



**All-Party Parliamentary Group on Extraordinary Rendition**  
**House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA**

*Press release: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017*

**Rt Hon Andrew Tyrie MP comments on the Government's statements on the case of Jamal al-Harith.**

“The idea that former detainees received compensation to prevent the disclosure of sensitive material is a red herring. The same argument was used to justify the introduction of secret hearings in the Justice and Security Act of 2013. These measures – where the Government can bar the other party, their lawyers, and the public from court – damage the tradition of open British justice.

In fact, there are long-established ways to stop sensitive information being released. For decades, the courts have been able to decide on a document-by-document basis whether the public interest is best served by disclosure or concealment, through a ‘Public Interest Immunity’ test.

When the new rules were proposed, the majority of security vetted lawyers – who are in the best position to know – said that they had not seen any cases in which the existing measures could not do the job.”

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**Note to editors:**

Speaking in Parliament on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Minister of State for Security, Ben Wallace MP, said, in response to an urgent question on the case of Jamal al-Harith:

“Like [Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP], and like my constituents, we will be outraged and disappointed by the sums of money that have been paid. ... That is also why we brought forward the Justice and Security Act 2013 to introduce closed material proceedings so that in future claims brought by such people, held in Guantanamo Bay in 2004, can be challenged in court without revealing sensitive intelligence information and we can, thus, defend many of those claims. ... That happened as a result of these types of payments; that action was taken under the coalition Government of David Cameron to make sure that we minimise the risk of this ever happening again.”