# TRADE IN GOODS USED FOR THE DEATH PENALTY, TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

**Submission by Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation[1] to the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) in view of its consideration of the Draft Report on possible amendment of Appendices 1 and 3 to Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and on the possibility of introducing a simplified amendment procedure for Appendix 2**

**5 October 2026**

## SUMMARY

This submission by Amnesty International and by the Omega Research Foundation aims to inform the ongoing review by the Council of Europe's (CoE) Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) of the lists of prohibited and controlled goods under the Committee of Ministers *Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 to member States on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment* (CM/Rec(2021)2 or Recommendation) to be considered at its 105th meeting.

Amnesty International, as an observer to the CDDH, and the Omega Research Foundation, have actively shared their expertise as torture-prevention and human rights civil society organizations with the CDDH since the outset of its work leading up to Recommendation CM2021(2).Our organizations support the recommendations for extending, strengthening and regularly reviewing the lists of prohibited and controlled equipment made in the Draft CDDH Report on possible amendment of Appendices 1 and 3 to Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (hereafter 'Draft CDDH Report').[2]

### 1. URGENTLY REQUIRED ADDITIONS TO APPENDIXES 1 AND 3

This submission specifically highlights five items which, due to their well-documented severe human rights impacts, including in the commission of torture or other ill-treatment in custodial and non-custodial contexts, would be vital additions to CM/Rec(2021)2 Appendixes 1 and 3 and therefore require the Committee of Ministers urgent consideration. Our organisations believe that the following prohibitions and controls are absolutely essential for the prevention of torture and other ill-treatment in line with state obligations under the UN Convention against Torture and related instruments:

**1.1. Urgently required additions to the list of prohibited goods in Appendix 1:**

- Direct contact electric shock weapons and equipment
- Multiple kinetic impact projectiles

**1.2. Urgently required additions to the list of controlled goods in Appendix 3:**

- Stun grenades
- Acoustic Devices and Weapons
- Police batons

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[1] This submission is also endorsed by other civil society organisations, a list of whom can be found at the end of the document.

[2] CDDH(2026)12, Draft CDDH Report on possible amendment of Appendices 1 and 3 to Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and on the possibility of introducing a simplified amendment procedure for Appendix 2, 5 June 2026.

### 2. SIMPLIFIED AND BIENNIAL REVIEW PROCEDURE

Our organizations support the proposals made in the Draft CDDH Report to introduce a simplified procedure for the amendment of Appendix 2 regarding pharmaceuticals used in lethal injection, and to extend these provisions to amendment of Appendices 1 and 3 regarding law enforcement equipment used in torture and other ill-treatment, as well as the proposal for a biennial review by the CDDH of goods covered by the instrument.

## OVERVIEW

For several decades, civil society has been actively involved in promoting and supporting efforts to regulate the trade in law enforcement weapons and equipment that can be used for torture and other ill-treatment. Since 2023, a global Torture-Free Trade Network, now made up of over 85 NGOs from all world regions, has been calling on states to create or strengthen national and regional regulations and for the negotiation of an international legally binding Torture-Free Trade Treaty through the United Nations.[3]

In 2023 the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture published an authoritative Study on the global trade in law enforcement weapons and equipment used in torture and other ill-treatment, and established a list of inherently abusive 'Category A' goods that should be prohibited and 'Category B' law enforcement equipment that risk misuse and should be controlled.[4] We support the UN Special Rapporteur's findings and recommendations.

Our organizations also welcome the 2025 revision and expansion made by European Union (EU) Member States of the range of law enforcement equipment and weapons prohibited and controlled under the EU Anti-Torture Regulation.[5] This was an important step forward in regional Torture-Free Trade measures supported by torture prevention organizations.[6] However, certain law enforcement weapons and equipment were not adequately addressed in that process.

