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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS OFFICE

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Dear President,

BREAKING THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE: USA'S EUROPEAN 'PARTNERS IN CRIME' MUST ACT AFTER SENATE TORTURE REPORT

Amnesty International would like to draw your attention to our enclosed briefing [*Breaking the conspiracy of silence: USA's European 'partners in crime' must act after Senate torture report*](#), published yesterday. The briefing analyses details from the so-called "Senate torture report" and the responses thereto that directly point to, or admit, European complicity in the CIA's rendition and secret detention programme. It also reiterates Amnesty International's call for accountability.

In the briefing, Amnesty International looks into new evidence on how foreign governments both directly and indirectly assisted the CIA, following the release in December 2014 of a summary of the "Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program" by the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI). The details elaborated in the study closely correlate with credible public information that directly points to heavy European involvement in the USA's post-9/11 rendition, secret detention, and interrogation operations, which amounted to torture and other ill-treatment. This involvement ranged from hosting secret CIA detention sites, where many of these abuses occurred, to permitting the use of their airspace and airports to illegally transfer detainees, as highlighted by the European Court for Human Rights in its rulings against Macedonia and Poland. In at least three cases, it is demonstrated that European governments accepted millions of US dollars in 'appreciation of support' for the CIA programs.

The Senate report also triggered a range of responses from former and current European officials, including key admissions of involvement in the CIA operations. These responses further verified European complicity. Amnesty International's findings suggest that the list of key European allies included: Germany, Lithuania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Romania, and the United Kingdom. The briefing also highlights the inadequate responses of the respective governments to carry out full and effective investigations.

European governments can no longer rely on unsubstantiated 'national security' grounds and claims of state secrecy to hide the truth about their roles in the torture and disappearance of people. They must urgently act to bring those responsible to justice. This duty to uphold basic human rights and the dignity of all persons in all counter-terrorism laws, policies, and practices, is particularly relevant at this sensitive moment in Europe, when the French and other governments are reviewing their responses regarding the deadly attacks against the magazine Charlie Hebdo, a kosher supermarket and security forces in Paris on 7 and 9 January.

Amnesty International calls on you to reaffirm the Parliamentary Assembly's strong stance in exposing European complicity in the CIA's illegal rendition, secret detention, and interrogation operations, and to call again on all European governments involved to:

- Conduct an effective, broad-based investigation as a matter of urgency into their involvement in these operations, with a view to reforming the laws, policies, and practices that permitted such cooperation
- Ensure that those state actors and any foreign agents responsible for crimes under domestic and international law such as torture and enforced disappearance on the territories of European states are criminally charged and held accountable after fair trials
- Afford victims of the human rights violations of these operations full and effective remedy.

We thank you for your attention and remain at your disposal for further information.

Yours sincerely,



Ivana McGowan
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Cc: PACE Secretariat
Commissioner for Human Rights
Directorate of Human Rights
Directorate of Political Advice
CPT Secretariat
Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights