

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Human Dignity Denied:
Torture and Accountability in the 'war on terror' - Summary report(1)

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A report based on Amnesty International's 12-point Program for the Prevention of Torture by
Agents of the State

Then [the guard] brought a box of food and he made me stand on it, and he started punishing me. Then a tall black soldier came and put electrical wires on my fingers and toes and on my penis, and I had a bag over my head. Then he was saying 'which switch is on for electricity?'
Iraqi detainee, Abu Ghraib prison, 16 January 2004(2)

The image of New York's Twin Towers struck by hijacked airliners on 11 September 2001 has become an icon of a crime against humanity. It is tragic that the response to the atrocities of that day has resulted in its own iconography of torture, cruelty and degradation. A photograph of a naked young man captured in Afghanistan, blindfolded, handcuffed and shackled, and bound with duct tape to a stretcher. Pictures of hooded detainees strapped to the floor of military aircraft for transfer from Afghanistan to the other side of the world. Photographs of caged detainees in the United States (US) Naval Base in Cuba, kneeling before soldiers, shackled, handcuffed, masked and blindfolded. Television images of orange-clad shackled detainees shuffling to interrogations, or being wheeled there on mobile stretchers. A hooded Iraqi detainee sitting on the sand, surrounded by barbed wire, clutching his four-year-old son.(3) And the photos from Abu Ghraib – a detainee, hooded, balanced on a box, arms outstretched, wires dangling from his hands with electric torture threatened; a naked man cowering in terror against the bars of a cell as soldiers threaten him with snarling dogs; and soldiers smiling, apparently confident of their impunity, over detainees forced into sexually humiliating poses. The United States of America (USA), and the world, will be haunted by these and other images for years to come, icons of a government's failure to put human rights at its heart.

The struggle against torture and ill-treatment by agents of the state requires absolute commitment and constant vigilance. It requires stringent adherence to safeguards. It demands a policy of zero tolerance. The US government has manifestly failed in this regard. At best, it set the conditions for torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by lowering safeguards and failing to respond adequately to allegations of abuse raised by Amnesty International and others from early in the "war on terror". At worst, it has authorized interrogation techniques which flouted the country's international obligation to reject torture and ill-treatment under any circumstances and at all times.

The US administration has said that it is "strongly committed" to working with non-governmental organizations "to improve compliance with international human rights standards."(4) President George W. Bush has recently said that the USA "support[s] the work of non-governmental organizations to end torture and assist the victims".(5) With this in mind, Amnesty International seeks to provide a framework in this report by which there can be a full accounting for any torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by US agents, and to prevent future violations of international law and standards.

Part One(6) gives an overview, describing how the US administration has fallen into an historically familiar pattern of abuse to respond to the "new paradigm" it says has been set by

the atrocities of 11 September 2001. The war mentality the government has adopted has not been matched with a commitment to the laws of war, and it has discarded fundamental human rights principles along the way. While there are undoubtedly complex challenges and threats in the current situation, the simple fact is that the USA has stepped onto a well-trodden path of violating basic rights in the name of national security or "military necessity".

Throughout history, torture has often occurred against those considered as "the other", and a second section of Part One traces the thread of dehumanization of detainees in US custody from Afghanistan to Abu Ghraib. A third section in Part One outlines the unequivocal and non-derogable international legal prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The final section stresses that respect for human rights is the route to security, as the US government itself claims, not the obstacle to security, as appears to be the administration's true belief if its detention and interrogation policies are the yardstick.

Part Two is entitled Agenda for Action, and begins with a reiteration of Amnesty International's call for a full commission of inquiry into all US "war on terror" detention and interrogation practices and policies. While the organization welcomes the recent official investigations that have taken place, it believes that a more comprehensive and genuinely independent inquiry is needed to ensure full accountability and non-repetition of abuse. This commission of experts must have all the necessary powers to carry out such an investigation.

The remainder of Part Two is structured around Amnesty International's 12-point Program for the Prevention of Torture by Agents of the State. The organization has been working against torture for more than three decades. In addition to its daily efforts against this most tenacious and pervasive of human rights violations, it has conducted three worldwide campaigns for the abolition of torture, launched in 1972, 1984 and 2000. The 12-Point Program that forms the basis of this report was adopted for the most recent of these campaigns and reflects Amnesty International's key findings on how best to prevent torture.

