



# 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 "*

## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE – COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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### **United States:**

### **ICJ welcomes first steps to restore human rights in countering terrorism**

The ICJ today applauded the signing of four executive orders by President Barack Obama aimed to reverse some of the most abusive policies and practices instituted by the previous administration in its "war on terror".

"The new administration has taken as among its first order of business a process of restoring the rule of law to its counter-terrorism programs", said Wilder Tayler, Acting ICJ Secretary General. "These steps should initiate a full repeal or revision of the laws, policies and practices that had such a corrosive effect on human rights and the rule of law both domestically and globally. It should also encourage other States to help bring arbitrary detention at Guantanamo to an end, including by accepting detainees for resettlement."

The directives include putting an end to the CIA practice of holding people in secret detention outside of the US; ensuring that all US agencies, including the CIA, apply rules provided under the US Army Field Manual regarding the treatment of detainees; and closing the detention facility at Guantanamo within one year. In addition, the administration requested suspension of the irreparably flawed military commissions, reportedly with a view to their complete dismantlement. President Obama has ordered the establishment of a task force to make detailed recommendations as to how to proceed with the detention, trial and transfer of persons in US custody, including at Guantanamo Bay.

"As the US takes the next steps, the ICJ urges the administration to ensure full respect of fundamental principles of international law in its counter-terrorism policies: no secret and arbitrary detention of any person; an end to the practice of renditions and the transfer of persons where they face the risk of serious human rights violations; fair trials by independent civilian courts for recognized crimes or release of all detainees; and scrupulous respect of the absolute prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment," said Wilder Tayler. "Ultimately, the administration must also take effective measures to hold accountable any official responsible for serious human rights violations and provide full reparation to the victims."

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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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