... I was two and a half months pregnant... I was detained for a year... I was tortured during many hours, and they knew I was pregnant but they still did it, they did it anyway, and not just that... I was tortured until I miscarried, ... then when I miscarried, when I had the haemorrhage no one did anything... I think they did the same with other women who were pregnant like I was, women that were arrested before or after... it's terribly cruel, because knowing that you're pregnant they took advantage of the fact, and one can't do anything about it. I mean, I was tied to a bed, by the hands and legs, and they do what they like to you, and they said... 'here's some electricity for the baby'"<sup>256</sup>.*

*"I was 29 years old ... I was working in a house looking after the children... I was arrested in 1975... I was taken to Investigations Police, and the Villa Grimaldi*

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255 Testimony NN 14. Names have been omitted at the request of the victims, but tape recordings of the interviews exist.

256 Testimony NN7. Idem.

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*and Cuatro Alamos detention centres. At first, when I arrived, it went on all morning, they applied electricity, they would rape me, then they took me to a yard where they soaked me in water, then the electricity again... when I was raped I lost all track of time, it could have been all afternoon, or all night, it might have been 5 or 10 minutes, but sometimes I was there all morning... the sexual violence consisted of being raped in the bathrooms, or when I was in Cuatro Alamos when I was in solitary, they would force me to go and get a shower, but they would wash me, the women couldn't go into the shower unless they went in with you... I was terrified in Cuatro Alamos of going to the shower, I spent all day not wanting the next day to arrive because I was terrified of having to go and get a shower, ... once they did it in front of a child, a boy who must have been five or six years old, it was incredible, I've never forgotten the look on that child's face... I never knew what that boy had to do with me, and they never said anything... I had never even had sexual relations before all this so for me it was horrendous... and I kept this to myself, I never told my parents, ... I never spoke about it with anyone"<sup>257</sup>.*

*" I was 37 years old... I was arrested July 14, 1982. I was arrested along with my mother... I remember I was on a rostrum, it was a very unusual room, a spacious room, about four meters by four, and at one end there was a two-meter rostrum, and this man had bedsteads, I know because of the way I banged my hips that it was a bedstead, maybe it was the torture room, there were people who described it, a man dressed in white, a woman from the CNI. This man examined me, I suffer from low blood pressure, and with no food, no salt, it was even lower. Maybe when I lost my memory it was due to a lack of sodium or potassium, I'm not sure, some mineral was lacking and I lost my memory, I'm also epileptic, but that examination was more than a routine, it was worse than any I've experienced in the public health clinics. The torture continued, with drugs, or the torture sessions they subjected my mother to, they forced objects into her vagina, they raped her, they hung her from the back of her knees... they would leave her hanging for a while, naked of course, I think it's worse than being shamed for a person aged 65 to be stripped naked... My mother was subject to sexual violence, it was horrible, horrible, ... they put something in her vagina and a green fluid came out... I know of terrible, horrible things, but I don't know if the women are willing to make it public because it really is humiliating, degrading... there was that policewoman with a German surname, she mastered dogs and she would take the dogs on beat and she would, I assume that's what she did, she would take the liquid that the bitches leak*

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257 Testimony NN8.

258 Testimony NN4



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*when on heat, which is very strong, and she would spread it on the vagina of one of the women, they tied her as if she were a dog, so then she wouldn't wash with us, and we respected her a great deal... at first some of the other women would ask why she didn't wash with us...and then we found out she had been raped by dogs, her whole stomach was covered with dog scratches, ... I knew about another woman, ... she wasn't raped, but they raped her little two-year-old daughter, in front of her, and she could do nothing about it..*"<sup>258</sup>.

*"I was tortured in front of my father and brother, and once they tried to force me to have sex with my father and brother... Tejas Verdes was the place where they trained military officers to become torturers, and it was there that I was subject to brutal torture. They would force me to have sex with a dog trained to participate in tortures. They would place rats in my vagina and then they would give me electricity shocks. The rats would panic and dig their claws into my vagina. They would urinate and defecate on my body and eventually I caught toxoplasmosis. The torturers raped me on many occasions and they would touch me sexually, insulting me, and forcing me into oral sex with them. They cut me with knives; once they cut the top layers of my belly and I lost a lot of blood. They also cut my ears. I still have the scars. Another torture consisted of tying my arms and legs, I would be lying on a table, and they would stretch my limbs until my blood stopped circulating. They would frequently torture me without interrogating me. I didn't understand why they kept on torturing me... In Tres Alamos, where I was kept until 1976 I was subject once more to rape, threats, insults, and other psychological tortures. Commander Pacheco, who was in charge of the Tres Alamos camp, constantly abused me, subjecting me to sexual harassment for three years..."*<sup>259</sup>.

Sexual violence was carried out as described by the testimonies recorded<sup>260</sup>, in all detention centres, legal or illegal, and throughout the whole period of the military regime<sup>261</sup>, during torture sessions as well as on other occasions. Perpetrators of sexual violence came from the four divisions of the Armed Forces and from the repressive agencies created by the military regime<sup>262</sup>. The majority of victims were female members of political parties; women related to

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259 Declaration made by Luz de las Nieves Ayressel at the Chilean consulate in the United States.

260 Interviews with 20 women and systematised information from CODEPU.

261 It is important to emphasise that during its first stage, repression was massive. Later, with the creation of the National Intelligence Agency (CNI), it became more selective, targeting female members of leftist political parties, be these official or unofficial with regard to the past government.

262 National Intelligence Direction and National Intelligence Agency.

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men (husbands, partners, sons) who were members of political parties that backed the overthrown government, or that were created to oppose the regime; members of social and trade union organisations (that continued to function clandestinely or that were created to resist the military regime). Their ages fluctuate from 2 years old<sup>263</sup> to 65 years old, in other words, they covered the whole cycle of a woman's life, and they came from a wide range of economic backgrounds.<sup>264 265</sup>

According to the women interviewed<sup>266</sup>, they did not consider sexual violence as a form of torture. When asked about the type of torture they were subjected to, they made reference to blows, the application of electricity, hanging, sleep and food deprivation, immersion in excrement and urine, solitary confinement, etc. They exclusively mentioned the methods that do not allude to their female condition and that are perceived as "abnormal" by society as a whole. The normalisation of violence against women in Chile has made it possible, both in the past and in the present, to conceal this serious damage inflicted against the majority of women detained during the military regime. It is the same silence that exists with respect to the violence inflicted upon women both in periods of peace and during periods of systematic human rights violations.

The lack of social, cultural and political-institutional conditions that would allow the identification of women tortured in Chile and establish how this treatment affected them, poses a risk to the process of truth and justice in the country, given that it conceals a percentage of the population affected. In effect, Chilean society still does not consider this violence as part of the systematic and generalised practices carried out by State agents against women. The "normalisation" of sexual violence is an element that exists among all political and social actors, as well as among some government authorities. In 2003, former political prisoner, Odette Alegría, recognised Chile's Investigations Director (civilian police organisation) Mr. Nelson Mery, as her

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263 Testimony NN4.

264 This is initially deduced from the sectors the women resided in at the time of their arrests.

265 There are no studies that discern what influence ethnic origin had on torture methods.

266 Interviews carried out as part of the "Violencia sexual como tortura ejercida contra mujeres en el período 1973-1990: Un secreto a voces" ("Sexual Violence as a Form of Torture Against Women from 1973 to 1990: A Loud Secret") research, Corporación la Morada and the Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, 2003-2004.

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torturer. She accused him of rubbing his penis against her face while she was seated and tied in a corridor outside the interrogation room. Along with denying this claim, the person accused was vindicated, prior to any investigation, by legislators<sup>267</sup> who were recognised for their participation in the defense of human rights, even though Mery's participation (not central) in one of the period's repressive organisations, Investigations Police, was publicly acknowledged.

In a series of interviews, professionals from the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*<sup>268</sup>, when asked about the absence of records on sexual violence as a form of torture, stated that at the time the urgent needs were other and that they had understood that such issues corresponded to female social workers because they “could” handle “intimate” topics with which some lawyers felt inhibited. Asked about the issue, the same social workers stated that “all the women were subject to sexual violence although the question was not always asked, and in few cases did the women declare it out of their own volition”<sup>269</sup>. According to the social workers, the reasons for which the women victims did not denounce sexual violence, include the social workers' embarrassment at having to ask, respect for the suffering of the victim and the desire not to force them to make such declarations. They also stated that women were reluctant to do it, and they also said they believed this was because the women were accompanied by their partners or relatives when they went to denounce the facts.

In effect, many of the women who were subject to sexual violence as a form of torture did not claim they had been victims of said violence. According to specialised sources from the period, this was due to shame and guilt in some cases<sup>270</sup>; in others, because the women victims did not associate the sexual violence they were subject to with torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Many of the women interviewed, who were in fact subject to sexual violence as a form of torture, clearly identified torture as being beaten; having

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267 Juan Bustos, Sergio Aguiló, Jaime Naranjo, among others.

268 Catholic Church organisation that currently possesses the most substantial information on political repression in Chile, 1974 – 1990.

269 María Luisa Sepulveda, Head of the Social Assistance Department of the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* and current Executive Secretary of the National Torture Commission.

270 It is a widely documented fact that women tend to feel guilt over acts of sexual violence they are subject to. This is a product of the prejudices and stereotypes that are culturally imposed upon society and women, and that compel victims to believe that, to a certain degree, they contributed to the aggression.

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electricity applied; hanging (pau de arara); immersion in excrement; the telephone (simultaneous pounding on both ears causing rupture of the eardrum); etc. It is only when specifically asked about sexual violence that they incorporate it as part of the aggressions they were subjected to.

Government authorities have also contributed to this silence by not taking the necessary measures to employ specialised personnel to work with the particular characteristics of victims of repression. For instance, during an interview to determine the degree to which the Interior Ministry's Human Rights Programme incorporated a gender and women's rights perspective into its work, the programme's former Director, Luciano Foullieaux, stated: "This programme does not discriminate on the grounds of sex or condition ... the violation of the human rights of women are dealt with within a global human rights perspective"<sup>271</sup>. The *non-existence* of women as specific victims of repression (and in particular of torture) with regard to the initiatives that the transition governments have taken to date has contributed to the permanence of impunity and is a contributing factor to the victims' sensation of being unprotected. The CNPPT currently has a unique historical opportunity to guarantee reparation for each of the victims of torture and political imprisonment. Moreover, the experiences of Yugoslavia and Rwanda's ad hoc tribunals; the international juridical debate with regard to the drafting of the Rome Statute; and the United Nations Rapporteur's account of violence against women, compel States to take more care over the measures taken in this field, guaranteeing women victims their right to be recognised as such and to receive reparation. Overlooking this and failing to provide the mechanisms, measures and actions required to fulfill this objective is equivalent to engaging in discriminatory conduct in the discharge of a juridical responsibility of States according to International Law.

The majority of unpunished torture actions occurred during the military regime, and are therefore prior to Chile's signing and ratification of the Convention against Torture. Nevertheless, the prohibition on torture is part of common international law, prior to the aforementioned convention. For this reason, Chile is responsible for investigating, judging, and sanctioning the perpetrators, as well as for providing repair to the victims, and specifically in this case, the female victims of sexual violence as a form of torture during the military regime.

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271 "El mal Estado de los Derechos Humanos: Práctica y discurso" ("The Poor State of Human Rights: Practice and Discourse"), Santiago, 2003.

As a member State of the Convention against Torture, Chile is clearly compelled to grant reparation. It is under the obligation to grant reparation to the victims of torture carried out by State agents as part of the events that occurred between 1973 and 1990. In this sense, the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture constitutes a great step forward, yet it does not guarantee the acknowledgement of and reparation for women who were subject to sexual violence as a form of Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment during the said period.

### 3.2 Juridical foundation of the Convention against Torture

Rape and sexual violence constitute torture under international law. Article 1 of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (hereinafter the CAT or the Convention), defines torture as requiring: (1) an intentional infliction of severe physical or psychological pain or suffering; (2) committed for such purposes as interrogating or obtaining confessions, intimidating, coercing, punishing or discriminating against the person or another; and (3) when committed or instigated by a government official or when committed by an individual with the consent or acquiescence of an official.

Rape and sexual violence have been widely recognised by the United Nations system as forms of torture under human rights, humanitarian and international criminal law. Although the definitions or their interpretation vary somewhat among the different UN bodies charged with implementation of the norm against torture, the recognition by other bodies of rape and other sexual violence as torture is consistent with the application of the three elements of the Convention against Torture and its Committee.

There has been no question regarding the way that men have documented common forms of torture including beatings and electric shock to the genitals. Although recognition of sexual violence as torture and inhuman treatment constituting crimes against humanity and crimes of war dates back to the Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals, rape and sexual violence have, until more recently been largely ignored in the official discussions of torture. This discriminatory absence of condemnation and sanction has, in the last decade or so, been widely corrected in international law as a result of the mobilisation of a global women's human rights movement to seek recognition and redress for gender violence. Nonetheless, patriarchal cultural attitudes persist that

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consistently dismiss rape and other forms of sexual violence as trivial rather than grave, and as a private indiscretion rather than a gross abuse of power, or as the woman's rather than the perpetrator's fault.

It is thus of the utmost importance to those Chilean women, entitled to compensation for the sexual tortures they endured and the physical and emotional effects they continue to suffer, as well as to women worldwide, that this Committee make explicit its view that rape and sexual violence, when committed for the purposes outlined in the Convention and with the requisite official involvement, constitute torture under the Convention against Torture.

It should be noted that the definition of rape has also evolved in international law in recognition of the gross suffering and of the purposive attack on dignity inflicted by rape and other invasive forms of sexual violence, which are disproportionately practiced against women.

For the purposes of this report, it is sufficient to use the definition of rape recently accepted by consensus in the negotiations of the Elements Annex to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court<sup>272</sup> as intended to guide the Court. This definition embraces what has been traditionally viewed as sodomy, while emphasizing that the sexual invasion or penetration need only be slight, and recognizing that a broad range of coercive situations undermine the ability of women to exercise autonomy in sexual decision-making and have their fundamental dignity respected<sup>273</sup>. The ICC definition represents an amalgam of the decisions made by the International Criminal Tribunal for the

272 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, U.N. Doc. A/Conf. 183.9(1998), amended text available at [http://www.un.org/law/icc/statute/99\\_corr/corr.html](http://www.un.org/law/icc/statute/99_corr/corr.html) (hereinafter ICC Statute), Article 9(1).l.

