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## Congressional Leaders Join Call for International Probe into Chicago Torture Cases

*Torture Victim, Congressmen Rush and Davis, and Victims' Lawyers  
Available for Media Comment Prior to Hearing Before International  
Human Rights Investigators*

**What:** In a move that could impact Chicago authorities suspected of stalling their own investigation, international human rights monitors will conduct an inquiry TODAY, October 14, into well-documented allegations that Chicago Police systematically tortured 135 African-American criminal suspects during the 1970s and 80s, with total impunity. This is the only hearing that day focused on human rights violations within the U.S.

**Congressional critics of Chicago police abuse will join lawyers involved in the torture cases at a press conference for reporters at 10:00 am EST TODAY before presenting the case to the international human rights monitors.**

The hearing by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) was granted at the request of a coalition of human rights organizations, bar associations, attorneys, and community activists that have long sought justice against former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and other officials responsible for the torture of African-Americans in an effort to coerce false confessions.

**When/: TODAY, October 14, IACHR Administrative Building**

**Where 1889 F. St. N.W., Washington, D.C.**

**10:00 am EST, press conference for media (on the building steps)**

**11:15 am EST, international human rights hearing**

**Who:** U.S. Illinois Reps. Bobby Rush and Danny Davis  
David Bates, victim of torture under Burge's command in 1983  
Locke Bowman, MacArthur Justice Center  
Bernadine Dorn, Midwest Coalition for Human Rights  
Flint Taylor, The People's Law Office  
Standish E. Willis, The National Conference of Black Lawyers

**Why:** The torture represents one of the most explosive police controversies in Chicago's history, fueling concerns about systemic racism in law enforcement and ultimately leading to the release of African American prisoners from Illinois Death Row after evidence showed they were victims of police torture. Other victims still languish in prison based on confessions that were extracted through torture.

All of the alleged acts of torture, including electric shocks to the genitals administered by a cattle prod, suffocation, burns and mock executions with a shotgun, took place under the direction of Burge, who has been the subject of various legal inquiries for nearly a decade. A special prosecutor was appointed in 2002 to review the case but has yet to issue any findings or file criminal charges. Meanwhile, Burge resides in Florida and collects a taxpayer-funded pension.

The lack of state or federal accountability for these heinous acts prompted the victims and their supporters to seek international intervention. The groups will present their case to the IACHR, the human rights arm of the Organization of American States (OAS), at the hearing in the hopes that the panel will conclude that an independent international inquiry and report in this case is warranted.

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