

Human Rights Group Asks U.S. to End Impunity in CIA Torture



New York, May 12 (RHC)-- The human rights group Amnesty International has pressed the Obama administration to revise a decision not to prosecute former officials involved in the CIA's torture program.

Salil Shetty, secretary general of Amnesty International, urged Attorney General Loretta Lynch in a letter to take steps to bring "an end to the impunity that has become the hallmark of this unlawful program."

Shetty also asked the new Attorney General to "personally examine" evidence from a report prepared by the US Senate Intelligence Committee on CIA torture, and order a preliminary review into violations of federal and international laws.

"As the new Attorney General you have a critical responsibility to ensure the USA complies with its international human rights obligations to effectively investigate evidence of crimes under international law and to bring the suspected perpetrators to justice," reads the letter, which is expected to reach Lynch's desk on Monday.

A highly-redacted executive summary of the 6,000-page damning report was released in December, following months of wrangling between the Senate and the CIA.

The CIA's interrogation of "suspected terrorists" was far more brutal than the spy agency had initially disclosed, committee chair Dianne Feinstein said as she announced the release of the report in Washington.

According to the Senate report, the CIA misled Congress and the White House about the harsh methods it used on suspects, such as simulated drowning known as waterboarding, sleep deprivation, mock execution, humiliation, solitary confinement, and threats that relatives of the inmates would be sexually abused.

The Justice Department said in December that it would not reopen any investigation into the CIA's torture program during the George W. Bush administration.

The report has drawn harsh criticism from the United Nations and prominent rights groups, that have called for prosecution of those responsible for the use of torture. The Obama administration has not held a single senior official from the CIA and the Bush administration accountable over the use of torture.

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