

From Center for Constitutional Rights



On Friday, a federal court in Alexandria, VA, [ruled](#) that our clients in [Al Shimari v. CACI](#), three Iraqi men, Salah Al Ejaili, Asa'd Al-Zuba'e, and Suhail Al Shimari, who were held at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison, were subjected to treatment that could constitute torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, and that the case to hold the private military contractor CACI Premier Technology accountable for this treatment can proceed. The hearing marked the first time in the course of our nine-year case that CCR presented in detail the torture and serious mistreatment their clients suffered at Abu Ghraib in 2003 and 2004.

CCR legal director [Baher Azmy](#), who argued the case on Friday, said, "The court has sent an important message that there can be accountability for torture, a vital step for our clients who have yet to see justice. This is a crucial ruling in a political climate where Trump has called for bringing back widely denounced torture techniques like waterboarding."

"Fourteen years later, Salah, Asa'd, and Suhail are still suffering from the severe mistreatment they experienced, and the torture of Iraqi civilians at Abu Ghraib remains one of the darkest chapters in recent U.S. history," said CCR senior staff attorney [Katherine Gallagher](#). "Yet there remains an accountability gap: military officers were court martialed for their misconduct, but the private contractors walked away with large payments, and they continue to be awarded millions of dollars in government contracts. This case hopefully will narrow that accountability gap."

Salah, Asa'd, and Suhail were subjected to dehumanizing acts of torture, and continue to suffer today from the cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment they received in 2003 and 2004. A U.S. Army general referred to their treatment as "[sadistic, blatant, and wanton](#) criminal abuses." Salah himself

[wrote about his experience](#)

, "My body was like a machine, responding to all external orders. The only part I owned was my brain, which could not be stopped by the black plastic bag they used to cover my head. The most important question to which I could find no answer at the time is: what is all this for?"

Since 2004, CCR has worked with a team of private attorneys on behalf of hundreds of Iraqi plaintiffs [on a series of civil lawsuits against private military contractors](#) . We will continue to keep you updated as we move forward with *Al Shimari*.