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<p><b>Article history</b></p> <p>Received: April 21, 2015  Received in revised form: August 17, 2015  Accepted: September 29, 2015  Available online: December 7, 2015</p>	<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>Following World War II, especially after the famous Nuremberg Trial, involvement of doctors in human torture came to light. Various international bodies like UN, WMA, Red Cross, understood the magnitude of this problem. Tireless effort of these bodies, to protect humanity against torture by doctors, has, brought forward several charters, with an aim that individuals do not suffer from cruelty and degrading treatment. Duty of doctor as per Hippocratic code of ethics is not to use professional knowledge to harm humanity. Regretfully doctors are getting involved in torture, having forgotten both Hippocratic code of ethics and the fundamentals of Tokyo declaration –A doctor must not for any reason, take part in the practice of torture as the role of doctor is to relieve distress of his/her fellow person.</p>
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## Introduction

It is well acknowledged that fresh graduate from medical schools join armed forces with a motive to serve the country, in the most patriotic way. These doctors become part of the security force. They are more than ready to sacrifice their lives and have done so, in many occasions. There is a flip side to it. In the vigor to serve the country, sometimes doctors in uniform do cross the limits of ethics and gets involved in torture, forgetting fundamentals of the Hippocratic code

Interestingly, the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) publicly released the 500-page executive summary ("summary") of its 6,700-page Committee Report of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program ("report") on December 9, 2014, which confirms the practices carried out by CIA for interrogations were far more brutal than previously thought. Even more

disturbingly, the summary reveals the extent to which U.S. health professionals ( "medical personnel" and "medical officers" of the CIA's Office of Medical Services (OMS),) were involved in developing, implementing, and attempting to justify the CIA's illegal torture program in violation of U.S. and international law and fundamental principles of medical ethics(1).

## Case reports

1. Detainee Abu Hudhaifa was subjected to ice water baths and 66 hours of standing sleep deprivation before CIA found they had the wrong man.

2. When Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who was water boarded 183 times tried to breath during the procedure, interrogators held his lips and poured water over his mouth

3. CIA officers would strip a detainee naked; shackle him in the standing position for 72 hours and douse (him) repeatedly with cold water (2).

4. Doctors helped in torturing terror suspect at US Jails. A report has found that doctors, meant to monitor the health of terror suspect, have been found taking part in torturing detainees. In disclosures made by a 19-member independent panel of military, ethics, medical, public health and legal experts, two yearlong review, the report "Ethics abandoned: medical professionalism and detainee abuse in the war on terror", physicians collaborated in "enhanced interrogation" methods such as extended sleep deprivation and weatherboarding which are recognized as forms of torture(3).

### Discussion

Health professionals who participated in the CIA torture program violated core ethical principles common to all healing professions, including the following obligations:

- To do no harm;
- To protect the lives and health of patients under their care from harm and brutality;
- To prevent and report torture;
- To uphold standards of professionalism, be honest in professional interactions, and report incompetence, fraud, and deception;
- To never engage in unethical research on human subjects;
- To receive the informed consent of the patient before providing medical treatment;
- To only perform roles consistent with their ethics and professional competencies; and

To find an ethical resolution when health professionals' obligations to persons under their care and to society conflict with the agenda of state institutions(1) .

"Nothing unfair in love and war" goes the saying. It may be fair in military practice to extract information from suspect by interrogation, but a doctor should not be a part of it. Duty of a doctor is to heal and not to inflict injury to any human being.

Torture is defined as the deliberate, systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of

any authority, to force another person to yield information, to make a confession, or for any other reason (4).

The aim of torture to a suspect in military conflict is to obtain information; objective being security and integrity of nation. Military intelligence is not aware of limitations of doctors. They do not know about Code of Medical Ethics or Tokyo Declaration. They go all-out to obtain requisite information to win the war. In the process co- operation doctors, become handy to them. Young energetic doctors, often step out of their limits, rendering help in torture for extracting information.

Doctors in uniform should feel shy to be involved in human rights violation. Good sense must prevail on the doctors. That should remain within their limit of patient care following the Tokyo declaration as given:

1. The physician shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, whatever the offence of which the victim of such procedures is suspected, accused or guilty, and whatever the victim's beliefs or motives, and in all situations, including armed conflict and civil strife.
2. The physician shall not provide any premises, instruments, substances or knowledge to facilitate the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or to diminish the ability of the victim to resist such treatment.
3. When providing medical assistance to detainees or prisoners who are, or who could later be, under interrogation, physicians should be particularly careful to ensure the confidentiality of all personal medical information. A breach of the Geneva Conventions shall in any case be reported by the physician to relevant authorities.
4. The physician shall not use nor allow to be used, as far as he or she can, medical knowledge or skills, or health information specific to individuals, to facilitate or otherwise aid any interrogation, legal or illegal, of those individuals.

5. The physician shall not be present during any procedure during which torture or any other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is used or threatened.
6. A physician must have complete clinical independence in deciding upon the care of a person for whom he or she is medically responsible. The physician's fundamental role is to alleviate the distress of his or her fellow human beings, and no motive, whether personal, collective or political, shall prevail against this higher purpose.
7. Where a prisoner refuses nourishment and is considered by the physician as capable of forming an unimpaired and rational judgment concerning the consequences of such a voluntary refusal of nourishment, he or she shall not be fed artificially. The decision as to the capacity of the prisoner to form such a judgment should be confirmed by at least one other independent physician. The consequences of the refusal of nourishment shall be explained by the physician to the prisoner.

The World Medical Association will support, and should encourage the international community, the National Medical Associations and fellow physicians to support, the physician and his or her family in the face of threats or reprisals resulting from a refusal to condone the use of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (4).

## Conclusion

Doctors after commissioned to armed forces should be trained properly. They should be trained by senior doctors in uniform regarding the conduct expected of a doctor in uniform. Lectures need to be taken on Ethics, Red Cross Convention, Tokyo Declaration and other related topics, which could give a clear idea on the duties, obligations and role of a doctor in cases of prisoners. Some of the uniformed doctors may not follow it. It is high time, for the teachers of medical schools to train medical students more on human rights, torture and Red-Cross convention. This will prevent human torture and cruelty from the hands of doctor.

## Conflict of Interest

None

## References

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