



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Distr.: General
11 January 2017
English
Original: Spanish

Committee against Torture

Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Ecuador*

1. The Committee against Torture considered the seventh periodic report of Ecuador (CAT/C/ECU/7) at its 1462nd and 1465th meetings (see CAT/C/SR.1462 and 1465), held on 8 and 9 November 2016, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 1490th meeting, held on 28 November 2016.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee would like to express its appreciation to the State party for agreeing to follow the optional reporting procedure, as this allows for a more focused dialogue between the State party and the Committee. However, the Committee regrets that the State party's periodic report was submitted almost one year late.

3. The Committee appreciates the dialogue held with the State party's delegation and the additional information provided during the consideration of the report.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the State party has ratified or acceded to all of the core human rights treaties that have entered into force.

5. The Committee welcomes the following legislative measures taken by the State party in areas related to the Convention:

(a) The enactment of the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code (First Supplement to *Registro Oficial* No. 180 of 10 February 2014);

(b) The adoption of the Act on Victims Redress and the Prosecution of Grave Human Rights Violations and Crimes against Humanity that Occurred in Ecuador between 4 October 1983 and 31 December 2008 (First Supplement to *Registro Oficial* No. 143 of 13 December 2013);

* Adopted by the Committee at its fifty-ninth session (7 November-7 December 2016).



(c) The adoption of the Intercultural Education Act (*Registro Oficial* No. 417 of 31 March 2011), in particular its provisions regarding the protection and support of student victims of violence, ill-treatment, sexual exploitation or other types of abuse;

(d) The adoption of the Organic Act on the National Councils for Equality (Second Supplement to *Registro Oficial* No. 283 of 7 July 2014).

6. The Committee commends the State party's efforts to adjust its policies and procedures in order to ensure greater protection for human rights and to apply the Convention, in particular:

(a) The implementation of a plan to provide training to the armed forces in the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

(b) The adoption of a protocol for the treatment of members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community who are deprived of their liberty (Ministerial Agreement No. 1265 of 4 July 2016);

(c) The adoption of regulations on prison labour (Ministerial Agreement No. MDT-2005-0004 of 22 May 2015);

(d) The transfer of the management and delivery of prison health services to the Ministry of Public Health, pursuant to Interministerial Agreement No. 00004906 of 26 June 2014;

(e) The updating, in 2014, of the National Plan for the Eradication of Gender Violence against Children, Adolescents and Women and the adoption of an action plan for the period 2015-2017;

(f) The adoption of the National Plan for Good Living (Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir) 2009-2013.

7. The Committee welcomes the establishment, within the Ombudsman's Office, of the national mechanism for the prevention of torture, pursuant to Ombudsman's Office Agreement No. 11-DPN-2011 of 8 November 2011.

8. The Committee recognizes the considerable efforts undertaken by the State party to respond to the many asylum seekers, persons in need of international protection and undocumented migrants who arrive in its territory. According to the information provided by the State party's delegation, Ecuador has recognized 60,253 people as refugees, of whom the vast majority are Colombian citizens.

9. Lastly, the Committee appreciates the fact that the State party has extended a standing invitation to the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

Pending follow-up issues from the previous reporting cycle

10. The Committee regrets that the State party has failed to submit in timely fashion the information requested in its previous concluding observations (see CAT/C/ECU/CO/4-6, para. 28) on the implementation of the measures identified for follow-up in respect of the following: protection of forensic physicians and other human rights defenders; abuse against and return of asylum seekers and refugees; violence against children and abuse and sexual violence against minors; and conditions of detention (art. 19).

Definition and classification of the offence of torture

11. Although it takes note of the explanations given by the State party's delegation, the Committee considers the definition of the offence of torture set forth in article 151 of the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code to be incomplete, inasmuch as it fails to mention the purposes for which the act in question is committed, contrary to what is prescribed by the Convention. Moreover, the main body of the definition does not include specifications relating to the perpetrator, namely, reference to the act being committed by, at the instigation of, or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity (art. 1).

