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## **Lithuania must reopen CIA secret prison Investigation**

The investigation surrounding the existence of secret prisons run by the US Central Agency (CIA) in Lithuania must not be closed until all avenues of evidence have been thoroughly pursued, Amnesty International said today.

The Lithuanian Prosecutor General recently closed the investigation into whether State Security Department (SSD) officials had colluded with the CIA to create and operate the secret sites on 14 January 2011.

“Closing this investigation is premature”, said Julia Hall, Amnesty International’s expert on counter-terrorism and human rights in Europe.

“By shuttering the investigation before all the evidence has been gathered and all lines of inquiry pursued, the prosecutor cuts off a process that had the potential to hold people accountable for serious human rights violations.”

A Lithuanian parliamentary inquiry issued a report in December 2009 concluding that the secret prisons existed and that SSD officials should be investigated for “abuse of power” under Lithuanian law.

When it closed the investigation last week, the Lithuanian prosecutor said SSD officials had committed “disciplinary offenses” by failing to notify top government officials of the operation, but that a statute of limitations on the investigation of the SSD had run out.

An Amnesty International delegation met prosecutors conducting the investigation into the secret sites in November 2010 to present a new report titled *Open Secret: Mounting Evidence of Europe’s Complicity in Renditions and Secret Detention* (Index: EUR 01/023/2010). The organization’s delegation was assured by the prosecutor that the investigation would continue and at that time the prosecutor made no mention of a pending statute of limitations.

Amnesty International has since prepared a dossier of information relevant to the investigation that it planned to send to the prosecutors this week. The dossier will still be sent along with a letter encouraging the prosecutor to pursue the lines of inquiry suggested by Amnesty International.

“It is abundantly clear from our meetings in Lithuania that there is a lot of evidence about the Lithuanian sites that has yet to be examined by the prosecutors”, said Julia Hall.

“The investigation should continue until that information has been assessed. The parliamentary inquiry and subsequent criminal investigation set a powerful example for the rest of the region that accountability for rendition and secret detention is possible. Lithuania has a legal obligation to investigate these allegations thoroughly and impartially. That can’t be done unless the prosecutor doggedly pursues every bit of evidence, which has not happened in this case.”