



CAT

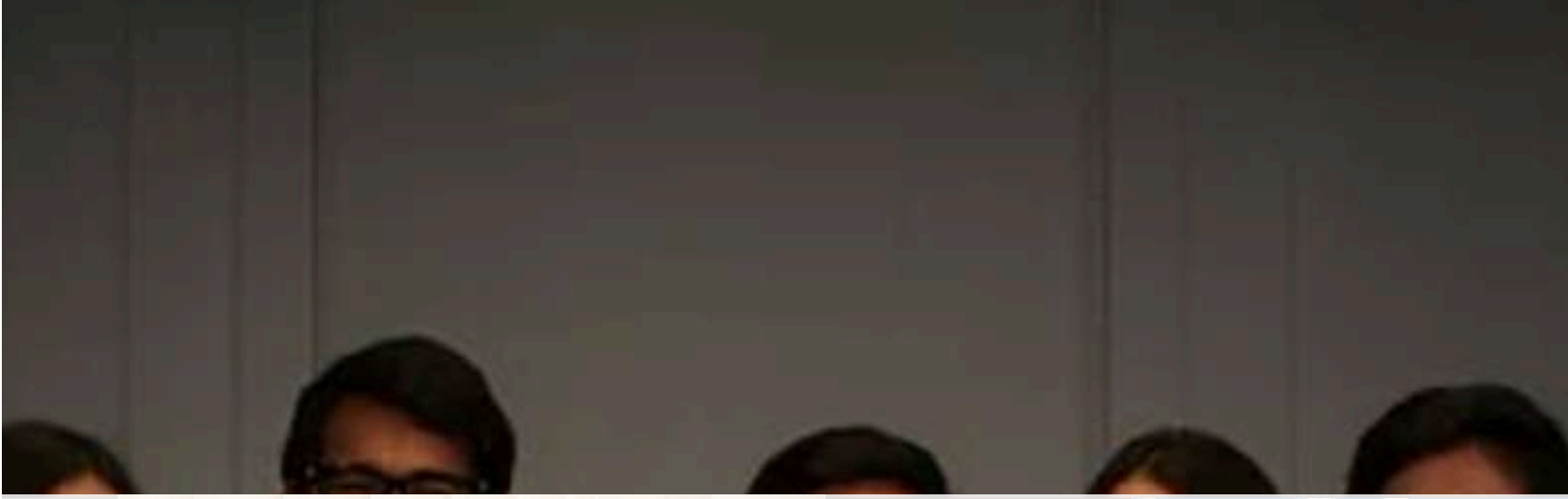
*COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE ACADEMIC
GUIDE*

MUNUR

*MODEL UNITED NATIONS OF THE
UNIVERSIDAD DEL ROSARIO*

2024





15 YEARS OF INNOVATION





SECRETARIAT

It is a pleasure for us, Nicolás, Antonia, Julio and María Camila, students of International Relations, Jurisprudence, History, Finance and Political Science and Government, to form the 15th Secretariat of the Model United Nations of our alma mater, the Universidad del Rosario.

We are excited to present an event that transcends being more than a space for discussion about the problems that affect today's society. We are dedicated to continuing the legacy of this event, building new stories with every step we take, not only in our country but around the world.

The General Secretariat has proposed a diversity of committees with a real impact, collaborating with various local, national and international entities. On the other hand, the General Directorate has worked on the organization and rigor of a Model that will host more than 400 people, national and international, including the participation of delegations from different parts of the world.

We hope you enjoy MUNUR and obtain unforgettable learning and experiences, both on a personal and professional level. We have worked tirelessly to deliver an event that leaves a lasting mark. We welcome you to the Model United Nations of the Universidad del Rosario!

**Nicolás Amador
Peñaranda**
Secretary General

**Antonia Hernandez
Botero**
Director General

Julio Pitta Urrea
Undersecretary General

**María Camila
Salsedo**
Underdirector General

WHAT IS? MUNUR

The Model United Nations of the Universidad del Rosario, MUNUR, marks a milestone by being the first of its kind at the university level in Colombia. It stands as a space of and for students, covering different educational levels and latitudes, where the word becomes a vital exercise. It is a corner that allows students to explore the vast universe of the international system, nurturing and getting involved with the various current, historical and future problems.

MUNUR had its origins as a project created by students from the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, who, following global trends, decided to immerse themselves in this type of academic challenges. Currently, it remains a student initiative that not only promotes healthy discussion, but also the forging of friendships, the celebration of diversity and inclusion in a world that longs to strengthen fraternal ties.

In this sense, the topics explained in this document are subject to modifications made by the MUNUR Secretariat in the exercise of its functions. Participants will be duly informed when this guide is finalized. Only the Secretary General and the Director General of the conference have the authority to make changes to this academic guide. MUNUR assumes no responsibility for erroneous statements made by other staff members regarding this document.

The Sponsor, Faculty Advisor or delegation manager of each participating institution must ensure that all their delegates participating in this committee read this academic guide in its entirety. Likewise, if a participant enters as an individual delegate, he or she assumes said responsibility. By registering for MUNUR, you accept the terms and conditions of the conference, that is, all the policies and conditions described in the Handbook and in this academic guide.

Similarly, this document contains the information that the delegates of this committee must take into account during the days of MUNUR. Here are compiled the procedural rules that both the Boards of Directors and the delegates must follow to guarantee the proper development of the debate within the committee. Together, we create a space where the voice of each student is a fundamental piece to build a more promising future.

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WELCOME LETTER

SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear young people,

I extend a cordial greeting to you.

If you stopped to read this letter, I would like to greet you pleasantly and introduce you to our model. Here you can find the way in which we make MUNUR a model that connects the old with the new. Welcome to the event of my loves, to which I gave my work and heart, welcome to MUNUR!

To begin, I introduce myself: I am Nicolás Amador, student of Political Science and History at the Universidad del Rosario and I have the honor of being the Secretary General of MUNUR. I am very happy to be part of this dream and, during these days, I want to provide you with the best possible experience, seeking to make this a committee, an SGA and an unforgettable model for you.

I have high expectations for this model. Therefore, I not only hope that you have the best attitude during these days, but also a vast academic preparation that can be your key tool to propose innovative, realistic ideas that allow you to achieve everything you propose. Remember that you will be the ones who will shape the course of your committees and the model with your decisions, so you must find a way to make the most of your qualities to achieve the objectives you set.

Something I have learned throughout my time on the circuit is that if a delegate wants to become "the best", he must seek to have integrity. An upright delegate is one who achieves a balance, one capable of managing a lobby, reaching agreements, giving memorable speeches, producing notable writing, masterfully personifying his character or his foreign policy and, above all, above, a delegate with values and who enjoys the committee in which he is participating.



Don't be afraid to take risks. After all, the point of participating in these types of events is to grow while learning and, therefore, I hope to see in the model delegates who are not afraid to defend what they believe in. Be intelligent, creative and strategic, find a way to convince others about the points you propose. Speak with confidence and self-assurance and, above all, enjoy MUNUR and make friends. Model United Nations are always excellent excuses to meet people with whom you can form great friendships.

Finally, I would like to tell you that if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, I will always be a message away.

I wish you much success and the best of luck in this great experience.



**Nicolás Amador
Peñaranda**
Secretary General



WELCOME LETTER

UNDERSECRETARY GENERAL

Hello everyone, Hola, Bom dia gente, Bonjour, 안녕하세요, my name is Julio Pitta and I will be your Undersecretary General for this 15th edition of MUNUR. I am an eighth semester student of International Relations and second semester of International Business Administration at my alma mater, the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario. Together with Nicolas, Antonia and Maria Camila we have prepared some fantastic days and with this letter I open the doors for you to challenge yourself, to give your best and show that the stars are not the limit.

