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Swedish TV4 Kalla Fakta Program: "The Broken Promise"

(English Transcript) Monday, 17th May, 2004

Participants:

Sven Linder, former Swedish ambassador to Cairo:
 Gun-Britt Andersson, former state secretary at the Foreign office
 Hanan Attia, wife of Ahmed Agiza
 Kjell Jönsson, lawyer to Mohammed Al Zery
 Hafes Abu Seada, Agiza's Egyptian lawyer
 Sven-Olof Rosén, flight broker at Bromma airport
 Thomas Hammarberg, head of the Olof Palme centre
 Julia Hall, Counsel in the Europe and Central Asia Division at Human Rights Watch
 Arne Andersson, Swedish Security Police, SÄPO, responsible for the expulsion
 Mikael Lundström, SÄPO
 Hamida Shalaby, Agiza's mother
 Muhammed Al Zery, expelled and victim of torture
 Mary Ellen McGuinness, Premier Executive Transport Services
 Masood Anwar, reporter The News, Karachi, Pakistan
 Ahmed Omar Abo El Seoud, general, Egyptian State security service
 George Tenet, head of CIA
 Susan Fayed, psychiatrist, Nadeem Center
 Hans Dahlgren, Swedish vice foreign minister

Announcer:

Welcome to tonight's Kalla Fakta (Cold Facts).

Sweden is known as one of the world's leading advocates of human rights, swift to condemn torture and summary trials. But tonight we can reveal that Sweden is itself abusing human rights in the worldwide terrorist hunt that has been going on since the 11th September 2001. Foreign masked agents have been allowed to strip, degrade and arrest suspects in Sweden, at Bromma airport. And take them to a country where they were to be tortured.

To expel someone to a country where he or she risks torture or inhuman treatment is incompatible with both international conventions and Swedish law. Yet, that was just what Sweden did when its government in December 2001 expelled Ahmed Agiza and Muhammed Al Zery to Egypt. An expulsion that not only was done in a very remarkable manner, but also was based on several incorrect pieces of information.

Speaker: Barely an hour before the airport closes for the night 18th December 2001, a small, very special jet plane lands at Bromma in Stockholm. Two civilian police cars are let in through the gate by the policewoman who guards it. In one of them is Muhammed Al Zery, 33 years, in the other Ahmed Agiza, 39 years.

Kalla Fakta has spoken with all we have found who were at Bromma that night. No one dares come forward publicly, but some have told what they saw, under the condition that they remain absolutely anonymous.

In a room, a group of men from the newly arrived plane, in plain clothes, are waiting. They have their faces hooded.

The two prisoners have their clothes cut from their bodies by scissors, without their hand- and handcuffs being loosened. The naked and chained prisoners have a suppository of unknown kind inserted into their anus, and diapers are put on them. They are forcibly dressed in dark overalls. Their hands and feet are chained to a specially designed harness. On the plane, both men are blindfolded and hooded.

When the plane takes off at 21.49 and sets course towards Egypt, Sweden is making a great deviation from a long tradition of safeguarding human rights.

Speaker: This is Hanan Attia. She and her husband Ahmed Agiza fled from Egypt to Pakistan and Iran after he had

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 No. 08-15693 archived on October 4, 2010

for many years been persecuted in Egypt for his engagement in islamistic movements.

Hanan Attia: Even hear in the news, must leave home. Because its like a blacklist, names in it. Difficult to live like that. And with children, more difficult. Two easy to move, children you must have stable life.

Speaker: Today, they have 5 children, one of them , little Kinana, was born here in Karlstad. The family had been fugitives for many years before they came to Sweden in September 2000.

Hanan Attia: I came here and feel trustful and I I don't want a lot from the world, I want a safe place to grown up children in good environment to be benefit person.

Live: Bye, Mum.

Speaker: The other man who was brought to Bromma, Muhammed Al Zery, an acquaintance of Agiza´s, came to Sweden in August 1999.

Kjell Jönsson: He had to flee Egypt in 1991 after having been harassed and tortured. So, he left Egypt illegally, and it was a matter of course to him that he wanted to come to Sweden to live in freedom.

Speaker: The Swedish Migration Board judged in both cases that the men needed protection, and should be granted asylum in Sweden.

But the Swedish Security police, called Säpo, was of the opinion that both were suspected terrorists who should be handed over to Egypt.

Speaker: With its pyramids, its history of many thousands of years, and sea and diving resorts , Egypt is a popular tourist country.

