

Email dated 17 October 2005

Torture “evidence” is unacceptable.

Amnesty International and 13 other organizations are seeking a ruling from the UK’s highest court that would render torture “evidence” inadmissible

Torture is never acceptable and evidence extracted under torture should never be admissible in any court, except in proceedings against the alleged torturer.

Amnesty International has joined forces with 13 other organisations in asking the UK Law Lords to overturn a 2004 judgement which permits the admissibility of evidence obtained by torture abroad, providing the torture was not committed or connived by UK agents.

Failing to rule out the use of any torture evidence would amount to giving a “**green light**” to torturers worldwide. The UK should not be legitimizing the actions of torturers. Instead it should uphold the absolute prohibition of torture in all circumstances.

The serious human rights deficit of policies and legislative measures that have been pursued in the UK in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA, including the latest **Terrorism Bill 2005** are alarming. The UK is at an important crossroads and must now take a lead in reasserting the respect for human dignity and international law.

Upholding human rights is not merely compatible with a successful counter-terrorism strategy. It is an essential element in it.” Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, March 2005

In its submission to the Law Lords to underscore the fact that evidence obtained by torture is never acceptable, Amnesty International has joined forces with: the Advice Centre on Individual Rights in Europe (The AIRE Centre), the Association for the Prevention of Torture, British Irish Rights Watch, The Committee on the Administration of Justice, Doctors for Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, The International Federation of Human Rights, INTERIGHTS, The Law Society of England and Wales, Liberty, the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, REDRESS and the World Organisation Against Torture.

The organizations are represented in this case, *pro bono*, by Keir Starmer QC, Mark Henderson, Joseph Middleton, Peter Morris, Laura Dubinsky and Professor Nick Grief all of Doughty Street Chambers and Richard Stein, Jamie Beagent, Jo Hickman and Rosa Curling of Leigh Day & Co. Solicitors.

Full text of submission to the House of Lords