

# PRESS RELEASE

**September 19, 2005**

## **Kuwait Calls For Fair Trials For Guantanamo Detainees**

Kuwait called on Sunday for fair trials for its nationals detained in the US detention camp of Guantanamo, the Kuwait News Agency reported.

"Kuwait is keen on subduing all detainees for a just trial according to the legal state of each detainee and adherence to implementation of the just verdict issued against each detainee," Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Sharar said in a written statement.

Kuwait was very concerned about "the health state of the Guantanamo detainees who went on a hunger strike recently", the statement added.

The call came after Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah said Kuwait was discussing with the United States the possibility of handing over five Kuwaiti detainees.

The US side has pledged to work on a solution to some cases of the detainees who have been held in Guantanamo for over three years, but stressed the issue is "complex".

There are altogether 11 Kuwaitis detained in Guantanamo, Cuba.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9603>

**SOURCE: Xinhua**

## **5 Guantanamo Inmates To Go Free**

Kuwait City - The United States has agreed to release five of the 11 Kuwaitis imprisoned at its camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the head of an inmate support group said on Sunday.

"Talks between the US and Kuwaiti governments have almost been completed to release five of the prisoners," said Khalid al-Ouda, the head of the society of families of Kuwaiti prisoners in Guantanamo.

"The US has agreed to return them to Kuwait but no timeline has been set. We are optimistic this will take place after a month or so," he told AFP.

The United States in January handed over Nasser Najr al-Mutairi, who spent three years in Guantanamo.

He was tried by a Kuwaiti court which in June cleared him of charges of undermining Kuwait's national interests by committing an act of aggression against a foreign nation.

Ouda said six Kuwaiti prisoners have joined a hunger strike being staged by some 200 inmates to protest at their conditions and prolonged confinement without trial.

"Two of the six, Abdulaziz al-Shimmari and Fawzi al-Ouda, have been hospitalised after their health deteriorated for refusing to take food for five weeks," said Ouda, citing US lawyers who visited them.

"The lawyers told me the two were skin and bones and Shimmari could not walk ... The remaining four are not in good health condition."

According to Thomas Wilmer, the US lawyer defending the Kuwaitis, most of them were captured by bounty-hunters in 2001 near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and sold to the United States.

The New York Times reported Sunday that as many as 200 prisoners - more than a third of the camp's population - have refused food in recent weeks, while camp officials put the number at 105.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9596>

SOURCE: News24.com

## September 20, 2005

### Military, Lawyers At Odds on Gitmo Hunger Strike Totals Say

By Toni Locy  
USA TODAY

The military and lawyers for detainees at the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, disagree on the number of participants in a camp protest because each side defines a hunger striker differently.

For the second time since July, some of the 505 detainees at the prison camp are refusing to eat or drink to protest their indefinite imprisonments, the military said.

Army Maj. Jeffrey Weir, a Guantanamo Bay public affairs officer, said Sunday that 91 detainees are participating in the protest. Of the hunger strikers, 21 are at the infirmary and are receiving nutrition through feeding tubes in their noses or mouths. The military defines a hunger striker as a detainee who has missed nine consecutive meals.

Kristine Huskey, a Washington lawyer who represents 11 Kuwaiti detainees, visited the prison last week and says that "90 percent of the camp is on strike in varying degrees." She says hunger strikers include detainees who miss a meal or two a day or refuse to take liquids.

Weir, however, says the numbers are steadily decreasing as detainees resume eating and drinking. "No one is anywhere near death," he says, despite some of the detainees' desire to commit what he calls "a slow form of suicide."

The camp's detainees are suspected al-Qaida and Taliban operatives. Many detainees have been held for more than 3 1/2 years and most were captured on remote battlefields in Afghanistan and Iraq in attacks on U.S. troops. Four have been charged with war crimes.

The Bush administration position is that it can hold the detainees classified as "enemy combatants" as long as the war on terrorism lasts, a stand that has been backed by federal courts.

Since January 2002, detainees have held several hunger strikes to protest the length of their detentions and treatment.

London attorney Clive Stafford Smith, who represents about 40 detainees, says 210 prisoners were on hunger strikes Aug. 15, when he last visited the camp. Stafford Smith says the detainees want to be charged or released. He says they also are protesting the quality of food and water, alleged beatings and the military's alleged mishandling of the Quran.

"The military wants to downplay this," he says. "The truth is, these guys are going to die."