If you want to know a little more about me, I am a person passionate about languages, international cinema, African and security studies and Millonarios FC. I hope that these coming days are the most incredible for you and you feel all the excitement, you have the strength to tear down the unbreakable walls of Ba Sing Se, the resilience to look for that yellow umbrella, the will to move forward with the power of strength and Above all things, may you never stop being yourself. Fight until the end and as a Colombian movie from the 2000s said "dreams are the only worthwhile investment in life", be willing to bet everything on them, because in the end, you are the only ones who can limit your path. .

He loves and appreciates them:

Julio Pitta Urrea
Undersecretary General



WELCOME LETTER

DSG OF UNITED NATIONS

“Passion is not blind, it is visionary.” Stendhal

Hello everyone!

My name is Laura Camila González Cruz, student of International Relations and Political Science and Government at the Universidad del Rosario. Active member of different academic and institutional groups and a woman passionate about sharing with her family and friends, topics related to diplomacy, history and travel around the world. I stand before you currently taking the position of SGA of the United Nations at MUNUR 2024, a responsibility that together with José Luis we seek to project as an example of resilience, discipline, academics and comprehensive respect.

Within the Model United Nations circuit in which I have been involved for several years, I have allowed myself to explore, define and strengthen the different skills that distinguish us as young people and leaders of our societies. For many the United Nations is a simple game and for others just an entity that remains but is not visible in itself; For me, he is an actor of interconnection, between those of us who are passionate about debate, teaching and the search for teamwork.

I have always dreamed of having an SGA that has a high level of experience, that moves through its deepest passions and tastes, and that also demonstrates the value of our voice and vote. Therefore, I would like to mention that leaving a legacy that has been handed down to me for several generations, I will always ensure that I am critical and sensitive to what is presented, generating





trust in all those who see in us a path to improve transversally and demonstrating the academia and strength that characterizes MUNUR until it now reaches its 15th version.

Without a doubt, this letter is also aimed at thanking those who have accompanied me and who have helped me see everything special that arises from the Model United Nations. Starting with my eternal duo, José Luis, thank you for continuing to fulfill dreams together, for putting up with me and for connecting from moment zero with our ideas, thoughts and personalities to take our greatest goals to the stars. As well as many more who know it and I have mentioned it repeatedly, where my participation, leadership and creation in these meetings make me happy and guide me day by day.

Finally, I hope that with your participation in MUNUR, you can see everything that inspired you to change, to put your passion into flight and, like me, you manage to find and have a wonderful closeness with many of those who in your time could have been your teachers. and life partners. I invite you to take the risk of trying everything that interests you, to be self-confident and to demonstrate that your capabilities and human quality can take you to the top of the mountain without even realizing the process that was involved.

Without further ado, we hope that both José Luis and I enjoy this new version of the Model United Nations of the Universidad del Rosario (MUNUR XV), a space in which tradition and innovation increase to put our creativity and academics to flight. and who act as key actors for our growth and development in our personal, academic, social and professional lives.

Fondly,



WELCOME LETTER

DSG OF UNITED NATIONS

“Dismiss sadness and melancholy. Life is kind, it has few days and only now do we have to enjoy it.” Federico García Lorca

Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Deputy Secretary General of the 15th edition of MUNUR, for me it is an honor that you participate in this beautiful project that together with Laura and our staff we have built so that you have an experience of academic and personal growth. My name is José Luis Sánchez, a Jurisprudence student at this Colegio Mayor and a great lover of poetry and Spanish literature in general.

If I could define this SGA in one expression, it would be Plus Ultra. An empire was built under that motto and it has been my philosophy of life since then. Always going beyond is what led me to launch myself as a United Nations SGA, to build a project that is a reflection of Rosarista values, maintains the tradition that has always characterized MUNUR and is at the forefront of innovation. In the same way, the committees of this SGA cover different areas of knowledge so that delegates can have a range of options to build solutions from the various areas of knowledge, in which academia and human quality are the protagonists of all committees. In this 15th edition of MUNUR I invite you to leave your comfort zone because it is these experiences that allow us to learn great lessons, not only academic but personal. For this reason and as Lorca says, live these moments to the fullest, because





They know if the committee can meet people with whom they can establish great friendships, as has happened to me several times.

Likewise, I would like to thank a very special person for me, my eternal and beautiful couple Laura. Thank you for wanting to venture on this ship together because it has not been easy. However, I can't imagine what this SGA would be like without your great knowledge, passion, and love for traditional committees. I couldn't have had a better couple because we understand each other very well and you put up with me, which I know is not an easy task, and I have been able to find in you a great friend and confidant. Along with this, I want to thank all the people I have met on the circuit because I have been able to learn a lot from them and each of those learnings have been reflected in this SGA so that it is a learning possibility based on the lessons of two years of delegating and being staff on the national circuit.

Finally, I wish you the best of luck for those days of MUNUR, may you enjoy every second both inside and outside the committee, may you create the most realistic, viable and innovative solutions possible. So that with MUNUR they not only follow Lorca's words, but they can also go Plus Ultra to build their path and their empire wherever they go, because if so they will manage to distort Lorca himself and ensure that there is a possible tomorrow and hope.

With love and affection.



WELCOME LETTER

PRESIDENT

Dear delegates,

It is with great enthusiasm that I extend the warmest welcome to the Committee Against Torture. My name is Daniela Galindo, and I am a seventh-semester student majoring in Business and International Relations. I am enthusiastic about controversial issues, which is why I am eagerly anticipating what may unfold in this committee.

Over the course of four days, you will have the opportunity to engage in stimulating debates, share diverse perspectives, and collaborate in crafting meaningful resolutions. As the Dais, my role is to ensure a conducive environment for the exchange of ideas, as well as for the personal and academic growth and learning of all participants.

It is important to remember that this committee is an opportunity to explore creative and innovative solutions while keeping in mind the gravity and urgency of the issue we are addressing. Each of you plays a crucial role in this process, and I encourage you to actively engage, express your opinions respectfully, and work collaboratively with your peers.

As the Dais, I am here to support you at all times and to ensure that the simulation runs smoothly and productively. Please do not hesitate to approach me with any questions,





concerns, or suggestions you may have.

I hope that this experience not only provides you with knowledge about the issue of torture but also equips you with negotiation, leadership, and teamwork skills that will be valuable in your future careers and academic pursuits.

Wishing you all enriching sessions. I am eager to see the positive impact we can achieve together.

Sincerely,

Daniela Galindo
President
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WELCOME LETTER

PRESIDENT

Dear delegates,

It is my delight to introduce myself as one of the Dais members for the Committee Against Torture. My name is Manuela Correa, and I am a third-semester student of International Relations and Law at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. In the 15th edition of MUNUR, I, alongside Daniela and David, will be serving as the Dias of this committee. As evidenced by my majors, I have a keen interest in international politics, and the topic we will be discussing is particularly intriguing to me.

I haven't been attending MUN conferences for very long. What captivates me is how situations that can be completely out of our control can bring a group of people together to have a conversation. While we delegate, we genuinely believe in what we argue. Four days can mean months of preparation so that we can come up with creative and clever solutions. Overall, my highest expectation for the CAT is that it can be a space for challenging debate that will push us to be genuine and develop new skills.

For this committee, it is very important to take a holistic view of the problem in order to propose realistic solutions. We trust that all of the discussions that will take place over these four days will focus on problem-solving. Because of the above, we expect delegates to share





our enthusiasm and to have thoroughly prepared for the topic. As MUNUR unfolds, let's approach it with eagerness, strategic thinking, creativity, inclusivity, and, above all, respect. I am confident that by prioritizing these principles in our discussions, we will make substantial progress in tackling the urgent challenges confronting our world today.

Finally, should any uncertainties arise regarding the committee, the topic, or the Model itself, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. I will be more than happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Manuela Correa
President
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(+57 3024239894)





WELCOME LETTER

PRESIDENT

Dear Delegates,

Firstly, I am proud to welcome you to the Committee Against Torture, as it is a fruit of many months of work, research, and love of the team that now will direct your trajectory throughout your MUNUR experience. We have built this scenario for it to be the perfect time and place for you to learn, teach, and collaborate with creative and innovative solutions.

