



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Rights Groups Present New Documents that Show Congress Knew More about CIA Rendition, Secret Detention, and Torture Than Previously Disclosed**  
*Evidence Points to Cheney Counsel's Role in Authorizing Torture*

**Contact:**

AIUSA, Sharon Singh, 202 675 8579, [ssingh@aiusa.org](mailto:ssingh@aiusa.org)

CCR, Jen Nessel, 212 614 6449, [jnessel@ccrjustice.org](mailto:jnessel@ccrjustice.org)

CHRGJ, Veerle Ogenhaffen, 212 992 8186, [opgenhaffen@exchange.law.nyu.edu](mailto:opgenhaffen@exchange.law.nyu.edu)

**(New York and Washington, February 22, 2010)**—New FOIA documents illustrate that key congressional members from both houses were briefed numerous times about the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) interrogation and detention programs, said several prominent human rights groups today. The groups—Amnesty International USA (AIUSA), the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), and the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) at NYU School of Law—were responding to several documents just received in response to the groups' Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) litigation.

Among other new information, the documents show that:

- While Vice President Cheney's role in authorizing waterboarding and other so-called enhanced interrogation techniques has been public, a newly obtained February 4, 2003, CIA memo documents the role of Counsel for the Office of the Vice President (OVP) in analyzing and approving the CIA techniques.
- According to CIA meeting records and the same February 4, 2003, memo, it seems that in one of his first acts as chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) discontinued efforts by previous chair Senator Bob Graham (D-Fla.) to implement greater oversight of these programs, thus abdicating the role of Congress in overseeing the CIA rendition, secret detention, and torture programs.
- There are significant questions about how clear the CIA was with Congress (including in Hayden's previously classified briefing on April 12, 2007 to the Senate Intelligence Committee) about the timing, nature, and results of the interrogation of Abu Zubaydah, including particularly interrogation pre-the OLC August 1, 2002 memo.

In light of these new facts, AIUSA, CCR, and CHRGJ released the following statements:

**Tom Parker, policy director for (counter) terrorism and human rights for Amnesty International USA:**

“We have a little more clarity about who knew what when, but this is still just the tip of the iceberg. These documents reveal that members of Congress colluded in covering up evidence of the U.S. government’s torture program. This is hardly the kind of oversight in which the American people can have faith. We need a full and impartial investigation to get to the truth. Congress simply can't be trusted to properly investigate itself.”

**Gitanjali Gutierrez, attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights:**

“Members of Congress must come clean about whether they encouraged or objected to torture during these many secret meetings with CIA officials and we need a complete accounting of Cheney’s counsel, David Addington’s, role in the creation of the torture program. These new documents show that the CIA may have lied to Congress about the role of interrogation techniques in detainee deaths and key members of Congress abdicated their oversight role. This new information points even more strongly to the need for a full criminal investigation of the torture program, up the entire chain of command.”

**Jayne Huckerby, research director for the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law:**

“These heavily redacted documents suggest that Congress had greater knowledge about the program than it has been willing to admit. This self-protective behavior runs counter to the role Congress should be playing in upholding transparency. It's unacceptable to have the courts, the executive branch, and now Congress blocking all avenues of accountability. Congress must come clean about what was known, by whom, and when in order to uphold the rule of law.”

**Background**

The 2007 lawsuit is based on administrative FOIA requests dating back to 2004 filed by AIUSA, CCR, and CHRJG with several U.S. government agencies—including the CIA, the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of State (DOS), the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security—seeking records about rendition, secret detention, and "enhanced" interrogation. Morrison & Foerster LLP serves as co-counsel in the case.

To see the most recent documents released from the CIA, DOD, and DOS, as well as the prior filings and other documents previously released through this litigation, visit [CCR's Freedom of Information Act](#) page.

For more information or copies of legal filings in the case and released documents, please contact [jnessel@ccrjustice.org](mailto:jnessel@ccrjustice.org), [opgenhaffen@exchange.law.nyu.edu](mailto:opgenhaffen@exchange.law.nyu.edu), or [ssingh@aiusa.org](mailto:ssingh@aiusa.org).

For more information about the organizations involved, please see their websites: [www.ccrjustice.org](http://www.ccrjustice.org), [www.chrgj.org](http://www.chrgj.org), and [www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org).

###