We believe that the current CDDH review of the Appendixes in CM/Rec 2021(2) allows CoE Member States an opportunity to incorporate and build on the advances made by the EU, informed by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture's recommendations, so as to strengthen the CoE's own instrument and thereby reenforce its efforts in the prevention of torture and other ill-treatment.

We note that the CDDH itself proposed that: "[T]he Committee of Ministers initiates a review with a view to possible revision of Appendices 1 and 3 of the Recommendation *in order to reflect international developments, address emerging risks and align with* the UN Special Rapporteur on torture's proposed Category A and B lists and the revised draft annexes of the EU Anti-Torture Regulation."[7] [Emphasis added].

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[3] Various NGOs, The Shoreditch Declaration for a Torture-Free Trade Treaty, January 2023, The-Shoreditch-Declaration-ENG.pdf ; Amnesty International, the Omega Research Foundation and the International Human Rights Clinic of Harvard Law School, Essential Elements of a Torture-Free Trade Treaty, (Index: IOR 40/5977/2022), 23 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IOR4059772022ENGLISH.pdf

[4] UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, 24 August 2023, UN Doc. A/78/324, https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a78324-thematic-study-global-trade-weapons-equipment-and-devices-used

[5] European Union, Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/928 of 21 May 2025 amending Regulation (EU) 2019/125 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, 31 July 2025, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32025R0928

[6] United Against Torture Consortium, "European Union Significantly Strengthens Region-Wide Efforts to End the Torture Trade", 31 July 2025, https://omegaresearchfoundation.org/news/european-union-significantly-strengthens-region-wide-efforts-to-end-the-torture-trade/

[7] CDDH Report on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, CDDH(2025)R102 Addendum 4 REV, paragraph 146.

We further note the Committee of Ministers in turn requested the CDDH to undertake this review of Appendices 1 and 3 "with a view to their revision *in the light of* the lists proposed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture...and the revised annexes" of the EU Anti Torture Regulation.[8] [Emphasis added].

We therefore welcome the Draft CDDH Report prepared by the CoE Secretariat ahead of the 104th CDDH meeting, also in its revised version of 4 September 2026 (CDDH(2026)12REV), and support its recommendations, which we believe present a comprehensive overview of the changes necessary to CM/Rec 2021(2). The CDDH now has a unique opportunity to use both the EU Anti-Torture Regulation and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture's lists to enable the Committee of Ministers to establish an ambitious standard for regulation in this area that responds to current usage of this law enforcement equipment in custodial and non-custodial settings, pointing the way forward for future progressive regional and international standard-setting.

We recognize that for EU Member States certain recommendations contained in the Draft CDDH Report (themselves based on the UN Special Rapporteur's 2023 Interim Report) would diverge from the recently revised EU Anti-Torture Regulation. However, CoE CM/Rec(2021)2 is intended to promote and encourage the adoption of progressive policy in all CoE member States and since its inception it has contained certain goods beyond those covered by the EU Anti-Torture Regulation but that were instead covered by other EU instruments. We note in particular that the CoE CM/Rec(2021)2 already contains a list of common tear gases that are controlled in the EU under the Common Military List of the European Union, and that the proposed revision of CoE CM/Rec(2021)2 would likewise include stun grenades which are also controlled under the EU Common Military List.[9] More broadly, we believe that for the EU Member States this CoE process could serve as a model for introducing national measures beyond the EU Anti-Torture Regulation, as well as informing future revisions of the EU Anti-Torture Regulation and the negotiation of a Torture-Free Trade Treaty.

## 1.1. URGENTLY REQUIRED ADDITIONS TO THE LIST OF PROHIBITED GOODS (APPENDIX 1)

### 1. Direct contact electric shock weapons and equipment

Direct contact electric shock weapons and equipment include electric shock 'stun guns', batons, gloves and shields used for law enforcement which deliver a painful electric shock through direct contact between electrodes and the target individual. Voltage varies between models, as does the length of the shock delivered. Direct contact electric shock weapons/equipment cause intense pain at the touch of a button, often without leaving long-lasting identifiable physical traces. They can be used for punishment, to give a sustained shock, multiple shocks, or to shock people on particularly vulnerable/sensitive parts of the body, including for sexual degradation. Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose.

