



Paris, 10 May 2005

Dear Colleagues,

Seventeen Afghans were recently released from the US military base at Guantanamo after being cleared of all suspicion of terrorism. They had been detained for between 18 and 42 months and, according to the Agence France Presse, had been subjected to “unspeakable torture.”

How can we, as members of the Parliamentary Assembly of OSCE, whose purpose is to ensure respect for human rights, remain passive while confronted with what has to be called the Guantanamo scandal?

We believe we cannot stand aside. For this reason we started taking action at the Rhodes session last September to enable our Assembly to intervene and send a delegation to fully establish the conditions under which the 520 people still detained at the camp (after 232 had been released) were arrested and are being treated. Our objective is in no way to discredit the United States government but to incite it to put an end to a situation that is so blatantly opposed to the elementary principles of justice.

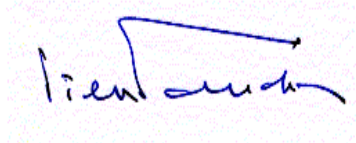
Our initiative is based on the Helsinki Treaty. We consider that it endows our Assembly with a specific responsibility that justifies it being granted the right to make a visit of this sort under these exceptional circumstances.

Mr. Hastings, the Speaker of our Assembly, has appointed Mrs. Lizin to undertake a special study of this matter. We know we can trust our colleague not to reduce the scope of her mission to a pure formality. We therefore await her report with confidence. It is due to be submitted to the Speaker before the July session in Washington.

However, we must immediately be alert to the decisive nature of the reply which meets our initiative. Our very presence in Washington gives this initiative special significance. We must emerge from the discretion that we have observed until now. Our purpose must be to take effective action in order to present our concerns to the press and to the American people.

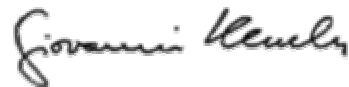
It is our wholehearted wish that our entire Assembly should mobilise itself on this occasion. For this reason, we would be most grateful if you could inform us whether you are prepared to associate yourselves with the action we are taking.

Thank you for giving us your attention.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Fauchon', with a stylized flourish above the name.

P. FAUCHON

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giovanni Kessler', written in a cursive style.

G. KESSLER

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