



**United Nations Human Rights Council  
59th session (16 June – 11 July 2025)**

**Item 3 – Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to  
freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Gina Romero**

**Oral statement by the Association for the Prevention of Torture on behalf of the  
United against Torture Consortium**

18 June 2025

The APT, on behalf of the United Against Torture Consortium, bringing together the IRCT, FIACAT, OMCT, Omega Research Foundation, and REDRESS, welcomes the Special Rapporteur’s report on the impact of the 2023–2025 “super election” cycle on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

We are deeply concerned that across various contexts, civil society actors, political opponents, and protesters allege to face torture and ill-treatment —particularly during election periods.

The prohibition of torture and ill-treatment is absolute. No political crisis, public emergency, or electoral instability can justify its use. Yet, reports document widespread and grave abuses against protesters, activists, and opposition voices that may amount to torture or other ill-treatment.

States must ensure that law enforcement officials deployed before, during and after elections operate in full compliance with international human rights law and standards. The Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials in the Context of Peaceful Protests provides a concrete roadmap for aligning law enforcement operations and institutional frameworks with the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.

We also echo the call to regulate the trade in law enforcement equipment used to suppress peaceful dissent. The adoption of a global torture-free trade treaty is a necessary step to prevent complicity in these abuses.

Torture and ill-treatment must never be tolerated—not before, during, or after elections, even when protests are no longer peaceful. Upholding the right to peaceful assembly must include a firm commitment to safeguarding human dignity at all times.

We ask the Special Rapporteur: which concrete steps can States undertake to implement the Model Protocol, especially in the context of elections?

Thank you.