



'Obama has violated international law' – UN investigator

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United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak has accused US President Barack Obama of violating international law for not bringing CIA torture agents to court.

According to the UN investigator, Obama's decision not to prosecute

CIA agents accused of using torture tactics is unacceptable. Nowak says the US is bound under the UN Convention Against Torture to prosecute those who engage in it.

Earlier, Obama said he would not prosecute under anti-torture laws CIA personnel, who relied in good faith on the Bush administration's legal memos issued after the September 11 attacks. These 'torture memos', authorized by Bush administration lawyers, advocated techniques such as keeping detainees naked for long periods, depriving them of food, putting them in painful 'stress positions' for long periods, and beatings.

Nowak is calling for an independent review and compensation for victims.

"The United States, like all other states that are part of the UN Convention Against Torture, is committed to conducting criminal investigations of torture and to bringing all persons against whom there is sound evidence to court," the expert told the Austrian daily Der Standard.

Nowak is not the first to criticise Obama's decision to protect CIA interrogators. Earlier, different human rights groups have voiced their concerns over the decision, saying charges are necessary to prevent future abuses and hold people accountable.

Washington, however, is unlikely to face any legal sanctions for its apparent breach of international law, but *"naming and shaming has its impact and usually governments try not to be criticized,"* Nowak added.