But Egypt is also a police state, where the people is held in an iron grip with the help of "emergency" laws.

A country where militant islamistic groups have perpetrated several terror attacks - but where also peaceful regime critics are classed as terrorists by the regime, in order to crush all political opposition.

Speaker: Here in the Nadim centre, doctors have attended to thousands of torture victims in the last years.

Susan Fayed: Torture is very widespread in police stations and state security detention places. Electricity is used unfortunately widely. It is used routinely, and sometimes for punishment, for political or oppositional people, and sometime just to complimen for third partner.

Julia Hall: Egypt is a country that has been criticized by many organisations including UN, for using torture as a means to affect state policy.

Speaker: A judgment that is shared by the Swedish government: "Reports of police brutality, maltreatment and torture in police jails and prisons are common, and seem to be well founded in many cases. "

Julia Hall: Sweden has signed and ratified numerous UN-treaties that prohibit torture, including the convention against torture which has an express provision stating that states must not send people back to places where they would be in danger of torture.

Thomas Hammarberg: So it was an established practice that people would not be sent back to Egypt when they had this background, as it was very likely that they would be subjected to torture during interrogations.

Speaker: Sweden was in a dilemma. But it was prepared to go very far to get rid of these men.

Gun-Britt Andersson, then state secretary at the Foreign office, obtained a unique guarantee from Egypt that would untie the knot.

Gun-Britt Andersson: It guarantees that they will not be treated in a way that is contrary to international conventions, the Convention against torture and the European convention on human rights. Moreover, we were granted a follow-up possibility through visiting the prisoners.

Ahmed Omar Abo El Seoud: It certainly is considered in high appreciation and it is a model. We consider it a model that can be copied and taken as a guide on the level of international cooperation. Which is what we aspire to and invite to and demand on the level of different international speheres. This is an implementation of the basis of international law.

Speaker: According to Säpo, the two men are leading terrorists, but all Säpo´s information on the men is secret, also to the accused and their lawyers. That is out of consideration for relations with the foreign intelligence agencies that have supplied the information about them.

Arne Andersson: On the whole, there is no ground for us to believe anything else than that this is correct. We have a

great trust between security agencies, and if we get information, we can mostly trust it.

Gun-Britt Andersson: Concerning Agiza, he is a wellknown figure, and there are reports on him in British press. And he was one of the leading figures in Islamic Jihad. Long ago, but since then these movements have splintered, and he was a member of those who were accused of the murder of presiden Sadat, I think.

Q: Suspected of Sadat?_

He was convicted in his absence.

Q: The murder of Sadat?_

I don't want to be precise on that.

It wasn't our business to investigate these things, but he was a very leading figure in Egypt then . Many years ago.

Q: How do we know that?

This is confirmed from all quarters.

Speaker: But much of the information that the Foreign Office and Säpo have are wrong, Agiza is not convicted of the murder of president Sadat, not even a suspect. Säpo thinks that Al Zery is convicted of crimes. That is incorrect. Agiza is said to have contacts high up in Al Qaida, and it is correct that he knows Ayman Al Zawahiri, today known as Usama Bin Laden's second in command. These two were both active in the Egyptian opposition in the beginning of the nineties, and met during Agiza's exile in Pakistan in the middle of the nineties. But Säpo doesn't have any reports of later contacts between them. And Agiza has several times publicly denounced Al Zawahiri and his ideology of violence. Agiza is convicted. He was convicted in his absence in 1999, together with 106 others, by a military court in Cairo for membership in Talal al-Fatah, an illegal organisation. The proceedings took 20 minutes. Neither the Egyptian security police nor Swedish Säpo have been able to produce any information pointing to Al Zery as a leading member of the same organization.

Kjell Jönsson, lawyer to Mohammed Al Zery: I think that this is..... It is my firm conviction that this is a miscarriage of justice. And we were never allowed to take part of the foundations for these accusations, and also not a chance to meet them.

Speaker: A quarter to twelve on 18th December 2001, Prime minister Göran Persson and the rest of the government sit down to an extraordinary meeting. With the suspicions of terrorist activities and the Egyptian information as a foundation, they make the decision to expel Mohammed Al Zery and Ahmed Agiza. That decision takes about one minute. Another 48 points on the agenda are ushered through before it is time for lunch.

The Migration Board officer charged with the matter goes to the Post office himself to mail the decisions in a registered letter to the extradited men's lawyers soon after four o'clock. But Säpo is in a state of readiness, and picks up the decision at the Foreign Office .

