



BACKGROUND

Ever since he “disappeared” at the hands of US government agents in the fall of 2001, Mohammad Haydar Zammar's family has been waiting for someone to tell them whether he is dead or alive. Now in his mid-40s, Mohammad Zammar was detained in Morocco, where he was interrogated for 2 weeks before being secretly transferred to Syria. Although Mohammad Zammar was born in Syria, he has not lived there since he was 4 years old. He holds German and Syrian citizenship, and was living in Hamburg, Germany at the time of his abduction. It appears that Mohammad Zammar was suspected of being linked to al-Qaeda, although he has never been charged with a crime. Senior Moroccan government officials told the Washington Post that US agents participated in Mohammad Zammar's interrogation in Morocco and his subsequent transfer to Syria. During his detention in Syria, US agents have reportedly fed questions to his Syrian interrogators. It is believed that a Gulfstream jet used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), tail number N379P, based in Smithfield, North Carolina, was used to transport Mohammad Zammar to Syria.

Amnesty International is extremely concerned about the fate of Mohammad Zammar. He was reportedly incarcerated from late 2001 to October 2004 in a Syrian military intelligence facility known as Far'

BACKGROUND CONTINUED...

Falastin, where torture and ill-treatment are routine. He may then have been moved to Sednaya Prison on the outskirts of Damascus. Mohammad Zammar's family was given no information about his fate until the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) gave them a 43-word letter from him, dated June 9, 2005. The letter suggests he may have been sent back to Far' Falastin. His current whereabouts are unknown.

A Moroccan who was released from Far' Falastin in 2003 said that Mohammad Zammar was being tortured there. In 2004, Amnesty International learned from other former prisoners that Mohammad Zammar had been held in solitary confinement in a tiny cell throughout his incarceration at Far' Falastin. His condition was described as "skeletal." He has reportedly been given meager amounts of rotten and unsanitary food and has been allowed only ten minutes each month of exposure to fresh air and sunlight. No one, not even representatives of the German government or the ICRC, has been allowed to visit him.

This Gulfstream V executive jet, variously registered as N379P, N8068V and N44982 has been the plane most often identified with known cases of rendition. AI has records of 590 landings and take offs between February 2001 and September 2005. © Jean Luc Altherr

OVERVIEW

Since September 11, 2001, the US government has engaged in the practice of "extraordinary rendition," as a tool in the "war on terror." Extraordinary rendition entails the secret, forcible transfer of terror suspects from one country to another, outside of any legal process, where there are substantial grounds for believing those persons would be in danger of facing torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Victims of "extraordinary rendition" are held indefinitely without being told why, usually without the knowledge of their families and little to no contact with the outside world. This practice is a clear violation of numerous provisions of international law, including the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which have been ratified by the US.

The US government claims that it seeks assurances that transferred persons will not be tortured. However, it is absurd to assume governments that routinely inflict torture or inhuman treatment on detainees will refrain from doing so in a particular case solely because they gave such assurances to the US government. If the risk of abusive treatment in custody is so great that the US must seek assurances that the receiving authorities will not behave as they normally do, then the risk of torture is unacceptably high.

TAKE ACTION FOR MOHAMMAD HAYDAR ZAMMAR

Legislation has been introduced in the US Congress (H.R. 952 in the House of Representatives and S. 654 in the Senate) which would require the executive branch to report annually to Congress, based on the State Department's annual human rights reports, a list of countries that practice torture. The bills would prohibit the transfer of a detainee in US custody to any of those countries.

Write or call your US Representative and ask them to:

- Cosponsor H.R. 952 or similar legislation as a step toward ending the practice of extraordinary rendition
- Speak out publicly against the use of torture and inhuman treatment in the "war on terror"

Write or call your Senators and ask them to:

- Cosponsor S. 654 or similar legislation as a step toward ending the practice of extraordinary rendition
- Speak out publicly against the use of torture and inhuman treatment in the "war on terror"

WRITE TO:

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

[Call the Capitol switchboard toll free at 1-800-426-8073.]



**DENOUNCE
TORTURE**

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