

## Ghana: UN rights expert to follow up recommendations in key criminal justice and mental health areas

GENEVA (29 September 2015) – United Nations Special Rapporteur Juan E. Méndez will carry out a follow-up visit to Ghana from 4 to 7 October 2015, to discuss and assess the level of implementation of the recommendations issued after his first mission to the country in November 2013.

“I will focus on the challenges I encountered in Ghana, such as critical issues in the criminal justice system, including conditions of detention, and mental health-care practices, including the treatment and living conditions of persons held in psychiatric hospitals and prayer camps,” said the independent expert charged by the UN Human Rights Council with monitoring and reporting on the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

“I hope that my second visit to Ghana will assist the Government in coping with some of the remaining challenges it faces in the fight against torture, and in finding solutions that will ensure the promotion of human rights and dignity of all persons,” Mr. Méndez stated.

During the visit at the invitation of the Ghanaian authorities, the human rights expert will engage with key Government decision makers and with civil society leaders. “I look forward to assisting the authorities to further implement my recommendations, uphold the rule of law, promote accountability, and fulfil the right of victims to reparations,” he said.

Mr. Méndez will share his preliminary observations and recommendations at a **press conference** to be held in Accra on Wednesday, 7 October 2015, at 3 pm, at the FAO Regional Office for Africa conference room (Block C) - FAO is adjacent the Efuia Sutherland Children’s Park, Ridge. Access to the press conference is strictly limited to journalists.

The Special Rapporteur will present a follow-up report to the Human Rights Council in March 2016.

(\*) Check the Special Rapporteur’s report on Ghana to the UN Human Rights Council:  
[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/25/60/Add.1](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/25/60/Add.1)

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*Mr. Juan E. Méndez (Argentina) was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council as the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in November 2010. Mr. Méndez has dedicated his legal career to the defense of human rights, and has a long and distinguished record of advocacy throughout the Americas. He is currently a Professor of Law at the American University*

– Washington College of Law and Co-Chair of the Human Rights Institute of the International Bar Association. Learn more, log on to:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Torture/SRTorture/Pages/SRTortureIndex.aspx>

*The Special Rapporteurs are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures' experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.*

Check the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CAT.aspx>

UN Human Rights, country page – Ghana:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/GHIndex.aspx>

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