Direct contact electric shock equipment has often been used in conjunction with other law enforcement equipment such as batons, pepper spray and restraints, and torture techniques including waterboarding, stress positions, sexual violence, hooding and mock executions. All parts of the body, including the most sensitive areas, such as genitalia, the inner thighs, palms of hands, soles of feet, the teeth, ears and face, have been subject to electric shocks.

[8] CM/Del/Dec(2025)1539/4.1 - Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) - d. Report on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, 7 October 2025, 3.b.

[9] Riot control agents are controlled under ML7(e); Stun grenades are controlled under ML4 (a), C/2025/1499 Common Military List of the European Union adopted by the Council on 24 February 2025 (equipment covered by Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/1499/oj/eng/pdf

Survivors have suffered burns, numbness, miscarriage, urinary disfunction, insomnia, exhaustion and profound psychological trauma.[10]

In 2025 Amnesty International published a major report *I still can't sleep at night: The Global Abuse of Electric Shock Equipment* which documented the use of direct contact electric weapons and equipment in all regions, including in Europe. Cases reported included the use against protesters, women - including during pregnancy- children, students, political opponents, human rights defenders, lawyers and prisoners of war for threats, punishment, forced confessions and other forms of coercion.[11] Amnesty International has also documented their use on already restrained individuals in acts of torture and other ill-treatment in all world regions.[12]

The dangers of direct contact electric shock weapons have recently been highlighted by news reports that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) plans to spend between $10 million and $20 million purchasing potentially thousands of CTG-5 Generated Low Output Voltage Emitter (G.L.O.V.E.) devices from a US based company.[13] In October 2024, a 43-year-old man died at Madison County Detention Center in Kentucky following an incident in which, according to a pending wrongful-death lawsuit, he was subjected to 27 applications of the G.L.O.V.E. and a further 13 applications of a Taser.[14][15] An internal investigation by the detention centre found that two applications of the G.L.O.V.E. lasted 45 and 99 seconds – significantly longer than that recommended by the manufacturer.[16]

Both the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the European Court of Human Rights have expressed "strong reservations" about the use of direct contact electric shock weapons, stating that "properly trained law enforcement officers have many other control techniques available to them when they are in touching distance of a person who has to be brought under their control".[17]

The UN Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement has noted that the use of direct contact electric shock weapons, including stun guns, creates an especially high risk of "inflicting pain or suffering so severe that it may amount to an element of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".[18] The UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNODC/OHCHR) have stated that: "With regard to electroshock stun guns, shields […] and batons, experts have agreed that there is no tactical utility to any of these that cannot be achieved with another device, and the risk of arbitrary force amounting to torture or

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[10] Amnesty International, *"I still can't sleep at night": The Global Abuse of Electric Shock Equipment"* (Index: POL 30/8990/2025), 6 March 2025.

[11] Amnesty International, *"I still can't sleep at night": The Global Abuse of Electric Shock Equipment"*, (Index: POL 30/8990/2025), 6 March 2025, pp. 17-29.

[12] See Amnesty International, "Iran: Child detainees subjected to flogging, electric shocks and sexual violence in brutal protest crackdown", 16 March 2023, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/03/iran-child-detainees-subjected-to-flogging-electric-shocks-and-sexual-violence-in-brutal-protest-crackdown/; Amnesty International, "Egypt: Children face shocking violations including torture and enforced disappearance", 20 November 2018 [updated 3 December 2018], www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/11/egypt-children-face-shocking-violations-including-torture-and-enforced-disappearance-2/; Amnesty International, "This is worse than covid-19": Ethiopians abandoned and abused in Saudi prisons, (Index: MDE 23/3125/2020), www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2020-09/Report.pdf?ofpXkfgKj_IEX2E2UrWjxmp_ZcloJYda=, p. 15; Amnesty International, *Substance Abuses: The Human Cost of Cambodia's Anti-Drug Campaign*, (Index: ASA 23/2220/2020), www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa23/2220/2020/en/, p. 40.

