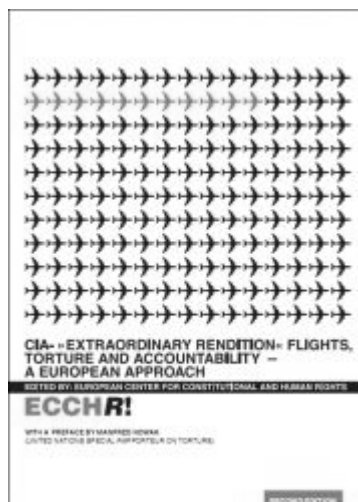


CIA 'Extraordinary Rendition' Flights, Torture and Accountability: a European Approach

an ECCHR Study, January 2009

ECCHR (ed.)



In January 2009, the ECCHR published the second edition of their report "CIA 'Extraordinary Rendition' Flights, Torture and Accountability: A European Approach." The study provides an overview of legal proceedings and other judicial responses to CIA rendition flights in pertinent European countries such as Germany, Poland, Italy, and Spain, as well as in the U.S.

In his preface to the report, Prof. Dr. Manfred Nowak, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights in Vienna, stresses the importance of legal proceedings against human rights abuses committed as part of the U.S.-led strategy of combating global terrorism. He also adds that the systematic practice of rendition and torture by the Americans and their allies has provided an extremely negative example for other states. In addition, Margaret L. Satterthwaite, Associate Professor with the New York University School of Law, examines the violations of international law committed under the long-classified CIA program and the policies brought about by the new Obama administration. The authors of the ECCHR also give a detailed account of the numerous on-going civil and criminal proceedings filed by victims of abuse and human rights organizations in both Europe and the U.S. in recent years. These groups, using freedom of information claims and other judicial means, call for a full disclosure of the facts.

Moreover, in the past few years, ECCHR has facilitated several events concerning the CIA program and the responsibility of European nations in cities such as Berlin, Warsaw and Copenhagen. Numerous human rights organizations and dedicated attorneys from countries affected by the CIA program have taken part in these events in order to examine not only the overall program, but also the individual cases involved. While on the one hand investigations and legal proceedings occurring in the respective countries have been regarded as a positive step, on the other hand, these endeavors admittedly also face many judicial and political obstacles. These challenges became evident in the summer of 2007, during criminal proceedings concerning the CIA-orchestrated kidnapping of the German citizen *Khaled El-Masri*. In order to avoid a political conflict with the U.S., the German government declined to file an extradition request in September 2007. In response to this move, in June 2008 the ECCHR filed an action on behalf of *Khaled El-Masri* against the Federal Republic of Germany before the Administrative Court in Berlin. The action included a request for the extradition of CIA agents who have been accused of kidnapping *El-Masri* and against whom an arrest warrant was issued by the District Court of Cologne. This request was postponed and later transferred to the Administrative Court in Cologne, where it is still pending review.

To receive a hard copy of CIA 'Extraordinary Rendition' Flights, Torture and Accountability: A European Approach" (€6 + shipping costs), please contact us per e-mail at info@ecchr.eu.

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