

CLOSE THE GUANTÁNAMO BAY DETENTION CENTER

ALL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SHOULD PUSH TO CLOSE THE GUANTÁNAMO BAY DETENTION CENTER BY LIMITING ANY EXPANSION OF THE DETAINEE POPULATION AND LIFTING RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSFERRING DETAINEES TO THE UNITED STATES OR TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

CLOSING GUANTÁNAMO

The U.S. Government opened the detention center at Guantánamo Bay in January, 2002, to house people outside the reach of the law after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Since then, 780 men have been detained at Guantánamo. Nineteen years after its opening, 40 detainees remain. Most have never been charged with a crime. Multiple remaining detainees have been cleared for transfer by all relevant U.S. intelligence agencies, but are still being held there.

International human rights law requires that each detainee either be fairly tried in a civilian court or released to a country where their rights will be respected. Many of the men remaining at Guantánamo without charge or trial were also tortured or otherwise mistreated by U.S. agents. This is a violation of human rights and illegal under U.S. and international law. All torture survivors should have access to rehabilitation services and full and independent medical care. Those imprisoned at Guantánamo do not.

EVERY DETAINEE SHOULD BE FAIRLY TRIED OR RELEASED

We are asking Congress to lift current restrictions on transferring Guantánamo detainees to the U.S., including for trial or medical treatment. Current U.S. law says the government must try and treat detainees at the detention center, which limits trial options as well as the medical services the government will provide to detainees.

The detainees in Guantánamo are aging and experiencing considerable health issues (some as a result of the torture they endured at the hands of U.S. government agents), and the approach to health care in the facility is becoming increasingly cruel. With the aging population, The New York Times has referred to the facility as a “nursing home.” And the trials at

Guantánamo, the military commissions, have barely moved forward: they are still unfair, and deny detainees fair-trial rights.

We are also asking Congress to refuse to fund expansion of the prison, ban any new transfers to Guantánamo, and to transfer all detainees who will not be charged with crimes to countries where they will be safe and treated fairly and humanely. While President-elect Joe Biden could close Guantánamo under current law, making these changes would smooth the way for the prison's safe, efficient and timely closure.

AIUSA RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lift current restrictions on transferring Guantánamo detainees to the US, including for trial or medical treatment.
- Refuse to fund expansion of the prison.
- Ban any new transfers to the Guantanamo detention center; and
- Urge the Biden administration to transfer all detainees who will not be charged with crimes to countries where they will be safe and treated fairly and humanely.

CONTACT

For more information, please contact Daphne Eviatar, Security with Human Rights.
deviatar@aiusa.org.