Under each of the 12 Points, Amnesty International illustrates how the USA has failed to meet basic human rights safeguards, thus opening the door to torture and ill-treatment. Detailed recommendations are given under each Point, with the compilation of more than 60 recommendations provided at the end of the report.

Point 1 of the 12-Point Program is "Condemn Torture". In other words, the highest authorities of every country should demonstrate their total opposition to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. They should condemn torture and ill-treatment unreservedly whenever they occur. They should make clear to all members of the police, military and other security forces that torture and ill-treatment will never be tolerated.

The report recalls the US administration's repeated claims that it is committed to what it calls the "non-negotiable demands of human dignity", and that it is leading the global struggle against torture. A government's condemnation of torture and other ill-treatment must mean what it says, however. The US administration's condemnation has been paper thin, as shown by the series of government memorandums that have come into the public domain since the Abu Ghraib scandal broke. These documents suggest that far from ensuring that the "war on terror" would be conducted without resort to human rights violations, the administration was discussing ways in which its agents might avoid the international prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. During this time, the government's voice was notable

by its absence in the public debate in the USA since 11 September 2001 about whether torture is ever an acceptable response to "terrorism". Such silence may also betray a less than absolute opposition to torture and ill-treatment.

In June 2004, in one of several statements by senior United Nations (UN) officials responding to the US "torture memos", Secretary General Kofi Annan emphasized the absolute prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. He stressed that the prohibition is binding on all states, "in all territories under their jurisdiction or control", and in times of war as well as peace. He added: "Nor is torture permissible when it is called something else. Euphemisms cannot be used to bypass legal obligations." (7)

There is a tendency, not least amongst the US military, to euphemize aspects of war and violence. Killed and maimed civilians become "collateral damage"; torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment become "stress and duress" techniques; and "disappeared" prisoners become "ghost detainees". Euphemizing human rights violations threatens to promote tolerance of them. In similar vein, there has been a noticeable reluctance among senior members of the US administration to call what happened in Abu Ghraib torture, preferring the term "abuse". Members of an administration that has discussed how to push the boundaries of acceptable interrogation techniques and of how agents could avoid criminal liability for torture might display a particular reticence to call torture by its name.

This reticence, however, is also symptomatic of a tendency by the USA – notwithstanding its pivotal role in the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international human rights instruments – to reject for itself the standards it so often says it expects of others. The human rights violations which the US government has been so reluctant to call torture when committed by its own agents are annually described as such by the State Department when they occur in other countries. While the State Department reports are positive contributions to the global struggle for human rights, double standards have greatly undermined the credibility of the USA's global discourse on human rights.

The USA's "war on terror" policies show that the prohibition against torture and ill-treatment is not "non-negotiable" as far as the administration is concerned. This is what must change. If a government genuinely opposes torture and ill-treatment, it must act accordingly. From this simple proposition, all 11 other points of the 12-point Program for the Prevention of Torture by Agents of the State follow.

Impunity allows torture and ill-treatment to thrive. All allegations must be thoroughly investigated, including all deaths in custody (Point 6). Perpetrators of such human rights violations must be brought to justice, preferably in ordinary civilian courts rather than military tribunals as an emerging international consensus now recognizes (Point 7). At the same time, the necessary safeguards must be put and kept in place to prevent any recurrence of torture and ill-treatment. Secret detention must end immediately (Point 3). So too must the use of incommunicado detention, with lawyers, doctors, relatives, and independent monitors granted immediate and continuing access to and information about detainees, and with detainees brought before a judicial authority as soon as possible after arrest (Point 2). There must be a clear delineation between powers of interrogation and detention, with detention conditions fully meeting international standards. Vulnerable detainees, including children and women, should receive particular protections demanded by international law (Point 4). Coerced statements must not be admitted in any trials. Military commissions set up to try "war on terror"

detainees, with the power to admit such statements, must be abandoned (Point 8).

