

Professor Erik Holst, MD

He was born in Denmark, December 1, 1929

He has a Medical Degree (1956) and a Diploma of Public Health (1964) from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Starting his clinical career in Internal Medicine he finished his academic career as Professor and Chair of the Institute of Social Medicine at the University of Copenhagen 1978 – 92 and teaching Comparative Health Policy as visiting Professor at the School of Public Health, UCLA, 1986 -89

He was Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Danish Medical Journal from 1967-80, President of the Standing Committee of Doctors of the European Union from 1977-79, and finally President of Danish Medical Association from 1980-86.

In 1990 he took over the chair of the board of the Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims, RCT, Copenhagen, and from 1993 he left both the University of Copenhagen and Denmark to become full-time Executive Vice-President of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) managing its Geneva Liaison Office.

In this capacity he has helped initiate centres in many parts of the world and organized International Symposia on Torture as a Challenge to the Medical and other Health Professions in **Budapest in 1991**, in **Istanbul in 1992**, in **Buenos Aires in 1993**, in **Cape Town in 1995** and in **Delhi in 1999**.

He was member of the board of AVRE, the first centre for victims of torture in Paris 1995-2000

And he has worked closely with Dr. Bhogendra Sharma since 1992 and has been involved in many seminars and workshops on medical aspects of torture held in Nepal.

He was member of the Danish Government Delegation to the UN World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993, where Denmark managed to introduce a whole page on the issue of torture in the final Declaration and from 1996-99 he was member of the Danish Government Delegations to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

He was instrumental in the move to create a special budget line for victims of torture in the EU from 1994 and has been actively promoting increased state contributions to the UNVFVT. In this context he has testified before several committees in US Congress in support of the efforts of the Center for Victims of Torture, Minneapolis, to increase US contributions to the UN Fund as well as directly to centres inside and outside the US.

He retired from IRCT in 1999 after a successful International Seminar on Torture as a Challenge to the Health, Legal and other Professions, which he organized in Delhi in collaboration with the Indian National Human Rights Commission, the Indian Medical Association, and the Indian Law Institute. The opening speech was held by the Chief Justice of India.

Since 2001 he is a Board member of the Association for Prevention of Torture (APT) in Geneva and has represented APT at UN consultations on Basic Principles for Reparations to Victims of Human Rights Violations and at the sessions of UN CHR in 2003 and 2004. He currently serves as honorary international consultant to the ICAR Foundation, Romania, and to the Latin European Coalition of Centres for Victims of Torture.

Since 1993 a resident of France, he lives close to Geneva in Divonne-les-Bains. Besides his Danish mother tongue he speaks and writes English and French. He is married to the founder and medical director of the ICAR Foundation, Romania, created after the 1989 revolution to provide medical services to victims of political repression in that country. He has good reading knowledge of Romanian.