



September 16, 2020

Dr. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

RE: CPA Ethics Clarification Regarding Work on Torture and Weapons of Mass Destruction

Dr. [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email about the CPA Ethics Clarification Regarding Work on Torture and Weapons of Mass Destruction. The CPA's Committee on Ethics (CoE) has carefully reviewed your email and its attachment. The CPA's Board of Directors has also reviewed your email and its attachment and is fully in support of the response as below.

The CoE has also reviewed communications between you and the CPA's Ethics Committee from 1991-1996 as well as an article related to the issue that was published by Dr. Carole Sinclair and Dr. Jean Pettifor in *Psynopsis* in 1992. The title of the article was "Crisis and conscience: The military and a just society" [*Psynopsis*, 14 (2), 10-11]. No members of the CoE who are still on the Committee since 1995 have been involved in the review.

The CoE has found no evidence supporting your allegations that, through the 1990's, the CPA "has made a series of policy statements that allow its members to contribute to armed force, killing and even weapons of mass destructions under some circumstances." To clearly address the issue, the following statement was added to the 2nd edition (1991) of the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists*:

"IV.24 Not contribute to nor engage in research or any other activity which promotes or is intended for use in the torture of persons, the development of prohibited weapons, destruction of the environment or any other act that contravenes international law." (CPA's Companion Manual to the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, 1991, p. 75)

The CPA's position was reiterated in the 3rd edition (2000) of the *Code* by stating the following:


"IV. 27 Not contribute to nor engage in research or any other activity that contravenes international humanitarian law, such as the development of methods intended for use in the torture of persons, the development of prohibited weapons, or destruction of the environment." (CPA's Companion Manual to the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, 2000, p. 95)

The CPA's position was reiterated again in the 4th and most recent edition of its *Code* in 2017:

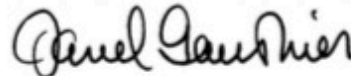
"IV.26 Not promote, contribute to, nor engage in any activity that contravenes international humanitarian law (e.g., declarations, treaties, or conventions regarding: human rights; torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment; economic, social and cultural rights; civil and political rights; rights of indigenous peoples; children's rights; weapons of mass destruction; destruction of the environment)." (CPA's Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, 2017, p. 33).

The CPA has never considered for adoption, let alone adopted and issued, any policy statement that would contravene the ethical principles and values promoted in the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists*. The CPA's position about torture and weapons of mass destruction has always been that psychologists are not to promote, contribute to, nor engage in any activity that contravenes international humanitarian law, which includes participating in the torture of persons, the development of prohibited weapons, and the destruction of the environment.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Corace, Ph.D., C.Psych.
President (2020-2021)
Canadian Psychological Association



Janel Gauthier, Ph.D.
Chair of the Committee on Ethics
Canadian Psychological Association