Any victims of torture or ill-treatment are entitled to reparations, including compensation for the families of anyone who died as a result of such treatment in custody (Point 10). Training of anyone who comes into contact with detainees is essential, and must include relevant cultural awareness education as well as training in the international prohibition of torture and ill-treatment (Point 9). The numerous conditions the USA attached to its ratifications of international treaties prohibiting torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment should be withdrawn. It should ratify those treaties and protocols it has not yet ratified (Point 11). In accordance with international human rights law, international security cooperation must rule out the transfer of detainees in conditions or to places where they are at risk of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Point 12). US laws must be amended, or reinterpreted, to reflect fully the absolute prohibition on torture and ill-treatment in international law and allow no loopholes, in peacetime, in war, and in the "war on terror," or for anyone, from the foot soldier to the President (Point 5).

On 11 September 2001, President Bush said that "America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining." (8) Three years later, the catalogue of human rights violations alleged or known to have been committed by US agents in the "war on terror" tells a different story. Amnesty International urges the US government to adopt a fundamental change in direction and to ensure that all its policies and practices fully comply with international law. The core message of this report is that the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is primarily a matter of political will.

A brief chronology

11 September 2001 – four US commercial airliners are hijacked. Two are crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, one into the Pentagon and one into a field in Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people are killed in this crime against humanity.

7 October 2001 – the USA leads military action against the Taleban government and members of the al-Qa'ida network in Afghanistan.

10/11 January 2002 – the first detainees are transferred from Afghanistan to the US Naval Base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, in conditions that amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

7 February 2002 – the White House announces its decision that the Geneva Conventions do not apply to al-Qa'ida suspects captured in Afghanistan, and that neither they nor Taleban members would be eligible for prisoner of war status.

June 2002 – Hamid Karzai appointed as President of interim Afghanistan administration. US forces continue to carry out military operations and detentions in Afghanistan to this day.

20 March 2003 – US-led Coalition forces attack Iraq. On 1 May 2003, President Bush announces that the main combat operations in Iraq are over. A major insurgency against the occupation develops.

28 April 2004 – photographs of torture and ill-treatment of Iraqi detainees by US soldiers in Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad are broadcast by CBS News and subsequently around the world.

22 June 2004 – the US administration releases several previously secret memorandums discussing "war on terror" detention and interrogation options "to set the record straight" following leaks.

28 June 2004 – the US Supreme Court rules that the US courts have jurisdiction over the

Guantánamo detainees, hundreds of whom have already been held for more than two years without any judicial review, charge, trial or access to legal counsel or relatives.

2001-2004 – The US military has taken more than 50,000 people into custody during its military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, the US has operated some 25 detention facilities, and in Iraq another 17. More than 750 people have been held in Guantánamo. The Pentagon states that 202 have been released or transferred, leaving "approximately 549" in the base by 22 September 2004. An unknown number of detainees have been held in undisclosed locations by the USA or transferred to the custody of other countries.

Compilation of recommendations under 12-Point Program

Amnesty International continues to call for a commission of inquiry, fully independent of government, into all aspects of the USA's "war on terror" detentions, with a view to achieving full accountability for any human rights violations that have occurred. Meanwhile, in order to prevent further such abuses, Amnesty International urges the government to consider the organization's 12-point program against torture and to put in place policies and practices which reflect the absolute prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Amnesty International's recommendations to the US authorities based on the organization's 12-Point Program for the Prevention of Torture by Agents of the State

1. Condemn torture

The highest authorities of every country should demonstrate their total opposition to torture. They should condemn torture unreservedly whenever it occurs. They should make clear to all members of the police, military and other security forces that torture will never be tolerated.

The US authorities should:

- Provide a genuine, unequivocal and continuing public commitment to oppose torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment under any circumstances, regardless of where it takes place, and take every possible measure to ensure that all agencies of government and US allies fully comply with this prohibition;
- Review all government policies and procedures relating to detention and interrogation to ensure that they adhere strictly to international human rights and humanitarian law and standards, and publicly disown those which do not;
- Make clear to all members of the military and all other government agencies, as well as US allies, that torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment will not be tolerated under any circumstances;
- Commit to a program of public education on the international prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, including challenging any public discourse that seeks to promote tolerance of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

2. Ensure access to prisoners

Torture often takes place while prisoners are held incommunicado — unable to contact people outside who could help them or find out what is happening to them. The practice of incommunicado detention should be ended. Governments should ensure that all prisoners are brought before an independent judicial authority without delay after being taken into custody.

Prisoners should have access to relatives, lawyers and doctors without delay and regularly thereafter.

