



## Torture: MEPs call for investigation into EU countries' role in CIA practices

[17-12-2014 - 16:53]

**Waterboarding, chaining people to walls, rectal feeding: the recently published US Senate's report on CIA interrogation methods makes serious allegations about the agency using torture to extract information from detainees. In a plenary debate about the report on 17 December, MEPs said that trampling fundamental values in the fight against terrorism is unacceptable and that the possible complicity of EU member states in this should be investigated.**

**Benedetto Della Vedova**, representing the Italian presidency of the EU Council, emphasised that the US was an important partner for the EU in fighting terrorism. "The EU is committed to fully banning torture and inhuman and degrading treatment," he said, adding that Barack Obama banned torture as soon as he became US president.

**Dimitris Avramopoulos**, the commissioner responsible for home affairs and citizenship, said about torture: "It is just wrong. Not only wrong, it's a crime. And it should never be used." He also stressed that efforts to combat terrorism should respect international law.

**Monika Hohlmeier** (EPP, Germany) commented: "People's fundamental rights are sacred and cannot be violated," adding that torture and brutal interrogations cannot be defended.

**Tanja Fajon** (S&D, Slovenia) said: "Torture is illegal, immoral and unacceptable. Europe's participation in any form in any type of illegal activity by the CIA is shameful, unworthy of democracy, unworthy of the foundations and values on which the EU was built." She added that it would not be acceptable if people got away with using torture.

**Mark Demesmaeker** (ECR, Belgium) said: "The EU says it defends honour and values and respects human rights," noting that the EU had lost much of people's confidence by cooperating with CIA programmes.

**Sophie in 't Veld** (ALDE, Netherlands) had a message for the US president: "No Mr Obama, we cannot draw a line under this until those responsible have been brought to justice." She also stressed that European countries should take responsibility for their support for the CIA programme.

**Cornelia Ernst** (GUE/NGL, Germany) said: "This evokes the practices of terrible, terrifying dictatorial regimes."

**Eva Joly** (Greens/EFA, France) said: "There's nothing really new in the 600 pages of this Senate report, just confirmations. Confirmations of collaboration on the part of European governments and the existence of CIA prisoners on European soil. Confirmation of the uselessness of torture."

**Laura Ferrara** (EFDD, Italy) stressed that the report does not include any recommendations for incriminating the people responsible. "There is nothing in peace time or wartime that can justify torture," she said.

**Krisztina Morvai**, a non-attached member from Hungary, said: "

If you are so angry at the US, why do you want to be friends with this country so badly? Because the EU is walking hand in hand with the US, both economically and politically."