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Lithuania blocking the truth about CIA Secret Prisons

The Lithuanian authorities must reconsider a decision not to re-open an investigation into CIA secret prisons on Lithuanian territory, Amnesty International said today.

The announcement by the country's Prosecutor General comes just weeks after Amnesty International issued a report with new information about extraordinary rendition flights into Lithuania during the time the sites were alleged to be operating.

The organization, along with London-based Reprieve, had urged the authorities to re-instate a criminal investigation into the country's role in the US-led rendition and secret detention programmes. Reprieve had provided new information about rendition flights for the report.

"The Prosecutor's claim that there's nothing left to investigate is simply not credible," said Julia Hall, Amnesty International's expert on counter-terrorism and human rights.

"There is a significant amount of information, old and new, that has not been fully investigated. The only reason left to refuse to re-open the investigation is fear of the truth."

A Lithuanian parliamentary inquiry conducted in 2009 concluded that two secret detention facilities had been prepared to receive detainees.

The Prosecutor General began an investigation into the matter in January 2010, but closed it a year later on highly dubious grounds, including the claim that information gathered by the prosecutor's office could not be disclosed because it constituted a "state secret".

The report released by Amnesty International, *Unlock the Truth in Lithuania: Investigate Secret Prisons Now*, argued that critical evidence from the first investigation had not been adequately investigated. A delegation from Amnesty International and the Vilnius-based Human Rights Monitoring Institute met government officials in September to urge that the investigation be re-opened.

Among the new developments cited were credible allegations that Abu Zubaydah, currently detained at the US detention facility in Guantánamo Bay, had been detained in a Lithuanian secret prison.

"We know people were tortured in facilities just like the ones discovered in Lithuania", said Julia Hall.

"If such abuse occurred in Lithuania too, the public has a right to know; the victims have a right to the truth; and the government has an obligation to bring to justice those who were responsible. The Prosecutor's refusal to investigate his country's role in the CIA's secret detention programme is a disgraceful dereliction of duty and a serious violation of Lithuania's human rights commitments."