

Topline Messages (as proposed by State)

- The 9/11 attacks presented a threat to the security of the American people that was unprecedented in our history. Our government and people responded to that threat in ways that were mostly smart, principled and effective. But we also made mistakes that we must acknowledge, learn from, and never repeat – including the use of interrogation techniques that were contrary to our values and traditions.
- The fundamental facts about this program have been known for some time. The U.S. government is committed to transparency and has released much of this information to the public before. This report adds additional details which confirm the wisdom of our national decision not to use such interrogation methods again.
- The report may not settle every debate: there may still be disagreement in our society about some aspects of what happened. But the report leaves no doubt that the methods used to extract information from some terrorist suspects caused profound pain, suffering and humiliation. It also leaves no doubt that the harm caused by the use of these techniques outweighed any potential benefit.
- This report tells a story of which no American is proud. But it is also part of another story of which we can be proud. America's democratic system worked just as it was designed to work in bringing an end to actions inconsistent with our democratic values.
- These interrogation methods were debated in our free media, challenged in our independent courts, and, just two years after their introduction, restricted by an act of our Congress sponsored by Senator John McCain and overwhelmingly backed by members of both of our political parties. In 2008, both the Democratic and Republican candidates for president disavowed the use of torture.
- In the first executive order he issued, President Obama directed that individuals detained in any armed conflict shall in all circumstances be treated humanely and shall not be subjected to torture or cruel treatment, and he revoked previous executive directives, orders and regulations to the extent inconsistent with that order. The American people have stood by this decision, and there is no serious effort in our country to reconsider it.
- America can champion democracy and human rights around the world not because we are perfect, but because we can say that our democratic system enables us to confront and resolve our problems through open and honest debate. Our Congress issued this report, and the Obama administration strongly supported its declassification, in that spirit. This report will help the American people can understand what happened in the past, and that will help to guide us as we move forward.

I. Administration and Agency Posture vis-à-vis the Reports

1. Does the Administration agree with the findings and executive summary (F-ES) of the SSCI Report?
2. Who in the White House actually read the F-ES?
3. Who in the White House looked at the evidence?
4. Is the White House in a position to say that no useful information was obtained?
5. Isn't the CIA in a better position to assess this?
6. Does the CIA believe useful information was obtained?
7. Doesn't the report make clear that at least some who authorized or participated in the RDI program committed crimes?
8. Will the Justice Department revisit its decision not to prosecute anyone?
9. Until now the USG has avoided conceding that the techniques used in the RDI program constituted torture. Now that the report is released is the White House prepared to concede that people were tortured – or will this be like the non-coup in Egypt where you won't admit the obvious?
10. Isn't it clear that the CIA engaged in torture as defined in the Torture Convention?
11. Does the Administration agree with the SSCI majority conclusion that . . . [here address each major narrative, e.g., CIA did not properly supervise; White House/DOJ were not fully informed . . .]
12. Does the Administration agree with the Minority Report when it says . . .
13. Does the CIA still stand by its response to the SSCI, or did the SSCI address the CIA's concerns when it revised its report?
14. Several Senators have called for the entire 6,000 page study to be declassified and released to the public. Is the administration prepared to review the entire 6,000 page report for redactions? If not, why not?
15. Why were sections of the report blacked out – what criteria did you use?
16. What are you still trying to hide?
17. Did the CIA and the rest of the Intelligence Community support making the report public?
18. Can you tell us what's new in the report, that wasn't previously confirmed?
19. How much did the report cost to produce?
20. Why did the CIA turn over all the records to SSCI in the first place? Did the WH compel them to do so? Why are we still talking about these issues after all these years?

II. Implications of release of the report for the security of American citizens and USG personnel overseas

1. Isn't the release of this report endangering American citizens overseas?

2. Isn't release of this report endangering USG personnel overseas?
3. Isn't this the worst possible time to release this report in terms of unrest in the Middle East and other places where our people are at risk?
4. Did the White House ask Chairman Feinstein to delay release of the report? Why not?
5. We understand that in June 2013, the Assistant Secretary of State for INR wrote to the Committee to express his concern about declassifying the report, noting that "it could negatively impact foreign relations with multiple U.S. allies and partners." Does the Secretary of State share Ambassador Goldberg's view?
6. We also understand that Assistant Secretary Goldberg said release of the report could adversely affect embassy security. Did the State Department disregard Goldberg's views?
7. Did the Departments of State and Defense take steps to increase security at overseas locations in response to the release of the SSCI report? What was done? At what cost?
8. Did you request more security measures from host governments to protect our missions? Did they provide such assistance?

III. Implications of release of the report for USG stance/credibility on human rights

1. How will this report impact the international standing and image of the United States?
2. Is the Administration further undermining our moral authority?
3. In light of the findings in the report, has the United States complied with its obligations under international and domestic law regarding issues such as culpability, accountability, redress, and remedy?
4. What standing does the U.S. have to criticize or judge other countries' human rights practices when it itself sanctions torture and other violations of basic human rights in the name of national security?

IV. Implications for policy oversight of US intelligence community and activities

1. What reforms or changes to Administration oversight of the Intelligence Community in general and the CIA in particular do you envision as a result of this report?
2. How will you ensure that such activities are never again undertaken in the name of national security?
3. The report concludes that CIA kept the Secretary of State and some U.S. Ambassadors in the dark about the program. Was State in the dark and if so, what is the Administration doing to ensure that this does not happen again?
4. In some cases, your Ambassadors knew of these activities, but were told by the CIA not to report them to the State Department. Do Ambassadors report to the Secretary of State? Do Ambassadors keep secrets from the State Department? Have you instructed your Ambassadors in this regard? Will you?

V. Implications of release of the report for US diplomatic and intelligence relationships

1. Isn't release of this report going to destroy our intelligence relationships?
2. How can our intelligence partners trust us in the future?
3. How do you respond to the former CIA Directors who say that releasing this report will undermine intelligence cooperation around the world?
4. This information is being declassified far earlier than normal. Does this signal a new approach to classification – do our partners need to assume the secrets we share will become public soon after the events occur? Are you setting a new standard for declassifying covert operations?
5. Did we consult with our partners before releasing this report?
6. Doesn't release of this report risk demonstrations against partner governments in reaction to their cooperation with us? Aren't you contributing to the potential for destabilizing key partners in the region, even as you say how important it is to buttress them, particularly at this moment?
7. Isn't release of this report going to damage key bilateral relationships, especially with governments that helped with the RDI program?
8. How will our embassies get people to cooperate with us after they learn what is in the report?
9. Did the President personally discuss release of this report with any foreign leaders?
10. Can you confirm that U.S. military bases were used as black sites?
11. Can you confirm that the countries involved were _____?
12. Can you confirm that country "x" is _____?
13. Have you reached out to select governments to brief them on the contents of the redacted Executive Summary? Which governments?
14. Why didn't the White House intervene put an end to this report before it was completed?