



Letter to the United Nations Committee against Torture

SUBJECT: Call for the Resumption of the Periodic Review of the Republic of Lebanon

**Mr. Chair,
Distinguished Members of the Committee against Torture,**

We, Cedar Centre for Legal Studies (CCLS) and Alkarama Foundation (ALK), respectfully, respectfully call upon the Committee against Torture to resume, without further delay, the periodic review of the Republic of Lebanon under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Nearly nine years have passed since the Committee last examined Lebanon in 2017¹. Lebanon's second periodic report was due on 12 May 2021, yet remains outstanding. This prolonged absence of review is particularly concerning given the persistence of allegations of torture and ill-treatment and the limited implementation of several recommendations previously addressed to Lebanon.

The need for renewed scrutiny is further reinforced by the Committee's Article 20 inquiry into Lebanon. Following information submitted in 2008, the Committee found well-founded indications that torture was being systematically practiced in Lebanon and issued 34 recommendations² aimed at preventing torture, ensuring effective investigations and accountability, and strengthening safeguards for persons deprived of their liberty. In its 2017

¹ UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations on the Initial Report of Lebanon, 30 May 2017, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2FC%2FLBN%2FCO%2F1&Lang=en

² UN Committee against Torture, *Report of the Committee against Torture, A/69/44, Annex XIII, Summary account of the results of the proceedings concerning the inquiry on Lebanon*, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=A%2F69%2F44&Lang=en



concluding observations, the Committee expressed concern about the low rate of implementation of these recommendations.

Although Lebanon adopted Law No. 65/2017 criminalizing torture, its effective implementation remains a serious concern. Nearly nine years after its adoption, CCLS and ALK, together with other Lebanese and international organizations³, documented the absence of effective implementation, including concerns regarding the investigation and prosecution of torture allegations, the role of military justice and the operationalization of the National Preventive Mechanism.

Recent cases further demonstrate that these concerns are not merely historical. CCLS has documented allegations of torture and arbitrary detention in the case of Rabih Fadel Zakaria⁴, while the January 2026 death of Mohammad Harkous⁵ in custody has raised serious concerns regarding the investigation of deaths in custody, allegations of torture and accountability.

These cases, together with other documented allegations, demonstrate the continuing need for effective safeguards, independent investigations and access to justice and reparation for victims.

The prolonged absence of a periodic review has tangible consequences for victims of torture, their families and all persons deprived of their liberty. Regular scrutiny by the Committee is essential to assess progress, identify remaining gaps and ensure implementation of the Convention and the Committee's previous recommendations.

We therefore respectfully urge the Committee to:

1. Request Lebanon to submit its overdue second periodic report without further delay and schedule its review at the earliest possible opportunity;

³ CCLS et al., *Lebanon: Seven Years of Enacting a Torture Law without Effective Implementation*, 26 June 2025. https://ccls-lebanon.org/lebanon-seven-years-of-enacting-a-torture-law-without-effective-implementation/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁴ CCLS, *Arbitrary Arrest and Torture of Rabih Fadel Zakaria*, 27 May 2024. https://ccls-lebanon.org/2024/05/27/arbitrary-arrest-and-torture-of-rabih-fadel-zakaria/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁵ CCLS, *The Death of Mohammad Harkous in Custody: Seeking Truth, Justice and Accountability*, 14 August 2026, https://ccls-lebanon.org/2026/08/14/the-death-of-mohammad-harkous-in-custody-seeking-truth-justice-and-accountability/?utm_source=chatgpt.com



2. Assess the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Article 20 inquiry and the Committee's 2017 concluding observations;
3. Examine the effective implementation of Law No. 65/2017, including investigations, prosecutions and accountability for alleged perpetrators;
4. Assess safeguards for persons deprived of their liberty, conditions of detention, and access to effective remedies and reparation for victims; and
5. Examine the independence and effectiveness of investigations into allegations of torture, ill-treatment and deaths in custody.

The resumption of Lebanon's review would provide an important opportunity to renew constructive dialogue with the Lebanese authorities and strengthen the protection of all persons deprived of their liberty against torture and other ill-treatment.

Respectfully,

- **Cedar Centre for Legal Studies (CCLS)**
Tripoli, Lebanon
- **Alkarama Foundation**
Geneva, Switzerland