Weir says the military will not allow detainees to starve themselves to death. "We are charged to take care of them and keep them in good shape, and that's what we're doing," he says. He also said no detainees are being mistreated and that the Quran, Islam's holy book, is not being mishandled.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9615>

**SOURCE: Navy Times**

**September 21, 2005**

## **US Ready To Extradite 5 Kuwaiti Guantanamo Detainees -- Kuwaiti FM**

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 20 (KUNA) -- Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah on Tuesday said the Kuwaiti side has insisted that its detainees at the US Guantanamo Bay Camp should "maintain contacts with their attorney, who would convey to them that Kuwait would not forget them." In remarks to KUNA here, Sheikh Mohammad said, following a meeting with Pierre-Richard Prosper, US special ambassador for war crimes for the second time in three days, that "we were made certain through the confirmations by Ambassador Prosper that the US is ready to hand over five out of the 11 Kuwaitis detained in Guantanamo, and this issue needs logistic procedures." "We hope the five detainees be extradited very soon and their trial in Kuwait according to the Kuwaiti judicial system would start," Sheikh Mohammad said.

Regarding the remaining six Kuwaiti Guantanamo detainees, the leading diplomat said "I hope this message is conveyed to them 'the Kuwaiti government is serious regarding getting them back in Kuwait', and about them ending their (hunger) strike, and we would be starting a mechanism for their return and trial in Kuwait," he added.

He said that Prosper has handed him a report on the detainees' health conditions saying "the important thing is that the US side is seriously working to end the strike through improving the detainees' conditions (at the detention camp). " He stated that "Kuwait was working to get back all the detainees into Kuwait to be brought to Kuwaiti justice." -- Prosper said the talks focused on means to ensure release of Guantanamo detainees.

He said, "This week is very busy. A lot of engagements, conversation with the Minister, Secretary Rice .. It shows the seriousness of trying to find a solution." "In all frankness, we continue to move forward and in the right direction to find an answer to this question." Answering a question by KUNA, the ambassador refused to give any timetable for the release of the detainees.

"There is no timetable. The key is that rather than focusing on exact date it is more on the process or the substance and we are working on the substance because both countries are mindful of the desires to return the nationals to their home country." "We are also mindful of making sure that every one understands what we are getting into, meaning what the threat the individual may or may not pose and what other issues are associated with this.

"What we are engaged in is really deliberate, very precise conversations to ensure both countries (feels) what is right." "There are a lot of complexity behind this, it is continuing to tie in the various loose ends, resolve some of the complexities in another area.

He said there are security aspects of concern for the US side and humanitarian aspects for the Kuwaiti side noting that "both countries are looking through it to see if we can find an answer that everyone will be satisfied with."

## Detainee Hunger Strike Prompts Request for Health Records Access

**By Carol D. Leonnig**  
**Washington Post Staff Writer**

Attorneys for several detainees at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, asked a federal judge for immediate access to their clients' medical records, saying they fear an eight-week-long hunger strike is growing more serious, according to court papers declassified yesterday.

Lawyers for a group of 17 Yemeni detainees told the court yesterday that, during an early August visit, some captives looked "gaunt and unwell" and that they fear their conditions have deteriorated. They complained to U.S. District Judge Henry H. Kennedy Jr. that the military and the Justice Department have refused to tell them or other lawyers about their clients' health status.

"Many participants . . . have stated their expectation of death and a growing number of detainees are now hospitalized and in grave condition," attorneys David Remes and Marc Falkoff wrote.

Military officials disputed that description, saying the number of detainees participating in the strike has recently declined. As of Sept. 12, the military said, 128 detainees were involved in the strike, which the Pentagon defines as refusing food or water for at least three consecutive days.

At that time, 18 were hospitalized, and were either having intravenous fluids forcibly administered or were being force-fed through nasal-gastric tubes. Yesterday, a military spokesman said, just 45 detainees had been refusing food or water for three or more days.

In a Sept. 12 e-mail, Justice Department attorney Andrew Warden wrote that the government is "not in a position" to provide health updates on hundreds of detainees.

Detainees on hunger strike are protesting what they describe as beatings at the prison and their indefinite detentions, their attorneys have said.

## Kuwait Chastizes U.S. Over Guantanamo

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's foreign minister has urged the United States to resolve the issue of hundreds of Muslim detainees imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Sheikh Mohammad al-Sabah said he told U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that "Guantanamo represents a moral and legal challenge to the United States."

He was speaking following a meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers and Rice in New York Monday night.

"It is not in the interest of the United States that Guantanamo detainees remain in such a situation," he said.

"I told Secretary Rice about reports on the health condition and the hunger strike by the inmates and that this was unacceptable to GCC states."

The GCC groups Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates alongside Kuwait.

"There should be ... an immediate humanitarian solution and a legal solution to the detainees in general," Sheikh Mohammad said.