[13] Omega Research Foundation, "ICE plan to acquire electric shock gloves raises serious concerns over risk of torture", 17 August 2017, https://omegaresearchfoundation.org/news/ice-plan-to-acquire-electric-shock-gloves-raises-serious-concerns-over-risk-of-torture/

[14] WKYT, "Kentucky man died after being tased 40 times in jail, lawsuit claims", 29 October 2025, www.wkyt.com/2025/10/29/kentucky-man-died-after-being-tased-40-times-jail-lawsuit-claims/

[15] Court documents refer to "taser" throughout – unclear whether refers to Axon product or is used as a generic term for projectile electric shock weapon.

[16] Commonwealth of Kentucky Madison Circuit Court Civil Division, Rebecca Mansfield vs Madison County Fiscal Court et al, 27 October 2025, uploads.guim.co.uk/2026/08/20/Mansfield_lawsuit.pdf; WKYT, "Kentucky man died after being tased 40 times in jail, lawsuit claims", 29 October 2025, www.wkyt.com/2025/10/29/kentucky-man-died-after-being-tased-40-times-jail-lawsuit-claims/

[17] European Court of Human Rights, *Anzhelo Georgiev and Others v. Bulgaria*,30 September 2014, para. 76; CPT, "Electrical Discharge Weapons", *op. cit.,* note 33, para. 78.

[18] OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, *op. cit.*, note 7, para. 7.4.12.

other forms of ill-treatment is too great. As such, their use is not advised."[19] The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture stated that direct contact electric shock weapons are inherently cruel and degrading and that their manufacture, trade and use would constitute a violation of the UN Convention against Torture.[20]

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the addition of direct contact electric shock equipment to the list of prohibited goods in Appendix 1 of CM/Rec(2021)2.***

### 2. Multiple Impact Kinetic Impact projectiles

Certain ammunition designed for law enforcement contains and disperses multiple kinetic impact projectiles. Such projectiles are generally non-metallic, can be made from rubber, plastic, or wood, and can vary in terms of their size, number, and shape. The number included in such ammunition can range from a small number of large balls or blocks to hundreds of small projectiles. Ammunition containing multiple kinetic impact projectiles is inaccurate, indiscriminate, arbitrary, and cannot be used safely, as it is not possible to accurately target the projectiles dispersed. As such, the use of this ammunition carries a significant risk of injuries, including to sensitive parts of the body such as the head or eyes. This ammunition also poses a significant risk to bystanders.[21] According to the UNODC: "Weapons that fire multiple projectiles at the same time … should never be used due to the risk of injury to bystanders."[22] UN Guidance on less lethal weapons states that multiple projectiles are inaccurate, "should not be fired in automatic mode" and "in general, their use cannot comply with the principles of necessity and proportionality". Projectiles "should be capable of striking an individual to within a 10-centimetre diameter of the targeted point when fired from the designated range".[23]

Cases of severe injuries, including blindings, have been reported across the world, including the use of rubberised backshot in Chile during protests in October 2019. According to an evaluation by Chile's National Institute for Human Rights, police actions in the protests resulted in more than 440 eye injuries, with over 30 cases of eye loss, or ocular rupture. One of the most severe cases was that of the 22-year-old student, Gustavo Gatica, who was blinded in both eyes after being hit in the face by pellets fired by police.[24]

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the addition of multiple kinetic impact projectiles to the list of prohibited goods in Appendix 1 of CM/Rec(2021)2.***

## 1.2. URGENTLY REQUIRED ADDITIONS TO THE LIST OF CONTROLLED GOODS (APPENDIX 3)

### 1. Stun Grenades

Stun grenades – also known as flash-bang, percussion or concussion grenades – are broad terms for various types of explosive grenades used in law enforcement and military contexts. They are designed to surprise and temporarily disorientate/blind people through intense exposure to sound and light, among other effects. They emit deafeningly loud noise and blinding light; some also emit inert smoke, chemical irritants, or kinetic impact projectiles.

