

“The Global Rendition System”: Major Study Sheds New Light on CIA Secret Prisons

By [Reprise](#)

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),
[Intelligence](#)

Today sees the launch of the “[Global Rendition System](#)” database and interactive map – the most comprehensive resource so far created illustrating the CIA’s [programme of renditions and secret prisons](#) as part of the ‘war on terror’.

On the eve of President [Obama’s major speech on counter-terrorism policy](#), the database illuminates the transportation network used to implement the US Government’s programme of “rendition, detention and interrogation”, which traversed Asia and Europe in a string of secret prison sites, ultimately sending over 800 men to Guantanamo Bay – where 166 remain.

The database – [a collaboration between Reprise and the Rendition Project based at Kingston and Kent Universities](#) – uses data from freedom of information requests, legal cases, published first-hand accounts, investigations by NGOs and authoritative news reporting to detail dozens of prisoner transfers between secret “black sites”. Through analysis of more than 11,000 flights by over 120 aircraft, linked to more than 50 private companies, the site reveals the roles of different countries and shows how companies tried to cover their routes by filing false flight plans or by switching aircraft halfway.

[Reprise](#) and the [Rendition Project](#) compiled documents from Reprise’s [Renditions Inc. investigation](#) with previous work by the [Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#), the European Parliament, the [Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Warsaw](#), the [Human Rights Monitoring Institute in Vilnius](#), [Access Info Europe](#) and other NGOs and investigators worldwide. All of the site’s source material is made publicly available and search results can be downloaded for further research and analysis. The data is plotted on [an interactive map](#) – users can zoom in on countries, flight routes and known or possible prisoner transfers, and move through the network via studies of individual cases and summaries of corporate complicity.

A recent [report by The Constitution Project’s Task Force on Detainee Treatment](#) – chaired by former Bush-era officials – heavily criticised the US’ programme of rendition and torture, pointing out the key role of European countries noting that the “CIA created its own...‘black sites’ in...Poland, Romania and Lithuania.”

[Sam Raphael](#) from the Rendition Project said: “The sheer scope of the CIA’s rendition and torture system is brought to light as never before by our work, which shows in painstaking detail how terror suspects were kidnapped and transported to secret prisons across the globe for ‘enhanced interrogation’.”

[Crofton Black](#) from Reprieve said: “This unprecedented database shows how false route filings, tarmac transfers, shell companies and the plausible deniability of executive jets masked a systematic programme of secret detention and torture run by the US with the active complicity of the UK and other European countries.”

1. For further information, please contact Clemency Wells in Reprieve’s press office: +44 (0) 207 553 8161 / clemency.wells@reprieve.org.uk

2. The Global Rendition System database is available here: <http://www.therenditionproject.org.uk/global-rendition/index.html>. It is the product of a collaborative research project between Dr Ruth Blakeley at the University of Kent and Dr Sam Raphael at Kingston University, funded by the UK’s Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), and accredited under the Global Uncertainties programme. Working closely with Reprieve, a legal action charity which has led the way in investigating secret prisons and representing victims of rendition and torture, the Rendition Project aims to bring together and analyse the huge amount of data on rendition and secret detention in the US-led ‘War on Terror’.

The Rendition Project aims to analyse the emergence, development and operation of the global system of rendition and secret detention in the years since 9/11. In doing so, it aims to bring together as much of the publicly-available information as possible on the detainees who have been held in secret, the detention sites in which they have been held, and the methods and timings of their transfers.

For further information on the project, please contact Sam Raphael (s.raaphael@kingston.ac.uk) or Ruth Blakeley (R.J.Blakeley@kent.ac.uk).

3. [Reprieve](#), a legal action charity, uses the law to enforce the human rights of prisoners, from death row to Guantánamo Bay. Reprieve investigates, litigates and educates, working on the frontline, to provide legal support to prisoners unable to pay for it themselves. Reprieve promotes the rule of law around the world, securing each person’s right to a fair trial and saving lives. Clive Stafford Smith is the founder of Reprieve and has spent 25 years working on behalf of people facing the death penalty in the USA.

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