

WEB UPDATES – TACTICAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST TORTURE

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Section	Features
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Title

Off the record secret CIA detention

Summary

In the most comprehensive list to date, six leading human rights organizations have published the names of at least 39 men, who are believed to have been held in secret US custody and who are still missing.

The wives and children of other detainees in secret CIA custody have also been arrested and interrogated.

Take action now!

Body

At least 39 individuals who remain missing are believed to have been subjected to enforced disappearance by the US authorities. The wives and children of other detainees in secret CIA custody have also been held in custody and interrogated, either as potential sources of information or to secure the capture of their husband or father.

Based on research by six leading human rights groups - Amnesty International, Cageprisoners, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice and NYU School of Law, Human Rights Watch and Reprieve -, the briefing paper *Off the Record* provides **the most comprehensive account** of these 39 individuals apprehension and detention to date, including four missing detainees here identified for the first time.

The full list includes cases of nationals from countries including Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Pakistan, Kenya and Spain. They were arrested in countries including Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Somalia and Sudan, and transferred to secret sites run by the US government.

In many cases, the current fate and whereabouts of detainees included on the list are completely unknown. In other cases, some speculative information has emerged in the press or through research and investigation.

In all cases, the US government's silence has created grave uncertainty. The US government must end the use of secret detention, clarify the fate and whereabouts of all people who have been secretly detained and allow them access to their families and to adequate legal process.

The US has the duty to detain and bring to justice anyone responsible for crimes but it must do so in a manner that respects human rights and the rule of law.

You can make a difference. Take action now against secret detention and enforced disappearance.

Web action text

The US government has constructed a wide-ranging detention system for terrorism suspects and others it considers to be implicated in the “war on terror”. Many suspects are subjected to “rendition” followed by detention in acknowledged or secret US detention facilities outside the USA, or foreign-controlled facilities under US direction. All of these practices violate international law.

Take action now!

Write to the US Embassy in your country calling for the US government to end secret detention and enforced disappearance, and to clarify the fate and whereabouts of all people who have been secretly detained in the CIA programme.

Web action letter

Dear [Name of the US Ambassador in your country],

I am writing to express my concern about 39 terrorism suspects believed to have been held in secret US custody and whose current whereabouts remain unknown.

These men are victims of enforced disappearance as defined by international law. Secret detention and enforced disappearance are violations of the USA’s treaty obligations.

I believe that lasting security and real justice for the victims of terrorism cannot be achieved by placing people in secret locations deprived of the most basic legal safeguards for any detainee. Governments must protect their people from acts of terrorism, but the US programme of secret detention, acknowledged by President George W. Bush on September 2006, is not the way to do this.

The US government must end the use of secret detention, clarify the fate and whereabouts of all people who have been secretly detained, allow them access to their families and to an adequate legal process.

I recall President Bush’s repeated assertions that the USA remains committed to the “non-negotiable demands of human dignity”, including the rule of law. I urge you to relay my concern to the US administration and to do all in your influence to make respect for human rights and the rule of law a reality for all those in US custody and their families.

Yours sincerely,

Box with information

On 6 September 2006, President Bush finally admitted what had long been reported – that, in its “war on terror”, the USA has been resorting to secret detentions and enforced disappearance, which is a crime under international law. The transfer of a detainee to Guantánamo in April 2007 proved that the US network of secret detention was still operating, though the authorities have never disclosed how many individuals have been secretly detained.

Links

- Report: Off the record: U.S. Responsibility for Enforced Disappearances in the “war on terror”
- Press release:
- Video: Interview with Rabia Khan, the wife of Majid Khan, a detainee transferred to Guantánamo from secret CIA custody
<http://emedial.amnesty.org/pakistan-061206-eng.ram>
- Video: Interview with Moazzam Begg, unlawfully detained in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Guantánamo Bay for 3 years
<http://emedial.amnesty.org/moazzambegg-080906-eng.ram>
- Feature: USA: Government must end all secret detention and guarantee fair trials <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/stoptorture-060907-features-eng>

Images:

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