

Good afternoon, I am a member of the polish National Preventive Mechanism Against Torture. The Polish NMP has been operating for 10 years so far and we have conducted more than a thousand preventive visits to all kind of places of detention, both public and private ones. The mandate of the NPM in Poland is carried out by the Ombudsman.

Our activity shows, that the torture and mistreatment still happens in Poland. The analyzed final judgements shows that in the period 2008-2016 courts delivered final judgements convicting in total 42 police officers in 28 cases and it should be emphasized that the scale of use of torture by the police is still increasing. Also during the preventive visits we frequently encountered situations having the potential to result in inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Even last month during our unannounced visit to the Police we met a detainee who had been beaten by the deputy head of visited unit.

However the crime of torture is not provided for in the Penal Code even though the acts committed against the detained persons by the police officers can be classified as the torture in the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention. That is why, on April this year the polish Ombudsman sent to the ODHIR a request to review polish legislation in relation to the definition of torture. The ODHIR's opinion on definition of torture and its absolute prohibition in polish legislation will be presented as the argument in the Ombudsman's general letter to the Minister of Justice.

This year we will also start the social campaign "A state without torture" with the aim to raise the social awareness on the act of torture and the victims of torture. The campaign will be dedicated also to the lawyers, judges, medical doctors, who may come into contact with victims of torture in their work.

You are kindly invited to acquaint yourselves with the contents of the annual reports of the National Preventive Mechanism presenting results from the visits. The English version of the reports can be found on the English-language website of the Human Rights Defender, in the "National Preventive Mechanism" section.