Stun grenades were originally developed by the military for training exercises to simulate explosions. Later they were used by police in high-risk special operations, such as hostage or siege situations. However, they have been

[19] UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.
[20] UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Interim report, 24 August 2023, UN Doc. A/78/324, paras 26, 27, 54.
[21] OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para. 7.5.4.
[22] UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.
[23] OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para. 7.5.6; 7.5.4.
[24] See Amnesty International/Omega Research Foundation, "*My Eye Exploded": the Global Abuse of Kinetic Impact Projectiles*, (Index: ACT 30/6384/2023), 14 March 2023, www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/6384/2023/en/

increasingly used in the policing of public assembly. Amnesty International has reported extensively on multiple protesters recently injured by stun grenades in various countries, including member states of the Council of Europe, where they have caused significant injuries, including severe burns, deafness, and head injuries.[25]

Human Rights Watch highlighted how Uzbek security forces unjustifiably used lethal force and other excessive responses including stun grenades to disperse mainly peaceful demonstrators on 1-2 July 2022 in Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan's autonomous region. Security forces responses included the inappropriate use of small arms and various types of grenades, including stun grenades. At least 21 people died, including four law enforcement officers, and over 270 were injured. Injuries included skin lacerations and gaping flesh wounds, consistent with damage caused by explosives through the use of various types of stun grenades. Human Rights Watch identified two other incidents, in which protesters experienced explosive trauma when security forces used projected flash/bangs and sound charges to disperse protesters.[26] Amnesty International has talked to multiple protesters who had been recently injured by stun grenades in the contexts of protests in a Council of Europe member state.[27]

UN bodies and international human rights organizations have argued that stun grenades should not be used directly against people, be fired into crowds, or used for dispersal of public assembly.[28] The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association has explicitly ruled out their use in the policing of assemblies, stating that weapons that are "overly harmful" should not be deployed in response to assemblies and that "stun grenades [...] should never be used in the context of assemblies".[29]

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the addition of stun grenades to list of controlled goods in Appendix 3 of CM/Rec(2021)2.***

### 2. Acoustic Devices and Weapons

Acoustic devices are loudspeakers that project high-volume sound over long distances. While they can be used to convey information like normal public address systems, they can also produce high-volume sounds at various frequencies, including at levels and frequencies that can be highly irritating or cause pain [alert tones]. Some acoustic devices have been specifically marketed as "acoustic weapons".

Serious health risks are associated with the use of acoustic devices and weapons, particularly at close range, at loud volume and/or for excessive lengths of time. Such risks range from temporary pain, eardrum rupture and loss of balance to deafness. There is a clear risk of acoustic weapons being indiscriminate in their effects. The UN Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement stated that "The indiscriminate use of an acoustic weapon against a crowd, or against targeted individuals at a range where the decibel output is likely to cause permanent hearing damage, would be unlawful." [30] In addition, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has warned that "These weapons and devices pose a risk of causing temporary or permanent hearing damage, depending on the model, distance and duration of exposure. They can be misused indiscriminately against a crowd or to inflict injury on targeted individuals.

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[25] Amnesty International, *The Repression Trade*, 11 October 2023, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2023/10/repression-trade/; Amnesty International, *Greece: Protests Are Not Battlefields: Patterns of Unlawful Use of Force by Police and Impunity in Greece*, (Index: EUR 25/1012/2026), 4 June 2026.

