



AMNESTY CALLS FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION

Amnesty International is increasingly concerned about the ever-growing body of evidence detailing torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of detainees in US custody. The sheer number of allegations and investigations and the striking similarity of the charges that have followed the US government from Afghanistan to Guantanamo to Iraq and beyond strongly suggest a pattern and practice of abuse by agents of the US government and the outsourcing of torture to third party governments. Although the US government has conducted numerous internal investigations, none have been given a mandate that would allow them to look at all levels of civilian and military leadership and determine who is responsible and should be held accountable for policies that set the stage for such abuse.

Amnesty International calls for an independent commission of inquiry to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into torture and other abuses in Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo, and elsewhere, and for assurances that those who perpetrated crimes and those who contributed to a command climate that facilitated crimes are brought to justice. The commission should be composed of credible experts independent of government, must have broad-ranging powers to examine the administration's detention policies and practices and ensure accountability at the highest level, and hearings and findings should be made public.

Specifically, Amnesty International is concerned about:

Extraordinary Renditions - Growing evidence of a US practice of transferring detainees into the custody of countries with a known record of torture in violation of US obligations under federal law and the Convention Against Torture.

Indefinite and Arbitrary Detention - Hundreds of people from several nations are being held without charge or trial in Guantanamo Bay, with thousands more being detained in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.

Disappearances - The US government has admitted to keeping "ghost detainees" in custody without registering them and without allowing access to the International Committee of the Red Cross. Allegations of torture and deaths in custody have been reported.

Use of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment - Government documents have revealed the use of interrogation techniques that amount to torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment with some of those tactics being approved by high ranking administration officials.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA RECOMMENDS THE US GOVERNMENT:

- ✓ Immediately cease the outsourcing of torture through "extraordinary renditions" that transfer detainees into the custody of governments who torture;
- ✓ Charge all those held in US custody with a recognizably criminal offense and try them in a fair, public and established system of justice or release them unconditionally;
- ✓ Register all detainees currently in US custody and allow unfettered access to all detainees and all facilities by the International Committee of the Red Cross and independent human rights organizations like Amnesty International;
- ✓ Comply with all of its obligations under federal and international law regarding the treatment of detainees;
- ✓ Appoint an independent commission of inquiry to investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment that will address the responsibility and accountability for policies and practices at all levels of military and civilian leadership.