At 16.48 Ahmed Agiza is apprehended in Karlstad, on the way home from a course in Swedish. A few minutes later, Säpo arrests Al Zery in a shop in Stockholm.

Kjell Jönsson: On Tuesday the 18th, I had a telephone interview with my client, when I suddenly heard someone say: -Put the receiver down. Then, the connection was interrupted.

Speaker: Kjell Jönsson immediately calls the Foreign Office to check what has happened. But those who handle the decision have left the receiver off on purpose, and all others are on a Christmas party. Those he finally get hold of say that they know nothing. The men are already on their way to Bromma airport, but no one wants to to tell that to their legal counsels.

When the letters from the Foreign office reach the lawyers two days later, the men are since long in the custody of the State Security in Cairo.

Kjell Jönsson: -Yes, to me it's all rather clear. I had already told the government that if , contrary to all expectation, the government would take a decision of expulsion to Egypt , I would go to the European court of Human rights with a complaint against Sweden, because there was an obvious risk that Al Zery would be subjected to torture. And that proceedings in Egypt can be completely illegal.

Gun-Britt Andersson: It was estimated that this would work and it worked.

Thomas Hammarberg: That was a breach of trend and practice, and it also was in Europe. And it was used in other countries as an argument for... as Sweden was so particular about respecting Human rights, and we had taken this decision of sending these two Egyptians back, then it was possible for other countries also, so in UN's Refugee Commissariat this Swedish decision was regarded as serious , because it opened the dam so to speak, so it was an important decision. Not only in Sweden, but also in other parts of Europe.

STUDIO: But why on Earth would Sweden want to risk its good reputation, and accept that two men are flown from Sweden hanging manacled and hooded in an aircraft?

Why was this so important to the Government?

We are back soon.

//// Commercial Break ////

STUDIO:

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www.therenditionproject.org.uk

Welcome back to Kalla Fakta.

Two men are swiftly and brutally expelled from Sweden to Egypt. Late at night, they are flown out, hanging in special harnesses from the interior of a mystical aircraft. To a country that is known to torture its prisoners.

The question is why Sweden in this way suddenly abandons its principles concerning human rights? Why was this expulsion so important that the Government, instead of complying with international conventions, made a hasty, makeshift special agreement with Egypt?

We can tonight reveal that it was a foreign intelligence agency that abducted the two men out of Sweden. Masked US agents were allowed to operate on Swedish territory.

A few months after the attack on World Trade Center, Sweden accepted to become a pawn in the United States' worldwide manhunt.

Julia Hall: We don't have any information about who in particular might have applied pressure to the Swedish government. What we do know is that the overall atmosphere, post September 11th has driven many governments, long interested in human rights, to do things that have in fact violated human rights. This is particularly disturbing to us.

Speaker: The USA have, both before and after 11 September, systematically kidnapped people all over the world, and handed them over to loyal security agencies in countries like Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The phenomenon is called Extraordinary Rendition.

George Tenet: I've testified there were over 70 renditions. But renditions in and of themselves doesn't stop this.

Julia Hall: The key feature of extraordinary rendition is that there is virtually no opportunity for the suspect, him or herself, to challenge it, or to have any process, to see whether or not it's legal, that's why we call it extraordinary rendition.

Speaker: People are taken to countries where they can be locked up for undefined time, or be interrogated with methods that would be unacceptable in a state ruled by law. Torture is no exception. A couple of examples:

24 year old Muhammad Saad Iqbal, was in November 2001 taken in chains on board a civilian aircraft in Djakarta. A few hours later, he was in Egypt. His further fate is unknown.

In June 2002, the German citizen Mohammad Zammar, was taken by

CIA in Morocco and was flown to Syria, where he is kept imprisoned to this day.

The Canadian citizen Maher Arar was arrested on 26th September 2003 in New York, on his way home to Montreal. He was turned over to the Syrian security service. He was interrogated and tortured for ten months, before he was released.

Could it be that a US intelligence agency has also been involved in the expulsion of Agiza and Al Zery? The last traces of the two men are found at Bromma.

Sven-Olof Rosén: Here are all the bookings. YES! From 2000 to 2001, that should be the one.

Speaker: Swedish Säpo had booked a plane through Executive Air at Bromma.

Sven-Olof Rosén: Then there is a note: Flight booking cancelled 18th December 21.45. It appears here that the crew of North flying, on their way here, over the radio had heard that an Egyptian jet had collected the passengers already on the night of 18th December. We had no idea of that.

