



Press Statement

11th January 2024

College of Psychiatrists welcomes Forensic Psychiatrist Prof Gautam Gulati Election to European Committee for Prevention of Torture

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland welcomes the election of specialist consultant forensic psychiatrist, and college member, Professor Gautam Gulati, as Ireland's member at the Council of Europe (CoE) Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT).

The CPT is a specialised independent monitoring body of the CoE, consisting of independent, impartial experts such as lawyers, medical doctors and specialists in prison and police matters. It visits places of detention in the member states of the CoE to see how persons deprived of their liberty are treated, and produces reports of its findings to which Governments are obliged to respond to. Many practices in Irish prisons and other places of detention have been abolished or improved following the CPT reports.

It is not an investigative body, but provides a non-judicial preventative mechanism to protect persons deprived of their liberty against torture and other forms of ill-treatment. It thus complements the judicial work of the European Court of Human Rights.

Each of the 46 member states of the CoE has one member on the CPT. Mr Mark Kelly, Chief Inspector of Prisons, was previously Ireland's member on the CPT.

Speaking today, as Prof Gautam is officially in post on the CPT, **Dr Lorcan Martin, President of the College of Psychiatrists and a Consultant Psychiatrist**, said:

"The College extends the warmest of congratulations to Professor Gulati on his election to this committee. Not only will Prof Gulati have the honour of representing his country on the European stage, but it is also notable that he is the first medical doctor to be the member for Ireland on the CPT. We wish him the very best in his role."

Professor Gulati said:

"I am honoured to be elected as the CPT member in respect of Ireland, where I look forward to a term of meaningful engagements, advancing the human rights of people in custody and detention. I would like to pay tribute to the outgoing member Mr Mark Kelly for his important contribution to advancing human rights at a supra-national level across the 46 member states."

Prof Gulati is a Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist at Cork and Adjunct Professor at the University of Limerick. He holds doctorates in Forensic Psychiatry (MD) and Law (PhD) and Fellowships of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, Royal College of Psychiatrists and of the Higher Education Academy. He has previously contributed to human rights initiatives in Romania, Belgium, Austria, Norway, Ireland and the United States.

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