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Torture Victims from Abu Ghraib Should Have Their Day in Court

The Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) urges federal district court Judge Gerald Bruce Lee to hear claims by four Iraqi citizens about torture inflicted on them by a U.S. military contractor

Today, in *Al Shimari v. CACI Premier Technology, Inc. (CACI)*, Judge Gerald Bruce Lee heard arguments on whether to dismiss a case against a military contractor accused of torturing detainees held at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison. Lawyers for CACI argued that the court must defer to the military because CACI was operating as a military contractor and implemented interrogations authorized by the U.S. government.

CJA Executive Director C. Dixon Osburn said: “Torture is not a political question. It violates both U.S. and international law, and those found to have committed torture must be held accountable. The soldiers who engaged in torture were prosecuted by the military; the contractors should be as well.”

CJA [submitted an amicus brief](#) in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals arguing that the district court had erred when it originally dismissed the case under the Alien Tort Statute, which allows foreign nationals to sue in the United States for actions that violate the laws of nations so long as those actions “touch and concern” the United States. The Fourth Circuit agreed with CJA that the district court should have done a fact-based inquiry to determine if CACI, a U.S. corporation, engaged in conduct that violated the law and “touched and concerned” the United States. Lawyers for CACI argue that the interrogations amount to a “political question” that cannot be adjudicated.

All four of the Iraqi victims who brought this case, represented by attorneys from the [Center for Constitutional Rights](#), claim they were brutally beaten and subjected to both physical and psychological torture while at Abu Ghraib.

About the Center for Justice and Accountability

CJA is a San Francisco-based human rights organization dedicated to deterring torture and other severe human rights abuses around the world and advancing the rights of survivors to seek truth, justice and redress. CJA uses litigation to hold perpetrators individually accountable for human rights abuses, develop human rights law, and advance the rule of law in countries transitioning from periods of abuse. www.cja.org

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