The head of the society of families of Kuwaiti prisoners in Guantanamo, Khaled al-Ouda, said on Sunday that six of the 11 Kuwaiti inmates have joined the hunger strike in the camp.

"Two of the six, Abdulaziz al-Shimmari and Fawzi al-Ouda, have been hospitalized after their health deteriorated for refusing to take food for five weeks," said Ouda, citing U.S. lawyers who visited them.

"The lawyers told me the two were skin and bones and Shimmari could not walk ... The remaining four are not in good health."

Ouda also said the United States has agreed to release five of the Kuwaiti prisoners and expected this to take place after about a month.

The U.S. in January handed over Nasser Najr al-Mutairi, who spent three years in Guantanamo. A Kuwaiti court cleared him in June of charges of undermining Kuwait's national interests by committing an act of aggression against a foreign nation.

According to Thomas Wilmer, the U.S. lawyer defending the Kuwaitis, most of them were captured by bounty-hunters in 2001 near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and sold to the U.S. The New York Times reported Sunday that as many as 200 prisoners - more than a third of the camp's population - have refused food in recent weeks, while camp officials put the number at 105.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9636>

**SOURCE: AFP**

## **Don't Let Omar Deghayes Die in Guantanamo**

*Family of hunger striker appeal to anti-war protesters*

Hundreds of inmates in the US prison camp in Guantanamo Bay have been on hunger strike for six weeks against their indefinite detention without charge or trial.

They renewed their fast after camp authorities reneged on their promise to treat them according to the Geneva Convention.

At the beginning of this week 20 were in the camp's hospital, held in handcuffs and leg restraints while being force fed.

Many of the hunger strikers could die if the US authorities do not meet their demands and improve their conditions.

One of those on hunger strike is British resident Omar Deghayes.

Abu Baker Deghayes, Omar's brother, told Socialist Worker, "We would like to request the help of all those people attending this Saturday's anti-war demonstration for our campaign.

"People should pressure their local authorities and their MPs for the sake of saving innocent people. We must relieve this oppression.

"We will be protesting outside the Labour Party conference this Sunday. People should join us. We must make our voice clear and loud for justice. Anything will help us. We must cooperate to raise this issue. This can't go on.

"Today it is these people in Guantanamo, tomorrow it could be anyone.

"All I know is the people in Guantanamo Bay are on hunger strike. Access to them is not allowed. Even the solicitors have only limited access. Letters from Omar are censored, only greetings are allowed.

"This horrible treatment is happening openly. Nobody can stay quiet about this. We are supposed to have a democracy in the West. It is absurd that this is going on.

"The public must act, otherwise our way of life is in great danger, threatened by George Bush."

Omar's lawyer, Clive Stafford Smith, points out, "Nine other British nationals are on hunger strike." He warns that "these people are going to die in the next few weeks and the military are trying to keep that secret."

Demonstrate, 4pm, Sunday 25 September, outside the Labour Party conference at the Brighton Centre, Kings Road (on the sea front).

For more on the hunger strike read Victoria Brittain on Guantanamo Bay: behind the wire and Clive Stafford Smith on A three year battle for freedom

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9634>

**SOURCE: Socialist Worker**

## **Victoria Brittain - Guantanamo Bay: Behind The Wire**

***British inmates in US military custody have joined a desperate hunger strike for justice, writes Victoria Brittain, and our government is doing nothing to ease their plight***

Last week the former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan and spokesman for the regime, was released from the US prison camp in Guantanamo Bay and sent home — a free man — at the request of Afghan president Hamid Karzai.

British prime minister Tony Blair is either unable or unwilling to get the same treatment for the nine British residents whose families have been pleading for the foreign office to take up their cases for three years.

Where are the MPs ready to raise this human rights issue prominently at the Labour Party conference? The family of one of the prisoners, Omar Deghayes, has called a protest on the first day of the conference.

Tony Blair should meet them himself. The detainees' families, including several children with British passports, have been in a hellish limbo they have done nothing to deserve, for nearly three years.

The British residents' names should be well known here by now — Shaker Ameer, Jamil el-Banna, Bisher Al Rawi, Omar Deghayes, Jamal Abdullah, Jamal Kiyemba, Khalid Hatair and Binyam Mohammed.

With the horror of a six week old hunger strike increasing by the day, the official British position of studied indifference to the degrading and completely illegal situation in Guantanamo is an outrage.

Some of the young British residents are among the reported 210 hunger strikers.

They have invoked the example of Bobby Sands as their model — choosing a principled death instead of the torture, humiliation, desecration of their religious effects, lack of decent food and water, refusal of legal redress and regular contact with their families, which is their life.

