



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

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States must fully investigate complicity in secret detentions and renditions

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Commenting on the Council of Europe report by Swiss Senator Marty on European involvement in renditions and secret detentions, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) today called on all states to end involvement in these systematic human rights violations perpetrated under the guise of countering terrorism.

It is vital that all states now comply with their legal obligations to investigate such allegations and arrest and prosecute those who perpetrate these acts on their territory, the ICJ said.

"What we need now are independent, national level inquiries with full investigatory powers to examine government involvement in and knowledge of illegal activity by foreign intelligence services," said Nicholas Howen, Secretary-General of the ICJ. "The information we have today may only be the tip of the iceberg. We still need to know much more about how these systematic human rights violations have been allowed to happen."

The Marty report raises serious concerns that suspects have been held in US-run secret detention centres in European states, including Romania and Poland. It finds that, in breach of their human rights obligations, European states have tolerated and in some cases knowingly participated in US "renditions" – the transfer of suspects, without legal basis or due process, often to face interrogation under torture.

This European support for CIA renditions raises very serious concerns about cooperation with foreign services that set aside the most basic principles of justice.

"Co-operation is essential to combat terrorism, and it is required by international law. But if states ignore the international law framework, and resort to illegal activity, they fatally undermine the legitimate struggle against terrorism", said Nicholas Howen. "States must now do all in their power to ensure that their national laws and practices prevent such abuses happening again."

Background

Senator Dick Marty of Switzerland was appointed, in November 2005, by the Committee of Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) to inquire into allegations of secret detentions in Council of Europe Member States. He presented his report to the PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights today, Wednesday 7 June 2006. The report will be debated in plenary session of PACE on Tuesday 27 June 2006. The report is available on the website of the Council of Europe at: www.coe.int

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The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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