



**FREEDOM
FROM
TORTURE**
EMPOWERING
SURVIVORS,
REBUILDING
LIVES

**SURVIVORS
SPEAK OUT** 

Nothing about us, without us

ANTI-TORTURE MANIFESTO

**Freedom from Torture and Survivors Speak OUT:
A call to all political parties.**



**TORTURE
IS NEVER
OK**

WHO WE ARE AND WHY WE ARE MAKING THESE CALLS:

There are never any circumstances in which torture is justified. It is an extreme abuse of power towards a defenceless person and a violation of their rights. Torture tries to destroy lives and every day in our therapy rooms we bear witness to the long and agonising journey of rebuilding lives torn apart by violence.

The prohibition on torture is absolute and states must take positive steps to prevent it. And yet in the 21st century, around the world, we see the incidence and acceptance of torture rising.

That is why Freedom from Torture exists. To offer a welcome environment, and hope for a better future, to people who have experienced the worst of humanity. We are here for people as they put themselves back together and rebuild their lives.

Our clinicians work with survivors to rebuild their physical and mental health. Our doctors document evidence of torture. Our lawyers and welfare advisors help survivors access the protection and support they need.

We fight to hold torturing states and those that support them to account and we campaign for fairer treatment of people that have been tortured. Survivor expertise and voices are at the heart of everything we do.

This manifesto – crafted in partnership with survivors of torture – is a call to the UK government to lead by example in meeting its obligation to uphold the absolute prohibition on torture without fear or favour.

1



ACTIVELY DEFEND AND PROMOTE THE ABSOLUTE PROHIBITION OF TORTURE INCLUDING BY ACTING AS A GLOBAL LEADER IN ENDING ALL FORMS OF TORTURE ABROAD

- **All laws in the UK should be compliant with the UK's international obligations. Commit to repeal or amend laws that do not meet these obligations.**
- **Re-introduce a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Anti-Torture Strategy that covers prevention and accountability.**
- **Support transparent and independent investigations and prosecutions of allegations of British involvement in torture, including in territories held by British armed forces abroad.**
- **Explicitly prohibit intelligence sharing where there is a "serious risk" of torture. Clearly define how what constitutes a serious risk will be established.**
- **Speak out strongly against torture wherever it occurs and actively work with international partners, including civil society, to push for accountability. Support multi-sectoral approaches to prevention through overseas aid assistance.**
- **Continue to lead, support and resource the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI).**

2



ACTIVELY PROMOTE AND ADVANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES IN THE UK AND PLACE TORTURE PROHIBITION AT THE HEART OF UK AID AND TRADE

- Ensure ‘Magnitsky’-style sanctions are proactively and equally applied against all perpetrators, in coordination with other governments and in consultation with survivors and civil society.*
- Provide an enabling environment for the proactive use of universal jurisdiction in the UK.
- Require British entities (public and private) engaged in overseas trade or service provision involving countries where there is a high risk of torture to conduct human rights due diligence and provide transparent public reporting.
- Make human rights risk assessments in relation to Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJAs) accessible to the UK Parliament and the public.

* The UK global human rights sanctions regime was introduced in 2020. It authorises the imposition of financial and immigration sanctions on individuals involved in serious human rights violations around the world.

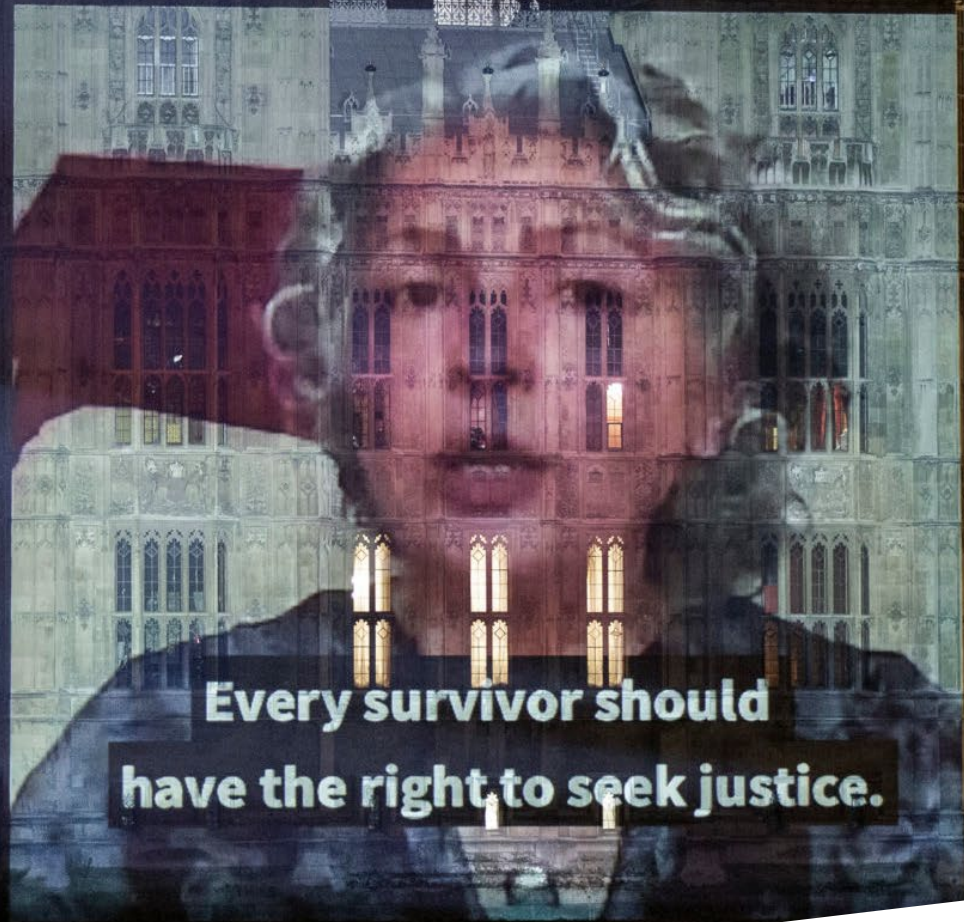
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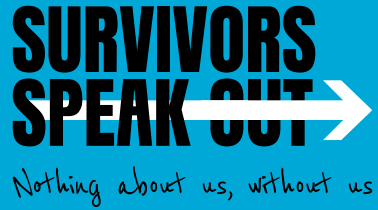
PRIORITISE REHABILITATION OF TORTURE SURVIVORS AND RECOGNITION OF THEIR EXPERTISE

- Commit to the provision of quality rehabilitation services, including physical and psychosocial support, to torture survivors residing in the UK.
- Utilise the expertise of survivors by ensuring their voices are at the heart of UK national and international policy on torture, including on justice and reparations.





**Every survivor should
have the right to seek justice.**



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Survivors Speak OUT



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