273 Elements of Crimes PCNICC/2000/1/Add.2, Article 7(1)(g)-1 defines the two elements particular to the crime of rape as a crime against humanity as:

1. The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.
2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.

See also, identical definition of rape in Elements Annex, Articles 8(2)(b)(xxii)-1 and 8(2)(e)(vi)-1 applicable to war crimes in international and non-international armed conflict.

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former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda<sup>274</sup>.

Various UN bodies have identified rape and/or other forms of sexual violence as torture. The UN Special Rapporteurs on Torture, have consistently recognised rape and sexual violence as torture<sup>275</sup>, as has the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences<sup>276</sup>. Several UN treaty

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274 See, e.g., Akayesu Trial Judgement, § 688 (rape defined as “a physical invasion of a sexual nature, committed on a person under circumstances which are coercive” and further stating that “sexual violence which includes rape, [is]...any act of a sexual nature which is committed under circumstances which are coercive”); Prosecutor v. Furundzija, Case No. IT-95-17/1 (Trial Judgement) (10 December 1998) [hereinafter Furundzija Trial Judgement] § 185 (rape defined as: “(i) the sexual penetration, however slight: (a) of the vagina or anus of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator or any other object used by the perpetrator; or (b) of the mouth of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator; and (ii) by coercion or force or threat of force against the victim or a third person”); Prosecutor v. Kunarac, Case No. IT-96-23 (Trial Judgement) (22 February 2001) § 440-460 (adopting Furundzija’s standard but expanding on the concepts of coercion, force and threat of force by introducing the idea of “violations of sexual autonomy” and requiring that such assessment be made “in the context of the surrounding circumstances”)

275 See, e.g., Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Mr. Koojijmans, U.N. ESCOR, 44th Sess., 21st mtg. at 8, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1992/SR.21 at 35 (1992)(hereinafter Koojijmans); Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Mr. Nigel S. Rodley, E/CN.4/1995/34, § 15-18, 23 (12 January 1995)(hereinafter Rodley 1995)(as a result of a special inquiry into women and torture, he found that “rape and other forms of sexual assault were reported to be common forms of torture and that in the “vast majority” of reports, women were the targets, id § 17); Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Mr. Nigel S. Rodley, Addendum :Visit by the Special Rapporteur to Chile, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1996/35/Add.2, § 24 (4 December 1996) (identifying rape as a form of torture); and Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Theo van Boven, UN Doc. (23 December 2003)(hereinafter vonBoven)(emphasizing impact of transmission of HIV/AIDs as aspect of sexual violence as torture and emphasizing the urgency of stopping sexual violence in custody and generally).

276 Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1997/47, § e.g.,19-20, 33 (12 February 1997) (hereinafter Coomaraswamy).

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bodies have also recognised that gender violence can constitute torture<sup>277</sup>, as has the UN General Assembly in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women<sup>278</sup>.

The adjudicatory bodies in the regional and UN systems have also frequently identified rape and sexual violence as torture, including the Inter-American Commission and Court on Human Rights<sup>279</sup> (hereinafter IAComm.HR and IACHR, respectively) and the European Court on Human Rights<sup>280</sup> (hereinafter ECHR). Most significantly, the International Criminal Tribunals of the Former Yugoslavia<sup>281</sup> (hereinafter ICTY) and

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277 U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women, Adoption of Report, U.N. Doc. CEDAW/C/1992/L.1/Add.15 (1992) §. 7(b) (recognizing that gender-based violence impairs the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment). See also, U.N. Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 28, Equality of rights between men and women (article 3), U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.10, § 11 (2000) (calling for information on violence against women including rape and medical reporting of illegal abortion. Pursuant to Article 7).

278 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, U.N. G.A. Res. 104, U.N. GAOR, 48th Sess., Supp. No. 49, U.N. Doc. A/48/49 (1993) (article 3 recognises that the prohibition on gender-based violence is based in part on the right of women not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment).

279 *Mejia v. Peru*, Case 10.970, Inter-Am. C.H.R. 157, OEA/se. L./V/II 91, doc. 7 rev. § 86 (1996); Inter-Am. Comm.H.R.; Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Haiti, OAE/Ser.L./II.88, doc.10 rev. (1995) [hereinafter Haiti Report] § 133.

280 See, e.g. *Aydin v. Turkey*, 1997-IV Eur. Ct. H.R. 23178/94, § 488.

281 *Prosecutor v. Delalic*, Case No. IT-96-21/T (Trial Judgement) (16 November 1998) [hereinafter *Celebici*] § 496 (rapes and other forms of sexual violence which occurred on a detention centre constitute acts of torture); *Prosecutor v. Furundzija*, Case No. IT-95-17/1-A (Appeal Judgement) (21 July 2000) [hereinafter *Furundzija Appeal Chamber*] § 113 (upheld Trial Chamber's finding that acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence committed during interrogation constitute torture); *Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al.*, Case No. IT-96-23/I-A (Appeal Judgement) (12 June 2002) [hereinafter *Kunarac Appeal Chamber*] paras. 134-156, 185 (upheld the Trial Chamber's convictions of torture for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence including the nightly threat of rape involved in a selection ritual and being passed around from "processing." Id 185).



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Rwanda<sup>282</sup> (hereinafter ICTR), based on careful assessment of facts and canvassing of the authorities under international law, have repeatedly held rape and sexual violence to be forms of torture meriting criminal punishment under their respective statutes. Although the standard of torture may differ slightly among these different authorities, they collectively confirm that the three elements of torture provided in the Torture Convention are met.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence inflict the requisite severe level of physical and/or psychological pain or suffering to constitute torture. The UN Special Rapporteurs on Torture have recognised that “rape or other forms of sexual assault against women in detention, were particularly ignominious violations of the inherent dignity and the right to physical integrity of the human being, and they accordingly constituted an act of torture”<sup>283</sup>.

Rape has been recognised as causing “an especially traumatic form of torture”, which “may have insidious correlative consequences”<sup>284</sup>. The consequences of rape and other forms of sexual violence include “physical and mental pain and suffering, disfigurement, miscarriage, maiming, death”<sup>285</sup>, in addition to

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282 Prosecutor v. Akayesu, Case No. ICTR-96-4-T (Trial Judgement) (2 September 1998) § 685-90 (rape and sexual violence charged as “other humane acts” and so adjudged, noting that rape compares to torture “as a violation of personal dignity” when inflicted for the purposes of “intimidation, degradation, humiliation, discrimination, punishment control or destruction of a person, by or at the instigation of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity”). Id 687).

283 Koojimans, § 35. also cited in. Rodley 1995, §16.

284 Id (Rodley), § 18.

285 See, e.g., Aydin v. Turkey, supra note 6, § 189 (stressing the physical and psychological suffering inflicted through rape as an “acute physical pain of forced penetration, which must have left...[the victim] feeling debased and violated both physically and emotionally”); Medical and social science describe some of the common physical consequences: see, e.g., Ann W. Burgess & Lynda L. Holmstorm, Rape Trauma Syndrome, 131 Am.J. Psychia U.N. Centre for Social Development & Humanitarian Affairs, Violence Against Women In the Family at 21, U.N.Doc. ST/CSDHA/2, U.N. Sales No. E.89.IV.5 (1989). try 981, 982-3 (1972)(hereinafter VAW in the Family) (physical symptoms include “general soreness and bruising from the physical attack in various parts of the body such as the throat, neck, breasts, thighs, legs and arms...vaginal infection, discharge, itching, a burning sensation on urination and generalised pain”);

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HIV/AIDS<sup>286</sup> infection, infertility<sup>287</sup> and forced pregnancy<sup>288</sup>. Many have stressed the profound psychological trauma inflicted by rape and sexual violence. A study by the UN Rapporteur on Torture on Women and Torture emphasises that the trauma as well as “the stigma attached in many communities to a woman who has been raped may result in particularly dire consequences for the private and public life of the woman”<sup>289</sup>. The ICTY, in the Celebici case, emphasised that rape inflicts particularly severe psychological suffering that “may be exacerbated by social and cultural conditions and (that) can be particularly acute and long-lasting”<sup>290</sup>. The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women emphasises that “rape is an intrusion into the most private and intimate parts of a woman’s body, as well as an assault on the core of her self” and stresses the frequency of post-traumatic stress disorder<sup>291</sup>.

In dealing with rape as a form of torture in a detention setting, the European Court has also emphasised the “psychological scarring of the victim, which does not respond to the passage of time as quickly as other forms of physical and mental violence”<sup>292</sup>.

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286 VonBoven, §\_\_\_ (stressing the additional danger of transmission of HIV/AIDS); Haiti Report, *supra* note 5, § 125.

287 VAW in the Family, § 123 (recognising other forms of sexual torture including “blows to the breasts and stomach, often inflicted on pregnant women with the intention of causing them to abort or damage their ability to have children”).

288 *Mejia v. Peru*, § 50.

289 *Rodley 1995*, § 18

290 *Celibici*, § 495.

291 *Coomararswamy*, § 19. *See also, Mejia v. Peru* (“psychological trauma...from having been humiliated and victimised, and on the other, from suffering the condemnation of the members of their community if they report what has been done to them”).

292 *Aydin v. Turkey*, *supra* note 6, § 189; see also for example, Dorothy J. Hicks, Rape: Sexual Assault, 7 *Obstet. & Gyn. Ann.* 447, 452-55 (1978) (recognizing the link between common forms of torture and rape as both are not necessarily designed to leave any physical traces, but rather “to change the mental balance of individuals”).

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Even where sexual violence does not involve rape, in the form of a physical invasion or touching, such violence may constitute psychological torture under the Torture Convention<sup>293</sup>. This was recognised by the ICTY Appeals Chamber of the ICTY, when rape and other forms of sexual violence, such as the threats of rape, are repeatedly inflicted on women, “the physical pain, anguish, uncertainty and humiliation...elevate...(such) acts (of violence) to those of torture”<sup>294</sup>.

The severity or degree of suffering is not assessed on the basis of each separate act of violence; rather it is evaluated on the basis of the cumulative effect of the acts or the conditions visited upon the victim<sup>295</sup>. The Appeal Chamber in the Kunarac case held that rape qualifies as one of the “acts that establish per se the suffering of those upon whom they were inflicted. Sexual violence necessarily gives rise to severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, and in this way justifies its characterisation as an act of torture”<sup>296</sup>. In addition, the

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293 Herman Burgers & Hans Danelius, *The United Nations Convention against Torture: A Handbook on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* 258, at 177-78 (1988) (stressing the sufficiency of the intentional infliction of psychological suffering as meeting the first element of torture under the Torture Convention); see also for example, Report of the Human Rights Committee (Muteba v. Zaire), U.N. GAOR Hum.Rts.Comm., 39th Sess., Supp. No. 40, Annex 13, at 187, U.N.Doc. A/39/40 (1984) (mock executions were found to constitute a form of torture); Report of the Human Rights Committee (Estrella v. Uruguay), U.N. GAOR Hum.Rts.Comm., 38th Sess., Supp. No. 40, Annex 12 at paras 1.6, 8.3, U.N.Doc. A/38/40 (1983) (the victim, a concert pianist, had been threatened with amputation of his hands by an electric saw for hours, which resulted in the loss of sensitivity in his hands and arms for about a year).

294 *Kunarac Appeals Judgement*, *supra* note 7, § 185 (Appeals Chamber concludes that the sexual violence was carried out deliberately, in a coordinated fashion, over a long period of time and “whether roused from their unquiet rest to endure the grim nightly ritual of selection or passed around in a vicious parody of processing at headquarters, the victims endured repeated rapes, implicating not only the offence of rape but also that of torture under Article 5 [of the ICTR statute]”); see also for example, Burgess and Holmstorm, *supra* note 10, at 982 (the psychological effects of rape, recognised as a manifestation of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, “an acute, long-term reorganisation process that occurs as a result of forcible rape or attempted forcible rape...as behavioural, somatic, and psychological reactions...to a life-threatening situation”).

295 *Furundzija Appeals Judgement*, *supra* note 7, § 114 (Appeals Chamber finds it “inconceivable that it could ever be argued that the acts charged...namely, the rubbing of a knife against a woman’s thighs and stomach, coupled with a threat to insert the knife into her vagina, once proven, are not serious enough to amount to torture”).

296 *Kunarac Appeals Judgement*, *supra* note 7, § 150.

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severity of harm has also been assessed in view of the second element of the Convention against Torture, namely the presence of a prohibited purpose<sup>297</sup>.

On analysing the effect of sexual violence in terms of severity of harm or magnitude, there exists a generalised perception in international law which states that when rape, characterised as any form of physical invasion of a sexual nature has occurred<sup>298</sup>, the act clearly constitutes an act of both physical and psychological torture. It has been established that where other forms of sexual violence have been executed, and in cases where threat and fear of more violence is palpable, said acts also constitute forms of psychological torture, even where a physical invasion of a sexual nature has not taken place. Thus, the seemingly less invasive forms of sexual violence, such as forced nakedness, the threat of rape, harassment and insults, being forced to hear the screams of other women being raped or tortured, and other psychologically terrorizing assaults on physical and mental integrity, may also constitute torture depending on the context in which they occur.

The conditions faced by women prisoners or women otherwise taken into custody by the officers of the Pinochet regime thus qualify as torture. Rape and other misogynistic and invasive forms of sexual violence were commonly inflicted upon women along with the full range of non-sexual tortures. The application of electric shock on the sexualised parts of the body constituted rape. In addition, women were detained in an atmosphere and in institutions where rape and other forms of sexual violence and abuse were systematic and formed part of the daily fear. The threat of rape was communicated physically

297 *Celibici case*, *supra* note 7, § 508 (Trial Chamber notes “the presence of the prohibited purpose of punishment may raise the causing of great suffering or serious injury to the level of torture...”).

