

# UN Criticizes Russia Over Torture Allegations

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UNITED NATIONS — The UN Committee Against Torture strongly criticized Russia in a report for failing to investigate widespread allegations of torture and stepping up intimidation and reprisals against human rights advocates and journalists.

The panel of 10 independent experts expressed concern at the discrepancy between the high number of complaints of torture and ill treatment that it received from detainees and the relatively low number of criminal cases opened by authorities in response leading to prosecution.

The report on Russia's compliance with a 1987 treaty against torture and other degrading punishments also expressed serious concern about numerous allegations that detainees have been tortured to extract confessions that were then used as evidence in court.

The panel issued the report at the end of a four-week session in Geneva which included two meetings on Russia. A high-level Russian delegation reported on a number of new treaties ratified by the government, its establishment of a committee to investigate crimes that is

independent of the state prosecutor's office and public oversight committees to monitor detention facilities.

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