My name is David García, an 8th Semester Law student and a 5th Semester International Relations student at Universidad del Rosario. I have about 8 years of MUN experience and have recently become an alumni of the UR Diplomats, the group of elite delegates that represents our University in international Models of United Nations. This past year I functioned as one of the members of the directive board, being the teams Treasurer, and I had the opportunity to watch our delegates grow, learn and create, which is why now I am glad to be back again in a place where I may be able to help you achieve all of these things and more.

As a law student, the idea of recreating an “obscure” part of the UN like CAT was daunting but exciting. It is important that we are able to understand these scenarios, these institutions





and we try to immerse ourselves into the roles that they could play in our current and past international situations. With this in mind, I want to remind you that we expect nothing less than the best from you. We expect research, dedication, and collaboration, this of course in hand with us being available to you for any help you might require during preparation and throughout the Model itself.

This is a new scenario, mostly because it's a thing that has been done very few times and to limited success, which is why this is a challenge not only for us, as the builders of this experience in hand with the Secretariat, but to you as delegates, and with this letter I want to not only present myself but extend an invitation to you to allow yourself to feel challenged, to ask yourself and others questions that in your day to day you might not, and allow yourself to grow, as you might never get the same chance as this.

With nothing more to say, again, may you be welcome to this edition of MUNUR, and I am at your service for all that you may need in both preparation and other topics you might need assistance with.

Kind regards,

David García
President
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ABSTRACT

The Committee Against Torture (CAT) is part of the Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations, and it is the body in charge of the implementation of the Convention against Torture, Inhuman and Cruel Treatment and Punishment. To the 15th edition of MUNUR, CAT will have the role of dialogue if the conversion therapies are a new modern modality of torture, focusing on the impact of these practices in the mental health and Human Rights in sexual minorities in Africa, with the study case of the LGBTIQ+ kidnapping in Equatorial Guinea.

The principal objective of this committee is promoting the debate around the different impacts and consequences of the practice of conversion therapies in order to define if these therapies are a new modality of torture considering the international legal framework, religious and cultural traditions. Also, the legal consequences of that category in the international scenario about the signatories of the Conventions against Torture

Keywords: Conversion Therapies, Torture, Convention, Legal Framework, Modality, Mental Health, Religion, Culture.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations is composed of six principal organs, each serving distinct functions within the organization. These organs include the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat, the International Court of Justice, and the Trusteeship Council.

Within the Secretariat, there is a crucial office known as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. This office plays a vital role in promoting and protecting human rights globally, overseeing various mechanisms and bodies, including the Committee Against Torture (CAT). The CAT operates under the auspices of the High Commissioner's office, focusing specifically on monitoring and addressing issues related to torture and inhuman treatment around the world. (ACNUDH, n.d.)

The Committee Against Torture (CAT) is a monitoring body established under Article 17 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1984 and entered into force in 1987. This committee plays a crucial role in promoting and protecting human rights worldwide, focusing on the prevention and eradication of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in all States parties. (OHCHR, n.d.)

Moreover, the CAT is composed of ten independent experts in human rights, selected by the States parties to the Convention by secret ballot. Its main function is to examine reports submitted by States parties on the measures they have taken to comply with the provisions of the Convention. Additionally, the Committee may receive and examine individual communications alleging violations of human rights protected by the Convention, all aimed at ensuring and monitoring the implementation of the Convention by States parties to prevent and eradicate torture worldwide. (OHCHR, n.d.)

These experts, representing various nationalities and fields of expertise in human rights, act in their individual capacity, not representing any government. Their work focuses on examining periodic reports submitted by States parties, as well as receiving and analyzing individual complaints of alleged violations of the Convention. In order to operate, the Committee holds two regular meetings annually, although extraordinary sessions may be demanded by any of the state parties if there is a high-importance situation that may concern the selected UN body or threaten the principles of the convention mentioned above.

In addition to its monitoring function, the Committee engages in awareness-raising and advocacy activities, working closely with other United Nations human rights bodies and civil society organizations. Through its recommendations and guidelines, the CAT contributes to strengthening national legal frameworks and policies to prevent torture and ensure the protection of human rights for all individuals, aligning with the principles established in the Convention.

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee Against Torture (CAT) is a body composed of ten independent experts responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by States Parties. Its primary function is to hold States accountable for human rights violations related to torture. Below are further details about the CAT:

- **Establishment and Objective:** The CAT was established in accordance with Article 17 of the Convention against Torture and is one of the ten bodies created under human rights conventions. Its objective is to enhance the effectiveness of the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment worldwide.
- **Functions and Supervision:** The CAT monitors the implementation of the Convention and evaluates reports submitted by States Parties. Additionally, it systematically investigates torture allegations to prevent and stop this crime. The committee also issues final

observations on the measures taken by States concerning the rights described in the Convention.

- Resources and Key Documents:

- Information sheet No. 17 on the Committee against Torture: Provides relevant information about the CAT.
- Istanbul Protocol: A manual for effective investigation and documentation of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.
- CAT's final observations for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean: Specific reports on the situation in different countries.
- Guidelines on the reception and processing of retaliation complaints and guidelines for monitoring final observations.

Furthermore, the CAT has also addressed issues such as the application of Article 3 of the Convention and the risk of ill-treatment and torture in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Image 1: Establishment and Objective



Source: Own Elaboration, 2024

COMPETENCE OF THE COMMITTEE

To fulfill its objective of overseeing the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT), the Committee Against Torture (CAT) operates with a specific set of powers, which can be categorized into two fundamental areas: monitoring and investigation.

Regarding the first area, as stipulated in Article 19 of the convention, all State Parties are required to submit reports to the committee detailing the measures they have taken to fulfill their obligations under the UNCAT. Upon reviewing these reports, the CAT may provide comments and observations, which may include remarks concerning Article 3, particularly regarding the extradition of individuals to an authority where they may be at risk of torture. (UNCAT, 1984)

As for the second category, there are three articles that can empower the committee to investigate a certain situation. The first one is Article 20, in which, if the CAT receives reliable information that indicates that there is a case of torture in a State Party, the committee encourages said state to cooperate in order to examine the information. Observations are made and if considered necessary, the CAT is empowered to send one of its members to make an inquiry that may include a visit to the country. The appointed members present their conclusions to the Committee, which then forwards them along with its own remarks or recommendations to the State Party. The State Party is requested to update the Committee on the steps it takes in response to the Committee's conclusions. (UNCAT, 1984)

The second scenario is in accordance with the second article, which specifies that other State Parties can submit to the CAT by a written communication that another State Party has violated one of the provisions of the Convention, subsequently the accused State must respond within three months, providing necessary clarifications. If the matter remains unresolved between the two States, either may refer it to the Committee during this phase. In the next phase, the CAT will set an Ad Hoc conciliation commission, within 12 months, the Committee

will submit a report containing a brief account of the facts and any solutions reached if a friendly resolution is attained. (UNCAT, 1984)

Lastly, individual complaints are also taken by the committee, this allegation has to follow the requirements stated by the article 22 of the Convention, in the case that the complaint does follow said requirements, the State accused of violating the Convention must provide explanations clarifying the case, in a six months period along with any remedial measures taken, the committee is also empowered to ask for provisional measures from the State Party to prevent irreparable harm to the alleged victim. The proceedings conclude with the transmission of the final views to both the author and the State concerned, with the letter urged to inform the Committee of actions taken in line with its views. (UNCAT, 1984).

The competence mentioned above is limited by the following requirements:

- State Parties can refuse to ratify Articles 20, 21 and 22, in which case the CAT will not have the competence to perform said investigations.
- All domestic remedies available must have been exhausted in order for the committee to deal with a complaint made either by another state or an individual.

It is important to note that the Committee Against Torture is a recommendation committee, thus it cannot release any binding documents.