298 *Akayesu Trial Judgement*, *supra* note 8, § 688 (defined as “a physical invasion of a sexual nature, committed on a person under circumstances which are coercive...sexual violence which constitutes rape, is considered to be any act of a sexual nature which is committed under circumstances which are coercive”); *Prosecutor v. Furundzija*, Case No. IT-95-17/1 (Trial Judgement) (10 December 1998) [hereinafter *Furundzija Trial Judgement*] at para 185 (defined as: “(i) the sexual penetration, however slight: (a) of the vagina or anus of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator or any other object used by the perpetrator; or (b) of the mouth of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator; and (ii) by coercion or force or threat of force against the victim or a third person”); *Prosecutor v. Kunarac*, Case No. IT-96-23 (Trial Judgement) (22 February 2001) at paras. 440-460 (adopting *Furundzija’s* standard but expanding on the concepts of coercion, force and threat of force by introducing the idea of “violations of sexual autonomy” and requiring that such assessment be made “in the context of the surrounding circumstances”);

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and explicitly as well as implicitly to women. For example, being forced to sit naked while surrounded by male guards is not only sexual cruelty, but also a degradation that was so severe as to qualify as torture.

There is also no question that rape and sexual violence are, by definition, inflicted upon women in detention for the range of impermissible purposes identified in Article 1 of the Convention against Torture including interrogation, punishment, intimidation, coercion and discrimination<sup>299</sup>. In *Celibici*, the ICTY Trial Chamber stated that it would be difficult to envisage circumstances in which rape, by, or at the instigation of a public official...or acquiescence of an official, could be considered as occurring “for a purpose that does not, in some way, involve punishment, coercion, discrimination or intimidation”. It found that these prohibited purposes are “inherent in situations of armed conflict”<sup>300</sup>. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has also noted that rape in detention serves many of the prohibited purposes.

*When sexual abuse occurred in the context of custodial detention, interrogators were said to have used rape as a means of extracting confessions or information, to punish, or to humiliate detainees. In some instances, the gender of an individual constituted at least part of the very motive for the torture itself, such as in those where women were raped allegedly for their participation in political and social activism.*<sup>301</sup>

The IACComm.HR, in its Report on Haiti, likewise recognised that rape and other sexual abuse of Haitian women “inflicted physical and mental pain and suffering in order to punish women for their militancy and/or their association with militant family members and to intimidate or destroy their capacity to resist the regime...”<sup>302</sup>.

299 Torture Convention, art. 1; see also Burgers & Danelius, at 118 (discussing the decision to identify the most common purposes preceded by the words “such...as” to make it clear that the list is not meant to be exhaustive); *Celibici*, § 470 (recognizing that the prohibited purposes enumerated in the Torture Convention after the words “for such purposes as “do not constitute an exhaustive list, and should be regarded as merely representative”).

300 *Celibici* paras. 471-495 (such purposes in the context of armed conflicts characterised as being “often integral components of behaviour”).

301 *Rodley 1995*, § 17.

302 *Haiti Report*, § 134. *Coomaraswamy* notes that in the United States, “rape was a common method of torture slavers used to subdue recalcitrant black women.” *Id* §33.

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The Trial Chamber in *Furundzija*, recognised that intimidation should be expanded to include the goal of humiliating the victim, stating, in terms equally applicable to the prohibition on torture by State officials, that “this proposition is warranted by the general spirit of international humanitarian law: the primary purpose of this body of law is to safeguard human dignity”<sup>303</sup>.

Finally, it has also been widely recognised that rape and sexual violence are committed *a fortiori* for the purpose of discrimination based at least on gender, often intertwined with discrimination based on ethnicity, race or political opinion. The Haiti report states: “rape and the threat of rape against women also qualifies as torture in that it represents a brutal expression of discrimination against them as women”<sup>304</sup>. It is also highly significant that both the CEDAW Committee and the UN General Assembly recognised that violence against women is an integral part of the practice of discrimination against women<sup>305</sup>.

Finally, it should be noted that the impermissible motives need neither be sole nor dominant, but “simply be part of the motivation behind the conduct”<sup>306</sup>. On appeal in *Kunarac*, defendants argued that they engaged in sexual intercourse to satisfy themselves sexually and did not intend to torture their victims. The Appeal Chamber rejected this contention out of hand, relying on the *Furundzija* Trial Judgement, for the proposition that “acts need not have been perpetrated solely for one of the purposes prohibited by international law... If one prohibited purpose is fulfilled by the conduct, the fact that such conduct was also intended to achieve a non-listed purpose (even one of a sexu-

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303 *Furundzija Trial Judgement*, § 162.

304 *Haiti Report*, § 134.

305 CEDAW Committee, *Recommendation 19: Violence against women* states that discrimination, “includes gender-based violence, that is, violence that is directly against a woman because she is a woman or which affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty... U.N.Doc. A/47/38 (1992), reprinted in *Compilation of General Comments and General Recommendations Adopted by Human Rights Treaty Bodies*, U. N. Doc. HRI/GEN/1/rev.5; *U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*, G.A.Res. 104, U.N. GAOR, 48th Sess., Supp. No. 49, U.N.Doc. A/48/49 (1993) (recognizing in the Preamble and article 3 that violence against women is rooted in and perpetuates discrimination and the subordinate status of women in society, operating as an obstacle to women’s full participation and equality).

306 *Celibici*, § 470.

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al nature) is immaterial<sup>307</sup>. Furthermore, it must be noted that the purpose requirement does not require that the perpetrator specifically intend to commit torture, nor concern itself with personal motivation<sup>308</sup> but rather with whether the perpetrator acted in such a way as to make severe suffering “a likely or logical consequence”<sup>309</sup>. As the Furundzija Trial Judgment stated, where the perpetrator is an official, the impermissible purposes of intimidation, coercion, punishment or discrimination “are often integral components of behaviour”<sup>310</sup>.

It is accordingly clear that the rape and sexual violence inflicted upon Chilean women under the Pinochet regime, as well as in the other instances presented in this Report, were carried out for impermissible purposes under the Convention against Torture. Women were seized or detained and then subjected to sexual violence because of their political activity, their relationship to partners or others who were politically involved, or for the purpose of spreading terror among women and the population in general.

Lastly, torture under the Convention against Torture requires some level of official involvement. The examples presented here, under the Pinochet regime, as well as in the present, all involve primarily rape and sexual violence committed by officials or agents of the State. In many cases, their acts reflect a policy that implicates their superiors personally; but regardless of authorisation from above, their acts are imputed to the State under basic principles of State responsibility. Where the State fails to take steps to prevent privately inflicted harm of which it is aware, the element of State consent or acquiescence applies. This Committee has applied this standard of acquiescence under Article 16<sup>311</sup>; where the State knows or has reason to know there is a threat of torture, the failure to act must constitute acquiescence; otherwise the CAT’s goal of preventing torture is undermined.

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307 *Kunarac Appeal Judgement* § 155 citing *Furundzija Trial Judgement*, § 470.

308 *Kunarac Appeal Judgement*, § 153.

309 Id § 153,180.

310 *Furundzija Trial Judgement*, § 471.

311 Communication No 161/2000: Yugoslavia. Committee against Torture, 29th Sess. (11-12 November 2002). Also available at <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/>

## 4. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of sex workers by police authorities

### 4.1 The facts, and institutional, legislative and administrative measures

In Chile, prostitution is a legal activity, regulated principally by Article 41 of the Sanitary Code that compels the government to compile health statistics regarding those persons dedicated to sex work. The law prohibits sex workers from organising “brothels or tolerance houses”. It states that, “The overseeing of this article is the responsibility of district Carabineros police, who should organise and carry out the closure of places where said brothels operate, regardless of the sanctions imposed by the National Health Service”.

Despite the fact that prostitution is legal, Article 373 of Chile’s Penal Code imposes legal sanctions for those persons who “in any form offend integrity or good customs by outrageous or scandalous conduct”, while Article 495, number 5, imposes sanctions on those persons who “publicly offend integrity with dishonest actions or remarks”. Both female and male sex workers are frequently arrested under said codes. The Penal Code also sanctions those who foster or facilitate the prostitution of minors (Article 367), or the entry into or departure from Chile of persons with the aim of prostitution (Article 367 bis).

The Health Ministry oversees the health statistics established by Article 41 of the Sanitary Code. According to Health Ministry data, in Chile there are currently some 15,700 registered sex workers of both sexes. These statistics contrast sharply with data collected by NGOs, such as the “Angela Lina” Syndicate of Sex Workers, which claims that the number of unregistered sex workers in Chile stands at 60,000.

In line with Article 41 of the Sanitary Code, Chile’s Carabineros police is responsible for carrying out the so-called “hygiene control” on sex workers. This control consists of inspections to ensure that sex workers carry on their person up-to-date health cards (health controls have to be carried out every two months). Likewise, it is the responsibility of Carabineros police to arrest those persons infringing the law, and they have the faculty, although not the obligation, to do so. In these cases, the objective of the arrest is to verify the address of the transgressor or to compel the transgressor to pay a fee that will guarantee their appearance before tribunals.



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According to sex workers' associations, all arrests made by Carabineros police in this sphere are arbitrary. They claim this is due to the extensive and vague nature of existing legal norms, such as Article 495, number 5 of the Penal Code. In effect, the police do carry out illegal arrests; for instance, where sex workers are not carrying their health cards on them, or said card is not up-to-date. In these cases, according to the law, the offender should be taken by Carabineros to the nearest health centre where they should subject themselves to a health check. In practice, however, these women are always arrested and taken to police stations.

Moreover, arrests based on Articles 373 and 495, number 5 of the Penal Code are also carried out by Carabineros police, in cases where sex workers are discovered in situations (actions, dress, etc.) that according to the criteria of the persons carrying out the arrest, can be classified as "dishonest". Yet sex workers claim that they are usually arrested merely because they are prostitutes, claiming that the Carabineros police "know them" beforehand.

Upon arrest for any of the above-mentioned motives, sex workers are subject to severe physical and verbal ill-treatment by those who have arrested them, and sexual abuse in all its forms, including rape, is frequently carried out.

It is at the time of arrest when the worst physical ill-treatment occurs, given that sex workers usually try to dodge arrest, which increases the violence inflicted by the police. Verbal abuse, which includes insults of all kinds, is generalised both during arrest and throughout the period of detention.

Although it is known that in some cases sex workers have been severely beaten, these cases are not normally denounced. The reasons for this include the fact that all cases of police violence are tried in military tribunals as opposed to ordinary tribunals, which means there are fewer guarantees of impartiality. Furthermore, in these trials the personnel accused of said conduct usually rely on the resolute support of other officers from their unit, thus, the police version is always more solid, in contrast to the generalised lack of credibility that women sex workers face. Finally, another hindrance to these denouncements of aggression is the fact that police personnel continue to indiscriminately detain sex workers as well as threaten reprisals against their families. In Chile's capital, Santiago, the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Police Stations are renown among sex workers as being the most repressive and violent.

With regard to the infringement of Article 495, number 5 of the Penal Code, the habitual procedure entails the arrest of the transgressor who should then

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be ordered to appear before the corresponding Local Police Tribunal. In order to ensure said appearance, the address of the transgressor should be verified, a bail payment should be demanded, after which the transgressor is freed. According to qualified sources<sup>312</sup> “the abuse of power is expressed in arbitrary and aggressive detentions carried out under the pretext of identity and sanitary control”. These sources claim that sex workers are stripped naked and body searches are carried out on them in police stations “under the pretext of looking for drugs, or stolen goods or identity cards”. Cases of rape through the use of force have been known to take place, as well as rape through the use of intimidation, including women who are coerced to have sex in exchange of being allowed to leave without having to pay bail. In all such cases, compiled by the Syndicate of Sex Workers, the victims have been reluctant to give their testimony.

## 4.2 Juridical foundation of the Convention against Torture

### Article 1

The juridical analysis made in point 3.2, in relation to rape and sexual violence as a form of torture, can be applied to the case of imprisoned women and female sex workers detained and/or abused by police officials. In accordance with the official report presented by Chile to this committee, there exist few cases of complaints of rape by officials. However, the report makes no reference to the extent of the problem, while the absence of information is in direct contrast with the recurrent nature of this practice in specific situations.

Rape and sexual violence during detention constitute torture, and when they lack severity or a prohibited purpose, said acts constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Studies carried out in other countries on women in detention, have established that they are subject to sexual violence and rape on grounds of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation<sup>313</sup>. It is accordingly feasible to suppose Chile is no exception, and that urgent measures are

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312 Eliana Dentone, President of the “Angela Lina” Sexual Workers’ Syndicate.

313 See, e.g., Human Rights Watch, *All Too Familiar: Sexual Abuse of Women in U.S. State Prisons*, Human Rights Watch, New York, 1996, 2; Amnesty International, *Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women In Custody*, Amnesty International (March, 1999).

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required to determine the extent of these practices against women in detention. Furthermore, the torture and sexual abuse that women have anonymously denounced confirm the existence of a model based on the abuse of power by public officials, composed of rape and sexual violence.

Being a sex worker, male or female, is no impediment to being protected by the CAT. However, the type of work they perform makes sex workers an easy target for illegal detention, rape and/or sexual violence, and abuse. Rape and sexual abuse constitute a prohibited cause under the CAT, which also includes the punishment and discrimination that make up the purpose of said conduct. Such cases aim to punish those persons who transgress gender-defined mandates and roles, while simultaneously overlooking the fact that the demand originates from another person, namely a socially established man or woman. Sex workers have fewer possibilities than other persons for denouncing situations of the kind aforementioned, given that the permanent vigilance they are subject to, as well as their socially disadvantaged position, make them liable to reprisals and further abuse, should they speak up.

In cases where, exceptionally, the suffering inflicted by sexual violence is not severe, or prohibited causes are absent, the acts clearly constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, making Article 16 of the Convention against Torture applicable.

