



# INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT



## Statement in relation to Detention and Rendition

In June last year, the Intelligence and Security Committee published two reports on the actions of the UK security and intelligence agencies in relation to the handling of detainees overseas and rendition. The Chairman of the Committee, the Rt Hon Dominic Grieve MP, said today *"Our inquiry uncovered new material which had not been presented to, or considered by, any previous inquiry or review. However we had wished to examine certain matters in greater detail and, in order to do so, we wanted to hear from the officers who were involved at the time. In 2017 the Government denied us access to those individuals and we were able only to publish the information we had found up to that point. A judge-led inquiry would have presented another opportunity for that full transparency."*

The Committee's report – which covered the period following the terrorist attacks on the US in September 2001, when UK personnel from SIS, MI5 and MOD participated in an estimated 2-3000 interviews of detainees held by US detaining authorities at locations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and at Guantanamo Bay – contained 27 conclusions and outlined some serious concerns. The Chairman said *"In our view the UK tolerated actions, and took others, that we regarded as inexcusable. While there was no smoking gun in what we found, we remain of the opinion that there may have been more to be heard from those on the ground at the time."*

The second of the Committee's two reports dealt with the situation since 2010. This marked a turning point in that the Government published its policy in relation to detainees overseas in order to ensure that the UK is not involved in torture or mistreatment. The Committee made 48 recommendations. The Chairman said today *"The Intelligence and Security Committee recommended a full scale review of the Consolidated Guidance: we are pleased that this has now happened and that the Government have accepted all of the major changes we said were required and reflected them in the new "Principles" being published today."*

The Chairman said that the change of name was key: *"The ISC has said since 2010 that the title of Guidance was misleading: it was not Guidance, but a framework which sets the boundaries within which the Agencies must operate. We are pleased to see that Government has now recognised the need for transparency around the purpose of the document."*

In terms of the changes, he said, *"The new Principles reflect the important changes we recommended, including, for example: specific reference to extraordinary rendition, alongside torture and CIDT; the application of the Principles to joint units and non-state actors; regular review; and that the Agencies must follow the spirit of the Principles, not just the letter. This is a major step forward and we are pleased that there has been real change as a result of our recommendations."*