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18/05/2002

To Mr Donald RUMSFELD
Secretary of Defence
UNITED STATES

Object : Rights of detainees in US custody in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay

Dear Secretary of Defence,

I am writing in relation with Amnesty International's Memorandum to the US Government on the rights of detainees in US custody in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay (AMR 51/053/2002).

I condemn the atrocities of 11 September and believe that anyone responsible must be brought to justice.

However, this search of justice must be conducted in strict compliance with international humanitarian law.

I urge you to ensure that detainees held in US custody in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay are held according to US obligations under international human rights law and standards, including in particular :

That all detainees are immediately granted access to legal counsel,

That all detainees are able to challenge the lawfulness of their detention in a court of law,

That no detainee be brought for trial before a military commission, as proposed in the Military Order of 13 November 2001 on the grounds that such trial threatens fundamental standards of justice,

That the death penalty is not sought against any of the people taken into custody in or outside the USA, including those currently held in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay,

That no detainee is sent to a country where he may be at risk of serious human rights abuses.

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