## **5. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of women who access public health services as a consequence of the practice of illegal abortion**

### **5.1 The facts, and institutional, legislative and administrative measures**

Current Chilean law on abortion is unequivocally restrictive. Abortion is prohibited under any circumstance, even where a woman's life is at risk. The crime of abortion is regulated by Chile's Penal Code, Articles 342 to 345, and is included in the category of crimes that go against the canons of the family and public morals. The corresponding prison sentences for the said crime

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fluctuate between three years and one day to five years for women who abort, and may be lowered to 541 days from three years if proved that the woman aborted to conceal her dishonour. The sentences for persons who carry out the abortion fluctuate from 541 days to three years, with longer prison sentences for health professionals<sup>314</sup>. The absolute prohibition on abortion is a product of the repeal in 1989 of Article 119 of the Sanitary Code. Despite its absolute prohibition, Chile has a high abortion rate, and it is calculated that approximately 160,000 abortions are carried out annually<sup>315</sup>. Likewise, health problems as a result of clandestine abortions constitute the major cause of maternal death in Chile, making up 26.6% of such deaths<sup>316</sup>. Researchers and health professionals calculate that one out of every five women who undergo illegal abortion require hospitalisation and medical treatment as a result of the health problems that the abortion generates<sup>317</sup>. In 1990 alone, 31,930 women in Chile were hospitalised as a result of health problems caused by illegal abortions<sup>318</sup>.

The practice of clandestine and unsafe abortion constitutes a threat to women's health, and the laws that prohibit abortion compel women to carry out abortions on themselves using dangerous methods, or to seek the intervention of persons who are not qualified to carry out the said practices. Even where those persons carrying out the abortion do so under safe procedures, women fear being prosecuted. This means that women frequently avoid seeking professional help, until it is absolutely unavoidable and their wellbeing is seriously endangered. The consequences of illegal abortion include permanent damage to women's sexual and reproductive health<sup>319</sup>. Women who choose to carry out abortions on themselves use drugs, objects or other substances not designed for the said use, and which can have the aforementioned effect on

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314 Chilean Penal Code, Articles 342 - 345.

315 The Alan Guttmacher Institute, "El Aborto Clandestino una Realidad Latinoamericana" ("Clandestine Abortion, A Latin American Reality"). New York, 1994.

316 Casas, Lidia. "Derechos Humanos. Derechos de las Mujeres. Obligaciones y desafíos para el estado chileno" ("Human Rights. Women's Rights, A Challenge for the Chilean State"), Instituto de la Mujer, CEDEM, Corsaps. March, 2001.

317 Centre for Reproductive Rights. "Mujeres tras las rejas : Legislación sobre aborto en Chile, un análisis desde la perspectiva de derechos humanos" ("Women Behind Bars: Abortion laws in Chile, an analysis from a human rights perspective")

318 Idem.

319 CRR- Safe Abortion: A Public Health Imperative 2.

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their health. Current practices include the introduction of catheters, caustic soda and parsley in the uterus, or the oral or vaginal introduction of powerful drugs<sup>320</sup>.

The World Health Organisation has identified the following repercussions as a result of the aforementioned types of abortion:

*“Sepsis, haemorrhage, and uterine perforation all of which may be fatal if left untreated and which often lead to infertility, permanent physical impairment and chronic morbidity; gas gangrene and acute renal failure, which contribute to abortion deaths as secondary complications; chronic pelvic pain, pelvic inflammatory disease, tubal occlusion, secondary infertility, as well as a high risk of ectopic pregnancy, premature delivery and future spontaneous abortions; and reproductive tract infections, of which 20–40% lead to pelvic inflammatory disease and consequent infertility”.*<sup>321</sup>

Said complications constitute one fifth of the principal causes of maternal death in Chile<sup>322</sup>. Long-term damage as a consequence of unsafe abortion practices include, “chronic inflammation; sterility; alterations in the menstruation cycle; complications in future pregnancies and when giving birth, and the potential rupture of internal scars caused by perforations from past abortions”<sup>323</sup>.

Chilean law compels health professionals to report all acts that constitute infractions<sup>324</sup>, including abortion<sup>325</sup>. Thus, women who access the health system due to complications from clandestine abortions run the risk of being prosecuted. Between 75 to 80% of abortion trials against women originate in accusations made by health system personnel. The largest proportion of

320 Clandestine Abortion In Latin America. 5

321 World Health Organisation, Unsafe Abortion 3 (1998).

322 Population Reports. The report further states that, “The five main causes of maternal mortality are hemorrhage, obstructed labour, infection, pregnancy-induced hypertension, and complications from unsafe abortion.”

323 Molina Lopez, Orellana et. al. “Características del aborto en Chile” [“Characteristics of Abortion in Chile”], in *Cuadernos Médico Sociales [Social and Medical Notebooks]* Vol. XIX, No. 1, p.9, Santiago, 1978 cited in *Women Behind Bars*.

324 Article 84 of Chile’s Penal Procedures Code.

325 Idem.

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accusations correspond to women admitted to the public health system with complications as a result of clandestine abortions. These women are from the lowest income groups in society<sup>326</sup>. Women with higher incomes are able to induce abortions in places that use proficient techniques under safe health conditions. This not only guarantees against subsequent complications, but also guarantees that they will not be reported or prosecuted given that they can rely on the acquiescence and confidentiality of the doctor. The obligation of health professionals to report the said cases is a serious breach of the doctor-patient relationship. There are cases of women who, fearing being reported, do not access health services and simply bleed to death at home<sup>327</sup>.

As a result of the judicial status of abortion, women are compelled to seek illegal and clandestine forms of abortion regardless of the subsequent risk to their lives and physical and mental health this implies. The medical complications caused by illegal abortions are so serious that low-income women are forced to access public hospitals in search of assistance. According to reliable sources, instead of receiving treatment that is adequate and timely, women who access the emergency sections of public hospitals are treated as criminals rather than patients. Research carried out by health professionals themselves in the city of Temuco, concluded that women who access hospitals due to abortions, are frequently treated in a prejudiced, punishing and coercive fashion, even where there is no certainty that the woman being treated has induced the abortion or is miscarrying. The ill-treatment includes smacking, insults and even carrying out intra-uterine scraping procedures without anaesthetics, and varies according to the personnel in charge at the time of admission<sup>328</sup>. Women do not denounce these acts because of the great vulnerability they face: not only are they undergoing a life-threatening experience due to the illegality of abortion, but they are also at risk of being accused of committing a crime.

The information available indicates that many public hospitals function more like investigative subdivisions of the police, rather than providers of effective and immediate treatment for women who present complications as a result of clandestine abortions. In this sense, they deliberately exacerbate the women's

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326 Lorenzini, Kena. Informe Alternativo sobre el cumplimiento de la CEDAW en Chile (Alternative Report on the compliance of CEDAW in Chile), Citizenry and Human Rights Division, Corporación la Morada. Santiago, 2003, p.33.

327 Lagos, Claudia. "Aborto en Chile" (Abortion in Chile), LOM ediciones, Santiago, April 2001, p. 100

328 Lagos, Claudia. "Aborto en Chile" (Abortion in Chile), LOM ediciones, Santiago, April 2001, p. 103

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pain and suffering, and increase the health risk the women are exposed to. Some of the women denounced are detained while in hospital, while others are interrogated even before they receive emergency treatment<sup>329</sup>. The following declarations<sup>330</sup> reflect the fear these women feel of the medical personnel, as well as of their intimidating and coercive behaviour, and their failure to comply with the obligation of providing healthcare:

*“A woman from Valparaíso was admitted to the hospital with symptoms of abortion. While she waited to be seen to, she heard the staff saying they would report her, and so she escaped. However, she got worse and was compelled to return”.*

*“Erica was undergoing symptoms of abortion. She was hospitalised, given bed rest and medication. But she asked to be allowed to leave the hospital because her three children, including an 18 month-old baby, needed her. She argued with the head doctor, and she was allowed to leave under her own responsibility. But the doctor warned her that should she return, he would not treat her. The woman had a miscarriage at home. When she arrived at the hospital, she was reported by the doctor”.*

*“Luzmenia was seven months pregnant when she fell down a flight of stairs carrying water. She was given emergency treatment by the rural midwife. She was told to take bed rest, suppositories and diazepam. As the symptoms worsened, the woman tried to get to the hospital, but her husband took too long getting a horse to try to get help. She miscarried at home. At the hospital, the doctor took no notice of the woman’s account. She said: “I was waiting for my baby... I wanted this baby. The doctor treated me very badly, he asked me what had I put in my vagina, I told him I had done no such thing, I explained about falling, but he didn’t seem to believe me”. Luzmenia was denounced for bringing about her miscarriage”.*

Frequently, the right to prompt treatment is conditioned on the handing over of information and admitting having carried out an abortion. Suffering is thus

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329 Centro Legal para Derechos Reproductivos y Políticas Públicas y Foro Abierto de Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos (Law Centre for Reproductive Rights, Public Policies and Open Forum on Sexual and Reproductive Rights), “Encarceladas: Un análisis desde los derechos humanos” (Jailed: An Analysis from a Human Rights Perspective), 1998.

330 Idem.

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deliberately increased and prolonged. In addition, the treatment that is provided, rather than reducing the pain and suffering, provokes intolerable physical and mental pain and suffering. The medical personnel, all of whom are State employees, violate their basic ethical obligation to provide healthcare, as stated by the constitution. They exacerbate women's suffering and the health risks they face, subjecting them to torture, and/or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as well as exposing them to the risk of death or of long-term damage to their health, including their capacity to have children in the future. Where medical staff deny women the emergency treatment that is their right, they may inflict serious and severe suffering in order to interrogate them and make them confess. This intimidation, punishment and discrimination may constitute torture, and/or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as stated by the Convention against Torture.

The Colegio Médico medical association's Medical Ethics Code aims to incorporate the promotion and protection of human rights into the framework within which doctors perform<sup>331</sup>. The ethical principles that constitute the basis of the exercise of the medical profession are the right and obligation to patient confidentiality and professional secrecy<sup>332</sup>. These principles determine the relationship that should exist between the doctor and his/her patient, and which is fundamental to saving lives. The World Medical Association Declaration of Tokyo is at the basis of this Code, and in particular of Article 25. The preamble of said Declaration states that "It is the privilege of the medical doctor to practice medicine in the service of humanity, to preserve and restore bodily and mental health without distinction as to persons, to comfort, and to ease the suffering of his/her patients"<sup>333 334</sup>. The Declaration states that, "The doctor shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, whatever the offence of which the victim of such procedures is suspected, accused or guilty, and whatever the victim's beliefs or motives, and in all situations, including armed conflict and civil strife"<sup>335</sup>. It is worth noting that the

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331 Official report submitted by the Chilean State to the CAT committee. CAT/C/39/Add.14 Chile p.26

332 Medical Ethics Code

333 Ibid.

334 The Tokyo Declaration establishes guidelines for doctors in relation to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or to punishment in relation to detention and custody procedures.

335 Tokyo Declaration (1975)



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declaration indicates that “A doctor must have complete clinical independence in deciding upon the care of a person for whom he/she is medically responsible”. The doctor’s fundamental role is to alleviate the distress of his/her patient, and no motive whether personal, collective or political shall prevail against this higher purpose<sup>336</sup>.

Stressing the importance of patient confidentiality, Article 247 (2) of the Penal Code, categorises as crime, “the acts of anyone who while exercising their profession reveals the secrets or confidential information of patients undergoing treatment”. Where women receive treatment for complications resulting from clandestine abortion, it is fundamental that they feel free to inform the doctor of the facts. The aim of patient confidentiality is to ensure doctors provide treatment based on accurate information, and guarantee medical attention to patients. This information could be essential to saving lives in the case of women undergoing the aforementioned experiences<sup>337</sup>.

The conduct of medical teams working in Chilean State hospitals goes against Article 25 of the Medical Ethical Code, based on the Tokyo Declaration. The objectives of improving the quality of services, and ensuring that the said services are coherent with international human rights standards, are forsaken by health professionals who present the police with information on almost all cases of complications due to clandestine abortions. Public health services should promote and guarantee the best treatment for each patient. Nonetheless, public health officials assume the role of judges and condemn those women who require their services to save their lives.

The Chilean government could argue that the interrogations to which women are subjected to in these cases and which often condition the provision of treatment, is legitimised by Article 84 (5) of the Penal Procedure Code, which compels health professionals to report these situations. However, this regulation does not justify the conduct of public health professionals who denounce women who have induced an abortion. These regulations should be

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336 Ibid.

337 In October 2000, the bill outlining sexual and reproductive rights was presented before Chile’s Congress. The project consecrates patient confidentiality in relation to the sexual and reproductive health of patients. It compels staff to refrain from reporting any assistance provided in relation to this matter, including cases of abortion. This would allow women to seek medical assistance in public hospitals without fear, thus diminishing the maternal death rate. However, those who oppose the project consider it a form of camouflaged abortion, since doctors are not obliged to denounce abortion cases to the authorities.

interpreted in the context of the obligation to maintain patient confidentiality and to give priority to providing adequate healthcare, regardless of the patient's involvement in activities classified as criminal. It is clear that the fear of being reported prevents women from seeking prompt medical assistance and hinders the handing-over of information required by the doctor to provide adequate treatment. Doctors and other health professionals should by no means be placed in a situation where their professional obligations are in conflict with their legal obligations. Criminal sanctions should not justify delay in treatment, nor should they hinder medical care in favour of interrogations before or during treatment.

Furthermore, in the context of the official report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Human Rights Commission recommended that Chile review its prohibitive legislation on abortion, as well as the conflict it generates for medical staff forced to choose between reporting an infraction and complying with their medical obligations:

*“The criminalisation of all abortions, without exception, raises serious issues, especially in the light of unrefuted reports that many women undergo illegal abortions that pose a threat to their lives. The legal duty imposed upon health personnel to report on cases of women who have undergone abortions may inhibit women from seeking medical treatment, thereby endangering their lives. The State party is under a duty to take measures to ensure the right to life of all persons, including pregnant women whose pregnancies are terminated. In this regard: The Committee recommends that the law be amended so as to introduce exceptions to the general prohibition of all abortions and to protect the confidentiality of medical information.”<sup>338</sup>*

## 5.2. Juridical foundation of the Convention against Torture

### Article 1 of the Convention

Complications of clandestine abortion almost invariably entail severe physical and psychological pain and suffering, as well as the possibility of death or permanent damage to the woman's health. Avoiding or delaying treatment unnecessarily prolongs the severe pain and suffering involved. The impending

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338 CCPR/C/79/Add.104, March 30, 1999.