[26] Human Rights Watch, Uzbekistan: Police Abuses in Autonomous Region Protests, 7 November 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/11/07/uzbekistan-police-abuses-autonomous-region-protests

[27] Amnesty International, *Greece: Protests Are Not Battlefields: Patterns of Unlawful Use of Force by Police and Impunity in Greece*, (Index: EUR 25/1012/2026), 4 June 2026.

[28] UNOCHR, Guidance on LLW in Law Enforcement, para. 6.1.4; PHR, Health Impacts of Crowd-Control Weapons: Disorientation Devices; Amnesty International, South Africa: Investigate excessive use of force against "fees must fall" protesters, https://www.amnesty.org/fr/wp content/uploads/2021/05/AFR5357252016ENGLISH.pdf; PHR and INCLO, Health Impacts of Crowd-Control Weapons: Disorientation Devices; https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/08/01/armenia-excessive-police-force-protest; PHR and INCLO, Health Impacts of Crowd-Control Weapons: Disorientation Devices.

[29] Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Clément Nyaletsossi Voule* A/HRC/50/42, para. 46.

[30] OHCHR, UN Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement, 2020, paragraph 7.8.5.

When used continuously over prolonged periods, such as in a prison setting, such misuse could amount to sensory (noise) torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."[31] UN, media and civil society reports have documented use of acoustic devices against protesters in several countries, notably in repeated cases in the United States and in a Council of Europe Member State, causing nausea, panic and hearing issues.[32]

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the addition of Long Range Acoustic Devices to the list of controlled goods in Appendix 3 of CM/Rec(2021)2.***

### 3. Police Batons

Police batons are usually made of rubber, wood, plastic or metal. These are one of the most common types of less lethal weapons with which law enforcement officers are equipped. However, they are also widely misused by law enforcement officials to inflict unnecessary or excessive force through beating. Force from side-handled and longer batons is harder to control, and they can be used to inflict greater injury. If driven 'end on' into the target individual, batons can cause bleeding and serious injury, including injuries to internal organs. Overarm strikes and strikes to the head and other vulnerable areas increase the risk of serious injury or death. Batons are sometimes used to apply dangerous restraint techniques, particularly neck holds that restrict breathing.

Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation documented 188 incidents of the misuse of batons and other striking weapons, from 2011 to 2021 in 35 countries, covering all regions of the globe. These include examples from violent crackdowns of mass protests in countries as diverse as Belarus, Colombia, India and Myanmar, as well as in the CoE region. Other cases documented include strikes against restrained individuals, batons being used to deliberately inflict pain in acts of punishment and to commit sexual violence.[33]

The global misuse of police batons has continued. In September 2022 Amnesty International documented mass detention of peaceful protestors following rallies throughout Russia against President Putin's call to mobilize additional troops to fight in Ukraine. When arresting demonstrators, police officers extensively resorted to unnecessary and excessive force against peaceful protesters, including by beating them with batons and putting them into chokeholds.[34] In Angola Amnesty International documented the use of unnecessary and excessive force by security forces during protests that took place between November 2020 and June 2023. This included cases of indiscriminate baton use by police against protesters who were simply exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly; such police actions were likely to amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or even torture.[35]

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has stated that "Baton weapons have been misused to inflict pain and injury by targeting victims' joints, using abusive neck holds to choke, or committing sexual assault such as anal or vaginal

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[31] UN SRT, Annex 2, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment A/78/324, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/torture/sr/annex-ii-document-august-2023-18-09-23.pdf, p. 12.

