

JUSTICE PRESS RELEASE

JUSTICE
59 Carter Lane
London
EC4V 5AQ
www.justice.org.uk

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JUSTICE welcomes Home Affairs Committee report on pre-charge detention

JUSTICE welcomed today's publication of the Home Affairs Committee report, which found no convincing case for the extension of pre-charge detention beyond 28 days.

In particular, the Committee endorsed the conclusions of JUSTICE's 2006 report on intercept evidence, stating that it found it '*ridiculous that our prosecutors are denied the use of a type of evidence that has been proved helpful in many other jurisdictions*' (para 86 of report).

Eric Metcalfe, JUSTICE's director of human rights policy said:

Parliament defeated the government's proposals for 90 day pre-charge detention back in 2005 and today's report has signalled that it would do the same to 42 days.

The Committee's report is another nail in a coffin that the government should never have exhumed in the first place.

For further information, contact Eric Metcalfe on 07939 119 369 (mobile) or 020 7762 6415 (direct line) or via email to emetcalfe@justice.org.uk.

Notes to editors

1. In November 2007, JUSTICE released a 30-page report showing that the US pre-charge detention limit of 48 hours was no obstacle to charging suspects in complex terrorism cases. A pdf copy of the JUSTICE report, *From Arrest to Charge in 48 Hours: Complex terrorism cases in the US post-911* is available on request.
2. In October 2007, representatives of JUSTICE appeared before the Home Affairs Committee to give evidence concerning the human rights aspects of pre-charge detention and other counter-terrorism proposals put forward by the government. JUSTICE also gave evidence to the Committee's earlier inquiry on counter-terrorism measures in 2005 and 2006.
3. In October 2006, JUSTICE released a 75-page report showing that intercept evidence is used regularly in other common-law jurisdictions to prosecute suspected terrorists. A pdf copy of the JUSTICE report, *Intercept Evidence: Lifting the ban* is available on request. JUSTICE also gave evidence to the ongoing Privy Council Review on Intercept Evidence.
4. JUSTICE has consistently opposed the extension of pre-charge detention in terrorism cases on the basis that there are sufficient workable alternatives to extension, including lifting the ban on intercept evidence in criminal proceedings, allowing questioning of suspects post-charge (subject to safeguards), and greater clarification of the CPS threshold test in complex cases.

Chairman of Council **Lord Goodhart QC** Director **Roger Smith**
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