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threat, together with the punishing attitude of hospitals, exacerbates the very real threat of death and permanent damage, constituting psychological torture and/or ill-treatment.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has stressed the close relationship between the right to health, especially the right to sexual and reproductive health, and the defence against torture, inasmuch as it affects both the general population and persons deprived of their freedom. Its most recent report to the Human Rights Commission, states that:

*“The right to health is closely related to and dependent upon the realisation of other human rights, including the prohibition against torture...Regarding the prohibition of torture in the context of HIV/AIDS, the Special Rapporteur draws attention to the freedom to control one’s health and body, including sexual and reproductive freedom, and the right to be free from interference such as the right to be free from non-consensual medical treatment and experimentation, especially for people in custody....The right to health also gives rise to entitlements including to a system of health protection which provides equality of opportunity for people to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. In particular, States are under the obligation to respect the right to health by, inter alia, refraining from denying or limiting equal access for all persons, including persons deprived of their liberty, to preventive, curative and palliative health services. In addition, States should refrain from limiting access to contraceptives and means of maintaining sexual and reproductive health, censoring, withholding or intentionally misrepresenting health-related information, including sexual education and information”<sup>339</sup>.*

Although the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture does not make special reference to the problem of women seeking medical assistance for complications of abortion, these women, as well as women suffering from HIV/AIDS, risk being treated in an arbitrary and punishing manner rather than with compassion and respect. This was emphasised by the international community, including Chile, in the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action.

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339 Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Mr. VonBoven), §56. (hereinafter, *Rapporteur on Torture*)

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The lack of prompt and adequate treatment aimed at reducing pain and suffering in women who are admitted into public hospitals due to complications of clandestine abortions, is, in this context, conscious and deliberate. Under the Convention against Torture, it qualifies as inflicting damage intentionally. Moreover, treating these women as criminals is contrary to the compassion they deserve as patients in distress, while intentionally exacerbating their suffering. It is public knowledge that women in Chile avoid or delay seeking assistance in public hospitals until they reach the point of dying or extreme pain, out of fear of being denounced as criminals. The suffering of these women is evident to medical staff who observe and are aware of the conditions in which the women arrive.

The legal obligation in itself to denounce all women who seek treatment for complications of abortion, induced or spontaneous, increases the women's refusal to seek medical help, as well as their exposure to severe physical and psychological pain, further suffering, and the risk of death or permanent damage. Furthermore, medical personnel that deliberately expose women to severe physical and psychological pain and suffering, particularly when there is a risk of death, are not only acting against medical norms, but are also inflicting severe harm and suffering on the women. Both the gender-biased legal norms and practices that exist meet the first requisite that constitutes torture in accordance with Article 1 of the Convention against Torture, that is, to intentionally inflict serious pain or suffering on a person. They also constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in accordance with Article 16 with regard to exceptional cases where punishment does not amount to torture.

Given the presence of unjustifiable and unacceptable motives prompting the refusal or delay of treatment and care by medical staff, the treatment meted out to women who seek assistance in the public health system following complications of abortion could amount to torture and/or ill-treatment.

With regard to interrogations and extractions of confession, it is clear that public hospital medical staff delay and/or condition emergency healthcare on the willingness of the affected woman to confess to having induced an illegal abortion, the circumstances under which it took place, and those responsible for carrying out the abortion. In breach of Article 15 of the Convention against Torture, these "confessions" are subsequently used in the lawsuits filed against the women.

Along with the interrogation and confession, the treatment of women who seek healthcare for abortion complications (which deliberately exacerbates

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severe pain and mental and physical suffering) is in itself a punishment for having induced the abortion. According to those persons who are opposed to abortion for religious motives, the desperate act of self-determination that women carry out when they choose to abort, is condemned from a religious stance, and merits religious punishment.

It has been widely shown that in other contexts where abortion is illegal, medical staff who ascribe to certain religious doctrines inflict different types of punishment on women who seek their assistance due to complications of abortion. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture stated that persons suffering from HIV/AIDS and who identify with a sexual minority, commonly undergo punitive treatment by medical staff, which constitutes torture and/or ill-treatment. The following circumstance is applicable to women who seek medical assistance due to complications from clandestine abortions:

*“Attitudes and beliefs stemming from myths and fears associated with HIV/AIDS and sexuality contribute to stigma and discrimination against sexual minorities. In addition, the fact that members of these minorities are perceived as transgressing gender barriers or challenging predominant conceptions of gender roles seems to contribute to their vulnerability to torture as a way of “punishing” their unaccepted behaviour... It was also reported that members of sexual minorities receive inadequate medical treatment in public hospitals on grounds of their gender identity, which, in the case of people living with HIV/AIDS, could lead to very serious consequences<sup>340</sup>.”*

Regardless of personal opinion on abortion or its legal status, the intimidation or punishment of women who seek or are granted medical assistance in the said conditions, is unjustified.

In recognition of the aforementioned situations, the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, of which Chile is a signatory state, indicates that:

*“All Governments and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are urged to strengthen their commitment to women’s health, to deal with the health impact of unsafe abortion as a major public health concern, and to reduce the recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family-planning services... Women who have unwanted*

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340 Idem., § 64.

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*pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information and compassionate counselling... In all cases, women should have access to quality services for the management of complications arising from abortion*<sup>341</sup>.

The treatment meted out to women who seek assistance for complications of clandestine abortion amounts to a double discrimination. On the one hand, the laws that penalise abortion perpetuate paternalistic control over the reproductive lives of women, denying them their equal rights to life, freedom, and personal safety, as well as to voluntary maternity. They also constitute a form of gender-based discrimination. The Commission on Discrimination Against Women states in its recommendation number 24 that,

*“Measures to eliminate discrimination against women are considered to be inappropriate if a healthcare system lacks services to prevent, detect and treat illnesses specific to women. It is discriminatory for a State party to refuse to legally provide certain reproductive health services for women. For instance, if health service providers refuse to perform such services based on conscientious objection, measures should be introduced to ensure that women are referred to alternative health providers*<sup>342</sup>.”

Failing to provide women with medical assistance and delaying or refusing treatment when and as required, is equivalent to inflicting additional pain and suffering because of the disapproval toward the decision to terminate a pregnancy. According to the Convention, this is an unjustified form of discrimination. As stated by the Special Rapporteur on Torture, this discriminatory conduct includes punishment for “transgressing gender barriers and mandates or challenging predominant conceptions of gender roles”<sup>343</sup>. In addition, it is doubly discriminatory given that this type of treatment is only meted out to poor women who have no other health alternatives, even more so in high-risk conditions. The fact that it is poor women who undergo medical treatment delays, upon whom avoidable pain and suffering is inflicted, and who are reported to the police, reflects a great disparity in society.

Torture practices involve officials of the Chilean state, and it is they who inflict this ill-treatment upon poor women seeking assistance in the public

341 Cairo Programme of Action, 8.25; Beijing Platform, 106 (k). (CRR ft. nt. 57).

342 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women [Women’s Convention] General Recommendation No. 24, 20th Sess. at Art. 12 (1) (11) (1999).

343 Rapporteur on Torture, § 64.

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health system. The Convention against Torture makes reference to all public authorities, all the persons who are employed by or work in public hospitals, and those persons responsible for the policies and practices of the said institutions. The actions of these individuals are thus directly imputable to the State. Furthermore, it should be of no importance whatsoever whether the pain is caused by an infringement of the law, a personal decision, or a woman's confinement in hospital. In these cases, the element that constitutes involvement of State officials is whether or not legitimate force was used, and/or whether the acts of State officials intentionally inflicted avoidable serious pain and suffering.

In exceptional cases that do not amount to torture, Article 16 of the Convention against Torture is applied. With regard to this, it is important to note the outcome of the *D. v. United Kingdom*, 37 (Eur. Ct. H.R. 777) (1997). The European Court of Human Rights determined that the United Kingdom could not deport a person suffering from HIV/AIDS without documents to St. Kitts, given that there, the person would not have access to continuous medical and psychological treatment comparable to that which he had been receiving in the United Kingdom. *D.* argued that although deportation was legal, he would be exposed to "a real risk of death in the most angst-ridden circumstances which would amount to inhuman treatment", in accordance with Article 3 of the European Human Rights Convention<sup>344</sup>. The Court rejected the arguments invoked and which claimed that the Convention was not applicable given that the petitioner was involved in dishonest acts, or because the additional risk the petitioner would be exposed to did not mean a transgression of Article 3 by the member state<sup>345</sup>.

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344 *D. v. United Kingdom*, 37 Eur. Ct. H.R. 777 (1997). § 53. We note that the Commission had determined that the suffering would be severe though none of the impermissible purposes connected with torture are present in that case, as they are here. *Id.* para 45.

345 *Id.* § 46-47. The Court opined that, "It is not therefore prevented from scrutinizing an applicant's claim under Article 3 (art. 3) where the source of the risk of proscribed treatment in the receiving country stems from factors which cannot engage either directly or indirectly the responsibility of the public authorities of that country, or which, taken alone, do not in themselves infringe the standards of that Article (art. 3). To limit the application of Article 3 (art. 3) in this manner would be to undermine the absolute character of its protection. In any such contexts, however, the Court must subject all the circumstances surrounding the case to a rigorous scrutiny, especially the applicant's personal situation in the expelling State."

## 6. Inhuman and degrading treatment of women in prisons

### 6. 1 The facts, and institutional, legislative and administrative measures

The living conditions of persons incarcerated in the penitentiary system constitute one of the more serious dilemmas the penal system in Chile currently faces. The system finds itself in a State of collapse, and it has become an urgent matter to introduce structural reforms that will provide conditions that meet international imprisonment standards. In 1991, the Chamber of Deputies created a special commission to analyse the problem; its final report lists a series of problems, the most important of which include high indices of overcrowding, a lack of prison personnel, and a deficiency in treatment. The report also proposed a series of measures to be taken to overcome the crisis. Nevertheless, over the following years, little has been done to implement the suggested reforms and the problems have worsened; the prison population has increased and so has overcrowding, there is a greater deficit in personnel and security systems have deteriorated<sup>346</sup>. With regard to women in prisons, in addition to a collapsed prison system, female inmates suffer from a general invisibility and a lack of information on the treatment they are subjected to within the penal system.

The number of women in prison has grown steadily over recent years. In 1998, there were 1,887 adult female inmates out of a global prison population of 23,485 inmates<sup>347</sup>, within the so-called “closed system”<sup>348</sup>. By November 2002, the number of women inmates had grown to 2,189 out of a global prison population of 34,550 inmates<sup>349</sup>. The types of transgressions committed by women have also changed within this time period. This is reflected in the fact that between 1980 and 1990, the prevailing infractions among

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346 Annual report on Human Rights in Chile 2003. Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago 2003, p. 61.

347 Anthony, Carmen, “Las Mujeres Confinadas: estudio criminológico sobre el rol genérico en la ejecución de la pena en América latina y Chile” (“Women in Custody: Criminological Study of the Role of Gender in Sentence Executions in Chile and Latin America”), Editorial Jurídica de Chile, Santiago 1998, p. 84.

348 The closed system refers to male and female inmates incarcerated in penal institutions.

349 See [www.gendarmeria.cl](http://www.gendarmeria.cl) for data.



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women were crimes against property<sup>350</sup>. In contrast, the current prevailing infraction among women is that of drug trafficking, which makes up 34% of all crimes committed by women<sup>351</sup>.

Chilean prisons are run by the Gendarmería de Chile public service, which is a subsidiary of the Ministry of Justice, and which is responsible for assisting, supervising and rehabilitating those persons who, by virtue of the competent government authorities, are arrested or deprived of their freedom; it is also responsible for fulfilling other duties as established by law<sup>352</sup>. Penitentiary activity is supervised by the Penitentiary Code, recently modified by the 1998 Decree number 518. The main aims of this code pertain to the attention, custody and assistance of prison inmates subject to preventive imprisonment or sentenced, as well as the granting of the education required for the social reinsertion of those persons sentenced to imprisonment<sup>353</sup>. However, the problems Chile's prison system faces, such as overcrowding, promiscuity, the forced inactivity of the majority of prison inmates, a scarcity of leisure and educational activities, and precarious living conditions, lead us to conclude that the concept of reinsertion, as outlined in the code, has not been taken seriously.

The penal system's closed prison establishments can be classified both in penal and gender terms into: Preventive Detention Centres (CDP), which incarcerate detained or sentenced males; Penitentiary Penal Centres (CCP), which incarcerate sentenced males; Female Incarceration Centres (CPF), which exclusively incarcerate women who have been detained, are on trial, or have been sentenced; Feminine Sections, which are located within some CDP and CCP centres, and are used for the incarceration of women who have been detained, are on trial, or have been sentenced. Adult women are incarcerated in two types of institutions: CPF centres, and the feminine sections located within male prisons. CPF centres exist only in some regions; there are six such centres throughout the whole of Chile, accommodating 48% of the incarcerated female population<sup>354</sup>. Thus, over 50% of women are imprisoned in mixed-sex prison centres.

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350 Cooper-Mayr, Doris, "Delincuencia Común en Chile" ("Common Delinquency in Chile"), Editorial Lom, Santiago 1994.

351 Statistics Compendium, Gendarmería de Chile, 2003.

352 Article 1, Organic Law, Gendarmería de Chile.

353 Article 1; Penitentiary Institutions Code.

354 See [www.gendarmeria.cl](http://www.gendarmeria.cl) for data.

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Moreover, in contrast to what is provided for some of the male prison population, there are no exclusive prisons for female inmates according to penal condition. On the contrary, the majority of female prisons accommodate women who are being tried or have been sentenced. Separation on the basis of penal quality only exists in prisons with a significant number of female inmates and only if there is enough space to implement the separation.