12. **The State party should bring the content of article 151 of the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code into line with article 1 of the Convention by identifying the perpetrator and the motivating factors or reasons for the use of torture.** The Committee draws the attention of the State party to paragraph 9 of its general comment No. 2 (2007) on the implementation of article 2 by States parties, in which it notes that serious discrepancies between the Convention's definition and that incorporated into domestic law create actual or potential loopholes for impunity. In its general comment, the Committee also recognizes that broader domestic definitions advance the object and purpose of the Convention so long as they contain and are applied in accordance with the standards of the Convention, at a minimum.

Fundamental legal safeguards

13. Taking into account the fundamental safeguards applicable under Ecuadorian legislation to persons deprived of their liberty, the Committee regrets that the State party has provided limited information on the measures and procedures in place to ensure the effective application of those provisions, in particular the right to immediately inform a relative or a freely designated third party of one's arrest. The Committee also expresses its concern at information pointing to shortcomings in the system of assigning cases to the Public Defender Service and the impact that this has on the legal advice given by public defenders and legal professionals (art. 2).

14. **The State party should ensure that persons deprived of their liberty are afforded, in practice, all basic legal safeguards from the moment of arrest, including their right to seek the assistance of a lawyer without delay and their right to immediately inform another person of their detention.**

National preventive mechanism

15. Notwithstanding the explanations provided by the delegation, the Committee remains concerned about the weak legislative framework and the limited resources available to the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. The Committee also notes the absence of any sustained dialogue between the national preventive mechanism and the relevant governmental bodies — in particular the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Religious Affairs — that would allow for the implementation of recommendations emerging from oversight activities (art. 2).

16. **The State party should take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure that the national mechanism for the prevention of torture has a solid legal basis and adequate resources to discharge its mandate effectively and independently, as set forth in the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention.** To that end the Committee urges the State party to adopt the bill on the Ombudsman's Office, including a specific section on the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. The Committee also urges the State party to establish a sustained dialogue with the national preventive mechanism that will make it possible to effectively act on and

implement the recommendations emerging from the mechanism's oversight activities. The State party should publish and widely disseminate the annual reports of the national preventive mechanism, in accordance with the Guidelines on national preventive mechanisms issued by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (see CAT/OP/12/5, para. 9). Lastly, the Committee urges the State party to authorize the publication of the report on the Subcommittee's visit that was carried out from 1 to 4 September 2014 for the purpose of providing advisory assistance to the national preventive mechanism of Ecuador.

Independence of the judiciary

17. Despite the extensive explanations on judicial reform provided by the State party's delegation, the Committee remains concerned about reports of political interference in judicial decisions and the application of disciplinary measures against judges who issue rulings that are contrary to the interests of the Government, as well as the questionable dismissal of hundreds of judges, and the appointment of officials close to the executive branch as judges of the National Court of Justice and the Constitutional Court and as members of the Council of the Judiciary (art. 2).

18. **The State party should guarantee the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary in the performance of its functions. It should also ensure that the judicial disciplinary regime and the system for appointment, promotion and dismissal of judges are applied in accordance with the provisions of the relevant international standards, including the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary.**

Indigenous justice

19. The Committee is concerned that, in spite of the indications made in its previous concluding observations (see CAT/C/ECU/CO/4-6, para. 20), the bill on coordination and cooperation between the indigenous and ordinary justice systems is still awaiting adoption by the National Assembly (art. 2).

20. **The Committee encourages the State party to take the legislative measures needed to establish mechanisms of coordination and cooperation between the indigenous and ordinary justice systems, as prescribed by article 171 *in fine* of the Constitution of Ecuador, in order to guarantee fundamental rights and freedoms, including the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.**

Refugees and non-refoulement

21. While noting the explanations given by the delegation, the Committee remains concerned at reports that the State party might have engaged in practices contrary to the principle of non-refoulement, especially at airport border posts. The Committee also expresses its concern at the content of article 34 of the Regulations on Recognition of the Right to Asylum in Ecuador (Decree No. 1182), which permits exceptions to the principle of non-refoulement in respect of asylum seekers who are considered to represent a risk to security or public order or who are deemed to constitute a threat because they have been convicted of a particularly serious crime. In this regard, the Committee recalls that article 3 of the Convention affords absolute protection to anyone in the territory of a State party, regardless of the person's character or the danger that he or she may pose to society (see communications No. 475/2011, *Nasirov v. Kazakhstan*, para. 10.4 and No. 444/2010, *Abdussamatov v. Kazakhstan*, para. 13.7). Furthermore, the Committee finds it regrettable that it has not received up-to-date information on the situation relating to the State party's

northern border with Colombia or on the use of diplomatic guarantees as a safeguard against torture or ill-treatment (art. 3).

