Editors' preface

There are many works on the prohibition of torture, written from many different perspectives. It would be impossible to reflect all those perspectives in a single work and so, as explained in more detail in the introductory chapter, we have chosen to focus on the legal and medical dimensions of that prohibition. During the time of its writing, we have served as Chairs of the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Subcommittee for Prevention of Torture and so the collection inevitably has a particular focus on international action through the United Nations, but by no means exclusively so. A positive consequence of this is that those contributing to this work come from a broad range of countries as well as a wide array range of disciplines. This adds greatly to the breadth of perspectives offered and, rather than impose unnecessary and constraining uniformity, we have been happy to permit contributors to conform to their respective academic writing styles and conventions. All, however, conform to the common tradition of rigour and of insightful commentary and analysis – for which we are grateful.

We are also grateful to the authors for their patience with a project which has taken longer to come to fulfilment than they, in their initial enthusiasm, had intended. It would have taken much longer again but for the outstanding assistance and support which we received from Una Marquard-Busk, to whom we are immensely indebted. We are also very grateful indeed for the patience of the publisher – and can only hope that authors, publisher and readers will agree that the product has been worth the waiting. We believe it to be so.

Malcolm Evans and Jens Modvig
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