



PRESS RELEASE

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FAULT LINES BETWEEN NON-COERCIVE INVESTIGATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURE

**Global thought leaders convene on International Day in Support of Victims
of Torture to debate the fine line between investigation and ill-treatment.**

Featuring Special Guests & Organisers:

Professor Nils Melzer
Danielle Turkov Wilson
Stephen Bennett

UN Special Rapporteur on Torture
Think-Film Impact Production
Director, *Eminent Monsters*

and Exclusive Clips of
Eminent Monsters: A manual for modern tort ure
Stephen Bennett

Hosted by: Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture

1pm to 2.30pm – 26th June 2019 – Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room XXV, PDN

London, Brussels and Geneva: Recent scientific research has produced compelling evidence that the most effective investigative methodology is based on strictly non-coercive forensic techniques. By contrast, coercive interrogation resorts to methods that are contrary to fundamental principles of international human rights law and the absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment –and does not produce reliable information.

In line with these findings, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has called for the development of an international protocol on non-coercive interviewing (see A/71/298).

The currently ongoing paradigm shift from traditional interrogation to non-coercive interviewing raises the question as to the distinction between, on the one hand, legitimate investigative techniques

and, on the other hand, methods of mental and emotional manipulation, intimidation or coercion which amount to psychological torture or ill-treatment. As part of his thematic consultations on this topic, the Special Rapporteur on Torture will moderate a panel discussion among eminent international experts and practitioners in the field of non-coercive police investigation and the prevention of psychological torture, followed by an interactive discussion with interventions from the floor.

During the side-event, the devastating consequences of unrestrained experimentation with psychological and chemical manipulation will be illustrated with excerpts of the Hopscotch Films production “*Eminent Monsters: A manual for modern torture*” by award-winning director Stephen Bennett funded by BBC Scotland, Creative Scotland and Hopscotch Films. The film traces psychological torture reportedly used on detainees held at Guantanamo Bay back to methods tested in the 1950’s on non-consenting patients at a psychiatric clinic in Montreal and, in the 1970’s, by the British forces in the so-called “Hooded Men” of Belfast.

The panelists will be:

- **Dr Asbjorn Rachlew**, Superintendent Norwegian Police (on the practice, rationale and limits of legitimate non-coercive interviewing)
- **Dr Pau Pérez-Sales**, psychiatrist, Resource Center in Mental Health and Human Rights, Head of the Complex Trauma Unit, Hospital La Paz, Madrid (on the distinction between legitimate interview techniques and psychological torture and ill-treatment).
- **Dr Barbara Bernath**, Secretary-General of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), (on the prevention of psychological torture).
- **Dr Harvey Weinstein**, Speaker Intervention (in film protagonist) Senior Research Fellow, Human Rights Center, Clinical Professor (Ret.), School of Public Health
- **Katherine Taylor**, REPRIEVE’s Deputy Director. She coordinates Reprieve’s Life after Guantanamo Project, helping to facilitate the resettlement of ex-Guantanamo prisoners in Europe

For more information about Think-Film Impact Production, visit www.tfip.org. Quotes from: Special Rapporteur, Nils Melzer “*Let us be clear: Psychological torture is neither ‘soft’ nor ‘light’ but perfidious and brutal. It aims straight at the destruction of your innermost self, albeit without leaving a physical trace*”

Film Director, Stephen Bennett “*We are incredibly honoured to be part of this event. It is both a testament to the power of testimony and the desire of others to make a difference. Working alongside UN Special Rapporteur Professor Nils Melzer and the APT we are proud to support the work they have done in the drawing up of a new International Protocol on Non Coercive Interrogation for Member States*”

