



The UN special rapporteur on torture has formally accused the US government of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment towards Bradley Manning, the US soldier who was held in solitary confinement for almost a year on suspicion of being the WikiLeaks source.

Juan Mendez has completed a 14-month investigation into the treatment of Manning since the soldier's arrest at a US military base in May 2010. He concludes that the US military was at least culpable of cruel and inhumane treatment in keeping Manning locked up alone for 23 hours a day over an 11-month period in conditions that he also found might have constituted torture.

"The special rapporteur concludes that imposing seriously punitive conditions of detention on someone who has not been found guilty of any crime is a violation of his right to physical and psychological integrity as well as of his presumption of innocence," Mendez writes.

The findings of cruel and inhuman treatment are published as an addendum to the special rapporteur's report to the UN general assembly on the promotion and protection of human rights. They are likely to reignite criticism of the US government's harsh treatment of Manning ahead of his court martial later this year.

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