22. The State party should:

- (a) Ensure that no one may be expelled, returned or extradited to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would run a personal and foreseeable risk of being subjected to torture;
- (b) Repeal or amend provisions that permit exceptions to the principle of non-refoulement, in particular article 34 of the Regulations on Recognition of the Right to Asylum in Ecuador;
- (c) Provide information on its practice regarding the use of diplomatic assurances to justify the deportation of foreign nationals where there are substantial grounds for believing that the persons in question would be in danger of being subjected to torture and explain how that practice is compatible with article 3 of the Convention.

Investigation and prosecution of past human rights violations

23. Notwithstanding the explanations given by the delegation of the State party concerning the results obtained through the investigation and prosecution of serious human rights violations, including acts of torture, that were committed in Ecuador between 1984 and 2008, the Committee remains concerned at the slow progress of investigations into the cases of torture, enforced disappearance and extrajudicial execution documented by the Truth Commission in its final report and at the low number of criminal proceedings launched to date. At the same time the Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation on the progress made in implementing the 7 September 2004 judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the *Tibi v. Ecuador* case (arts. 2, 12-14 and 16).

24. In light of the Committee's previous recommendation (see CAT/C/ECU/CO/4-6, para. 17), the State party should take appropriate measures to ensure effective and impartial investigations into all outstanding cases of alleged torture, enforced disappearance and extrajudicial execution; prosecute and, where applicable, punish the perpetrators; and provide compensation to the victims or their families.

Conditions of detention

25. While acknowledging the efforts of the State party to improve conditions for persons deprived of their liberty, including the recent opening of three prisons with an additional capacity of 12,074 places, the Committee is concerned at the introduction of restrictions on visits to prisoners and at the transfer of prisoners to prisons far from their family or social circle under the new model of prison administration. Furthermore, the Committee remains concerned at the high occupancy rates in some prison facilities and at the frequent episodes of inter-prisoner violence. It is also concerned that, despite the transfer of responsibility to the Ministry of Health, there are still shortcomings in the health services and medical care provided in detention centres. Lastly, the Committee expresses its concern at complaints regarding the invasive and humiliating search procedures to which visitors, in particular women, are subjected (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

26. The State party should:

- (a) Step up efforts to alleviate overcrowding in prisons, in particular by the use of alternatives to custodial sentences, and continue the work of improving existing prison facilities;

- (b) Ensure security inside prisons by providing appropriate training to prison staff and developing strategies to reduce violence among prisoners;
- (c) Ensure that the resources needed to provide prisoners with proper medical and health care are effectively allocated;
- (d) Ensure that prisoners are authorized to communicate with family and relatives on a regular basis and, to the extent possible, are placed in prisons close to their home or place of social rehabilitation, in accordance with rules 58 and 59 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules);
- (e) Ensure that prison search and admittance procedures are not degrading to visitors (the Nelson Mandela Rules, rule 60).

Solitary confinement

27. The Committee takes note with concern of reports indicating that inmates deemed to be highly dangerous have been placed in solitary confinement for long periods of time and that so-called “reflection cells” are used as a disciplinary measure in juvenile detention centres (arts. 11 and 16).

28. **The State party should bring its legislation and practice on solitary confinement into line with international standards, as set forth in rules 43 to 46 of the Nelson Mandela Rules. In particular, the State party should:**

- (a) Ensure that solitary confinement is used only as a last resort for as brief a period as possible and is subject to strict judicial oversight and control;
- (b) Prohibit the use of solitary confinement for minors in conflict with the law.

