

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Miscellaneous Statements

CAT A/57/44 (2002)

Chapter I. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

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K. Statement of the Committee in connection with the events of 11 September 2001

17. At its 501st meeting, on 22 November 2001, the Committee adopted the following statement:

“By letter dated 11 October 2001, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights solicited the views of the Committee against Torture on the matter of ensuring that the human rights covered by its mandate are maintained with a high visibility in the light of various State responses to the events of 11 September 2001.

“It is in the spirit of this request that the Committee against Torture decided to communicate directly to the States parties to the Convention against Torture the following statement:

“The Committee against Torture condemns utterly the terrorist attacks of 11 September and expresses its profound condolences to the victims, who were nationals of some 80 countries, including many States parties to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Committee is mindful of the terrible threat to international peace and security posed by these acts of international terrorism, as affirmed in Security Council resolution 1368 (2001) of 12 September 2001. The Committee also notes that the Security Council in resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001 identified the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the threats caused by terrorist acts.

“The Committee against Torture reminds States parties to the Convention of the non-derogable nature of most of the obligations undertaken by them in ratifying the Convention.

“The obligations contained in articles 2 (whereby “no exceptional circumstances whatsoever ... may be invoked as a justification of torture”), 15 (prohibiting confessions extorted by torture being admitted in evidence, except against the torturer), and 16 (prohibiting cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) are three such provisions and must be observed in all circumstances.

“The Committee against Torture is confident that whatever responses to the threat of international terrorism are adopted by States parties, such responses will be in conformity with the obligations undertaken by them in ratifying the Convention against Torture.”

18. A copy of this statement was sent to each State party to the Convention.