

AI Index: PRE 01/611/2011
08 December 2011

Romania must come clean over secret prisons

Romania must come clean over secret prisons

The Romanian authorities must re-open an investigation into CIA secret detention centres on its territory, Amnesty International said today after new evidence of secret prisons was revealed by a German newspaper.

Süddeutsche Zeitung today published compelling fresh evidence that the CIA rendered and tortured “suspects of terrorism” in European states including Romania in the years following the 11 September terror attacks.

"For many years, we have urged the Romanian government to fully explain its involvement in the CIA rendition and secret detention programmes," said Nicola Duckworth, Amnesty International's Europe and Central Asia Director.

"The Romanian authorities must now respond to these accusations that a secret detention centres was located on its soil and people were held there. Simple denials will no longer do."

Süddeutsche Zeitung reportedly received information from former CIA agents that Romania, as well as Poland and Lithuania, had hosted secret detention centre.

As recently as in November, the Romanian government refused to reopen the investigation into secret prisons.

It declared that there was no proof of the allegations of its involvement into the CIA-led rendition programme, or the existence of secret detention centres on Romanian territory.

Romania was identified as early as 2005 as a country alleged to have hosted a secret CIA detention facility.

Reports by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament also alleged that Romania hosted a secret detention facility.

However, a secret internal inquiry conducted by the Romanian government in 2007 concluded that the accusations were “groundless”.

"Romania must now conduct an independent, thorough and effective investigation into these reports. Too much information is now in the public domain to stall any longer. A refusal to investigate its role in the CIA's secret detention programme is a serious violation of Romania's human rights commitments." said Nicola Duckworth.