Overcrowding is one of the major problems of Chile's prisons. According to Justice Ministry data, in 2002 there were 33,131 persons imprisoned in Chile, while the country's prison system only had capacity for 12,340 inmates, which is equivalent to a 59% deficit. As can be seen from the following data, this situation also affects women. In 1999 the Rancagua CPF centre had a population of 55 women, in contrast to its capacity for 22 inmates, equivalent to a 150% deficit; the Santiago CPF, which houses the greatest quantity of female prisoners in Chile, had a population of 623 women in 1999; however, its capacity was for 180 persons, which meant a 246% deficit<sup>355</sup>. This situation not only makes it impossible to provide female inmates with the most basic living conditions, but it also deteriorates the quality of the service and security provided, and generates precarious hygiene conditions. In this context, and although the situation for women has not yet improved, the government announced a bidding process for the improvement of prison infrastructure, open only to the private sector. The aim of the bidding process, which was initiated in 2001, is to build 10 new prisons by the end of 2006.

A second problem, and in this case specific to women inmates, is the dilemma that imprisoned mothers face. The Chilean system allows imprisoned mothers to keep their children with them until the latter turn two years old. However, the physical space to rear their children is restricted and, in general, they lack the differential treatment their special condition requires. Once a child turns two, he/she is separated from his/her mother. For many inmates, this is a type of double punishment, especially for those women who have no one to leave their children with. This is compounded by the fact that the existing programmes are only accessible to women who have been sentenced, when the latter constitute only 50% of women incarcerated under the closed prison system<sup>356</sup>. The two programmes available in this area are the Paternitas Foundation project, which has a reception centre for the children of men and

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355 Report on Human Rights 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago, 2003, p. 66 - 67.

356 See [www.gendarmeria.cl](http://www.gendarmeria.cl) for data.

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women who have been deprived of their freedom, and the government “Conozca a su Hijo” (Know your Child) programme<sup>357</sup>. Although these two programmes provide great support for women in this situation, they are unable to meet existing needs.

The Penitentiary Code sets out the disciplinary regulations applicable to persons deprived of freedom<sup>358</sup>. This legal body states that no inmate shall be subject to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, verbally or physically, nor shall persons be subject to unnecessary harshness in the application of the norms established by the code. In the case of disorder or lack of discipline, the code categorises said transgressions into grievous, less grievous and slight, establishing sanctions that correspond to each of these categories. These sanctions range from a verbal warning to solitary confinement for up to 15 days. The code also declares that sanctions can only be applied by the head of the establishment in which the inmate is imprisoned, once he/she has studied the accusation and interviewed witnesses and the affected party, and where necessary, invited the recommendations of the Technical Council. The code states that the punishment should be as just, prompt and proportional as possible.

Although the procedures used by the Chilean prison system to apply sanctions is regulated in accordance with international standards, the personnel of Chile’s prison service have observed major transgressions in the application of sanctions<sup>359</sup>. In the first place, there are no clear, transparent procedures in place regarding the application of sanctions<sup>360</sup>. Frequently, there are no concrete accusations, or those that are made are not included in the code as transgressions calling for punishment. Often, the conduct of an inmate is punished directly by the officer in charge, without any information relayed to the internal guards, thus side-stepping the corresponding procedure<sup>361</sup>. Recent

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357 This programme has been operating for three years in Chile’s prison system. It aims to teach imprisoned mothers and children up to age six their roles, and improve the physical, psychological and social development of the whole family group involved.

358 Article 81 to 91; Penitentiary Institutions Code.

359 Institution annexed to Chile’s judicial system; charged with execution of sentences.

360 “Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile; An Exploratory Study”, Law Department, Diego Portales and CEJIL, August 2002, p. 78.

361 Anthony, Carmen, “Las Mujeres Confinadas: estudio criminológico sobre el rol genérico en la ejecución de la pena en América latina y Chile” (“Women in Custody: Criminological Study of the Role of Gender in Sentence Executions in Chile and Latin America”), Editorial Jurídica de Chile, Santiago 1998, p. 106.

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studies<sup>362</sup> record a series of abuses carried out against inmates, including degrading and humiliating solitary confinement conditions, beating, being subjected to exhausting periods of exercise, being threatened with arms, etc. None of these studies, however, contain sex-segregated data, preventing them from describing the specific situation of women. They only state that, according to those interviewed, the restriction of visits as a form of punishment is a mechanism preferred by the Santiago CPF, which does not imply it is not also used in other prison centres<sup>363</sup>.

A contributing factor to this degrading and abusive conduct towards inmates is the absence of administrative and judicial control mechanisms. In the administrative sphere, Chilean penal law establishes a set of official petition and complaint procedures, yet in practice these are not implemented<sup>364</sup>. In the first place, there is no system that records the major demands or complaints by inmates. In the majority of cases, the prison head that must administer petitions is unaware of complaints; in other cases, the inmates do not dare make complaints for fear of reprisals. In 2001, an information and complaints office was created, but the administrative procedure for complaints has not yet been established, thus the said procedures will have to be established through practice. Likewise in 2002 the government announced the creation of an Internal Inspection unit, aimed at controlling the conduct of prison staff.

With regard to judicial control, the sentencing judge figure does not exist in Chile. This means that the task is given to the criminal court judges or the Appeals Court through a protection order. Neither of these systems has been efficient. Moreover, although judges are compelled to visit inmates in prison, the majority do not fulfil this obligation.

In relation to visiting rights, inmates have the right to one to two visits of approximately three hours each per week. This is the case of the Santiago CPF women's prison, where the inmates have the right to receive visits twice a week between 2 to 5 p.m.; however, these time periods are often shorter, given pre-

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362 Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile, 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago 2003, and "Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile". Law Department, Diego Portales and CEJIL, August 2002.

363 "Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile; An Exploratory Study", Law Department, Diego Portales and CEJIL, August 2002, p. 88.

364 Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile, 2003, Law Department, Diego Portales University, Santiago 2003, p.84

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vious control delays or because the large number of visits, due to the large number of inmates, generates long queues. With regard to intimate visits, the deficiencies are serious. Very few prison centres have private and adequate rooms where inmates can meet up with their partners. In the majority of prison centres, inmates are compelled to have sexual relations during visit hours in the visiting room itself, improvising measures that give the impression of intimacy. In the case of women, the situation is even worse given that they are prohibited from having sexual relations with their partners, except for two pilot programmes; one implemented in Concepción city prison, and the “Venus Programme”, implemented in the Santiago CPF centre. In order for inmates to be eligible for the Venus Programme, they must meet a series of requirements, including having already been sentenced, having a stable partner and good behaviour, and to be free of sexually transmitted diseases<sup>365</sup>. This is a clear case of gender discrimination, as that right is satisfied for men, even in the most adverse conditions, while for women it is prohibited and, in the only two pilot programmes being implemented, this right is subject to maintaining good behaviour.

One serious problem related to visiting rights is the searches that persons visiting imprisoned relatives are subject to. Although searching people is justified on the grounds of security, the way in which these are carried out in Chile's prisons is abusive and degrading to a person's dignity. This is particularly true in the case of women, who have to undress in the presence of female prison staff, and are often forced to bend over while they are strip-searched. This frequently deters women from visiting inmates again. In 2002, a woman who was strip-searched when visiting her son filed a lawsuit. The Santiago Appeals Court ruled a verdict stating that such treatment was degrading and harmful, and that it was preferable to run some security risks than to transgress a person's right to physical and psychological integrity, and to free will. It is yet to be seen whether this recent verdict will affect the continuation of this type of practice<sup>366</sup>.

In conclusion, the lack of information regarding the conditions for female prisoners in Chile hinders efforts to attain an accurate overview of the situation. Current studies on the precarious living conditions in Chile's prisons and the abuses inflicted upon inmates do not include sex-disaggregated data, and

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365 Ibid. p.89

366 “Torture, Human Rights and Criminal Justice in Chile”; Law Department, Diego Portales and CEJIL, August 2002, p. 90.

so provide only a partial overview of the situation. This constitutes an obstacle to analysing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment against women. Because the problem is made invisible, it is not possible to design adequate measures to ensure the respect of the human rights of incarcerated women.

## 6.2 Juridical foundation of the Convention against Torture

The juridical analysis made in point 3.2, in relation to rape and sexual violence as a form of torture, can be applied in the case of imprisoned women and female sex workers detained and/or abused by police officials. In accordance with the official report presented by the Chilean State to this Committee, there exist few cases of complaints of rape by officials. However, the report makes no reference to the extent of the problem; this absence of information is in direct contrast with a practice that is recurrent in specific situations.

Rape and sexual violence during detention constitute torture, and when they lack severity or a prohibited purpose, the latter acts constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Studies carried out in other countries, have established that women in detention are subject to sexual violence and rape on the grounds of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation<sup>367</sup>.

In cases where, exceptionally, the suffering inflicted by sexual violence is not severe, or prohibited causes are absent, the acts constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, making Article 16 of the Convention against Torture applicable.

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367 See, e.g., Human Rights Watch, *All Too Familiar: Sexual Abuse of Women in U.S. State Prisons*, Human Rights Watch, New York, 1996, 2; Amnesty International, *Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women In Custody*, Amnesty International (March 1999).

## General recommendations

In order to guarantee the right to physical and mental integrity in Chile, the effective democratisation of the Chilean State is a fundamental requirement. As long as the Constitution and laws are not the product of national majorities, and as long as there is no clear subordination of the Armed Forces and Carabineros to civilian authority, all progress in this field will be limited and precarious.

Another fundamental requirement involves a profound change in government attitude. As long as the government does not become truly conscious of the importance of the prevention of torture, and as long as it does not resolutely face up to the issue of sanctioning cases of torture during the dictatorship and providing the maximum possible reparation to victims, very little progress will be achieved in this area. It is therefore recommended that the Chilean government:

1. Adequately adapt domestic legislation so that it is in line with the contents of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This requires, at least, the following legislative reform:
  - Define the crime of torture in accordance with the Convention;
  - Abolish the principle of due obedience in the Armed Forces and Carabineros' laws and regulations;
  - Substantially increase penalties for this crime;
  - Establish that it will be imprescriptible;
  - Stipulate the extra-territoriality of torture, in the terms established in Article 5 of the Convention;
  - Approve special legislation to enforce Article 14 regarding reparation, compensation and rehabilitation of torture victims; and
  - Make the optional declarations of Articles 21 and 22 of the Convention.

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2. Promptly ratify the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
3. Repeal the 1978 amnesty decree-law, thus also complying with the relevant categorical resolutions of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and of the United Nations Human Rights Committee (of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights).
4. Guarantee respect for the rights of prison inmates, especially the right to life, to being free of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and in general, to be recipients – both themselves and their visitors – of treatment that respects their human dignity. Take all necessary measures to eliminate overcrowding in detention areas so that imprisonment can indeed lead to the rehabilitation of inmates.
5. Repeal all arrest (or “retention”) faculties on the grounds of suspicion, which in addition to the ensuing torture and ill-treatment, clearly contravenes Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states: “... No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law”.
6. Guarantee that the crimes of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and sentences be dealt with by an impartial judiciary. Therefore, military justice may not deal with such crimes; and those cases presently in that sphere must be transferred to the realm of civilian courts.
7. Restrict the competency of military courts to crimes of an effective military nature, committed exclusively by the military.
8. Comply fully with the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental liberties of the native peoples in Chile.
9. Eradicate what is virtually the slave society of “Colonia Dignidad”, take its leaders to court and re-socialise and repair – together with Germany – its subjugated population.
10. Design a system for the comprehensive reparation and vindication of people detained and tortured during the dictatorship, which at least carries out the following:



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- Officially accredit a list containing people (alive or dead) that suffered detention for political reasons and torture between 1973 and 1990;
  - Establish by law ways to achieve moral vindication and material reparation (benefiting descendants in the case of those deceased), as well as comprehensive rehabilitation; and
  - Immediately eliminate all legal or administrative sequels that still have an effect on victims of political detention during the dictatorship.
11. Establish a Defender of the People with wide-ranging faculties to act in cases related to the violation of the right to physical and mental integrity, be it in military, police or prison environments.
  12. Include, throughout the school education, a civic and human rights curriculum, enabling citizens to be fully aware of their rights and respectful of the rights of others.
  13. Incorporate a broad curriculum on human rights and international humanitarian law within military, police and prison-warden training programmes, whose contents and teaching will be supervised jointly by the public power and the main academic centres in Chile.
  14. Prevent the appointment of people involved in and responsible for serious human rights violations to top positions in the Armed Forces and Carabineros, as well as to high public office or diplomatic positions.
  15. Adopt measures to guarantee the independent and respectful compliance of the judiciary with the international treaties signed by Chile, in order to resolve and duly sanction crimes against humanity – including torture – committed during the Pinochet dictatorship.

## Recommendations with regards to children

1. Regarding Chile's legal system on torture, Opción and the OMCT recommend that the Committee against Torture:
  - ask the Chilean government to establish protection measures, and in cases where a State agent or State official is prosecuted for acts of torture or abuse, particularly against a child, suspend him/her from his/her functions immediately and strengthen penalties if he/she is found to be guilty; and
  - check the effective implementation of Law n°19,927 by the Chilean authorities, especially through the courts.
  
2. Regarding the complaints procedure in case of torture, Opción and the OMCT recommend that the Committee against Torture ask the Chilean government to:
  - establish a special procedure of complaints to denounce, sue and effectively try State agents accused of torture and ill-treatment of a child; and
  - facilitate children's access to such a procedure.
  
