

By RT

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A United Nations investigator has demanded that the US publish classified documents regarding the CIA's human rights violations under former President George W. Bush, with hopes that the documents will lead to the prosecution of public officials.

Documents about the CIA's program of rendition and secret detention of suspected terrorists have remained classified, even though President Obama's administration has publicly condemned the use of these "enhanced interrogation techniques". The US has not prosecuted any of its agents for human rights violations.

UN investigator Ben Emmerson, the UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism, said that the classified documents protect the names of individuals who are responsible for serious human rights violations.

*"Despite this clear repudiation of the unlawful actions carried out by the Bush-era CIA, many of the facts remain classified, and no public official has so far been brought to justice in the United States,"* Emmerson said in a report to the UN Human Rights Council, according to Reuters.

Kept in secret prisons around the world, the CIA's detainees were subjected to torture including waterboarding, sleep deprivation and various other interrogation techniques that violate human rights. The detainees were often subjected to clandestine transfers to secret prisons known as CIA 'black sites'.

*"There is now credible evidence to show that CIA 'black sites' were located on the territory of Lithuania, Morocco, Poland, Romania and Thailand, and that the officials of at least 49 other states allowed their airspace or airports to be used for rendition flights,"* Emmerson

said, describing how suspected terrorists were often detained without being charged for any crimes, receiving extradition procedures or having access to lawyers.

Emmerson has urged the US to prosecute any public official who was involved in setting up the CIA "black sites" at which human rights or legal violations occurred. Even though the Obama administration has condemned those who promoted the use of such facilities for inhumane procedures, the administration has taken no steps to punish any of its public officials. Attorney General Eric Holder has said that the Justice Department would not take legal actions against those who "*acted in good faith*" and followed the guidelines provided by the Office of Legal Counsel during the Bush era.

But without names and details about the involvement of US officials at CIA black sites, the government is maintaining a level of secrecy and "*perpetuating impunity for the public officials implicated in these crimes,*" Emmerson said. A Senate committee led by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) previously investigated the CIA's interrogation program and may have had complete access to classified information about it.

Emmerson has called for this information to be published "*without delay, and to the fullest extent possible.*"

While the UN special rapporteur lacks the power to force the Obama administration to release this information, his report puts further pressure on the US government to expose a practice it publicly condemns, but continues to keep secret.