Speaker: So, quite another plane has picked up the two men. But Säpo won't give any details.

Arne Andersson: What type it was and where it came from, I can't say.

Q: Why?

Arne Andersson: That could disturb our relations with another service, and it could also affect the foreign relations of Sweden. As a nation.

Speaker: But Kalla Fakta can now disclose that it was an American plane. A Gulfstream 5, a very exclusive small private jet. The Bromma plane had the registration N379P, and proved to be owned by an anonymous company on the East coast of USA.

Mary Ellen McGuinness: That was our aircraft. You come to the right office.

Speaker: We call and want to hire the aircraft, but get the answer that it only flies for the US government.

Mary Ellen McGuinness: That is correct. We only lease through the US government, we are on a long term lease with them. Let me see if I find someone call you back.

Speaker: After 15 minutes, our phone rings again. This time from Stockholm.

Mikael Lundström: Hello, my name is Mikael Lundström, I work with the Security police, I call because you have been in contact with US authorities, concerning a certain person.

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www.therenditionproject.org.uk

Q: OK. My question is then, do you work for a Government authority?

Why do you ask? If I put it like this, we have been contacted by our US cooperation partners in on this matter.

Q: We have been in contact with the owners of the plane. And a colleague of yours calls and says: US authorities.

Arne Andersson: I still can't neither confirm nor deny your information, that it's right or wrong, but I can say as much that this was an international cooperation. That's what it was. And it was cheap for the taxpayers.

Q: Very cheap?

Arne Andersson: Cheaper than normal.

Speaker: Säpo confirms that a foreign security agency has been at Bromma, but won't say more. But Kalla Fakta can reveal that it was 6-8 Americans who handled the prisoners at Bromma, and that the plane is an instrument in the international manhunt conducted by the United States.

Two months earlier, the Jeminite student Jamil Gasim was picked up in the same way in Karachi in Pakistan, and flown in chains to Amman in Jordania. Masood Anwar, a reporter of The News in Karachi, wrote about the incident a few days later:

Masood Anwar: My sources were eyewitnesses, they belong from firebrigade. They have seen the entire drama, They told me all the persons wearing masks. The Entire episode was operated by foreigners. They were from US. They saw that the tailnumber was N379P.

Speaker: N379P. The same plane that transported Ahmed Agiza and Muhammed Al Zery from Bromma to Cairo.

Kalla Fakta has charted the plane and its owners. It's quite clear that it's not an ordinary rental aircraft. It works on classified contracts for the US Department of Defense, and moves frequently between the continents. It has exclusive landing permits on US air bases all over the World, like Wake atoll in the Pacific, and Guantanamo on Cuba. The plane is a frequent guest there.

Thomas Hammarberg: Yes, it's what One has had the feeling all the time that there has been a strong US element in this whole business. There was a strong pressure from Washington during this autumn. On governments who might have had people on their lists. But one thing we have really learnt during this period. That is that the US' security service's list on suspected people may not be taken as evidence.

STUDIO: Without being able to refer to any proof of committed crime, Sweden expels two men to Egypt, a country that is known to torture political prisoners. And it was this agreement that made it possible to circumvent both Swedish law and the Convention on Human Rights. A guarantee where Egypt promises that the two men are to be given a humane treatment and have a fair trial. Did they get that - what happened to Agiza and Al Zery. We went to Egypt to find out.

Speaker: When the American plane had landed in Cairo, the two prisoners are turned over to the Egyptian State security service. During the following five weeks' interrogations, the Swedish government doesn't know where they are. It doesn't even ask.

Sven Linder: What do you think had happened if I had come rushing in after four or five days and demanded to see those people?

It had been to signal from the start that we don't trust you Egyptians.

Speaker: This is the Swedish embassy in Cairo. It is here the responsibility lies to control that the guarantee agreement is adhered to.

Live: -We are going to Masra Tora prison, to see Ahmed Agiza.

Q: How long will you be there?

For about an hour.

Speaker: Every month for two years time, the embassy has paid a visit to the prisoners. But the embassy's reports show that the visits take place in the prison director's office, often with personnel from Egypt's security service present, who take notes of what the prisoners have dared to say. And the men have never been examined by an independent doctor.

Sven Linder: The only thing you can assume, as I see it, as an observer who is neither a psychologist nor with a medical degree, but still with a certain life experience, that is to what extent a person's pattern of behaviour is normal under the circumstances.

