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**CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE EXPANDS TRAINING PROJECT
TO SUDAN AND CAMEROON**

Project to increase indigenous treatment centers' long-term sustainability

Minneapolis—The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) today announced that torture treatment centers in Sudan and Cameroon will join its international training project to improve healing services for torture survivors in their countries.

The Amel Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in Sudan and the Center for Rehabilitation and Abolition of Torture in Cameroon join 16 other torture treatment centers in CVT's International Capacity-Building Project (ICB).

In many countries, torture is a significant public health problem and a barrier to democracy due to the destruction of civil society caused by political repression. Torture treatment centers play a unique role in the effort to end torture by documenting abuse and using their position as healers to advocate for human rights.

The number of centers providing care to torture survivors has grown dramatically, from three in 1985 to 200 today. However, many operate with a severe shortage of human and financial resources and work in isolation, without the emotional and intellectual support of colleagues.

The ICB project is designed to overcome those barriers and assist centers in four areas: clinical skills, fundraising and organizational development, technology enhancement and advocacy. An on-site assessment is conducted to gauge each center's strengths and weaknesses and create a development plan based on self-identified priorities. Funds are provided through sub-grants for specific organizational, technological or clinical improvements.

"Governments use torture to destroy leaders, usually at the grassroots level, and control societies through fear. Indigenous torture treatment centers like those in Sudan and Cameroon are part of a global movement to reclaim that leadership and help societies overcome cultures of fear and apathy created by torture," said Pamela Kriege Santoso, ICB Project Manager.

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*TORTURE TREATMENT CENTERS IN SUDAN AND CAMEROON JOIN
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT*

Page 2

The indiscriminate violence, rape and harassment in Darfur have produced an overwhelming amount of psychological and physical trauma among the population. The Amel Centre dedicates much of its energy toward these problems.

Founded in 1999, the Amel Centre maintains an office in the capital of Khartoum, a branch in southern Sudan to assist internally displaced persons, and two branches in the heart of the ongoing violence in Darfur. Amel staff work on treatment and rehabilitation of survivors. They also provide legal aid for victims making statements to police or filing cases against perpetrators.

While Cameroon generally has a stable civil society, it is ruled authoritatively, leading to human rights violations including unwarranted killings by police. The most common violations occur in detention. Prisoners are routinely beaten, held in overcrowded and unsanitary cells, and denied access to food and water. Women in detention are vulnerable to sexual violence by other prisoners, putting them at risk for sexually transmissible diseases and HIV/AIDS.

The Cameroon center also provides care to a growing refugee population fleeing conflicts in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The center receives referrals from national and international aid groups, hospitals and health centers, and works directly in prisons. Services focus on the rehabilitation through medical, psychosocial and psychiatric care.

“We want to be part of ICB principally because of its resourcefulness and its wider global scope,” said Ajuo Basil Tifu, executive director of the Center for Rehabilitation and Abolition of Torture (CRAT) in Cameroon. “Since CRAT shares the same ideals, we feel that we can improve our capacity and effectiveness by being part of ICB.”

The ICB project launched in 2001 and is funded by the United States Agency for International Development through the Torture Victims Relief Act.

CVT is a nonprofit with headquarters in Minneapolis and offices in St. Paul, Washington D.C., Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its mission is to heal the wounds of torture on individuals, their families and their communities and to stop torture worldwide.

To view a list of ICB partner centers, visit:

<http://www.cvt.org/main.php/BuildingHealingCommunities/InternationalOutreach/InternationalCapacity-BuildingProject>

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