



association pour la prévention de la torture  
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association for the prevention of torture

- **PRESS RELEASE**

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## Time for Thailand to ratify UN's torture prevention treaty

GENEVA 30 JULY 2013. In September, at the opening of the General Assembly in New York, the Secretary General of the United Nations invites Governments to participate in the yearly treaty ratification signature ceremony, known as the UN Treaty Event. The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) encourages Thailand to seize this opportunity to confirm its commitments to prevent torture and ill-treatment and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT).

It would be a significant step for Thailand to ratify the OPCAT during the UN Treaty Event, to express Thailand's commitment to preventing torture and ill treatment ahead of the Special Rapporteur on Torture's visit to Thailand in February 2014 and the State review before the UN Committee against Torture in May 2014.

By ratifying the OPCAT, States agree to open up prisons, police cells and all other places of detention to independent monitoring by expert bodies, as a way to prevent abuse. Some 70 States from around the world have already joined this new system.

The APT welcomes the positive developments to prevent torture and ill-treatment in Thailand in recent years, in particular the on-going work to reform the criminal code to include the offence of torture, and the recent commitment to study the possibility of OPCAT ratification. The Ministry of Justice, Rights and Liberty has already started consultations with concerned government agencies.

In a letter sent to the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations in New York, we now encourage Thailand to seize the opportunity of the UN Treaty Event in New York (24-26 September and 30 September – 1 October 2013), to take the next step and to ratify the OPCAT.

Contacts:

Pornpen Khogkachonkiet (Thai and English): [noinoi@apt.ch](mailto:noinoi@apt.ch), +41 22 919 21 70

Veronica Filippeschi, OPCAT Adviser (English): [vfilippeschi@apt.ch](mailto:vfilippeschi@apt.ch), +41 22 919 21 72

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*The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) is an independent NGO based in Geneva. We work for a world free from torture, where the rights and dignity of all persons deprived of liberty are respected. Visit our website [www.apt.ch](http://www.apt.ch)*