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## Conservatives and Socialists block search for rendition truth - Ludford

The Socialist (PSE) and Conservative (EPP) groups, which together have a majority in the European Parliament, have allied to deny a request made by the Liberal, Green and the Communist groups for a debate on Guantanamo and the CIA extraordinary rendition programme in next week's European Parliamentary plenary session in Strasbourg.

London MEP Sarah Ludford, Liberal Democrat European justice & human rights spokeswoman, was vice-chair of the enquiry by MEPs 2 years ago into European governments' collusion with illegal rendition and CIA flights, the programme of kidnap, torture and secret prisons that broke all norms of international and domestic law. She said:

"How sadly ironic that Conservatives and Socialists chose International Human Rights Day, the 60th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, to make an unholy alliance blocking a further attempt to determine the truth about rendition and find a way for Europe to help Barack Obama close Guantanamo."

Since the European Parliament inquiry report, new revelations have emerged, relating in particular to Poland, Portugal, Italy, Spain, and the UK, about how abducted terrorist suspects were brought to Guantanamo and kept outside any legitimate criminal justice system with the complicity of EU Member States. Sarah Ludford added:

"MEPs need to debate the new developments and call on the Commission, the Council and Member States to bring clarity about what happened and ensure it cannot happen again. Conservative and Socialist obstruction of this debate will seriously undermine their credibility in terms of attachment to human rights."

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