3. Regarding the juvenile justice reform, Opción and the OMCT recommend that the Committee against Torture ask the Chilean government to:
  - ensure that in the light of the current reform in the juvenile justice system affecting minors aged 14-18 the civil rights and protections be applicable to all persons without any exception nor conditionality, as is outlined by the CRC; similarly, ensure that those minors under the age of 14 be treated as legally incapable of committing crimes, in accordance with the CRC and other international agreements, ensuring that there is no punitive action taken by the State. Furthermore, the OMCT and Opción recommend that, until this reform is fully in place, no minor under age 18 be tried as an adult for a crime;
  - allow every minor to obtain legal counsel from the first hour of the police custody and during the rest of the proceedings;

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- guarantee to the fullest extent the rights and minimum guarantees of the minor according to the CRC and other international agreements, regardless of his/her city of residence, since it has been noticed that there is no juvenile court in some small communities of Chile and that some legal cases involving minors are heard by ordinary judges<sup>368</sup>. Beyond the short-term, the OMCT and Opción welcome the judicial reforms in a process that will replace Minor judges with family judges and provide a more specialised programme for adolescent offenders; and
  - check whether this reform is fully in conformity with the Riyadh Guidelines and Beijing Rules, and whether it provides all the adequate material, professional and financial resources needed for the effective implementation of the new system.
4. Regarding police custody, Opción and the OMCT recommend that the Committee against Torture ask the Chilean government to:
- establish precise guidelines and generally limit the cases where a child may be held in police custody. This is congruent with the fact that a child who has not infringed the law, but who is in need of care and protection, would rather be in the care of specialised social workers rather than of the police;
  - implement effective procedures for internal monitoring and disciplining of the behaviour of public officials, including provisions allowing a child to be assisted by a lawyer and informed of his/her rights;
  - adopt and enforce appropriate sanctions for public officials who are found to have held a child in custody without immediately notifying the prosecutor, or are found to have interrogated a child without the presence of a prosecutor or a lawyer; and
  - require that independent and qualified medical and social personnel carry out regular examinations of children under arrest.

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368 CRC/C/65/Add.13 Periodic report of Chile § 427 (25 June 2001).

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5. Regarding deprivation of liberty, Opción and the OMCT welcome the current efforts to distinguish between cases of an infraction of the law versus situations of a violation of a minor's rights, and recommend that the Committee against Torture ask the Chilean government to:
  - ensure a clear distinction between child offenders and children in need of protection, in order for the latter to be protected and assisted, rather than deprived of his/her freedom;
  - comply with and not exceed the legally provided periods of detention, regardless of their purpose; and
  - make the juvenile justice reform in conformity with all the relevant international standards and, concerning the legislation currently in force, strictly implement Act n°19,343 on the removal of children from adult prisons, so that no more minors are detained inside adult prisons but only in specific centres, which are suited to the minor's special needs, development and rehabilitation. In this framework, the Chilean authorities should always keep in mind that the detention of a person under 18 must remain a measure of last resort, secondary to social programmes.
  
6. Regarding schools, Opción and the OMCT recommend that the Committee against Torture ask the Chilean government to:
  - expressly ban corporal punishment as well as every type of physical and mental abuse in schools, and lay down measures to punish persons responsible for these acts, while providing assistance to child victims.

## Recommendations with regards to women

### 1. General recommendations

Because Chile has not ratified a series of international human rights treaties, Chile's citizens are subject to a great lack of protection. This is even more so if we consider that human rights were dramatically violated during Chile's recent past. We express our concern over the fact that President Ricardo Lagos' resolution is weakened by parliament, thus making the ratification of the following treaties impossible: these include the Rome Statute, which establishes the International Criminal Tribunal, the Convention on the Imprescriptibility of War Crimes, the Convention on the Forced Disappearances of Persons and the Optional Protocol of CEDAW.

We are also concerned with the fact that from 1990 onwards, legal reform bills which promote the creation of public and autonomous institutional human rights measures have not been approved, despite the support of civil society. In effect, the Public Defender or Ombudsman figure, which would guarantee the respect of human rights and which would ensure that systematic violations of human rights would never again occur in Chile, has been substituted by the Citizen's Defender model, which refers only to the quality of public services and makes no reference whatsoever to the international human rights framework Chile ascribes to.

### 2. Specific recommendations regarding the aforementioned issues

#### 2.1 Sexual violence as a form of Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

According to the Convention against Torture, Chile is under the obligation to provide "reparation and the right to a just and adequate compensation" and "the means for the most comprehensive rehabilitation possible". In accordance with this obligation, the process of compensation for female victims of torture during the military regime is by all accounts deficient.

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Firstly, and in relation to the concept of a “just” reparation, rape and other forms of sexual violence were common forms of torture practiced against women during the military regime. The fact that the victims have not reported these acts immediately and spontaneously indicates that the Chilean government should make sure its reparation measures are gender-specific, and it should facilitate the procedures whereby women may apply for compensation. In order to implement the principle of non-discrimination or gender-inclusion in the aforementioned cases, the government should introduce measures that encourage women to register claims for compensation for sexual violence as a form of torture, as well as other forms of torture. This would be coherent with the concept of “just and adequate” compensation as established by Article 14 of the Convention against Torture as well as with Article 4(1) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which calls on its member states to “take special temporary measures aimed at quickening the process of de facto equality between men and women...»

In order to comply with this obligation, we consider it necessary that the State:

- a) Extend the deadline for denunciations before the National Political Imprisonment and Torture Commission, given that to date only a small percentage of women victims of sexual violence have actually registered their denunciations. The acts referred to in this report constitute crimes against humanity, for which no restrictive statutes exist under international law. We call on the government to extend the deadline by 10 years, and to be under the obligation to extend it further if need be. This is essential if the measures are to reach the whole community, including persons who were exiled and are still living outside Chile. A number of obstacles hinder victims from denouncing their past experiences. These obstacles, which include fear of reprisals; the passing of time; and, in the case of women, cultural impediments and barriers, can only be overcome in the right conditions, which need extended periods of time for their generation. Such is the case of “comfort women” used as sex slaves during World War II. It was only in 1991 that they revealed for the first time ever their former conditions as “comfort women”<sup>369</sup>. To date, they are still in the process of denouncing the acts they were subjected to. In addition, the Chilean government should implement an integral programme to inform all Chilean

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369 McDougall report.

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citizens, in Chile and abroad, of the possibility that exists to denounce any torture they were subject to during the military regime. This programme should use for this purpose all existing means of mass communication, public transport, and informative leaflets aimed at the heads of households.

- b) Given the historical difficulties that exist regarding the characterisation of rape and sexual violence as a form of torture, the Chilean government should create a list of acts that amount to torture, so that women who underwent ill-treatment at the hands of State officials or third parties acting with the latter's consent, can more easily identify these acts. This list should be incorporated into the information package made available to Chilean society, and should be attached to the denunciation questionnaires that victims have to fill in.
- c) Fear of disclosure and reprisals seriously hinder any possibilities for denouncing. This is particularly so in the case of women who were subjected to rape or sexual violence as a form of torture. Measures should be taken to protect the confidentiality of victims and survivors who choose to denounce, and restrict any publicity and disclosure of names if the person denouncing has not given his/her approval. This can be carried out by allowing the persons denouncing to decide whether or not to opt for confidentiality; allocating a specialised team to systematise and process information under the obligation of following the same norms of confidentiality that doctors, for example, are subject to; keeping archives clearly marked as confidential, which would prevent their public exposure by non-authorised State officials or privates; and drawing up sanctions for those who infringe upon the confidentiality.
- d) With regard to the personnel carrying out the interviews at the National Political Imprisonment and Torture Commission, there exists concern as to whether or not they are properly trained and prepared to deal with aspects that have not traditionally been categorised as torture practices. Indeed, the lack of awareness and preparation regarding these issues may affect both the Commission personnel as well as the victims, who might be exposed to greater pain and suffering. It is commonplace for victims to relive their trauma once more when describing their experiences of torture. Given that rape and other forms of sexual violence constitute one of the more profound and permanent traumas, the lack of preparation among personnel that receive and record these experiences hinders the process of denouncement. For this reason, ensuring that only trained personnel

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receive sexual violence denunciations is a matter of the utmost urgency. Women denouncing should be informed that there exists an option to talk with specialised personnel of the same sex if desired, so as to guarantee the best possible conditions for making the denunciation. This information should be included in the publicity strategy indicated above.

- e) Lastly, it is essential to facilitate access to this entity (or to any other that may be created with this aim in mind). This applies especially to persons who reside in isolated and/or rural areas, or areas difficult to access. Some people may require special assistance to fill in the questionnaire forms.

Secondly, and in relation to the concept of “adequate” reparation: We express our concern over the words used by Chile’s President during the creation of the CNPPT. Indeed, the terms used, “austere and symbolic” to describe the reparations, does not comply with international standards. It is impossible to financially compensate persons for the suffering and losses as a result of imprisonment and torture under the Pinochet regime, or for the permanent consequences of these types of criminal acts. However, compensatory and rehabilitation measures should not trivialise the suffering of persons while simultaneously reducing the government’s obligations in this area.

In this context, we express our concern for the fact that Chile has not yet announced levels of compensation; neither has it revealed the criteria it is considering for the creation of measures in this sphere. We demand that the Committee call on the Chilean government to prepare a compensation plan that takes into account the international law progress and criteria developed by other committees and organisations. The plan should be submitted to this Committee for review. There are but few international examples of compensation for rape and other forms of sexual violence, but considering the high degree of trauma the latter induce, along with the long-term consequences, it is evident they amount to the most grievous human rights violations. Examples that should be considered when conceiving the compensation plan, include the case of María Mamerita Mestanza Chaves, a poor indigenous woman forced to undergo sterilisation and who was later denied medical assistance for complications of the operation. In a “friendly agreement” published by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, the eight surviving relatives were paid compensation of US\$ 10,000 each, along with substantial compensations in healthcare, education and housing<sup>370</sup>. In the case of

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370 Case of Maria Mamerita Mestanza Chavez (Peru), Report No. 71/03, Petition 12.191, Friendly Settlement (October 22, 3003). (hereinafter Mestanza)



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Carmelo Soria Espinoza, a Chilean-Spanish citizen kidnapped and assassinated by DINA agents, the government agreed to pay US\$ 1.5 million to the family<sup>371</sup>. In another friendly agreement, involving Chilean citizens incarcerated for over five years, the government agreed to provide compensatory measures of an individual character, consisting of a discretionary pension payment<sup>372</sup>.

It is important to note that Article 14 is not restricted to compensation, and includes providing “the means for the most comprehensive rehabilitation possible”. The aforementioned cases illustrate this principle. They not only include a compensation, but they also provide individual and social/historic rehabilitation along with measures to prevent their repetition. In the Mestanza case, the Peruvian government also agreed to undertake an investigation; sanction those responsible; modify discriminatory legislation; and take measures to implement policies that protect the autonomy of women in decision-making, and prevent abusive sterilisation<sup>373</sup>. In the Carmelo Soria case, along with the modest compensation paid to his relatives, the Chilean government also agreed to build a monument in memory of Mr. Soria, and emit a public declaration acknowledging the responsibility of the State in his death. In the case of Juan Manuel Contreras and others, the Chilean government agreed to finance courses for the development of working skills that would allow them to earn a decent and dignified living. It also agreed to reform existing regulations regarding compensation for judicial errors<sup>374</sup>.

When drawing up the compensation measures and rehabilitation programmes, it is just and adequate that the government should consider the gravity over time of physical and mental suffering inflicted by the practice of

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371 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Report num. 19/031 [1], Compliance Agreement of Carmelo Soria Espinoza v. Chile, Case no. 11.725, March 6, 2003. Available at <http://www.cidh.org/annualrep/2003eng/chile.11725.htm>.

372 The State adds that “the nature of the discretionary annuity is that of a special measure adopted by law, whose effects last for the duration of the beneficiaries’ lifetimes,” and enables them “satisfactorily to cover the costs of their upkeep and those of their immediate family.” Case of Juan Manuel Contreras San Martin, Victor Eduardo Osses Conejeros, and Jose Alfredo Soto Ruz (Chile), Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, Report Num. 32/02, Friendly Settlement, Case 11.715, March 12, 2002, available at <http://www.cidh.org/annualrep/2002eng/chile11715.htm>. (hereinafter, Contreras)

373 Mestanza, Section “Eleventh.”

374 Contreras.

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rape and sexual violence. It should also include non-discriminatory measures which aim to improve the health, education and daily life of the women affected and their offspring, and measures which aim to repair the suffering and deprivation the latter have endured as a result of the torture inflicted upon their mothers. The government should also promote the public recognition of rape and sexual violence against women as a form of torture; the implementation of measures to prevent their happening again, such as memorials, historical research, and the inclusion in school textbooks of a condemnation against sexual violence in all its forms; and the implementation of expedite procedures to aid denouncements and ensure a prompt investigation, prosecution of those responsible, and reparation on the terms stated above.

In those exceptional cases where the suffering inflicted by sexual violence is not severe or unjustified motives are absent, then the acts put forth in this report amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, in accordance with Article 16. According to this Committee, the Convention, in relation to the Yugoslavia case, imposes the obligation to provide compensation, as part of the obligations established by Article 16 aimed at preventing future ill-treatment<sup>375</sup>.

We also require, in reference to the request for measures aimed at alleviating the suffering of women victims of torture, that the Committee call on Chile to draw up a report on the measures adopted, within 90 days. This measure was also requested in the Yugoslavia case<sup>376</sup>.

In order to eliminate sexual violence against women, Chile must review all its laws and policies, and must include rape and sexual violence as forms of torture. In addition, Chile must develop adequate procedures to prevent and sanction such acts in the future, including those that could take place in the context of arrests, detention or prison (Articles 2,4,5 CAT).

Chile must take the measures required to undertake, in the immediate future, research on the practices applied by personnel that have the faculty to arrest, detain or imprison women, or to submit them to custody or control. Where it is established that there are reasons to believe women are being subject to rape

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375 Communication No 161/2000: Yugoslavia. 02/12/2002. CAT/C/29/D/161/2000. (Jurisprudence), Committee against Torture, 20-ninth session §9.6 (11 - 22 November 2002).

376 Id § 11.

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or other forms of sexual violence or abuse, the State must promptly initiate investigations aimed at determining the course of events and sanctioning those responsible (Articles 6 and 7).

It is also essential that the armed forces and police institutions receive information on the prohibition of sexual torture and other abuses (Article 10 of the Convention).

We also recommend that the State establish a systematic review of the rules, instructions, methods and practices applied in relation to women under custody, aimed at preventing rape or abuse in the context of arrest, detention and imprisonment. In this context, the access to sex- and age-disaggregated data is key (Article 11 of the Convention).

Where there is reason to believe that a woman has been subject to rape, sexual violence or abuse within its territory, Chile must guarantee an impartial investigation, carried out by persons competent in the matter (Article 12).

## **2.2 Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of female sex workers upon arrest and of women deprived of freedom in general**

In order to prevent sexual violence against women, the State must categorically review all related laws and policies with the aim of explicitly incorporating abuse during the detention of female sex workers, and the practice of rape and sexual violence as a form of bribery to prevent detention and as a practice against women who are confined (Articles 2, 4 and 5 of the Convention).

