

JUSTICE PRESS RELEASE

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Study of post-9/11 US terrorism plots shows lengthy pre-charge detention unnecessary

A major study of US alleged terror plots since 9/11 has found that complex terrorism investigations in the US have not prevented police and FBI from charging suspected terrorists within 48 hours of their arrest.

Today's report by human rights group JUSTICE gives details of ten of the most high-profile terrorism cases in the US between 2002 and 2007, involving alleged plots aimed at causing widespread loss of life and including plans to destroy such US landmarks as the Sears Tower and the Brooklyn Bridge.

The report shows that despite the complexity of the federal investigations, frequently involving multiple suspects in different countries, every suspect was charged with a criminal offence within 48 hours of being arrested.

The report also details the extensive use of intercept evidence by US police and FBI, enabling suspected terrorists to be charged swiftly.

Eric Metcalfe, JUSTICE's director of human rights policy and author of the report said:

From Guantanamo Bay to rendition to torture, the US has done a lot of things badly wrong in the fight against terrorism. But in the rush to extend pre-charge detention here in the UK, we sometimes overlook what they are doing right.

If the FBI can charge a suspect in 48 hours, why do UK police need more than 28 days? This report shows that complex terrorism cases can be investigated without the need for lengthy pre-charge detention or other exceptional measures.

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Notes to editors

1. A pdf copy of the 30-page JUSTICE report, *From Arrest to Charge in 48 Hours: Complex terrorism cases in the US post-911* is available on request. An executive summary is attached to this press release.
2. Under the Terrorism Act 2006, the maximum period of pre-charge detention in the UK is 28 days. Under the Fourth Amendment, the maximum period of pre-charge detention in the US is 48 hours.
3. The report was supported with research on US law by Mayer Brown LLP, the international law firm. The views in the report are those of JUSTICE.