



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

"Dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights"

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2008

17 April

Universal Periodic Review of Poland: ICJ urges complete response to questions on secret detentions and on renditions of terrorism suspects

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), together with its Polish section, today urged the Government of Poland to respond fully to concerns about the adequacy of its investigations into allegations of CIA-run secret detention centres in Poland and renditions of terrorism suspects, following the review of Poland's human rights record at the first session of the UN Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

"There is strong evidence, in particular from the inquiry of Dick Marty, rapporteur on secret detentions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe that at least one CIA-run secret detention centre has existed in Poland, involving gross and systematic violations of human rights, and this imposes an international human rights law obligation on Poland to provide for a thorough, transparent, independent and impartial investigation", said the ICJ.

The ICJ urged the Human Rights Council, in its submission to the UPR of Poland, to hold the Government to account for its failure to investigate the existence of secret detention centres on its territory and the renditions of terrorism suspects made to and from them. "So far, the only national-level investigation has taken place in secret, with no published report, which fails to satisfy Poland's duty to investigate alleged human rights violations", stated the ICJ.

In the course of the UPR dialogue, the Polish government provided only very inadequate responses to questions about the results of its investigations into allegations of secret detention centres on Polish territory, restating its position that the allegations were groundless, and maintaining that they had been fully investigated by the competent authorities. However, the Government did not address a request to publish the report of its investigation and did not respond to allegations of the use of its territory for secret flights for renditions of terrorism suspects.

Deplorably, the Council's Working Group failed to discuss and recommend that Poland establish a transparent, independent inquiry, with full investigative powers to require the attendance of persons and the production of documents, to investigate allegations of the involvement of Polish officials in secret detentions and renditions.

"If the UPR process is to provide a real and credible mechanism for review of human rights protection in Poland, then the Government must respond by means of a meaningful investigation of these gross and systematic violations of human rights. The government must also justify why it has not published the results of its earlier investigation", concluded the ICJ.

For further information, please contact:

Mr. Lukas Machon, ICJ Representative to the UN, phone: +41 22 979 38 29, mobile: +41 76 345 40 65, and Ms. Roisin Pillay, Legal Officer for Europe, phone: +41 22 979 38 30

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

33, rue des Bains, P.O. Box 216, 1211 Geneva 8, Switzerland
Tel: +41(0) 22 979 3800 - Fax: +41(0) 22 979 3801 - Website: <http://www.icj.org> - E-mail: info@icj.org

P
R
E
S
S
R
E
L
E
A
S
E