



Across the street from U.S. military headquarters in Kabul, shrouded from view by concrete walls, the Afghan intelligence agency runs a detention facility for up to 40 terrorism suspects that is known as Department 124. So much torture took place inside, one detainee told the United Nations, that it has earned another name: “People call it Hell.”

But long before the world body publicly revealed “systematic torture” in Afghan intelligence agency detention centers, top officials from the State Department, CIA and U.S. military received multiple warnings about abuses at Department 124 and other Afghan facilities, according to Afghan and Western officials with knowledge of the situation.

Despite the warnings, the United States continued to transfer detainees to Afghan intelligence service custody, the officials said. Even as other countries stopped handing over detainees to problematic facilities, the U.S. government did not.

U.S. Special Operations troops delivered detainees to Department 124. CIA officials regularly visited the facility, which was rebuilt last year with American money, to interrogate high-level Taliban and al-Qaeda suspects, according to Afghan and Western officials familiar with the site. Afghan intelligence officials said Americans never participated in the torture but should have known about it.

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