What is torture for the international law? To answer this question, it is important to review international treaties and jurisprudence of international courts of Human Rights. The most relevant definition is the article 1 of the Convention against Torture, Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted by the General Assembly Resolution 39/46 of 1984 and entered into force in 1987.

“Article 1: For the purposes of this Convention, the term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions” (United Nations, 1984).

Nevertheless, some authors consider that explicit definition is limited, but, the same article seated the possibility to be complemented with other definitions of different international instruments or give preference to this different instruments with a greater scope. This last possibility is a development of the progressive principle. (Villan Duran, 2004).

Moreover, the regional organizations like the European Union and the Organization of American States seated their own conventions to prevent and punish torture. However, the Ibero-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture included another conception of torture in the article 2:

“The use of methods upon a person intended to obliterate the personality of the victim or to diminish his physical or mental capacities, even if they do not cause physical pain or mental anguish” (OAS, 1985).

In this line, various decisions of international courts on Human Rights completed the conception of torture and inhuman treatments as in the case Selmuni vs. France in the European Court of Human Rights in 1999 where the ECHR said:

“The acts complained of where such as to arouse in the applicant feelings of fear, anguish, and inferiority capable of humiliating and debasing him and possibly breaking his physical and moral resistance.” (ECHR, 1999)

This decision gave a conception very similar to the one given for the Ibero-American Court of Human Rights in *Loayza Tamayo vs. Peru*, where the Court said:

“The violation of the right to physical and psychological integrity of persons is a category of violation that has several gradations and embraces treatment ranging from torture to other types of humiliation or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment with varying degrees of and physical psychological effects caused by endogenous and exogenous factors which must be proven in each specific situation” (ICHR, 1998).

In addition, it is important to point that the International Humanitarian Law has a significant role with these practices are in the context of the armed conflict. In this context, the Geneva Conventions and its additional protocols seated a prohibition to any modality of torture to civilian in articles 13 and 32 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Also, the common article 3 established that prohibition including the not international conflicts too (ICHR, 2011).

ABOUT THE TOPIC

TOPIC

Impact of Conversion Therapies on the Mental Health and Human Rights of Sexual Minorities in Africa.

INTRODUCCIÓN

The history of the LGBTQ+ community is marked by a persistent struggle for fundamental rights and recognition. As of right now, 69 States worldwide have laws that condemn same-sex relations, which sums up around 2,000 million people that are subjected to these regulations that live under discriminatory contexts (United Nations, 2022). This global fight has faced numerous obstacles, and progress has varied depending on the region. Africa, unfortunately, remains a continent where LGBTQ+ rights are not well established. In fact, many African countries are part of the 69 States mentioned above that actively target this community through the justice system. Laws criminalizing same-sex relationships, some even carrying the threat of death, conversion therapies, along with the potential for other inhumane treatments, create a climate of fear and violence.

Although homosexuality ceased to be classified as an illness by the World Health Organization (WHO) on May 17, 1990, there are still several countries that allow procedures proven to be ineffective, such as conversion therapies. These therapies, defined by the United Nations General Assembly as “interventions of various kinds that are based on the belief that individuals' sexual orientation and gender identity, including gender expression, can and should be changed or suppressed when they do not conform to what other actors consider, at a given time and situation, the desirable norm, particularly when it comes to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or gender diverse individuals” (UNGA, 2020), continue to be practiced in spite of their ineffectiveness and harmful consequences.

The use of these therapies is extremely harmful to individuals subjected to them for several reasons. First, it constitutes a violation of multiple rights, such as the right of bodily autonomy, as it involves techniques that prevent individuals from controlling their minds and bodies. Additionally, it infringes upon the right of freedom of expression and identity, as it hinders the capability of expressing the real feelings and personalities of people. Furthermore, it violates the right of non-discrimination and the right to health, as it involves procedures that have been widely discredited by medical and psychological professionals, who have found them to be ineffective and potentially harmful to individuals' mental and emotional well-being.

Image 2: Protest against repression



Source: Centre of the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

In addition to these mentioned rights, conversion therapies, due to their torturous nature, also result in adverse effects on the mental health of individuals subjected to such practices, as indicated by United Nations researcher Madrigal-Borloz. 'The combination of the effects of deep humiliation and the sense of powerlessness generates feelings of shame, guilt, self-disgust, and worthlessness, which can damage self-esteem and cause permanent personality changes' (Borloz, 2020).

In Africa, “conversion therapies” manifest in diverse forms, enforced by political, religious, and traditional spheres of society. Firstly, religious “conversion therapies” persist due to the perception of homosexuality as irreligious and 'unAfrican.' The belief in exorcizing homosexual “demons” remains prevalent, driving individuals to seek spiritual interventions to alter their sexual orientation.

Secondly, cultural reasons also fuel the practice of conversion therapies, often through localized methods. Traditional healers claim the ability to change the sexual orientation of LGBTQ individuals using potions and rituals, aligning with societal norms and expectations.

Thirdly, training camps are established under the guise of preserving family honor, aiming to isolate LGBTQ+ individuals and subject them to interventions aimed at altering their sexual orientation. These camps provide advice and coercive measures in an attempt to enforce conformity with heterosexual norms.

The violent behavior exhibited towards LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa contributes to a migration phenomenon, where many seek political asylum in other countries to escape persecution. These acts of violation and violence, justified in the name of family honor, are often instigated by those in positions of power within society.

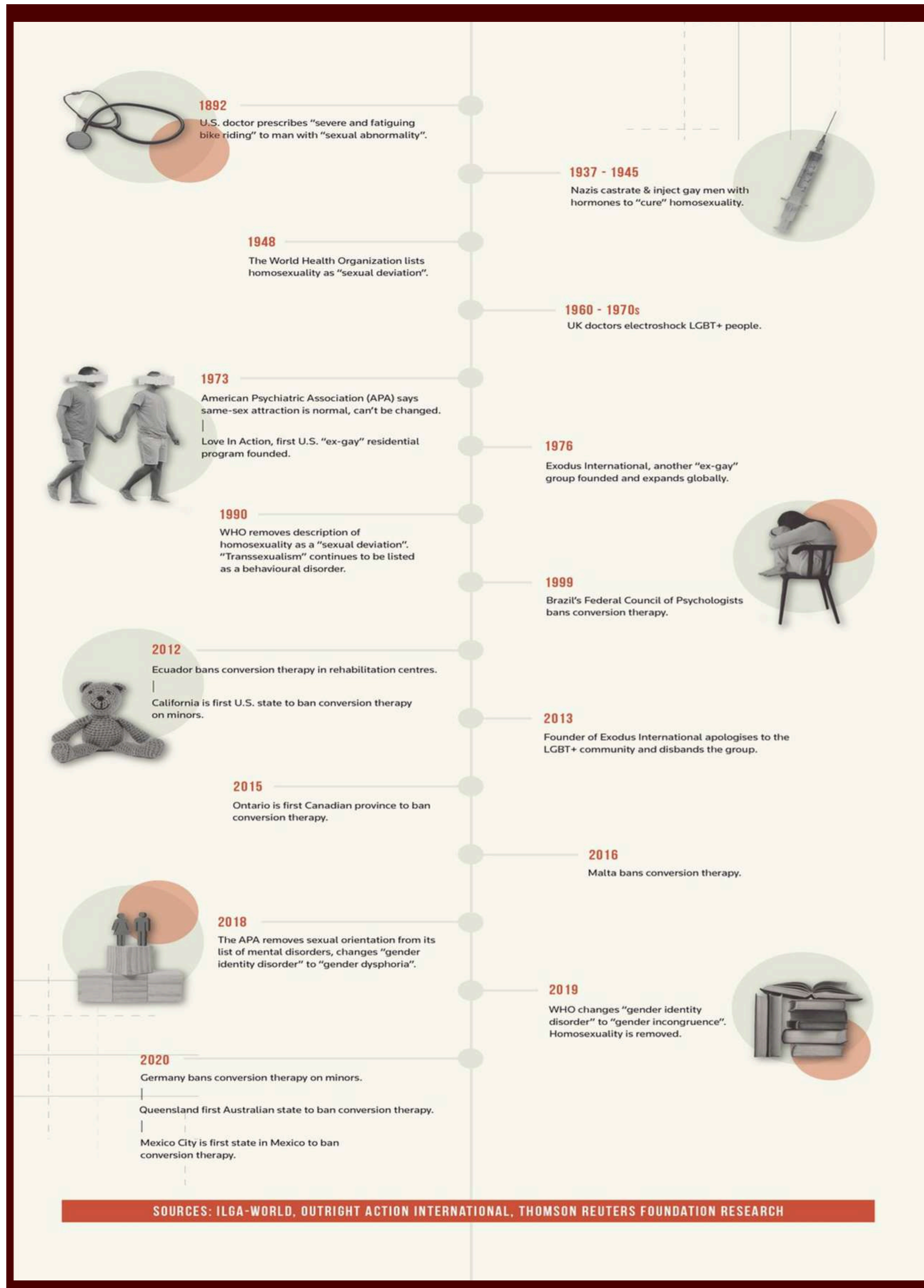
The systemic oppression faced by LGBTQ+ individuals underscore the urgent need for legal protections and societal reforms to ensure their safety and well-being. Efforts to combat conversion therapies must address the root causes within religious, cultural, and political frameworks. Conversion therapies inflict considerable psychological trauma on LGBTQ+ individuals, profoundly impacting their emotional and mental health. These methods undermine self-esteem by attempting to alter core aspects of identity, fostering feelings of inadequacy and shame. Moreover, the imposition of such therapies fosters societal rejection of LGBTQ+ individuals, exacerbating their vulnerability and isolation. Therefore, the continued allowance of conversion therapies represents a significant human rights issue that requires urgent attention and action from governments and international organizations.

