

# Physicians for Human Rights

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://phr.org/our-work/resources/a-doctors-response-to-torture/>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

on April 23, 2012

In the recent volume of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Dr. Sondra Crosby, a PHR volunteer physician [describes her experience](#) treating a former Guantanamo detainee who she calls Rashid. Rashid is a survivor of US torture.

Kidnapped from a hospital bed in a far away country and sold for a bounty, Rashid spent time in various US detention sites and was eventually transported blindfolded and shackled to Guantanamo.

During the 5 years Rashid spent in US custody, he suffered severe beatings, painful stress positions, prolonged solitary confinement, forced nakedness and humiliation, sleep deprivation, withholding of food, sexual assault, and rape. All along, Rashid was innocent. He was never charged with crime and upon his release, he was given a document confirming his innocence.

To this day, Rashid still suffers from the torture he endured while detained, describing himself as a ghost wandering around the town in isolation, unable to eat or sleep.

Dr. Crosby's documentation of Rashid's ordeal exposes the ongoing, yet largely unknown, saga of America's torture victims who spent years of their lives wrongfully detained.

The United States has thus far made no attempt to offer recompense to these individuals, and it does not appear that it will do so anytime soon: in fact, the [Military Commissions Act of 2009](#) severely [limited the rights](#) of former detainees to sue their former captor.

There are many former detainees like Rashid to whom we owe redress in the form of physical treatment, like Dr. Crosby's work, and financial compensation. This is the least we can do to help these men heal.

Dr. Crosby's efforts are the first step in an attempt by PHR to address the plight of these men. Working with medical practitioners like Dr. Crosby, PHR is striving to highlight the needs of these torture survivors with the ultimate goal of securing rehabilitation and recompense.

It is unlikely that these men will ever receive just compensation, or that their suffering will ever be acknowledged by the US government.

Much attention has (rightfully) been focused on ensuring the release of these men from their confinement. We must not forget, however, that the years they spent in US custody have a lasting effect on the bodies and the minds of men like Rashid. Our concern for the men who have been harmed must not stop when they walk out of the prison gates.

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