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**APA Restates Position Barring
Psychiatric Participation in Interrogation of Detainees**

Arlington, Va. Psychiatrists are healers who should not participate in the interrogation of detainees: The American Psychiatric Association (APA) stands by this position in a letter to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The letter by APA President Nada L. Stotland, M.D., M.P.H., objects to information in a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that the military is training or has trained psychiatrists in methods of interrogation.

Both the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association have taken official positions opposing the participation of physicians in interrogation, Stotland said. "We understood that the U.S. military had acknowledged those policies. Has the military's position changed?"

The American Psychiatric Association opposes the use of psychiatrists in interrogating prisoners, Stotland said. We believe that the use of psychiatrists to aid in interrogations is a serious violation of medical ethics and should be discontinued.

An official APA position statement [Psychiatric Participation in Interrogation of Detainees](#), issued in 2006, bars psychiatrists from participating in interrogations, though it allows psychiatrists to provide training to military or civilian investigative or law enforcement personnel to recognize and respond to individuals with mental illnesses.

According to the position statement, No psychiatrist should participate directly in the interrogation of persons held in custody by military or civilian investigative or law enforcement authorities, whether in the United States or elsewhere. Direct participation includes being present in the interrogation room, asking or suggesting questions, or advising authorities on the use of specific techniques of interrogation with particular detainees.

About the American Psychiatric Association:

The American Psychiatric Association is the nation's leading medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psych.org and www.HealthyMinds.org.

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