

## Questionnaire for Candidates to the Committee against Torture (CAT)

1. **Name:** LORENA GONZÁLEZ PINTO

2. **Nationality:** GUATEMALAN

### 3. **Current position**

I serve as an international consultant specializing in human rights, with particular emphasis on torture prevention, women's and children's rights, migration issues, and prison systems. I also engage with the international (UN) and regional (OAS) human rights protection frameworks. Currently, I am a faculty member and Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in Human Rights at De La Salle University in Costa Rica. In addition, I serve as a visiting professor in Master's programs at universities throughout Latin America.

4. **The CAT and GA resolution 68/268 require experts to possess “recognized competence in the field of human rights” and “in particular in the field covered by the relevant treaty”, including to give consideration to the usefulness of “some persons having legal experience” (article 17). Please explain how you qualify as an expert.**

I have extensive knowledge of both the universal (United Nations) and inter-American (Organization of American States) human rights protection systems. I have specialized in development and human rights, particularly in torture prevention, and have drafted protocols addressing prison policy issues. I served as an Independent Expert and Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) (2015–2019). During my tenure, I conducted missions to countries including the Philippines, Spain, Panama, and Chile, serving as Head of Mission for the latter two. My colleagues elected me to present the SPT's work to the UN Human Rights Council at its 10th anniversary celebration (2016). At the invitation of my former colleagues, I also participated in the 49th session of the SPT (2023) at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, where I presented on Policies and Coordination Strategies for the Prevention of Torture.

Regarding the legal experience I have a law degree, a master's degree in human rights, as well as specialization studies in human rights. (Oxford University, 2004. Diploma in Diplomacy; Guatemala, 2023; American University, 1999; The Hague Academy of International Law, 1998., International Institute of Human Rights, Strasbourg, 1992, among others).

I have authored various publications on human rights and torture prevention, such as:

- The United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture: The Effects of Preventive Action. Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Draft National Policy on Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty. European Union, 2022.

- Draft Protocol for the Reception of Complaints and the Exchange of Information for the Protection and Investigation of Crimes Against Human Rights Defenders and Journalists. European Union, 2022.
- The Challenges of Correctional Systems in Latin America and the Contribution of the Ombudsman Offices. 2012.

**5. According to the Addis Ababa Guidelines, “Treaty body members shall not only be independent and impartial, but shall also be seen by a reasonable observer to be so”. Do you have any experience or affiliation that could be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest (e.g. holding a position within or on behalf of your country’s government)? If so, how do you intend to address it, to ensure full independence and impartiality in the exercise of the functions?**

For the last 35 years, I have not held any governmental position that could be considered a conflict of interest. During this time, I have worked exclusively as an independent human rights consultant and university professor.

For 19 years, I served as a human rights expert at the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights. Since 2019, I have been consulting for various United Nations bodies and the Inter-American system.

For four years, I was an Independent Expert for the SPT and always acted independently and objectively. Throughout my professional career, I have conducted my work with seriousness, professionalism, and impartiality.

**6. If elected, how will your professional commitments enable you to dedicate the necessary time and attention to perform your duties effectively, both during and between sessions?**

During my four-year term at the SPT, I continued teaching at various universities in Latin America, but I reduced my human rights consulting services so that I could dedicate the maximum possible time to my work during and between sessions. I also reviewed and drafted reports during intersessional periods. I considered it essential that States parties receive our recommendations in a timely manner following visits, and I assumed additional tasks to ensure this objective, always with a commitment to diligence and accountability.

As an Independent Expert for the CAT, I would again reduce my human rights consulting activities and continue my teaching as a university professor, devoting my full attention to fulfilling the CAT’s mandate.

**7. In your view, what is the role of civil society, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs), in engaging with the Committee in relation to its mandated functions? In your**

**opinion, how can the voices and experiences of survivors of torture and other ill-treatment be meaningfully considered in the Committee's functions and working methods?**

I believe it is important to strengthen relations with civil society the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs), based on a dialogue of respect and collaboration. It is important that these institutions support the spread out the international standards approved by the CAT through its general observations, reports, and recommendations. Efforts can also be combined to achieve universal ratification of the UNCAT. It's important to promote coordination processes between States Parties and civil society to generate spaces of trust and cooperation that allow for the joint development of effective measures to implement the CAT recommendations.

The voice of victims in any human rights case is paramount, because it must serve as a guide for the design and approval of international documents.