

*From The Times*

*25 March 2009*

## **Rendition allegations require inquiry**

### **Confronting the reality of our commitment to human rights in covert detention centres**

Sir, Allegations of British complicity in the extraordinary rendition of people detained by British Forces, and in the torture of some of them, have been made recently about covert detention centres in Egypt, Pakistan, Morocco, The Gambia and Iraq. This would be contrary to this country's adherence to the UN Convention Against Torture and to the European Convention on Human Rights. A [recent UN report] on torture, accused Britain of trying to conceal its own illegal acts.

The Government has repeatedly denied that it condones torture. The conflict between evidence and official denials is stark, and is undermining trust in our stated commitment to human rights. We welcome the Prime Minister's commitment to draw up new guidelines for security and intelligence agencies on interrogating detainees abroad, but it is not enough. Only an independent inquiry will meet the need in a democracy to hold accountable those who knowingly breach national and international law.

Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon

Baroness D'Souza

Lord Goodhart, QC

General Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank

Lord Hannay of Chiswick

Lord Howe of Aberavon, QC

Lord King of Bridgwater

Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC

General Lord Ramsbotham

Lord Rees of Ludlow

Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank

Lord Thomas of Gresford, QC

Baroness Williams of Crosby

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