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European Parliament's LIBE Committee adopts key report on EU complicity with the CIA's rendition and secret detention programmes.

Amnesty International welcomed a new European Parliament (EP) report that again urges implicated EU member states to investigate their involvement in the CIA's rendition and secret detention programmes.

To date, not a single EU member state has complied fully with the legal obligation to investigate the serious human rights violations attendant to the CIA counter-terrorism operations, including illegal transfers, secret detention, torture and enforced disappearance of persons. The report was adopted by the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) on 10th July 2011.

"The EP has again shone the spotlight on serious human rights abuses by the CIA and delivered a rebuke to those EU member states complicit in these abuses. MEPs have come under considerable pressure from different national and other interests, seeking to keep a lid on these allegations, but thankfully they stood firm and voted in favour of this report" said rapporteur H el ene Flautre (Greens/EFA, FR), whose report was adopted with 50 votes in favour, 2 against and 5 abstentions. The report will be put to a vote in plenary session in Strasbourg in September.

The LIBE report focuses in particular on the states alleged to have hosted secret detention facilities where terrorism suspects were held in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA: Lithuania, Poland, and Romania. Lithuania has acknowledged hosting two secret detention sites, and there is mounting credible evidence that Poland and Romania also collaborated with the CIA to establish secret detention centers on their territories. All of the governments deny that suspects were held in secret sites in their countries. The Committee calls on all implicated EU member states to conduct independent, impartial, thorough and effective investigations into their involvement in these programmes.

The report is a follow-up to a 2007 report by a special committee of the European Parliament which documented the available evidence at the time of European complicity in the US-led operations. Resolutions passed in 2007 and 2009 called on EU member states to conduct investigations, but had been largely ignored. Between 2007 and 2012 numerous developments led to the release of additional credible evidence of European complicity, including the discovery of secret sites in Lithuania (December 2009), the identification by former CIA officials in media reports of a detention facility in Bucharest (December 2011), and the news that charges had been leveled in Poland against the former head of the country's intelligence agency for collusion with the CIA to hold terrorism suspects in Poland (March 2012).

An EP delegation visited Lithuania in the course of the committee's work and visited one of the sites of a CIA center. Rapporteur Helene Flautre also visited Poland. The final report calls on Lithuania to re-open a criminal investigation into the secret sites and urges Poland, where an investigation is on-going, to continue the investigation with greater transparency. The Romanian authorities have denied any involvement in the CIA operations, but the LIBE committee calls on the government to open a full and effective investigation into ever mounting credible evidence of its collusion with the CIA.

Data released by the Polish aviation agency and by Eurocontrol to the LIBE committee provided important information about rendition flights into and out of Lithuania, Poland, and Romania, further corroborating claims that the three countries were deeply embedded in the CIA rendition and secret detention programmes. The report also acknowledges a “Scandinavian connection” between the three countries and aircraft landings in and overflights of Danish and Finnish territory.

Amnesty International reminds EU governments that torture and disappearance cannot go unanswered and this report drives that point home. The report makes a strong and important contribution to the effort to achieve accountability for European complicity in the CIA's rendition and secret detention programmes. Amnesty International now urges members of the European Parliament across political groups to stand behind the report when it comes for plenary vote in September, and send an unmistakable signal to all implicated EU governments that they must carry out independent, impartial, thorough and effective investigations into their role in these abusive and illegal CIA programmes.

Public Document

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