

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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### COUNTER-TERRORISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE RULES OF THE GAME HAVE NOT CHANGED, SAYS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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(Brussels, 14 December 2005) The current European Union's counter-terrorism strategy is failing to uphold fundamental rights, said Amnesty International in an Open letter sent today to the European Heads of State or Government, on the eve of the EU Summit.

With continuous disclosures suggesting complicity from EU Member States in CIA transfers and detention of suspects, and actual investigations on secret detention sites on EU territory starting to take place, Amnesty International finds the EU's response so far unsatisfactory.

The human rights organisation believes that the EU has a legal, political and moral duty to ensure that no Member States are directly or indirectly involved in "disappearances" and torture. It rejects the US Secretary of State's assertions that "extraordinary renditions" are permissible under international law. On the contrary, any involvement of EU Member States in such transfers, including the mere act of allowing facilities at airports, is equally in breach of international law (see "*Appeal to the European Council to reassert the Union's fundamental values in the fight against terrorism*", available at [www.amnesty-eu.org](http://www.amnesty-eu.org)).

"Rhetoric about "combating terrorism while respecting human rights" does not work any longer" said Dick Oosting, Director of the EU Office of Amnesty International, "As leaders bury their heads in the sand, the credibility of the EU is being compromised both at home and abroad".

Amnesty International calls on the European Council to state unequivocally that it will not tolerate any national or EU law or practice in the fight against terrorism that violates the principles of respect for the rule of law and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The full text of the Open letter to EU Heads of State is available at: [www.amnesty-eu.org](http://www.amnesty-eu.org).

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