[32] Earshot, *Sonic Attack on a Silent Vigil*, https://cms.earshot.ngo/media/pages/investigations/sonic-attack-on-a-silent-vigil/35b77e6f92-1750175141/earshot-report-sonic-attack-on-silent-vigil.pdf; The Guardian, "Calls grow in Serbia for investigation into claims 'sound cannon' targeted protesters", 21 March 2025, www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/21/calls-serbia-investigation-claims-sound-cannon-targeted-protesters; United Nations, Correspondence to the Government of Serbia from the UN Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the right to education; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, ALSRB 2/2025 , 2 April 2025; Amnesty International, On the Streets of America: Human Rights Abuses in Ferguson, 2014, www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/onthestreetsofamericaamnestyinternational.pdf

[33] Amnesty International and Omega Research Foundation, Blunt Force: Investigating the misuse of police batons and related equipment, 9 September 2021, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2021/09/blunt-force/

[34] Amnesty International, "Russia: More than 1,300 protesters detained after Putin's partial military draft", 22nd September 2022.

[35] Amnesty International, Broken Promises Protesters Caught Between Tear Gas, Bullets, and Batons in Angola, (Index: AFR 12/8764/2024), 2024.

rape."[36] In a number of its country reports the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has highlighted the misuse of police batons including in neck holds.[37]

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the addition of police batons to the list of controlled goods in Appendix 3 of the CoE CM/Rec(2021)2.***

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING AND AMENDING APPENDICES

Our organizations note that the Committee of Ministers requested that the CDDH examine the possibility of introducing a simplified procedure for the amendment of Appendix 2 regarding pharmaceuticals used in lethal injection executions and further note that the proposal in the Draft CDDH Report (CDDH2026)12REV for such measures is extended to also encompass a similar procedure for amendment of Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 regarding law enforcement equipment. We further note that the Draft CDDH Report also proposes a biennial review of goods covered in all Appendices. We strongly support such measures.

Our ongoing research demonstrates that manufacturers of law enforcement equipment and weapons are constantly seeking to develop and manufacture new products and/or adapt existing products – some of which may be inherently abusive, whilst other types may be readily misused for torture and other ill-treatment – and to promote such goods to law enforcement bodies around the world. Similarly state entities in certain countries that retain the death penalty and carry out executions through lethal injection, have previously sought to employ additional pharmaceutical chemicals for such executions.

In order to ensure that CoE CM/Rec(2021)2 provides effective guidance to CoE Member States in the range of law enforcement equipment and weapons that should be controlled or prohibited to prevent their use in torture and other ill-treatment, and the range of pharmaceutical chemicals that should be controlled to ensure they are not transferred for use in lethal injection executions, Appendices 1, 2 and 3 should be regularly reviewed and if needed strengthened.

***Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation strongly support the proposal in the Draft CDDH Report (CDDH2026)12REV that the CDDH commit to review, on a biennial basis, the list of pharmaceutical chemicals to be controlled (Appendix 2) to assess whether this list should be amended, and also to extend this process of review and revision to the lists of law enforcement equipment to be prohibited (Appendix 1) and controlled (Appendix 3).***

***In addition, in cases where immediate action is needed to control new pharmaceutical chemicals or law enforcement equipment to prevent their export and use in certain third countries for the death penalty or torture or other ill-treatment respectively, the CDDH should commit to review the relevant Annexes with a view to adding such pharmaceutical chemicals or law enforcement equipment as soon as possible and transmitting this proposal to the Committee of Ministers as a matter of urgency.***

[36] UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Interim report, 24 August 2023, UN Doc. A/78/324, para. 59.
[37] See for example CoE: CPT, Report to the Slovenian Government on the visit to Slovenia carried out by the CPT from 31 January to 6 February 2012, 19 July 2013, CPT/Inf (2013) 16, para. 67.

Submission authored by Amnesty International† and Omega Research Foundation*†, and endorsed by the following organisations:

- Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT)*†
- Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)†
- DIGNITY†
- Freedom from Torture†
- International Federation of ACATs (FIACAT)*†
- International Network of Civil Liberties Organisations (INCLO)†
- International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)*†
- REDRESS*†
- Reprieve
- World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)*†

** Members of the United Against Torture Consortium*
*† Members of the Torture-Free Trade Network*