Deaths in custody

29. The Committee notes with concern that, despite its repeated requests, the State party has not provided statistical information on suicides registered in places of detention during the period under review or on any investigations into such deaths. Nor has it provided information on the protocols that are followed in such cases (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

30. **The State party should promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigate all deaths in custody to determine whether prison officials are in any way responsible and, if so, duly punish the guilty parties and provide adequate reparation to the victims’ families. The Committee urges the State party to provide detailed data on registered cases of death in custody, disaggregated by place of detention, sex, age, ethnic origin or nationality of the deceased and cause of death.**

Allegations of torture and ill-treatment in prison

31. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation on the ongoing investigation into alleged abuses committed against inmates of the Sierra Sur Turi regional prison in Cuenca on 31 May 2016. However, it regrets that it has not received information on the investigation into the cases of alleged ill-treatment of minors being held in centres for adolescent offenders in Quito, Machala and Ambato (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

32. **The Committee requests the State party to provide full information on the results of the investigation into allegations of abuse committed in the Sierra Sur Turi regional prison. It should also investigate and report to the Committee on allegations of ill-treatment of minors held in centres for adolescent offenders.**

Inspection and complaint mechanisms

33. While noting the statement by the State party's delegation that the members of the national preventive mechanism have unfettered access to places of detention, the Committee remains concerned at reports that they have been denied entry to several prison facilities. The Committee is further concerned that places of detention in the State party still have not made an internal mechanism available to receive complaints from persons deprived of their liberty (arts. 2, 11-13 and 16).

34. **The State party should ensure that all places of detention are subject to regular independent inspections and that access to them by members of the national preventive mechanism and human rights NGOs is facilitated through formal accreditation procedures. The State party should also guarantee the right of persons deprived of their liberty to lodge complaints with the competent authorities and should carry out regular evaluations of the effectiveness of the complaints mechanisms made available to such persons.**

Investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment

35. According to the information provided by the State party, between 2010 and early 2016, 170 complaints of torture — 59 of them relating to incidents in the province of Guayas — were submitted to the Attorney General's Office. However, the State party has supplied no data corresponding to the period from March to December 2014. Likewise, between 2013 and 2016, five convictions for crimes of torture were reportedly handed down, but no information has been provided on the penal or disciplinary sanctions imposed on the perpetrators (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

36. **The Committee urges the State party to:**

- (a) **Ensure that all allegations of torture or ill-treatment are investigated promptly and impartially by an independent mechanism and that there is no institutional or hierarchical relationship between the investigators and the suspected perpetrators;**
- (b) **Ensure that the suspected perpetrators are duly tried and, if found guilty, are punished in a manner that is commensurate with the seriousness of their acts;**
- (c) **Ensure that the authorities launch investigations ex officio whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture or ill-treatment has been committed;**
- (d) **Ensure that alleged perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment are immediately suspended from duty for the duration of the investigation, particularly when there is a risk that they might otherwise be in a position to repeat the alleged act, take reprisals against the alleged victim or obstruct the investigation; and**
- (e) **Provide the Committee with comprehensive statistical data on the number of complaints of torture and ill-treatment registered during the period under review.**

Victim and witness protection

37. While recognizing the efforts made by the State party to address the serious deficiencies in the victim and witness protection scheme identified by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (see A/HRC/17/28/Add.2, paras. 78-82 and 96-98), the Committee remains concerned that no information has been provided on measures taken by the State party to provide protection to members of the national network of forensic experts following the murder in 2010 of Germán Antonio

Ramírez Herrera, a forensic expert specializing in the investigation of torture cases. The Committee has also not received up-to-date information on the criminal proceedings arising from the investigation launched into that case by the Attorney General's Office (art. 13).

38. The State party should continue to strengthen the capacity of the National Victim and Witness Protection Programme in order to ensure that victims and witnesses of acts of torture, including forensic experts, are effectively protected and supported. The Committee urges the State party to report on the outcome of the investigation into the murder of the forensic doctor Germán Antonio Ramírez Herrera and on the related criminal proceedings, if any.

Excessive use of force against demonstrators

39. The Committee expresses its concern at the numerous allegations of excessive use of force and arbitrary arrest of demonstrators and bystanders during the demonstrations that took place in 2015. The Committee regrets that the State party has not provided detailed information on the investigations conducted into such allegations or on the number of criminal proceedings brought against demonstrators accused of crimes of terrorism and sabotage (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

40. The State party should ensure that all complaints regarding the excessive use of force and arbitrary detention by law enforcement officers or military personnel are investigated in a prompt, effective and impartial manner. It should also ensure that persons suspected of committing such acts are brought to trial and, if found guilty, are punished in a manner commensurate with the gravity of their acts. The State party should also ensure that victims receive adequate reparation. In addition, the State party should sufficiently train all members of its security forces in the proper use of force and should establish rules on the use of firearms by its security forces that are consistent with the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (1990).

