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News Flash

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Pakistan/South Africa: Khalid Mehmood Rashid appears after 18 months of secret detention

Amnesty International today received information from Pakistan sources that Khalid Mehmood Rashid, who disappeared after being handed over by South African government officials to agents of the Pakistan Government on 6 November 2005, appeared before the "Federal Review Board" in the Supreme Court Building in Islamabad on 12 April 2007.

Although the authorities reportedly have been ordered to transfer him to a prison in Rawalpindi and allow him access to his family and medical care, Mr Rashid was still in the custody of the Inter-services Intelligence [ISI] on 16 April.

"Mr Rashid has already suffered 18 months of secret detention and it is totally unacceptable for the Pakistan authorities to continue to deny him access to his lawyer, family and medical care. This situation must be immediately addressed and Mr Rashid be brought to justice in a fair trial or released without delay", said Erwin Van Der Borgh, acting Director of the Africa Programme at Amnesty International

Amnesty International is seeking further information about this development. The organization remains extremely concerned for Mr Rashid's well-being, after nearly 18-months of incommunicado detention which is a high risk factor for torture. It had appealed in 2006 to the government of Pakistan for him to be produced before a court without delay and either to be brought to justice promptly in a fair trial or released from custody. In addition, Amnesty International had raised its concerns last year about this case with the South African Government, who appeared to have breached its obligations under Article 3 of the UN Convention Against Torture by participating in the enforced disappearance of and exposing Mr Rashid to the risk of torture.

For further information please see:

South Africa: Government must investigate circumstances of "disappeared" Pakistani's transfer

<http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGAFR530012006>

South Africa Briefing for the Committee against Torture

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR530022006?open&of=ENG-2F3>

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