



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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United States Must Clarify Fate of 28 Individuals *“War on Terror” detainees may be held in secret sites*

The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice today urged the U.S. government to clarify the fate of 28 individuals who it says may be held in secret sites. In a report released today entitled *Fate and Whereabouts Unknown: Detainees in the “War on Terror,”* the Center said that the United States violates international law when it holds individuals in secret detention sites. The 28 named in the report include well-known terrorism suspects such as Ramzi Binalshibh and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, whom the U.S. has acknowledged holding, as well as individuals who have not been widely reported as among those “disappeared” by the U.S. Included in the latter category are Suleiman Abdalla, a Yemeni abducted in Somalia, and Abu Naseem, a Tunisian apprehended in Pakistan. Also included in the report is Aafia Siddiqui, a woman who has been missing since 2003. She is the only woman included in the report.

“The fate and whereabouts of these individuals must be clarified,” said Meg Satterthwaite, Research Director of the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. “The United States cannot exempt itself from basic international law prohibiting ‘disappearances.’”

The report also draws attention to the connections between covert procedures being used in the “War on Terror.” Examining the overlap between extraordinary rendition and enforced disappearances, the report stresses that “disappearances” often happen in conjunction with other abuses. Several cases included in the report detail the successive transfer of detainees among sites and even between nations. “The United States is trying to maintain a secret system of transport and detention for those it suspects of terrorism,” Satterthwaite said. “It cannot avoid the application of human rights standards by hiding detainees,” she added.

In addition to acts of enforced disappearance carried out by the United States, the report also criticizes U.S. collaboration in “disappearances” by other states. Reporting on the case of Abdullah Khadr, the report explains that U.S. agents have allegedly interrogated individuals while they were held in secret detention by other countries. Mr. Khadr, a Canadian citizen, claims he was interrogated by U.S. officials while in detention in Pakistan in 2004 and 2005.

A report published by CHRJGJ and the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, *Torture by Proxy: International and Domestic Law Applicable to “Extraordinary Renditions”* provides a detailed analysis of international and domestic legal standards applicable to extraordinary renditions. A later report by CHRJGJ, *Beyond Guantánamo*, examines additional forms of extralegal transfer, and *Briefing: International Law Applicable to “Extraordinary Rendition”* calls attention to the collaboration of states in each other’s violations. The reports can be found on the CHRJGJ website at www.chrgj.org.

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The briefing paper can be accessed at: [http://www.nyuhr.org/docs/Whereabouts Unknown Final.pdf](http://www.nyuhr.org/docs/Whereabouts_Unknown_Final.pdf)

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