

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stands against secret detention and illegal transfers

The adoption of the resolution and recommendations on *Secret detentions and illegal transfers of detainees involving Council of Europe member states*, in the report presented by Senator Dick Marty is a welcome first step towards ending the "legal and moral quagmire", in which secret detention, torture and other grave abuses have been practised with impunity. It is now up to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers to end its silence, publicly condemn rendition and secret detention and demand that the member states initiate independent, impartial and effective investigations into state complicity and cooperation in rendition and secret detention, and bring those responsible to justice.

Mr Marty's report demonstrates that complicity with the US came not just from countries most directly involved in the secret detention program, but from all the members and partners of NATO, who signed up to terms that allowed free reign to CIA operations. The report deplores the fact that concepts of state secrecy or national security are invoked by many Governments to obstruct judicial and parliamentary proceedings aimed at ensuring accountability for human rights violations arising from illegal counter-terrorism measures. Council of Europe member states must ensure that multilateral and bilateral agreements and actions taken to implement them, including those made the context of NATO, are consistent with their duties to respect and protect human rights.

Amnesty International reiterates its call on the Council of Europe to initiate the drafting of standards recommended by its Secretary General in September 2006, aimed at ensuring effective democratic oversight and accountability for all intelligence services, including by ensuring that their use of state and civilian aircraft complies with human rights standards, and creating a framework for the waiver of immunity of state officials suspected of human rights violations.

These measures are essential to demonstrate the real commitment -- in action as in words -- of the Council of Europe and its member states to the founding principles of the Council of Europe. Respect for human rights and the rule of law demand no less. Our future collective and individual security depends on it.