Gun-Britt Andersson, former state secretary, the Foreign office: I hope and believe that they haven't been tortured.

Sven Linder: I can be very clear on that point. My estimate is that they have fulfilled their commitments as they were supposed to under this agreement.

Speaker: We meet Agiza's mother Hamida Shalaby, who every other week sees her son in prison, under less

supervised conditions. She knows what has happened before the ambassador's visits.

Hamida Shalaby: A day before they tell him tomorrow the ambassador is coming. Don't Speak! If you speak you will lay on the electric mattress.

Speaker: In spite of the threats, they took the chance already at the ambassador's first visit, in January 2002. Kalla fakta can today reveal that it appears already in the first reports to the Foreign Office that the guarantee had been broken. The men then tell that they are forced to wear a blindfold at all times, that they are not allowed to sleep, that their families are threatened, about beatings and maltreatment. All of it testimony that the Swedish government immediately puts a stamp of secrecy on.

Julia Hall: I mean, I'm sorry I've just never seen the excerpted passage before I only have the one they haven't taken out, so I'm a little struck by it.

Q: why?

Because everything that they told him amounts to torture and ill treatment. The only conclusion I can draw from that is that the Swedish government did not want to admit publicly that the men had been tortured or ill treated upon return. To do so would mean in fact that they had violated the torture principle.

Speaker: Friday prayer outside the Al Azhar mosque in Cairo. For two weeks, we have on location sought permission to see the imprisoned Ahmed Agiza. But the Egyptian Security service dawdles.

At last, we are granted permission to go to Tora prison, an enormous complex on the outskirts of Cairo, covering several blocks. With a large number of security police on our heels, we are brought to the door of Agiza's cell block, but that is as far as we go. We are not permitted to go in, there is no interview.

Speaker: The man the security police wants us to interview is Muhammed Al Zery, who was released from prison in October, and is said to be a free man. But he is not permitted to leave his native village without permission. The meeting is arranged by the security service's management, and in the room are four officers whom we are not allowed to show in the picture. The highest ranking decides when the camera should be on and when not....and what questions we can put.

Live: Without recording!

Without recording!

Not recored now?

No!

Q: But he will tell me some questions to ask?

Yes!

OK!

Q: Treated well in prison?

Mohammed Al Zery: Yes. According to agreement there was good treatment, in that there was a lawyer, there was family visit, there was a monthly visit by the Swedish Embassy, throughout the trial and review by General Prosecution until it was proven that there was nothing..

Kjell Jönsson: What can Al Zery say in a situation like this? It's evident that he is speaking under coercion.

Speaker: But Agiza's mother can tell another story.

Hamida Shalaby: The mattress had electricity. The mattress. He would lay on it - like this - and his arms in chains on both sides and his legs in chains too. When they connected to the electricity, his body would rise up and then fall down and this up and down would go on until they unplugged electricity.

F: How many times did they use electrical torture?

Four times. Four times with the mattress, but on the chair; every day.

Yes, from 19 December to 20 February.

Speaker: The reports about torture also made Al Zery's attorney Kjell Jönsson try to seek more information on location in Cairo.

Kjell Jönsson: This information, that they have been tortured is now confirmed. It is about very painful torture. They fasten electrodes to the most sensitive parts of the body. That is, genitals, breast nipples, tongue, ear lobes, underarms.

There are physicians present to judge how much torture, how much electricity, the prisoners can take. Afterwards the exposed parts are anointed, so that there won't be marks and scars, and cold water is poured to stop blood clots.

Sven Linder: I was beginning to wonder if he was trying to signal something to me after all. And then I simply asked him to take his clothes

off. And then he started to do that. There were only men present. I simply wanted him to show himself. And when he had proceeded halfway he said: There are no marks on my body. And then I stopped the procedure.

Q: Could it be electrical torture he meant, it leaves no marks.

Sven Linder: Well, again, we are moving in a theoretical sphere.... I don't think so, but of course it could be that way.

Hamida Shalaby: They would electrocute in a group. Each one would scream Ahh Ahha, because of electricity. So they make them hear each other. That would scream and this one would hear him, and then he would scream and he would hear him. They wear out their nerves until its their turn. That is the electricity bit. This electricity was daily. After that they threatened him...

Speaker: Kalla Fakta has taken part of original documents which support the testimonies, and which prove that the two men have been systematically tortured, with electricity, blows and kicks.

