

[DATE]

Re: Immediately end the broad use of torture within Canadian prisons

Dear [MP NAME],

Despite Prime Minister Trudeau's long-standing promise that there would be an "end" to solitary confinement, the abusive practice of prolonged solitary confinement occurs in federal prisons to this day. This practice is prohibited by the United Nations as a form of torture and has been found by Canadian courts to violate Charter rights.

In November of 2019, the government implemented Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) to replace administrative segregation. This 'replacement' was little more than a rebranding. [Former Minister of Public Safety, Ralph Goodale, stated himself that the physical infrastructure of the SIUs are "virtually indistinguishable" from segregation units.](#) Criminologists Dr. Anthony Doob and Dr. Jane Sprott have written a series of reports detailing the failures of the SIUs. [It is appalling that they have found that 10% of those in an SIU are subjected to treatment meeting the internationally recognized definition of torture.](#) It is more appalling that [Minister of Public Safety Bill Blair accepted this finding](#) with no decisive action taken to immediately terminate this abuse.

Torture anywhere in federal prisons, not only restricted to the SIUs, must come to an immediate end. This includes torture in dry cells, restricted movement areas, excessive lock-downs and other similar units. Of a significant concern is the use of medical isolation in prisons. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified inadequacies within penitentiaries. Though there is undoubtedly a need to contain the spread of coronavirus, [the Correctional Service Canada's medical isolation policy is so broad as to likely fail to safeguard the constitutional rights of prisoners.](#)

Torture occurring within Canada cannot be met with inaction. The government has yet to take appropriate action. A commitment to ending torture in prisons, that is reinforced by concrete actions and policy, is the bare minimum that Canadian citizens must be able to expect from their elected representatives.

[SALUTATION],

[NAME]