Regarding suicide risk, the detrimental effects of conversion therapies heighten the likelihood of suicide among LGBTQ+ individuals, attributed to the stress, anxiety, and despair engendered by these practices.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The historical situation of sexual minorities in Africa has been marked by discrimination, stigmatization, and persecution over time. Cultural, religious, and political attitudes towards non-normative sexuality have varied across different African countries.

Image 3: Timeline



Source: Thomson Reuters Foundation

To understand conversion therapies today, it is essential to go back to their origins, which date back to earlier times than is commonly assumed. The colonial process left an indelible mark throughout the world by imposing Western values and regulations on the colonizers. In this context, the British Empire played a central role in introducing a regulatory regime aimed at exercising effective control over African populations, especially with regard to the regulation of sexuality on the continent.

Within this colonial regulatory framework, punishments were established that bear similarities to the practices used in contemporary conversion therapies. These punishments delineated the limits between pleasures considered legal and those considered deviations contrary to the legal system, condemning in particular sodomy and other crimes classified as unnatural.

Despite the decolonization process that many colonized countries followed, an important legacy of the regulations imposed during the colonial era persisted. Among these survivals are the legal codes that preserve the classification of sexual behaviors related to homosexuality, thus perpetuating the colonial influence and stigma in the way in which sexual and gender diversity is addressed.

This legislation is influenced by the belief that homosexuality is a disease, which is important to understand as conversion therapies are based on the misconception that non-heterosexual sexual orientation or diverse gender identity are disorders that require correction, although there is no precise date on which this concept can be located. However, there are fundamental texts that can guide us in the development of the perception of homosexuality as a pathological condition in the academic field, from its beginnings to its eventual disappearance.

The first recorded text that addresses sexual perversions dates back to 1886, written by Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who attributed homosexuality to a hereditary predisposition. This document marks an initial point in the construction of homosexuality as a disease. Subsequently, a much more influential text emerges in this chronological line of bibliography,

which is Freud's psychoanalysis, at the end of the 19th century. Freud is widely recognized for his contribution to the establishment of homosexuality as a psychological disorder, suggesting that it is an arrest in the child's development that leads to an Oedipus complex. His work had a significant impact on the psychological academic community.

In 1956, the first edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) was published, a work of great importance for the diagnosis of psychological diseases and disorders. In this initial edition, homosexuality is listed as a pathology. Although Freud later retracted his statements about homosexuality and the research on which the manual was based did not adequately reflect the diversity of the population, this text became a widely accepted reference in the world. professionally.

The World Health Organization (WHO) also had an important role in the stigmatization of homosexuality, since in 1948 the first edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) was published, in which there was a section that described mental disorders that indicated that homosexuality was a sexual deviation, which was supposed to reflect an underlying personality disorder.

Subsequently, more rigorous investigations were carried out, which revealed that the existing literature up to that point contained incorrect information regarding the homosexual community. These studies demonstrated that sexual preferences did not necessarily imply psychological effects on individuals, nor did they differentiate them psychologically from heterosexuals per se.

The evidence collected revealed that when evaluating the impulses, fears and unconscious needs of a group of homosexual and heterosexual individuals, a clinical picture could not be identified that would allow distinguishing the sexuality of the subjects under study. Therefore, it was concluded that homosexuality cannot be considered a pathology in itself. This finding marked a turning point in the understanding and treatment of sexual diversity, destigmatizing

the homosexual community and promoting a more inclusive and respectful vision of human sexuality.

It was not until after these investigations that the literature and diagnoses began to transform, and medical and psychological currents began to point out that homosexuality is not a disease. This change materialized in 1973, when the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its diagnostic manual, thus recognizing that it was not a “pathology.” Later, in 1990, the World Health Organization (WHO) also removed homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), taking an important step towards the destigmatization of the homosexual community globally. This event marked a significant milestone in the recognition of sexual diversity and the promotion of respect and equality for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Although in its beginning conversion therapies had strong support from studies and various associations, subsequent advances in the understanding of sexuality failed to put an end to these practices. In fact, there are still groups that call themselves “ex-gays”, which claim that this type of therapy really works and is beneficial. These groups maintain that conversion therapy can change people's sexual orientation and help them adopt heterosexuality in accordance with prevailing social and religious norms.

The turning point for the African continent occurred in the 1990s. This period marked a significant change in discourses and approaches towards sexuality in sub-Saharan Africa and across the African continent in general. This change may have been driven by a combination of factors, such as international pressure, the advancement of human rights movements, and growing awareness of sexual diversity and LGBT+ rights.

It is important to note that this change in discourses about sex did not necessarily immediately translate into concrete legal changes in all African countries. However, it did reflect an evolution in the understanding and treatment of sexuality, as well as a growing recognition of

the need to protect the rights of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The historical context in Africa regarding conversion therapies and the protection of the rights and health of sexual minorities has been complex and influenced by various cultural, religious, and political factors that have shaped attitudes towards non-normative sexualities.

For a long time, sexual minorities in Africa have faced discrimination, stigmatization, and persecution due to aforementioned laws and social norms that marginalized them. These discriminatory practices have been supported by traditional cultural beliefs that have not accepted non-normative sexualities, contributing to the persistence of challenges faced by these minorities. Additionally, religious perspectives have also played a significant role in influencing condemning attitudes and restrictive policies that have contributed to the marginalization and exclusion of sexual minorities in some African countries.

In this context, conversion therapies have emerged as a controversial practice seeking to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQ+ and gender-diverse individuals. These therapies, based on misconceptions about human sexuality, have evolved over time, but their essence remains the same: attempting to modify intrinsic aspects of people's sexual and gender identities.

In Africa, conversion therapies are more common in countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, where they are applied in publicly funded hospitals supported by humanitarian organizations and foreign countries. However, these practices are widely condemned internationally due to their devastating effects on the mental health of LGBTQ+ individuals, including depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicide risk. For instance, one study in 2021 revealed that in Nigeria, many religious institutions were involved in conversion therapies and around 17% of LGBTIQ+ people were forced to be part of a conversion therapy. Also, the study analyzed the negative effects around the conversion therapies, where 14% of SSM

(Sexual Minority Men) had anxiety symptoms, 23% with depression symptoms and around 21% had suicidal ideas with 11% had attempted suicide (Ogunbajo, 2021).

