Canadian human rights commission | Commission canadienne des droits de la personne

association for the prevention of torture

Indigenous Peoples and Deprivation of Liberty: A Global Dialogue Among National Preventive Mechanisms and NHRIs

Wednesday 25 March 2026

https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/32281124761036?p=3haFtdaNsOjmLOIJgQ

Meeting ID: 322 811 247 610 36 Passcode: wg2Mm92J

Co-hosted by the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) and the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC)

Background and Rationale

Across many regions, Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by deprivation of liberty, often at the intersection of criminal justice systems, mental health frameworks, child protection regimes, and immigration or public-order laws. These dynamics are rooted in colonial legacies, structural discrimination, cultural misunderstanding, and ongoing socio-economic marginalisation.

National Human Rights Institutions and National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs), established under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT), are uniquely positioned to address these risks through preventive monitoring, dialogue with authorities, and system-level recommendations. However, many NPMs report persistent challenges when engaging with places and practices affecting Indigenous peoples.

This event aims to share experiences, challenges, and promising approaches, with the aim of strengthening oversight that is culturally grounded, rights-based, and effective.

Objectives

The initiative aims to:

- Facilitate peer exchange among NHRIs and NPMs on monitoring places of deprivation of liberty affecting Indigenous peoples
- Identify shared challenges and risk factors leading to ill-treatment or discriminatory practices
- Surface promising practices for culturally appropriate monitoring, engagement, and recommendations
- Explore the relationship between OPCAT, UNDRIP, and other relevant standards, including domestic Indigenous rights frameworks
- Lay the groundwork for sustained collaboration, guidance development, or future joint work among NHRIs and NPMs

Agenda

Time (CEST)	
11:00–11:05	Opening remarks, Nicole Hogg, Secretary General, Association for the Prevention of Torture
11:05-11:40	Discussion moderated by Tabatha Tranquilla, Director, Policy, Research and International Division, Canadian Human Rights Commission Speakers: • Dr Claire Achmad, Te Kaikōmihana mō ngā Tamariki, New Zealand Children's Commissioner • Helga Fastrup Ervik, Head of the Norwegian NPM • Shona Reid, Guardian for Children and Young People, South Australian NPM • Rodrigo Solá, representative of the Local Preventive Mechanism of Salta, NPM of Argentina • Camila Antero de Santana, Deputy General Coordinator National Mechanism for the Prevention and Combat of Torture, Brazil Draft questions 1. Where do oversight bodies most often encounter Indigenous peoples in situations of deprivation of liberty—and what risks or commonalities exist across these contexts? 2. What challenges have you faced when trying to conduct monitoring in a way that is culturally appropriate and trusted by Indigenous communities? 3. How can oversight bodies translate what they observe into recommendations that address structural causes—rather than only conditions inside places of detention? 4. "How have you engaged Indigenous communities or organisations in your work and what difference has that made?"
11:40-12:20	Plenary discussion, moderated by Andreea Lachsz, Manager of Policy and Law Reform at the NSW/ACT Aboriginal Legal Service
12:25-12:30	Closing Remarks, Ben Buckland, Senior Oversight Advisor, APT

Translation

The event will include simultaneous translation in English Spanish and Portuguese

Timing for Wednesday 26 March 2026

Location	Local Time
Peru / Colombia	05:00
Ottawa	06:00
Chile	07:00
Brazil / Argentina	07:00
Norway / Switzerland (CEST)	11:00
Perth, Australia	18:00
Canberra, Australia	21:00
New Zealand	23:00