The US does not want to see a repeat of the 1981 IRA hunger strike in which ten men died, or the 1996 strike of political prisoners in Turkey in which 12 men died.

The military authorities have admitted to force feeding 18 of the men who are in hospital, and have reluctantly conceded that the number of men on hunger strike has risen from 76 to 89 and, most recently, to 128.

Only in the past year, after determined litigation from lawyers in some of the most prestigious law firms in the US, have internal government memoranda been released under the Freedom of Information Act.

And from interviews with their clients in Guantanamo it has emerged how appalling the conditions of the prison camp are, and also that there have been many hunger strikes and protests since 2002.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has long since judged that the indefinite detention and current conditions at Guantanamo are "tantamount to torture".

The early protests were usually sparked by soldiers deliberately dropping or kicking the Qur'an in order to provoke the prisoners on their most sensitive point.

The central issue now is that the US government has not allowed a single fair hearing for any prisoner, even after the US supreme court issued its decision in the Centre for Constitutional Rights' case, Rasul versus Bush in June 2004.

This gave the prisoners the right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention in federal court.

Lawyers for the prisoners have been tied up ever since in a series of appeals and counter appeals to different levels of court to get the hearings the supreme court promised.

But the intense politicisation of the US judiciary under president George Bush has meant that the department of defence lawyers have so far managed to defy the supreme court.

According to lawyers from the well known firm Shearman & Sterling, the prisoners described the June/July 2005 hunger strike as follows:

The protest was "a peaceful, non-violent strike until demands are met".  
The strike called "for starvation until death".  
The prisoners planned to boycott showers.  
They planned to boycott their recreation time.  
Some prisoners planned on refusing to wear clothes in order to be equal to the living conditions of prisoners in other camps who are denied clothing.  
The protesters called for "no violence, by hand or even words, to anyone, including guards".  
We need to see sunlight, and not to be forced to go months without seeing daylight.  
"We need to know why we are in Camp 5 for so long, in some cases for over a year. What have the Camp 5 detainees done to be treated so much worse than the other detainees?"  
"We need basic human rights like everyone else in the world — including real, effective medical treatment."  
"We need to be able to contact our families, and write to them and receive letters."

Some prisoners have not received any of the letters sent by their families, their families have not received any of the prisoners' recent letters, and this is a widespread problem across the camp.

Some new individual stories highlight the debased culture among the authorities at Guantanamo, which has been repeatedly reported by released prisoners in many countries.

For instance, Jarallah al-Marri was hospitalised as a result of his participation in the June/July hunger strike and a deteriorating heart condition, and was placed on an IV drip.

He told his lawyer, Jonathan Hafetz of Gibbons, Del Deo, Dolan, Griffinger & Vecchione, that the government got a nurse to make sexual advances towards him while he was lying in his hospital bed. This was a vain attempt to convince him to give up his hunger strike.

Mr al-Marri had been in solitary confinement for over 16 months, and often goes as long as three weeks without being allowed outside his cell for recreation.

The lights in Mr al-Marri's cell remain on 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and he has been denied adequate bedding and clothing. Mr Al-Marri is able to sleep only two hours a night.

The prisoners' protests have become progressively more serious, with the current series of hunger strikes resulting in an unknown number of detainees slipping into comas.

The US military has made strenuous efforts to conceal the scope and significance of the protests.

The current strike began again in mid-August, after the department of defence reneged on promises to implement the Geneva Conventions.

Prisoners have refused to sign the department's "hunger strike waiver form", and additional waivers forced upon them for previously refusing IV treatments.

Prisoner mistreatment, which had been rife during the July strike, returned very soon and in early August military personnel beat several prisoners.

According to British resident Shaker Ameer, when the August strike began the department of defence placed the representative members of the "Prisoners' Council" in isolation.

The department continues to refuse independent investigators access to Guantanamo and the prisoners, preventing any public assessment of the detention and treatment of men in US military custody.

Guided tours for US senate members and others have given a deliberately selective and misleading impression, according to the men's lawyers.

It is high time Blair demanded access for a delegation of independent British lawyers to visit all the camps at Guantanamo. They should then bring the nine residents home.

*Victoria Brittain is co-author of the acclaimed play Guantanamo: Honor Bound to Defend Freedom*

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9625>

**SOURCE: Socialist Worker**

**September 22, 2005**

## **Five Kuwaitis Protest at Guantanamo**

**By BEN FOX**  
**The Associated Press**

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico - Five Kuwaiti detainees participating in a hunger strike at the U.S. prison for terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have lost substantial weight and were pale and depressed during a recent visit, lawyers said Wednesday.

