

Appendix 1

Principles of Medical Ethics

Relevant to the Role of Health Personnel, Particularly Physicians, in the Protection of Prisoners and Detainees Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,
Resolution 37/194, December 18, 1982

Principle 1

Health personnel, particularly physicians, charged with the medical care of prisoners and detainees have a duty to provide them with protection of their physical and mental health and treatment of disease of the same quality and standard as is afforded to those who are not imprisoned or detained.

Principle 2

It is a gross contravention of medical ethics, as well as an offence under applicable international instruments, for health personnel, particularly physicians, to engage, actively or passively, in acts which constitute participation in, complicity in, incitement to, or attempts to commit torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Principle 3

It is a contravention of medical ethics for health personnel, particularly physicians, to be involved in any professional relationship with prisoners or detainees, the purpose of which is not solely to evaluate, protect, or improve their physical and mental health.

Principle 4

It is a contravention of medical ethics for health personnel, particularly physicians:

(a) to apply their knowledge and skills in order to assist in the interrogation of prisoners and detainees in a manner that may adversely affect the physical or mental health or condition of such prisoners or detainees and which is not in accordance with the relevant international instruments; and

(b) to certify, or to participate in the certification of, the fitness of prisoners or detainees for any form of treatment or punishment that may adversely affect their physical or mental health and which is not in accordance with the relevant international instruments, or to participate in any way in the infliction of any such treatment or punishment that is not in accordance with the relevant international instruments.

Principle 5

It is a contravention of medical ethics for health personnel, particularly physicians, to participate in any procedure for restraining a prisoner or detainee unless such a procedure is determined in accordance with purely medical criteria as being necessary for the protection of the physical or mental health or the safety of the prisoner or detainee himself, of his fellow prisoners or detainees, or of his guardians, and presents no hazard to the physical or mental health of the prisoner/detainee.

Principle 6

There may be no derogation from the foregoing principles on any ground whatsoever, including public emergency.

Declaration on the Protection of All Persons From Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment follows on page 549.

**Declaration on the Protection of All Persons
From Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel,
Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

**Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,
Resolution 3452 (XXX), December 9, 1975**

Article 1

(a) For the purpose of this Declaration, torture means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted by or at the instigation of a public official on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or confession, punishing him for an act he has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating him or other persons. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions to the extent consistent with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

(b) Torture constitutes an aggravated and deliberate form of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 7

Each State shall ensure that all acts of torture as defined in Article 1 are offences under its criminal law. The same shall apply in regard to acts which constitute participation in, complicity in, incitement to, or an attempt to commit torture.

The information contained herein is adapted from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Geneva, Switzerland).

