

Guidelines for Dentists against Torture

ADOPTED by the FDI General Assembly **October, 2007** in **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**
The FDI World Dental Federation supports and endorses the World Medical Association guidelines, from which this statement has been adapted.

1. It is the privilege of the dentist to practise dentistry in the service of humanity, to preserve and restore oral health without distinction as to persons, and to ease the dental suffering of his or her patients. The utmost respect for human life is to be maintained even under threat. Without discrimination, all sick and injured shall be treated on the basis of their clinical needs and dental resources available. No use is to be made of any medical or dental knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity.
2. Whilst respecting generally acknowledged patients' rights, dentists must have complete clinical independence in deciding upon the care of persons for whom they are dentally responsible. The dentists' primary role is to alleviate the dental distress of their fellow human beings and no motive, whether personal, collective or political, shall prevail against this higher purpose.
3. The dentist shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, whatever the offence of which the victim of such procedures is suspected, accused or guilty, and whatever the victim's beliefs or motives, and in all situations, including armed conflict and civil strife.
4. Dentists shall not use nor allow to be used, as far as they can, medical or dental knowledge or skills, or health information specific to individuals, to facilitate or otherwise aid any interrogation, legal or illegal, of those individuals.
5. The dentist shall not provide any premises, instruments, substances or knowledge to facilitate the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or to diminish the ability of the victim to resist such treatment.
6. Dentists shall not be present during any procedure during which torture or any other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is used or threatened and shall denounce any such request to attend.
7. When providing dental assistance to detainees or prisoners who are, or could later be, under interrogation, dentists must ensure the confidentiality of all personal medical and dental information of these individuals.
8. A dentist shall keep proper dental records and shall not alter these records or otherwise suppress information relevant to the patient's dental condition and treatment, if such alteration is to facilitate the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures or to conceal such acts from public scrutiny and retribution.
9. Where authorities are participating in torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, a dentist must denounce and is to resist these authorities to the fullest extent that prudence will permit. A breach of the Geneva Conventions shall in any suspected case be reported by the dentist to the relevant authorities; the report should safeguard the confidentiality of the victim to help protect the victim from further such harm.
10. The FDI World Dental Federation will support, and should encourage the international community, the national dental associations and fellow dentists to support, dentists and their families in the face of threats or reprisals resulting from a refusal to condone the use of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.