On at least four occasions, Swedish authorities have received information through different channels from the men about what they have been subjected to.

Speaker: All Hamida has left is her son's cut up clothes after he was arrested in Sweden.

Live: Those who took him cut up his clothes.....

Hanan Attia: Yes, yes it's his clothes yes.

F: It is Ahmed's clothes?

Yes yes ... yes it's his clothes yes. Yes his... yes. Ja det är Ahmeds kläder
What can I say

Speaker: The Government's decision on 18th December 2001 also concerns Hanan and the five children. They can be expelled any day.

Susan Fayed: These children are kids of a suspected terrorist, of course they may be vulnerable for at least investigations. If not more. And especially his wife

Live: Girl with bag

Susan Fayed: We know here I have met a wife of a terrorist, suspected terrorist, I don't know he is or not. And she was tortured and she was obliged to write a paper that her husband did so and so and so and it was a false paper. What is guarantee that this lady will not pass in such experience here?

Speaker: Sweden's guarantee did not only cover the treatment of the prisoners and their families. One of the central points were that they should be awarded new and fair trials. But in the beginning of May Agiza was sentenced again to 25 years imprisonment by another military tribunal.

Hafes Abu Seada: A military trial is a unfair trial. We asked for three witnesses to come, and refused, and we asked to ... to send Ahmed Agiza to the medicine... to bring a certificate about torture. But refused.

Speaker: According to the agreement between Sweden and Egypt, the Swedish embassy was to be allowed to monitor the trial. But it was not allowed in two out of three days.

Hafes Abu Seada: I told you they refused to give them permission to enter the court. The court! To cross the door. There is no possibilities at all for the Swedish government to influence or to affect or to make anything. They don't care about this agreement.

STUDIO: Regeringen har alltså hela tiden hävdad att egypten har hållit avtalet och behandlat männen korrekt. Men nu efter att Kalla fakta har börjat gräva i den här historien har regeringen svängt.

//// Commercial Break ////

STUDIO: Welcome back to Kalla Fakta, which tonight reveals how Sweden has taken part in a United States intelligence agency's hunt for suspected terrorists, in a manner contrary to all conventions on human rights. The Swedish Government has for two and a half years maintained that the two men that were taken out of the country to Egypt have had a correct treatment, that Egypt has not broken its promise. But now, since Ahmed Agiza, again has faced trial in a military court in Egypt, and Kalla Fakta has been able to show that they have been tortured, the Government has made an about turn.

Hans Dahlgren: This is so ominous that that we have prepared a visit to Cairo, on a high political level from the Swedish side, to take up this question with representatives of the Egyptian Security service. And of the Egyptian government.

One of the four elements in the guarantee was a fair trial. And we do not think that the trial a few weeks ago lived up to that.

Q: So, the agreement is broken, in your view?

Hans Dahlgren: We do not think that the Egyptian government has lived up to the agreement, this guarantee, in that

part. And we will demand a new trial that meets the demands for a fair trial.

If this has happened, to the extent that you show here, the full responsibility lies with the Egyptian government. It is unacceptable to treat people in this manner. And that is exactly why the Swedish government is eager to have a definite promise from the representatives of the Egyptian government...

Q: But it was Sweden who expelled them...

Hans Dahlgren: It was Sweden who expelled them, but it is not Sweden who has treated any prisoners in this manner, but in that case the Egyptian government. And exactly because of this information and similar reports that has reached us, and which we are taking with the utmost seriousness, we will speak up about this on a very high level in Cairo.

Kjell Jönsson: It is depressing if the Swedish government says that, because it is absolutely forbidden according to international law to repatriate a person who risks being subjected to torture, and naturally, the Swedish government has a full responsibility for this.

Julia Hall: The men were tortured and ill treated upon return, the Swedish government should be held accountable for returning the men.

Thomas Hammarberg: Yes, you may wonder what the US government has to do with this in the first place. But of course, this illustrates the role and the way of acting the US government chose, not at least during the autumn of 2001, when they very actively put pressure on various governments in matters like this.

Julia Hall: I think that after September 11th numerous governments were under pressure in a way that led them to violate their human rights obligations. Sweden is an emblematic case of this because a long time promotor of human rights and the fact that they would succumb to such pressure to the expense of human rights is particularly disturbing.

Q: How will you define the cooperation that some call pressure from the USA, as wishes or as demands?

Hans Dahlgren: I have no comments on whether there have been wishes or demands from the American side. I have no information about this, and cannot comment on it.

*** END ***

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