We also call on Chile to conduct an investigation on the practices adopted by personnel who have the faculty to arrest, detain, imprison or in any other way confine or control women, including sex workers. Where reason exists to believe that the said women are being subjected to rape or sexual violence, the State must guarantee an immediate and impartial investigation (Article 6 and 7 of the Convention).

We demand that Chile increase investment in the training and preparation of police personnel, and that it incorporate a categorical prohibition on rape and sexual violence in the rules and instructions of the relevant entities.

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Likewise, where there is reason to believe that a woman, whether she is a sex worker or not, has been subject to rape or sexual violence within its territory, Chile must guarantee a competent and impartial investigation (Article 12 of the Convention).

In relation to all cases covered by the Convention, the State is obliged to provide “just and adequate compensation” and provide “the means for the most comprehensive rehabilitation possible” to all women, including sex workers, subject to sexual torture or cruel and inhuman treatment (Articles 13 and 14 of the Convention). Furthermore, as this Committee has already mentioned in relation to Yugoslavia, the Convention imposes the obligation to provide compensation as part of the obligations established by Article 15 aimed at preventing future ill-treatment<sup>377</sup>. In this context, we call on the Chilean State to take the corresponding measures to comply with this obligation, and present a report on the progress being made in relation to this point, within 90 days<sup>378</sup>.

### **2.3 Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of women who seek medical assistance for complications of abortion**

So as to protect women from torture and/or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in the future, the Government of Chile should issue immediate administrative directives to public hospitals instructing them to cease reporting women with complications of abortion and to treat them compassionately and humanely, and in accordance with the best medical standards relevant to their situation. In addition, the Government of Chile should take legislative means, as it deems necessary, to provide judicial remedy for women who were treated poorly. This includes repeal of Criminal Procedure Code Article 84 (5), which applies to women presenting an illegal abortion, a punishable offence in Chile. In order to prevent the recurrence of such situations in the future, the Chilean government should establish a system of monitoring to ensure compliance with its directives and law. The above would be in accordance with Article 2 of the Convention.

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377 Communication No 161/2000: Yugoslavia. 02/12/2002. CAT/C/29/D/161/2000. (Jurisprudence), Committee against Torture, 20-ninth session §9.6 (11 - 22 November 2002).

378 Id § 11.

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Chile should undertake an investigation of the practices of its public hospitals to determine whether they have delayed or disrupted medical treatment by conducting interrogations or otherwise violating the Convention, and should institute criminal proceedings where appropriate against both medical staff and persons responsible for the hospital (Articles 6 and 7 of the Convention). In addition, the State should incorporate a protocol of *treatment for women with complications from abortion*, so that institutions and personnel directly involved *in their assistance comply with its norms, and be subject to sanctions where they fail to do so* (Article 10 of the Convention). Moreover, the State should establish a regular procedure whereby the treatment of women in such cases is periodically reviewed (Article 11 of the Convention).

Where there is reason to believe that women presenting abortion complications have been subject to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Chilean government shall ensure that the case be investigated immediately and impartially (Article 12 of the Convention).

The government should establish a mechanism whereby women who have been or may be subject to the aforesaid treatment, can complain to the authorities with guarantees of confidentiality of their identity, should they request it; respect for their person; and protection against intimidation or ill-treatment as a consequence of the request. In addition, the Chilean State should facilitate their access to compensation, whether through administrative or judicial means, and provide the necessary rehabilitation measures (Articles 13 and 14 of the Convention).

Finally, Chile should carry out a review of all the proceedings brought against the women affected and charged with illegal abortion, where statements taken at the hospital or through reporting by the hospital were used. The requirement to denounce the said cases constitutes in itself a violation of the Convention. Convictions based on reporting by medical staff or persons responsible for the hospital should be made invalid, as well as those in which statements taken under coercive or intimidating circumstances were used (Article 15 of the Convention).



**COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE**

**THIRTY-SECOND SESSION**

**3-21 MAY 2004**

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED  
BY STATES PARTIES**

**UNDER ARTICLE 19 OF THE CONVENTION**

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE:**

**CHILE**

**STATE VIOLENCE IN CHILE**

1. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Chile (CAT/C/39/Add.5 and Corr.1) at its 602nd and 605th meetings, held on 10 and 11 May 2004 (CAT/C/SR.602 and 605), and adopted the following conclusions and recommendations.

**A. Introduction**

2. The Committee welcomes the third periodic report of Chile, due in 1997, which was prepared in accordance with the Committee's guidelines, but regrets the lateness in submission of the report.
3. The Committee welcomes the supplementary information provided by the State party and the extensive and constructive written and oral replies to the questions posed by the Committee both prior to and during the session. The Committee also appreciates the large and highly qualified delegation of representatives that was present for the consideration of the report, and the full and in-depth discussion of the obligations under the Convention that their presence facilitated.

**B. Positive aspects**

4. The Committee notes the following positive developments:
  - (a) The introduction of the offence of torture in domestic criminal law;
  - (b) The comprehensive reform of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and in particular the changes aimed at improving the protection of detainees;
  - (c) The establishment of the Office of the Public Criminal Defender, and of the Office of the Public Prosecutor;
  - (d) The abolition of provision for arrest on suspicion;
  - (e) The reduction in the period of detention in police custody to a maximum of 24 hours;
  - (f) Assurances by the representatives of the State party that the Convention is directly applicable by the courts;



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- (g) The establishment of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture to identify persons who were deprived of freedom and tortured for political reasons during the military dictatorship, and the assurances by the representative of the State party that its tenure would be extended to permit it to complete its work;
- (h) Assurances by the representatives of the State party that mechanisms have been created to ensure that any testimony obtained under torture will not be admissible in court, and their recognition of the serious problem of coercing confessions from women who seek life-saving treatment in public hospitals after illegal abortions;
- (i) Confirmation that non-governmental organizations are allowed regularly to visit places of detention;
- (j) The declarations under articles 21 and 22 of the Convention, enabling other States parties (art. 21) and individuals (art. 22) to submit complaints concerning the State party to the Committee;
- (k) Notification by the representatives of the State party that the process of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture has been initiated.

**C. Factors and difficulties impeding the application of the Convention**

5. The constitutional arrangements made as part of the political agreement that facilitated the transition from military dictatorship to democracy jeopardize the full exercise of certain fundamental human rights, according to the State party's report. While being aware of the political dimensions of these arrangements and their shortcomings, and noting that several Governments have previously submitted constitutional amendments to the Congress, the Committee stresses that internal political constraints cannot serve as a justification for non-compliance by the State party with its obligations under the Convention.

## D. Subjects of concern

6. The Committee expresses concern about the following:
  - (a) Allegations of continued ill-treatment of persons, in some cases amounting to torture, by carabineros (uniformed police), policía de investigaciones (civil police forces) and the gendarmería (prison guards), and reports of failure to conduct thorough and independent investigations into such complaints;
  - (b) The fact that certain constitutional provisions jeopardizing the full exercise of fundamental human rights remain in force, including, in particular, the Amnesty Law, which prohibits prosecution of human rights violations committed from 11 September 1973 to 10 March 1978 and which entrenches the impunity of those responsible for torture, disappearances and other serious human rights violations during the military dictatorship and the lack of reparation for the victims of torture;
  - (c) That the definition of torture in the Criminal Code does not comply fully with article 1 of the Convention, and that it does not fully incorporate the purposes of torture and the acquiescence of public officials;
  - (d) The continued subordination of the carabineros and the civil police forces to the Ministry of Defence, one result of which is that the competence of the military jurisdiction remains excessively broad;
  - (e) Reports that some officials accused of torture-related crimes during the dictatorship have been appointed to high office;
  - (f) The absence of internal legal provisions that expressly prohibit extradition, return, or expulsion when there are grounds for believing the person may be subjected to torture in the requesting country, and the absence of internal provisions regulating the implementation of articles 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the Convention;
  - (g) The limited mandate of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture aimed at identifying victims of torture during the military regime and the conditions for obtaining reparation. In particular, the Committee notes with concern:

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- (i) The short time period in which alleged victims can register with the National Commission, resulting in fewer persons registering than anticipated;
  - (ii) The lack of clarity as to which acts the Commission defines as torture;
  - (iii) The reported rejection of claims not filed in person, notwithstanding, e.g., the disability of the person(s) involved;
  - (iv) The failure to permit persons to register who may have received reparation for other human rights violations (disappearance, exile, etc.);
  - (v) That “austere and symbolic” reparation is not the same as “adequate and fair” reparation as set forth in article 14 of the Convention;
  - (vi) That the Commission does not have the competence to investigate allegations of torture in order to identify those persons responsible, so that they may be prosecuted;
- (h) Severe overcrowding and other inadequate conditions in places of detention and reports of failure to conduct systematic inspections of such places;
- (i) The continued provision, in articles 334 and 335 of the Code of Military Justice, of the principle of due obedience, notwithstanding provisions affirming a subordinate’s right to protest against orders that might involve committing a prohibited act;
  - (j) Reports that life-saving medical care for women suffering complications after illegal abortions is administered only on condition that they provide information on those performing such abortions. Such confessions are reportedly used subsequently in legal proceedings against the women and against third parties, in contravention of the provisions of the Convention;
  - (k) That the introduction of the new Code of Criminal Procedure in the Metropolitan Region has been delayed until late 2005;
  - (l) That few cases of disappearances have been clarified by the military, despite the Government’s efforts to establish a dialogue;

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- (m) The absence of disaggregated data on complaints, the results of investigations, or prosecutions related to the provisions of the Convention;
- (n) The insufficient information on the application of the Convention to action by the armed forces.

**E. Recommendations**

7. The Committee recommends that the State party should:
  - (a) Adopt a definition of torture in conformity with article 1 of the Convention, and ensure that it covers all forms of torture;
  - (b) Reform the Constitution to ensure the full protection of human rights, including the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in conformity with the Convention, and to this end abolish the Amnesty Law;
  - (c) Transfer responsibility for the carabineros and the civil police forces from the Ministry of Defence to the Ministry of the Interior and ensure that the jurisdiction of military courts is limited to crimes of a military nature;
  - (d) Eliminate the principle of due obedience, which may permit a plea of superior orders, from the Code of Military Justice to bring it into conformity with article 2, paragraph 3, of the Convention;
  - (e) Adopt all the necessary measures to ensure impartial, full and prompt investigations into all allegations of Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators, and the provision of fair and adequate compensation for the victims, in conformity with the Convention;
  - (f) Consider eliminating or extending the current 10-year statute of limitations for the crime of torture, taking into account its seriousness;
  - (g) Adopt specific legislation to prohibit extradition, return, or expulsion to countries where a person may be in danger of being subjected to torture;

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- (h) Clarify, through legislation, the status of the Convention in domestic law to ensure that the provisions of the Convention can be applied, or adopt specific legislation incorporating the provisions of the Convention;
- (i) Develop training programmes on the provisions of the Convention for judges and prosecutors as well as other law-enforcement officials, including programmes on the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, for military officials, police, and other law-enforcement personnel and others who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of persons at risk of torture; ensure that training programmes for medical specialists specifically deal with the identification and documentation of torture;
- (j) Improve conditions in places of deprivation of liberty to meet international standards and take urgent measures to address overcrowding in prisons and other places of detention; introduce a system for monitoring the conditions of detention, the treatment of inmates and prisoner-on-prisoner and sexual violence in prisons;
- (k) Extend the term and mandate of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture to enable victims of all forms of torture, including victims of sexual violence, to file complaints. To this end:
  - (i) Initiate measures to better publicize the work of the Commission, utilizing all media, and clarifying the definition of torture by including a non-exhaustive list specifying various forms of torture, including sexual violence, on the forms victims must complete;
  - (ii) Ensure that victims will be afforded privacy when registering with the Commission, and that persons in rural areas or otherwise unable to file in person can register;
  - (iii) Include in the final report of the Commission data disaggregated by gender, age, type of torture, etc;
  - (iv) Consider extending the Commission's mandate to permit investigations and, where warranted, the initiation of criminal proceedings against those allegedly responsible for the actions reported;
- (l) Create a system to provide adequate and fair reparation to victims of torture, including rehabilitative measures and compensation;

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- (m) Eliminate the practice of extracting confessions for prosecution purposes from women seeking emergency medical care as a result of illegal abortion; investigate and review convictions where statements obtained by coercion in such cases have been admitted into evidence, and take remedial measures including nullifying convictions which are not in conformity with the Convention. In accordance with World Health Organization guidelines, the State party should ensure immediate and unconditional treatment of persons seeking emergency medical care;
  - (n) Ensure that the application of the new Code of Criminal Procedure is promptly extended to the Metropolitan Region so that it can be fully operational throughout the country;
  - (o) Introduce, as part of the reform of the criminal justice system, safeguards to protect persons experiencing possible retraumatization in connection with prosecution of cases such as child abuse, sexual abuse, etc.;
  - (p) Provide updated information to the Committee on the status of investigations into past crimes involving torture, including the cases known as the “Caravan of Death”, “Operación Cóndor” and “Colonia Dignidad”;
  - (q) Provide detailed statistical data, disaggregated by age, gender and geographical location, on complaints related to torture and ill-treatment, allegedly committed by law-enforcement officials, as well as the related investigations, prosecutions, and sentences.
8. The Committee requests that the State party provide, within one year, information on its response to the Committee’s recommendations contained in paragraph 7, subparagraphs (k), (m) and (q) above.
9. Considering that Chile has provided information concerning the implementation of the Convention during the period covered by the third and fourth periodic reports, the Committee recommends that the State party submit its fifth periodic report by 29 October 2005.

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|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • El Mercurio     | • La Época               | • La Segunda           |
| • El País (Spain) | • La Estrella de Iquique | • La Tercera           |
| • La Cuarta       | • La Nación              | • Las Ultimas Noticias |

4. **Bi-monthly Publications:** El Siglo, La Firme, Punto Final

### 5. Magazines:

- Caras, El Periodista, Ercilla, Qué Pasa, Reflexión, Siete + 7