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Council of Europe: PACE calls for an end to rendition and secret detention

The adoption by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) of a resolution aimed at ensuring that states in Europe take specific measures to end the US-led practice of rendition and secret detention is a milestone in unravelling the web of unlawful conduct that has resulted in torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearance of individuals.

Echoing concerns raised by Amnesty International, the PACE inquiry, led by Senator Dick Marty of Switzerland, that concluded that “authorities in several European countries actively participated with the CIA in these unlawful activities.”

Presenting his findings to date today Senator Marty said: “It is necessary to admit that mistakes have been made and to begin work on improving matters.”

Reaffirming its absolute commitment to countering terrorism in a manner that respects the rule of law and human rights, the Assembly has called on the 46 member states of the Council of Europe to ensure an end to rendition and secret detention and the transfer of any individual to a place where they risk serious violations of their human rights.

Both the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly and its Secretary General have underscored the need for regulation of the actions of national and foreign security services to ensure that their actions are consistent with respect for human rights and to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

The Assembly has also called on the US and European states to initiate full and effective independent investigations into renditions and secret detention, with the results made public, to bring those responsible for participating in these unlawful practices to justice and to ensure that the victims, most of whom are still languishing in prison cells across the world have access to redress and receive compensation.