The US authorities should:

- End the practice of incommunicado detention;
- Grant the International Committee of the Red Cross full access to all detainees according to the organization's mandate;
- Grant all detainees access to legal counsel, relatives, independent doctors, and to consular representatives, without delay and regularly thereafter;
- In battlefield situations, ensure where possible that interrogations are observed by at least one military lawyer with full knowledge of international law and standards as they pertain to the treatment of detainees;
- Grant all detainees access to the courts to be able to challenge the lawfulness of their detention. Presume detainees captured on the battlefield during international conflicts to be prisoners of war unless and until a competent tribunal determines otherwise;
- Reject any measures that narrow or curtail the effect or scope of the *Rasul v. Bush* ruling on the right to judicial review of detainees held in Guantánamo or elsewhere, and facilitate detainees' access to legal counsel for the purpose of judicial review.

3. No secret detention

In some countries torture takes place in secret locations, often after the victims are made to "disappear". Governments should ensure that prisoners are held only in officially recognized places of detention and that accurate information about their arrest and whereabouts is made available immediately to relatives, lawyers and the courts. Effective judicial remedies should be available at all times to enable relatives and lawyers to find out immediately where a prisoner is held and under what authority and to ensure the prisoner's safety.

The US authorities should:

- Clarify the fate and whereabouts of those detainees reported to be or to have been in US custody or under US interrogation in the custody of other countries, to whom no outside body including the International Committee of the Red Cross are known to have access, and provide assurances of their well-being. These detainees include but are not limited to those named in the 9/11 Commission Report and in this Amnesty International report as having been in custody at some time in undisclosed locations;
- End immediately the practice of secret detention wherever it is occurring, and under whichever agency. Hold detainees only in officially recognized places of detention;
- Not collude with other governments in the practice of "disappearances" or secret detentions, and expose such abuses where the USA becomes aware of them;
- Maintain an accurate and detailed register of all detainees at every detention facility operated by the US, in accordance with international law and standards. This register should be updated on a daily basis, and made available for inspection by, at a minimum, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the detainees' relatives and lawyers or other persons of confidence;
- Make public and regularly update the precise numbers of detainees in US custody specifying the agency under which each person is held, their identity, their nationality and arrest date, and place of detention;

- Either charge and bring to trial, in full accordance with international law and standards and without recourse to the death penalty, all detainees held in US custody in undisclosed locations, or else release them;
- Comply without delay with Freedom of Information Act requests, and related court orders, aimed at clarifying the fate and whereabouts of such detainees;
- Make public and revoke any measures or directives that have been authorized by the President or any other official that could be interpreted as authorizing "disappearances", torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or extrajudicial executions.

4. Provide safeguards during detention and interrogation

All prisoners should be immediately informed of their rights. These include the right to lodge complaints about their treatment and to have a judge rule without delay on the lawfulness of their detention. Judges should investigate any evidence of torture and order release if the detention is unlawful. A lawyer should be present during interrogations. Governments should ensure that conditions of detention conform to international standards for the treatment of prisoners and take into account the needs of members of particularly vulnerable groups. The authorities responsible for detention should be separate from those in charge of interrogation. There should be regular, independent, unannounced and unrestricted visits of inspection to all places of detention.

The US authorities should:

- Immediately inform anyone taken into US custody of his or her rights, including the right not to be subjected to any form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; their right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention in a court of law; their right to access to relatives and legal counsel, and their consular rights if a foreign national;
- Ensure at all times a clear delineation between powers of detention and interrogation;
- Keep under systematic review interrogation rules, instructions, methods and practices, as well as arrangements for the custody and treatment of anyone in US custody, with a view to preventing any cases of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;
- Ensure that conditions of detention strictly comply with international law and standards;
- Prohibit the use of isolation, hooding, stripping, dogs, stress positions, sensory deprivation, feigned suffocation, death threats, use of cold water or weather, sleep deprivation and any other forms of torture, or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment as interrogation techniques;
- Bring to trial in accordance with international fair trial standards all detainees held in Guantánamo, or release them;
- Ensure compliance with all aspects of international law and standards relating to child detainees;
- Ensure compliance with all international law and standards relating to women detainees;
- Invite all relevant human rights monitoring mechanisms, especially the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Committee against Torture, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (1980) and the Working Group on Arbitrary detention to visit all places of detention, and grant them unlimited access to these places and to detainees;

- Grant access to national and international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, to all places of detention and all detainees, regardless of where they are held.

