



# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

*" dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights "*

## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE – COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **ICJ COMMISSIONER APPOINTED SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE**

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) warmly welcomes the appointment of Manfred Nowak as United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur plays a vital role in the fight against torture and ill-treatment in all countries. The existence of this mandate is particularly crucial at a time where some States, in the context of the fight against terrorism, try to challenge the absolute prohibition of torture clearly established by international law.

The UN Special Rapporteur examines questions relevant to torture, covering all countries, irrespective of whether a State has ratified the Convention against Torture. His mandate includes transmitting urgent appeals to States with regard to individuals reported to be at risk of torture, as well as communications on past alleged cases of torture. He also undertakes fact-finding country visits.

Manfred Nowak, a respected human rights expert, is currently Professor of Constitutional Law and Human Rights at the University of Vienna. Since 1996, he has served as Judge at the Human Rights Chamber for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

Professor Nowak was also a member of the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances between 1993 and 2001. In 2001, he was appointed UN expert to study gaps in international law on forced disappearances with a view to draft a binding instrument on enforced disappearances.

Professor Nowak succeeds another ICJ Commissioner, Professor Theo Van Boven, who has brilliantly fulfilled his mandate of Special Rapporteur over the last three years.

Manfred Nowak, ICJ Commissioner since 1995, will take up his mandate on December 1, 2004.

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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