The role of the Committee against Torture (CAT) is crucial in protecting human rights and preventing practices like conversion therapies. The CAT, as an independent body of experts, monitors the compliance of State Parties with the Convention against Torture, issuing recommendations to prevent torture and other inhuman treatments. Regarding conversion therapies, the CAT has urged Member States to ban these practices, considering them forms of torture that violate the fundamental rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Image 4: Person holds the LGBTQ+ flag



Source: Redress

CURRENT SITUATION

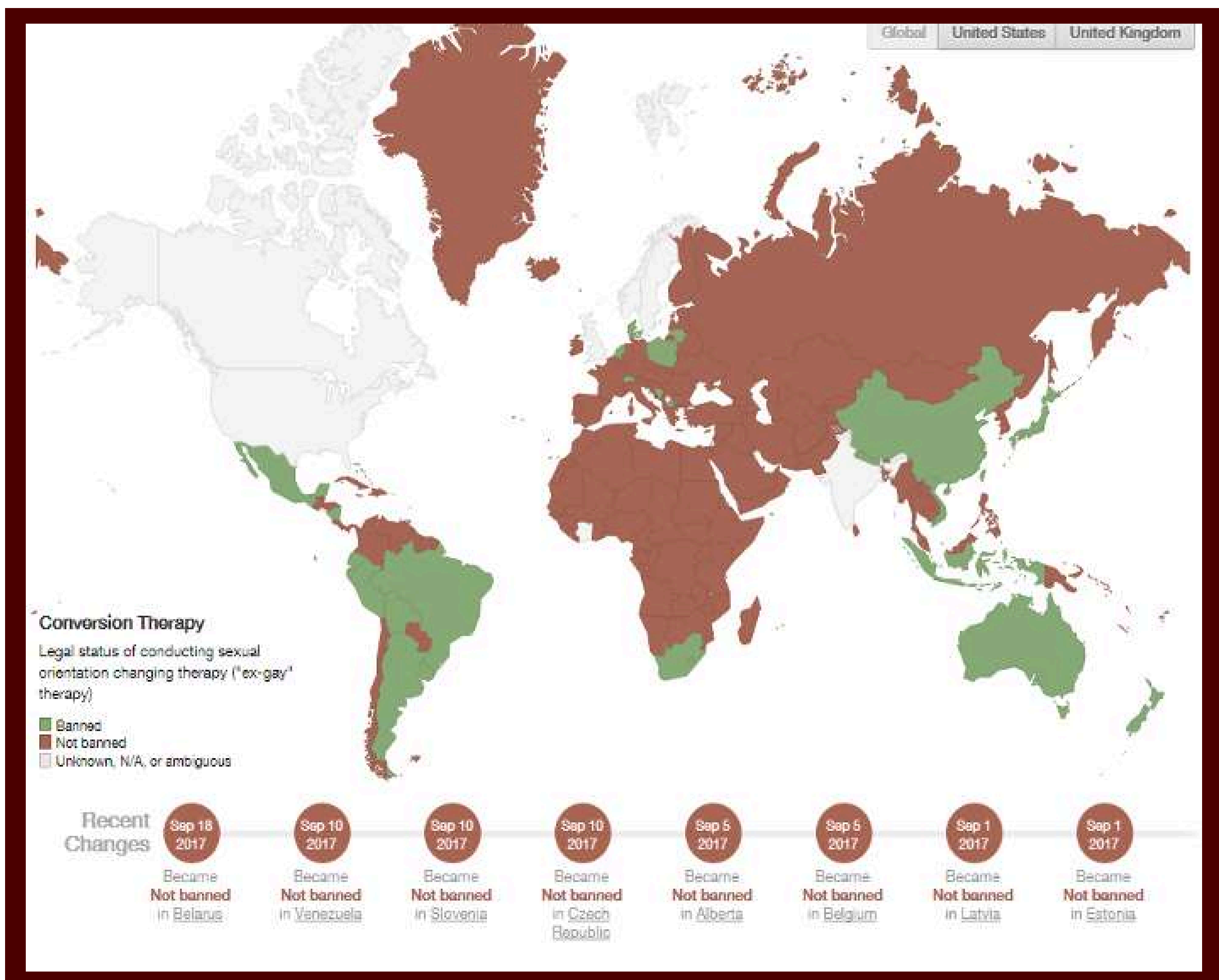
Conversion therapies are prevalent in Africa, with instances occurring in public hospitals supported by humanitarian organizations and foreign entities. Countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania offer these therapies aimed at “redirecting” homosexuality and other LGTBIQ+ identities, perpetuating stigmas and violating human rights. Furthermore, several African nations have enacted laws criminalizing homosexuality and restricting the rights of LGTBIQ+ individuals, thus reinforcing the persistence of these harmful practices.

The political landscape across Africa showcases a spectrum of legal frameworks that either safeguard or discriminate against sexual minorities, illustrating the diversity of approaches adopted by different countries. Despite prohibitions or restrictions imposed in certain jurisdictions, conversion therapies persist in Africa, where they are more prevalent and continue to inflict physical and psychological harm on LGTBIQ+ individuals. It is worth noting that currently, no African country explicitly prohibits or protects its population against

conversion therapies. The social scenario is different from the political one, for example, in Nigeria around 44% disagree with the statement of homosexuality is a sin, against the 38% that agree with it, but more than a half of the study participants declared that have prayed to God in order to become them heterosexual (Ogunbajo, 2021).

This situation underscores the urgent need for comprehensive legal reforms and increased advocacy efforts to combat conversion therapies and protect the rights and well-being of sexual minorities across the African continent. Efforts should be directed towards promoting acceptance, fostering inclusive policies, and providing support services to ensure the safety and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Image 5: status of conversion therapies



Source: The World Economic Forum

An important aspect to consider in analyzing this issue is the low levels of reporting of torturous practices within the community. According to a survey conducted by Somos Parte del Mundo, nearly 90% of respondents had not heard of institutions where complaints could be filed, such as the Ombudsman's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Parliamentary Complaints and Petitions Committee, and the institution they were familiar with, the courts, were not utilized due to their high costs.

Within the survey, less than 20% of individuals turned to the justice system to address such situations, often encountering discriminatory treatment in the process, with only 3% achieving resolution. Additionally, 75% of respondents have never reported rights violations due to a lack of trust in their country's justice system.

These findings underscore the systemic barriers and lack of confidence in the justice system that hinder individuals from seeking recourse for torturous practices. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive reforms aimed at increasing accessibility to justice, combating discrimination within the legal system, and rebuilding trust among marginalized communities.

Another crucial factor to consider is the enduring influence of religious beliefs in Africa, which significantly shape societal attitudes towards non-normative sexualities. These beliefs often result in the condemnation and exclusion of sexual minorities from mainstream society. Furthermore, religious convictions also exert influence over the formulation of restrictive policies targeting sexual minorities, thereby creating legal barriers and exacerbating their marginalization within society.