Redress and rehabilitation

41. Taking into account the efforts made by the State party in terms of providing redress and compensation to victims of human rights violations documented by the Truth Commission, the Committee notes with concern that, to date, only 10 agreements have been signed concerning compensation amounts and in only one case has a victim been awarded financial compensation under the terms of the Victims Redress Act. Furthermore, the Committee regrets the paucity of information provided on redress and compensation measures ordered by the courts or other State bodies during the reporting period in other cases of torture or ill-treatment (art. 14).

42. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 3 (2012) on the implementation of article 14 by States parties, which describes in detail the nature and scope of States parties' obligation to provide full redress and the means for full rehabilitation to victims of torture. In particular, the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Expedite procedures in the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Religious Affairs and the Ombudsman's Office to grant compensation under the provisions of the Victims Redress Act;

(b) Provide all victims of torture or ill-treatment with full redress for the harm they have suffered, which should include fair and adequate compensation and the fullest possible rehabilitation;

(c) Supply updated information on redress and compensation provided to victims of torture or their families.

Human rights defenders and journalists at risk

43. While taking note of the scope for protection afforded by the Special Agreement on the Enforcement of Temporary Precautionary Measures and Urgent Action, the Committee expresses its concern at reports of acts of harassment and intimidation perpetrated against human rights defenders, journalists and other members of civil society. The Committee is also concerned at the extensive powers granted the National Secretariat for Communication to monitor and disband NGOs by means of executive decrees Nos. 16, of 4 June 2013, and 739, of 21 August 2015 (arts. 13 and 16).

44. **The Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) Ensure that journalists, human rights defenders and other representatives of civil society are protected from acts of intimidation and violence to which they may be exposed because of their activities;

(b) Ensure that all incidents involving threats or attacks directed at journalists, human rights defenders and members of civil society organizations are promptly and impartially investigated;

(c) Take the necessary measures to ensure that human rights NGOs and other members of civil society can operate freely, and refrain from any unjustified interference in or restriction of their activities.

Criminalization of voluntary interruption of pregnancy resulting from rape

45. In view of the high rates of gender-based violence and sexual violence registered in the country (see CEDAW/C/ECU/CO/8-9, paras. 20 and 21), the Committee is concerned about the restrictions on abortion that are laid down in the criminal legislation of the State party, which permits the voluntary interruption of pregnancy only when it endangers the life or health of the woman and the danger cannot be prevented by other means or when the pregnancy results from the rape of a woman with a mental disability. The Committee notes with concern the grave risk that such restrictions present for the health of women victims of rape who decide to have an abortion and the criminal consequences that may ensue, including the possibility of a prison sentence for women who undergo an abortion and for the medical practitioners who perform such operations (arts. 2 and 16).

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that women victims of rape who voluntarily decide to terminate their pregnancy have access to safe, legal abortions.**

Abuse and sexual violence against minors in schools

47. The Committee reiterates its consternation at the persistence of cases of abuse and sexual violence against minors in schools in Ecuador. While noting the various legislative and other measures taken by the State party in this regard, the Committee notes with concern that, between 2012 and 2014, there were 343 complaints of sexual offence in schools. The Committee regrets that official statistical data on the number of complaints investigated and the number of prosecutions and convictions in such cases during the period under review are not available. It is grateful for the information provided by the State party's delegation on the sentence handed down in the criminal case against Jorge Glas Viejó and for the details concerning the proceedings of the *Paola Guzmán v. Ecuador* case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. In this regard, the Committee notes the clear lack of protection for victims from possible reprisals (arts. 2, 12, 13 and 16).