5. Prohibit torture in law

Governments should adopt laws for the prohibition and prevention of torture incorporating the main elements of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture) and other relevant international standards. All judicial and administrative corporal punishments should be abolished. The prohibition of torture and the essential safeguards for its prevention must not be suspended under any circumstances, including states of war or other public emergency.

The US authorities should:

- Enact a federal crime of torture, as called for by the Committee against Torture, that also defines the infliction of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment as a crime, wherever it occurs;
- Amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to criminalize expressly the crime of torture, as well as a crime of infliction of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, wherever it occurs, in line with the Convention against Torture and other international standards;
- Ensure that all legislation criminalizing torture defines torture at least as broadly as the UN Convention against Torture;
- Ensure that legislation criminalizing torture and the infliction of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment covers all persons, regardless of official status or nationality, wherever this conduct occurred, and that it does not allow any exceptional circumstances whatsoever to be invoked as justification for such conduct, or allow the authorization of torture or ill-treatment by any superior officer or public official, including the President.

6. Investigate

All complaints and reports of torture should be promptly, impartially and effectively investigated by a body independent of the alleged perpetrators. The methods and findings of such investigations should be made public. Officials suspected of committing torture should be suspended from active duty during the investigation. Complainants, witnesses and others at risk should be protected from intimidation and reprisals.

US Congress should:

- Establish an independent commission of inquiry into all aspects of the USA's "war on terror" detention and interrogation policies and practices. Such a commission should consist of credible independent experts, have international expert input, and have subpoena powers and access to all levels of government, all agencies, and all documents whether classified or unclassified.

The US authorities should:

- Ensure that all allegations of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment involving US personnel, whether members of the armed forces, other government agencies,

medical personnel, private contractors or interpreters, are subject to prompt, thorough, independent and impartial civilian investigation in strict conformity with international law and standards concerning investigations of human rights violations;

- Ensure that such investigations include cases in which the USA previously had custody of the detainee, but transferred him or her to the custody of another country, or to other forces within the same country, subsequent to which allegations of torture or ill-treatment were made;
- Ensure that the investigative approach at a minimum complies with the UN Principles on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Ensure that the investigation of deaths in custody at a minimum comply with the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, including the provision for adequate autopsies in all such cases;
- In view of evidence that certain persons held in US custody have been subjected to "disappearance", the US authorities should initiate prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into the allegations by a competent and independent state authority, as provided under Article 13 of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

7. Prosecute

Those responsible for torture must be brought to justice. This principle should apply wherever alleged torturers happen to be, whatever their nationality or position, regardless of where the crime was committed and the nationality of the victims, and no matter how much time has elapsed since the commission of the crime. Governments must exercise universal jurisdiction over alleged torturers or extradite them, and cooperate with each other in such criminal proceedings. Trials must be fair. An order from a superior officer must never be accepted as a justification for torture.

The US authorities should:

- Publicly reject all arguments, including those contained in classified or unclassified government documents, promoting impunity for anyone suspected of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including the ordering of such acts;
- Bring to trial all individuals – whether they be members of the administration, the armed forces, intelligence services and other government agencies, medical personnel, private contractors or interpreters – against whom there is evidence of having authorized, condoned or committed torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;
- Any person alleged to have perpetrated an act of "disappearance" should, when the facts disclosed by an official investigation so warrant, be brought before the competent civil authorities for prosecution and trial, in accordance with Article 14 of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
- Ensure that all trials for alleged perpetrators comply with international fair trial standards, and do not result in imposition of the death penalty.

8. No use of statements extracted under torture

Governments should ensure that statements and other evidence obtained through torture may not be invoked in any proceedings, except against a person accused of torture.

The US authorities should:

- Ensure that no statement coerced as a result of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including long-term indefinite detention without charge or trial, or any other information or evidence obtained directly or indirectly as the result of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, regardless of who was responsible for such acts, is admitted as evidence against any defendant, except the perpetrator of the human rights violation in question;
- Revoke the Military Order on the Detention, Treatment, and Trial of Certain Non-Citizens in the War Against Terrorism, and abandon trials by military commission;
- Expose and reject any use of coerced evidence obtained by other governments from people held in their own or US custody;
- Refrain from transferring any coerced evidence for the use of other governments.