The pervasive impact of religious ideologies underscores the complex intersection of culture, religion, and human rights in addressing the challenges faced by sexual minorities in Africa. Efforts to promote acceptance, equality, and human rights must navigate these deeply ingrained beliefs while advocating for inclusive policies and protections for all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

RELEVANT ACTORS

- **Families:** Families are often the first point of contact for individuals undergoing conversion therapies. In many cases, family members may pressure or coerce LGBTQ+ individuals into undergoing these therapies due to social or cultural beliefs about sexuality and gender. They may believe that conversion therapy is a way to “correct” or “cure” their loved one's perceived deviation from heterosexual and cisgender norms. Family support or lack thereof can significantly impact an individual's decision to undergo or resist conversion therapy, making families crucial actors in this context.
- **Churches:** Religious institutions, particularly those with conservative or fundamentalist beliefs, often play a central role in promoting and conducting conversion therapies. Some religious leaders or counselors within these institutions may advocate for conversion therapy as a means of aligning individuals with their interpretation of religious teachings on sexuality and gender. Churches can provide a platform for promoting the idea that being LGBTQ+ is sinful or unnatural, further legitimizing the use of conversion therapies within certain religious communities.
- **Police Agencies and Military:** In some cases, conversion therapies may be administered or enforced by state authorities, including police agencies and military institutions. This can occur in contexts where being LGBTQ+ is criminalized or seen as a threat to societal norms. State-sponsored conversion therapy programs may involve coercion, detention, or even physical violence against LGBTQ+ individuals as a means of “rehabilitating” or “correcting” their sexual orientation or gender identity. Police agencies and military organizations may be complicit in these practices through enforcement or participation, making them relevant actors in the perpetuation of conversion therapy.
- **Governments and Legislation:** The role of governments is crucial in addressing conversion therapies. Legislative measures, including the criminalization or prohibition of such practices, are essential steps towards protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

- **Civil Society Organizations:** NGOs and advocacy groups play a vital role in raising awareness, providing support to victims, and lobbying for policy changes that protect sexual minorities from conversion therapies.
- **International Organizations:** Bodies like the United Nations, through committees like the CAT, have a responsibility to monitor and address human rights violations, including conversion therapies, at a global level.
- **Healthcare Providers:** Medical professionals and mental health practitioners should be educated about the harmful effects of conversion therapies and encouraged to adopt ethical practices that respect the rights and identities of LGBTQ+ individuals.

CASE OF STUDY

LGBTQ+ kidnappings in Equatorial Guinea

As mentioned above, there are multiple reasons why conversion therapies are still used around the world. In this specific case, the perception of homosexuality as a disease, coupled with deep-rooted cultural beliefs, has resulted in a complex human trafficking network. In Equatorial Guinea, families are negatively affected when the community learns that one of its members is part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Discrimination and stigmatization towards LGBTQ+ people in Equatorial Guinea are manifestations of a broader problem rooted in cultural and religious norms. Divergent sexual and gender identity is often seen as a deviation from the “normal” and an affront to the traditions embedded in society.

In an attempt to “correct” this supposed deviation, families resort to various actions to “cure” the victims. One of the most common practices is the use of religious healing techniques of Bantu origin. In these rituals, the victim is locked up, either in her home or in facilities

designated for this purpose. The confinements are usually prolonged, during which families justify the disappearance of the person by saying that they are on a study trip or that they simply suffer from an illness that prevents them from going out.

Within these forced confinements, abusive and tortuous practices take place. Sexual conversion therapies are one of the most common forms of “treatment.” These therapies employ “corrective” techniques, ranging from physical violence to rape, with the goal of suppressing a person's LGBTQ+ identity. In addition, the use of conversion therapies based on witchcraft and the consumption of psychoactive substances is also common, all of them with devastating consequences for the physical and mental health of the victim.

This process within communities is particularly painful and can extend for years, even starting from early stages of development, such as pre-adolescence. LGBTQ+ individuals face not only the denial of their identity, but also the physical and psychological trauma inflicted by these coercive practices.

When dealing with minors who lack family protection, human trafficking networks take advantage of the vulnerability of these young people. They offer protection, lodging, food and even companionship, thus gaining their trust. However, once within these networks, minors are exploited and subjected to sexual and labor abuse, furthermore they steal Identification Documents (ID) in order to impede them the access to health care, thus perpetuating a cycle of violence and exploitation.

In other situations, It is also observed that the Armed Forces and State Security Corps receive support to attempt to “reform” homosexual individuals, often using violence as a means of coercion.

It is alarming that, according to half of the people surveyed by the organization Somos Parte del Mundo, high-ranking military and police officers frequently transport transgender minors

to the capital, Malabo. Once there, it is reported that these minors face the prospect of being confined and exploited in prostitution activities in homes located in high-income neighborhoods.

Likewise, it is highlighted that, according to 40% of the people surveyed, a significant part of the demand in the prostitution market, both from heterosexual minors and from the LGTBIQ+ community, comes from the upper class. This highlights the way in which the sexual exploitation of minors is fueled and perpetuated by individuals with purchasing power and high social status.

This panorama reveals an extremely serious situation, where both the security forces and the upper class participate in practices of violence and exploitation against minors, especially those belonging to the LGTBIQ+ community, and it reflects an imbalance of power, where those who promote conversion therapies take advantage of the vulnerability and suffering from LGBTQ+ people, thus perpetuating the violation of their human rights. It is urgent to address these practices and protect vulnerable individuals, recognizing and defending their fundamental human rights.

However, why the victims don't report anything, because in Equatorial Guinea exist many mechanisms to report the violation of these rights? The answers are really simple, misinformation. Somos parte del Mundo made a survey where the 90% of people don't know about those mechanisms, the only mechanism that they know is the tribunal, but for this people are really expensive. Another factor to take into account is the survey revealed that just 3% of people believe that its case was justice. That is the reason of the rate of 75% of people that don't trust in the judicial system, with the fact of the 18% of people that report their cases received bad treatment from the officials (El País, 2022).

In short, the kidnappings and exploitation of LGBTQ+ people in Equatorial Guinea are a reflection of the deep injustices and prejudices embedded in society. Urgent action is required at the national and international levels to protect the human rights of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and to end these abusive and discriminatory practices.

PROCEDURE

The rules of procedure for the Committee Against Torture (CAT) will be the Harvard Procedure established in the MUNUR's Handbook. This committee as part of the Deputy Secretary General of United Nations does not have any different or special procedure.

DOCUMENTS

Relevant Documents and Resources for Further Research on Conversion Therapies and the CAT's Role:

- Statement on Conversion Therapy by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)[a]: This document provides a comprehensive overview of conversion therapy, its lack of medical and scientific validity, the likely physical and psychological consequences of undergoing conversion therapy, and whether it constitutes cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or torture under international human rights law.
- Conversion Therapy' As Degrading Treatment by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI)[b]: This article discusses the degrading treatment of conversion therapy under article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the positive state obligations that arise in this context.
- One UN human rights expert's fight to eliminate 'conversion therapies' by the United Nations (UN)[c]: This article highlights the efforts of Victor Madrigal-Borloz, the UN's independent human rights expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, to eliminate conversion therapies and criminalization of gender orientation and gender identity.
- Conversion Practices on LGBTQ+ People by the European Parliament[d]: This study explores the existing data, studies, and analyses pertaining to conversion practices on LGBTQ+ people and provides recommendations to EU institutions and bodies, as well as to Member States.
- “Have You Considered Your Parents' Happiness?": Conversion Therapy Against LGBT People in China by Human Rights Watch (HRW)[e]: This report documents the experiences of 17 people who endured conversion therapy in China and discusses the legal obligations of the Chinese government under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

- **The Practice of Conversion Therapy by the World Health Organization (WHO):** This document provides an overview of the practice of conversion therapy, its harmful effects, and the ethical and legal issues surrounding it, including the role of health professionals and medical and mental health organizations.
- **International Human Rights Law and Conversion Therapy by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA):** This report provides an analysis of international human rights law and its application to conversion therapy, including the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.
- **Research Studies on Conversion Therapy and Human Rights Violations by the American Psychological Association (APA):** This resource provides a list of research studies and legal analyses pertaining to conversion therapies and human rights violations, including the physical and psychological consequences of undergoing conversion therapy and the ethical implications of offering or performing it.
- **Case Law on Conversion Therapy and Human Rights Violations by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ):** This resource provides a collection of case law and legal opinions related to conversion therapies and human rights violations, including the responsibility of states in regulating this practice and the role of health professionals and medical and mental health organizations in preventing and addressing human rights violations related to conversion therapy.

