

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 19 OF THE CONVENTION**

Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture
(Extracts for follow-up of CAT/C/PRT/CO/4)

PORTUGAL

(...)

C. Principal subjects concerns and recommendations

Prison conditions

11. The Committee welcomes the reform of prison legislation reported by the Portuguese delegation which is designed to bring the law on the enforcement of sentences into conformity with the European Prison Rules. It also notes the substantial improvement in prison occupancy rates and the efforts made in the area of health care. The Committee remains concerned, however, about reports of continuing violence among inmates, including sexual violence, and about the persistently high number of deaths in detention, largely attributable to HIV/AIDS and suicide. The Committee is also troubled by reports of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in penitentiary establishments, for instance the case of Mr. Albino Libânio, who allegedly suffered multiple injuries from a beating in 2003 (arts. 11 and 16).

The State party should continue its efforts to improve prison conditions, in particular by maintaining an appropriate prison occupancy rate. It should also step up measures aimed at preventing violence among inmates, including sexual violence, and suicide by prisoners. The State party should, furthermore, take the necessary steps to ensure that the physical and psychological integrity of prisoners is respected under all circumstances.

(...)

Use of “TaserX26” weapons

14. The Committee is deeply concerned about the recent purchase by the State party of electric “TaserX26” weapons for distribution to the Lisbon Metropolitan Command, the Direct Action Corps, the Special Operations Group and the Personal Security Corps. The Committee is concerned that the use of these weapons causes severe pain constituting a form of torture, and that in some cases it may even cause death, as recent developments have shown (arts. 1 and 16).

The State party should consider relinquishing the use of electric “TaserX26” weapons, the impact of which on the physical and mental state of targeted persons would appear to violate articles 1 and 16 of the Convention.

(...)

22. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within one year, information on its response to the Committee's recommendations as contained in paragraphs 11 to 14 above.

(...)