48. The Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations (see CAT/C/ECU/CO/4-6, para. 18) and urges the State party to continue taking the necessary measures to prevent and eliminate abuse and sexual violence against minors in schools. The Committee also urges the State to ensure that all such acts are investigated promptly, effectively and impartially, that the perpetrators are brought to justice and that victims obtain redress. The State must also ensure that the victims are provided with the necessary protection and support. Finally, the State party should provide comprehensive statistical data on the number of complaints received and investigated, and on the number of prosecutions and convictions in such cases.

Violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity

49. The Committee is concerned at allegations of involuntary placement and ill-treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in private centres in which “sexual reorientation or dehomosexualization therapies” are practised. Despite the closure of 24 such centres, the Committee notes with concern that the proceedings initiated by the Attorney General’s Office have, to date, not yielded any convictions. The Committee also strongly condemns the killings of gay and transgender persons that occurred in the State party during the period under review (arts. 2 and 16).

50. The State party should ensure that all cases of violence against persons on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity are investigated with the aim of prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators of such acts. It should also carry out awareness-raising activities for the general public in order to combat the social stigmatization of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons.

Coerced confessions

51. While the Committee takes note of the guarantees set forth in the Constitution and the provisions of the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code regarding the inadmissibility of evidence obtained in violation of fundamental rights and guarantees, it regrets that the State party has not provided it with examples of recent cases that have been dismissed by the courts because of the submission of evidence or testimony obtained by means of torture or ill-treatment (art. 15).

52. The State party should take effective steps to ensure in practice that confessions obtained under torture or ill-treatment are ruled inadmissible. It should also expand vocational training programmes for judges and prosecutors so as to ensure the latter’s ability to effectively identify torture and ill-treatment and investigate all allegations of such acts.

Training

53. The Committee acknowledges the efforts made by the State party to develop and implement training programmes in human rights, including modules on the provisions of the Convention, for members of the National Police and prison security officers. However, it regrets that no information has been provided on specialized training activities for professionals directly involved in the investigation and documentation of torture, as well as for medical and other personnel who deal with prisoners, on how to detect and document physical and psychological sequelae of torture and ill-treatment (art. 10).

54. The State party should:

(a) Continue to conduct and review mandatory continuing education programmes in order to ensure that all public officials, particularly members of the National Police and prison security officers, fully understand the provisions of the

Convention and are fully aware that offences will not be tolerated but rather will be investigated and that the perpetrators of those offences will be prosecuted;

(b) **Develop training programmes on non-coercive investigatory techniques;**

(c) **Ensure that all relevant staff, including medical personnel, receive specific training in identifying and documenting cases of torture and ill-treatment, in accordance with the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (the Istanbul Protocol);**

(d) **Develop and apply a methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes on the Convention and the Istanbul Protocol.**

Ill-treatment of police officer trainees

55. The Committee expresses its concern at reports of abuse committed against police officer trainees and takes note of the information provided by the delegation on the ongoing investigation into incidents of alleged ill-treatment at the Dr. Gustavo Noboa Bejarano National Police Academy in Manabí. Nevertheless, the State party has not provided information on steps taken to ensure that similar incidents are not repeated (arts. 2 and 16).

56. The State party should ensure that prompt, impartial and thorough investigations are conducted into all allegations of abuse committed against police officer trainees and that appropriate penalties are imposed on the perpetrators of such abuse. The State party is encouraged to provide detailed information on effective measures adopted to prevent and suppress these acts.

Follow-up procedure

57. The Committee requests the State party to provide, by 7 December 2017, information on the follow-up given to the Committee's recommendations, as contained in paragraphs 32 (allegations of torture and ill-treatment in prisons), 38 (victim and witness protection) and 48 (abuse and sexual violence against minors in schools). Along these same lines, the State party is invited to inform the Committee about its plans for implementing, during the next reporting period, some or all of the remaining recommendations set out in the present concluding observations.

Other matters

58. The State party is requested to disseminate widely the report it has submitted to the Committee and the present concluding observations, in appropriate languages, through official websites, the media and non-governmental organizations.

59. The Committee invites the State party to submit its eighth periodic report by 7 December 2020. To that end, and in view of the fact that the State party has agreed to report to the Committee under the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee will, in due course, transmit to the State party a list of issues prior to reporting. The State party's replies to that list of issues will constitute its eighth periodic report under article 19 of the Convention.