These resources provide a comprehensive understanding of conversion therapies, their impact on individuals and communities, and the role of the CAT and other international human rights mechanisms in addressing these issues. They also highlight the importance of protecting the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and the need for further research and advocacy in this area.

QARMAS

- How does the Committee Against Torture (CAT) define and categorize conversion therapies within the framework of torture and inhumane treatment as per international conventions?
- What specific measures has the CAT recommended to States parties in order to address the issue of conversion therapies and uphold the human rights of sexual minorities, particularly in regions like Africa where these practices are prevalent?
- How does the CAT assess the effectiveness of national policies and interventions in combatting conversion therapies and protecting the mental health and human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa?
- What role does the CAT play in engaging with civil society organizations, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders to raise awareness about the harms of conversion therapies and advocate for policy changes at the national and international levels?
- In what ways has the CAT addressed intersectional issues, such as the impact of conversion therapies on individuals from marginalized communities within sexual minorities, and how does it ensure a comprehensive approach to protecting their rights and well-being?

GLOSSARY

- **Advocacy:** Activities of defense and promotion of policies and rights on behalf of sexual minorities and their communities.
- **Cisgender:** A person whose gender assigned at birth matches the gender with which they identify.
- **Committee Against Torture (CAT):** Supervisory body established under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment, responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Convention by the States parties.
- **Community Empowerment:** Processes that strengthen the participation and influence of LGBTQ+ communities in decision-making and the defense of their rights.
- **Conversion Therapies:** Interventions that seek to change people's sexual orientation or gender identity, often based on discredited beliefs and considered violating human rights.
- **Convention against Torture:** International treaty adopted by the United Nations in 1984 that prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, and establishes a framework for its prevention and eradication.
- **Freedom of Expression and Identity:** Rights that protect people's ability to freely express their sexual and gender identity without discrimination or coercion.
- **Guidelines and Recommendations:** Documents issued by the Committee Against Torture to guide States parties in the effective implementation of the Convention and the prevention of torture.
- **Human Rights:** Inherent rights of all human beings, internationally recognized, which include fundamental freedoms, dignity, and equality.
- **Impact Evaluation:** Process of evaluating the effects of interventions and policies in reducing conversion therapies and protecting LGBTQ+ rights.
- **Impact on Mental Health:** Psychological and emotional effects of conversion therapies, which can include depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicide risk.
- **Inclusion and Diversity:** Valuation and respect for sexual and gender diversity, promoting inclusive environments free of discrimination.

- **Individual Complaint:** Communication presented to the CAT by an individual or group of individuals who claim to be victims of violations of the Convention against Torture by a State party.
- **International Collaboration:** Cooperation between countries and organizations to jointly address conversion therapies and promote international human rights standards.
- **Legal Guarantees:** Legal protections and reporting mechanisms for victims of conversion therapies and other forms of violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Mental Health Interventions:** Treatments and services intended to support the mental health and emotional well-being of people affected by conversion therapies.
- **Periodic Report:** Document presented by a State party to the Committee Against Torture, detailing the measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention against Torture.
- **Preventive Measures:** Actions and policies aimed at preventing torture, conversion therapies, and other forms of inhuman or degrading treatment.
- **Public Awareness:** Promotion of understanding and empathy towards the experiences and challenges faced by sexual minorities.
- **Right to Bodily Autonomy:** Principle that guarantees that people have control over their own bodies and decisions related to their health and sexuality.
- **Risks and Challenges:** Factors that may hinder the protection of LGBTQ+ rights and the elimination of conversion therapies, such as cultural resistance, legal obstacles, and lack of resources.
- **Sexual Minorities:** Groups of people whose sexual orientation or gender identity differs from the majority in a given society.
- **State Party:** Country that has ratified an international treaty and has legally committed to comply with its provisions.
- **Stigma and Discrimination:** Negative and prejudiced attitudes towards sexual minorities, which can lead to social exclusion and violation of their rights.
- **Torture Prevention:** Actions and policies aimed at preventing the occurrence of acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

- **Training of Health Professionals:** Educational programs to improve the competence and sensitivity of health care providers regarding the needs of sexual minorities.

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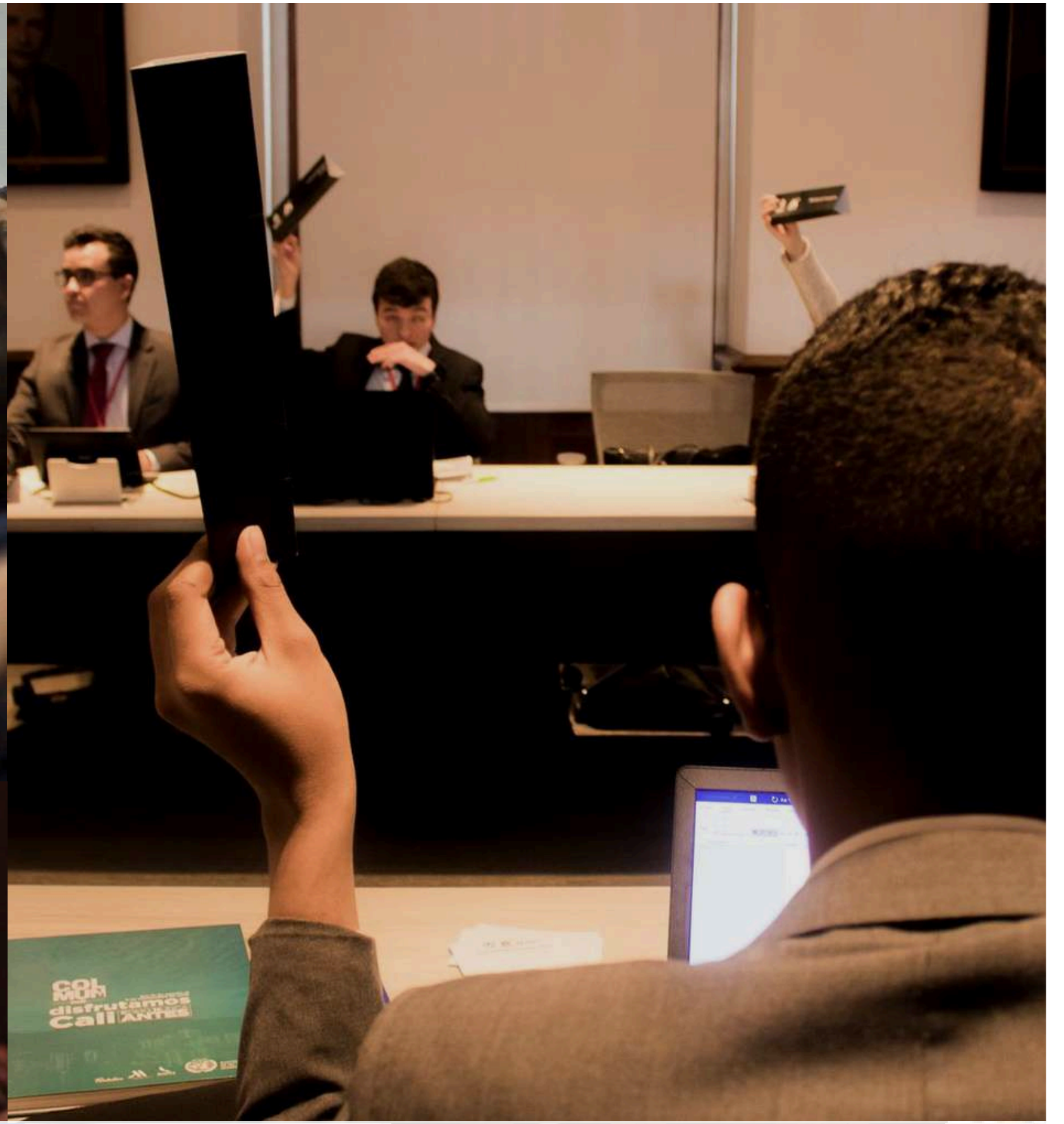
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15 YEARS OF TRADITION







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