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Amnesty International's reaction to Agustin Aguayo guilty verdict

Reacting to today's verdict in the case of Agustín Aguayo a, US army medic sentenced by US court martial to eight months in prison, for his refusal to participate in the war in Iraq as a conscientious objector, Amnesty International said:

"It is evident from the statements made by Agustín Aguayo, and members of his family that he is a legitimate conscientious objector whose opposition to war developed over the course of time and evolved further in response to his experiences in Iraq. Amnesty International believes that he took reasonable steps to secure release from the army through applying for conscientious objector status.

"Amnesty International is of the view that the right to refuse to perform military service for reasons of conscience is protected under international human rights law. As such we consider Agustin Aguayo to be a prisoner of conscience and call for his immediate and unconditional release."

Background

Agustin Aguayo's unit is based Germany, where his court martial took place. Amnesty International sent a delegate to observe the court-martial proceedings held in Wurzburg, Germany.

Amnesty International has declared four other imprisoned conscientious objectors in the US to be prisoners of conscience in the context of the war in Iraq. They were Camilo Mejia, Abdullah Webster, Kevin Benderman and Pablo Paredes. All four have since been released

For further information please see: USA: US army medic facing 7 years in prison AI Index: AMR 51/037/2007 <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR510372007?open&of=ENG-USA>

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