9. Provide effective training

It should be made clear during the training of all officials involved in the custody, interrogation or medical care of prisoners that torture is a criminal act. Officials should be instructed that they have the right and duty to refuse to obey any order to torture.

The US authorities should:

- Ensure that all personnel involved in detention and interrogation, including all members of the armed forces or other government agencies, private contractors, medical personnel and interpreters, receive full training, with input from international experts, on the international prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and their obligation to expose it;
- Ensure that all members of the armed forces and members of other government agencies, including the CIA, private contractors, medical personnel and interpreters, receive full training in the scope and meaning of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as well as international human rights law and standards, with input from international experts;
- Ensure that full training be similarly provided on international human rights law and standards regarding the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty, including the prohibition on "disappearances", with input from international experts;
- Ensure that all military and other agency personnel, as well as medical personnel and private contractors, receive cultural awareness training appropriate to whatever theatre of operation they may be deployed into.

10. Provide reparation

Victims of torture and their dependants should be entitled to obtain prompt reparation from the state including restitution, fair and adequate financial compensation and appropriate medical care and rehabilitation.

The US authorities should:

- Ensure that anyone who has suffered torture or ill-treatment while in US custody has access to, and the means to obtain, full reparation including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition, wherever they may reside;

- Ensure that all those who have been subject to unlawful arrest by the USA receive full compensation.

11. Ratify international treaties

All governments should ratify without reservations international treaties containing safeguards against torture, including the UN Convention against Torture with declarations providing for individual and inter-state complaints. Governments should comply with the recommendations of international bodies and experts on the prevention of torture.

The US authorities should:

- Make a public commitment to fully adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law and standards – treaties, other instruments, and customary law – and respect the decisions and recommendations of international and regional human rights bodies;
- Make a public commitment to fully adhere to the Geneva Conventions, and to respecting the advice and recommendations of the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- Ratify Additional Protocols I and II to the Geneva Conventions;
- Withdraw all conditions attached to the USA's ratification of the UN Convention against Torture;
- Provide the USA's overdue second report to the Committee against Torture, as requested by the Committee;
- Withdraw all limiting conditions attached to the USA's ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Provide the USA's overdue reports to the Human Rights Committee;
- Ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture;
- Ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Ratify the American Convention on Human Rights;
- Ratify the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons without any reservations and implement it by making enforced disappearances a crime under US law over which US courts have jurisdiction wherever committed by anyone.
- Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

12. Exercise international responsibility

Governments should use all available channels to intercede with the governments of countries where torture is reported. They should ensure that transfers of training and equipment for military, security or police use do not facilitate torture. Governments must not forcibly return a person to a country where he or she risks being tortured.

The US authorities should:

- Withdraw the USA's understanding to Article 3 of the UN Convention against Torture, and publicly state the USA's commitment to the principle of non-refoulement, and ensure that no legislation undermines this protection in any way;
- Cease the practice of "renditions" that bypass human rights protections; ensure that all transfers of detainees between the USA and other countries fully comply with international human rights law.

(1) This is a summary version of a report of the same title and date, AI Index: AMR 51/145/2004.

(2) Abdou, 16 January 2004. Statement to military investigators.
<http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/iraq/abughraib/18170.pdf>. This technique is said to be "a standard torture. It's called the 'Vietnam'. But it's not common knowledge. Ordinary American soldiers did this, but someone taught them." Darius Rejali, quoted in The Roots of Torture, Newsweek, 24 May 2004.

(3) World Press Photo of 2003. Jean-Marc Bouju, AP.
<http://www.worldpressphoto.nl/contest/winner.jsp>

(4) Remarks at Briefing on the State Department's 2002 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Secretary of State Colin Powell, Washington, DC, 31 March 2003.

(5) President's statement on the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. White House, 26 June 2004.
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040626-19.html>

(6) This refers to part one of the main report of the same title and date, AI Index: AMR 51/145/2004.

(7) United Nations Press Release SG/SM/9373 OBV/428. 17 June 2004.

(8) Statement by the President in his address to the Nation. 11 September 2001