

Irish Government Facilitated CIA “Torture Flights”

Report of the Open Society Justice

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[News Beacon Ireland](#)

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“What is morally wrong can never be politically right.” Lord Shaftesbury, 1801 – 1885

A report published today by the [Open Society Justice Initiative](#) shows that some 54 countries helped to facilitate the CIA’s secret detention, rendition and interrogation programme in the years after 9/11, including Ireland.



“ Interrogation” by C Ó Croidheáin

It says countries participated in various ways with the US programme, which is a crime under international law. That included:

- hosting detention and / or “interrogation” (torture) facilities on their soil
- detaining, interrogating, torturing, and abusing individuals
- assisting in the capture and transport of detainees and permitting the use of domestic airspace and airports for secret flights transporting detainees.

The report says that Ireland permitted the use of its airspace and airports associated with CIA extraordinary rendition operations and references several examples since 2002.

The complicity of the Irish government has been known for quite some time. In an article published today [thejournal.ie](#) reports:

“A 2007 European Parliament report expressed serious concern about the 147 stopover made by CIA-operated aircraft at Irish airports that on many occasions “came from or were bound for countries linked with extraordinary rendition circuits and the transfer of detainees”.

“U.S. court records from a lawsuit involving Richmor Aviation, a company that operated CIA extraordinary rendition flights, also show that at least 13 flights operated by Richmor involving U.S. personnel landed in Ireland between 2002 and 2004.”

“Richmor-operated flights were involved in the extraordinary rendition of the Egyptian cleric Abu Omar, and are also suspected of having refueled at Shannon before transporting Abd al Nashiri, alleged to be the mastermind of the bombing of the navy missile destroyer the USS Cole .”

“Diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks in 2010 revealed that former Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Dermot Ahern told US Ambassador Thomas Foley that he was “quite convinced that at least three flights involving renditions had

refueled at Shannon Airport before or after conducting renditions elsewhere.”

Complicity by inaction

According to other cables released by Wikileaks, the former US ambassador to Ireland noted in 2006 that the Irish government had “acted to ensure continued US military transits at Shannon in the face of public criticism”.

Answering concerns expressed by the Irish Human Rights Commission in 2005 requesting inspections of suspect aircraft landing at Shannon, the government said that inspections were not necessary because it had received assurances from the United States that detainees had not been and would not be transported illegally through Irish territory.

Amnesty International Ireland’s Colm O’Gorman said today the report confirmed the findings of the organisation’s own report in 2010. He said:

“It is undeniable that the Irish government knew rendition flights transited Ireland and that they knew this breached the legally binding international convention on torture. Yet they did nothing. Official Ireland was prepared to ignore our role in kidnap and torture for the sake of maintaining good relations with the United States government.”...

“We have repeatedly called for an independent investigation into the use of Shannon airport. This investigation must also make clear who knew that we were complicit in torture and why they failed to act.”

Other countries convict at least the footsoldiers carrying out these crimes (see <http://www.aclu.org/blog/national-security-human-rights/italian-court-upholds-rendition-conviction-cia-agents>).

The Irish government does nothing.

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