All five pledged to starve to death unless they are released or brought to trial, and two were being force fed, according to attorneys Tom Wilner and Kristine Huskey, who received a court order allowing them to visit their clients at the base last week.

"They both look like skeletons," Wilner said of the two who were being tube fed.

Detention center spokesman Sgt. Justin Behrens said the military does not comment on the conditions of individual prisoners - and the U.S. has not disclosed which Guantanamo detainees have joined the hunger strike that began on Aug. 8.

The number of those participating has dropped to 36 detainees - from a high of 131 - and all are in stable condition, Behrens said.

At Guantanamo, the U.S. military holds about 500 detainees suspected of links to the al-Qaida terror network or Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime. Four of the prisoners have been charged and the military said Tuesday that it will proceed next month with a military trial against David M. Hicks, an Australian charged with conspiracy, attempted murder and aiding the enemy.

One of the force-fed detainees, Fawzi al Odah, could barely sit up while they interviewed him, Wilner said.

Reading from notes of the interview, Wilner quotes al Odah as saying "We have no faith in the courts and this is the only thing we can do. If I die, it will be better than this hell."

They said another of the detainees, Abdullah al Kandari, had eaten nothing in 15 days and had lost substantial weight. "He was bleary-eyed. He could barely talk," Wilner said.

The lawyers identified the other Kuwaitis participating in the strike as Mohammed al Dahaini, Sa'ad al Azmi and Abdulazziz al Shammari, who was the other one being force-fed. It could not be determined whether the men were still taking part, though their attorneys said the detainees had no intention of halting the protest.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9683>

**SOURCE: New Hampshire New Herald**

## **Detainees' Lawyer Seeks Hearing on Guantanamo Hunger Strike**

**By Charlie Savage, Globe Staff**

WASHINGTON -- A lawyer for 11 Kuwaiti detainees at Guantanamo Bay asked a federal judge yesterday to hold a fact-finding hearing about a five-week hunger strike at the military prison, saying the health of detainees is increasingly dire.

Lawyer Tom Wilner, who visited the base last week, said his clients described a deteriorating health crisis at the US Navy base in Cuba. Many of the 500 prisoners there have stopped eating to protest their continued detention without trial, he said.

But a military spokesman at the base said yesterday that the number of detainees participating in the strike had fallen sharply. The spokesman said 36 detainees are refusing meals, of whom 16 are being force-fed intravenously in a prison hospital. A week ago the military said 105 detainees were not eating.

Wilner said he was skeptical of the government's assertions. He accused the military of undercounting the number of participants, saying he had been told before his trip that three of his clients were on hunger strike. In fact, he said, five were.

In a court filing that was declassified yesterday, Wilner asked a federal judge to hold an emergency hearing to find out more about the detainees "who are starving themselves to death."

He also asked the judge to order the government to provide regular medical reports about his clients and to allow family members to communicate directly with them.

The judge, Colleen Kollar-Kotelly of the district court in Washington, is expected to rule on Wilner's petition early next week.

Guantanamo detainees staged a widespread hunger strike in July. Prison authorities brought that strike to an end by promising that the prisoners would receive better treatment.

But the strike started again on Aug. 8, the military has said. Several lawyers for detainees said their clients told them it was restarted following an alleged incident in which a Kuwaiti prisoner, Fawzi al-Odah, was violently pulled from his cell after he refused to walk to an interrogation.

Wilner, who met with Odah last week, said his client had bruises on his body from the alleged incident. He said Odah told him he had refused to go to the interrogation because, during a previous interrogation, he had been chained down and forced to urinate on himself. The military did not respond to a request for comment.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9681>

**SOURCE: The Boston Globe**

## **Lawyers for Bahraini Detainees in Guantanamo Discuss Hunger Strike**

BAHRAIN - Lawyers for the six Bahraini detainees being held in the Guantanamo Bay detention center in Cuba revealed on Wednesday the causes for the hunger strike that the detainees began in mid- June.

In an account in Bahrain about his recent visit, lawyer Joshua Colangelo-Bryan said one of the detainees, Jumah Al Dossar, informed him that the detainees in the Alpha block of Camp 5 agreed to launch a hunger strike to protest against their conditions.

Colangelo-Bryan is from the law firm Dorsey & Whitney that is representing the six Bahrainis. His visit to Guantanamo took place July 29-31.

According to Colangelo-Bryan, Al Dossari said that the message the detainees wished to send to the camp authorities was: "Solve these issues or we want to die."

The detainees were protesting against being held without having fair hearings, their religious practices being interfered with, not being provided medical care when needed, being served food which was often rotten, and tap water which was often yellow and brackish.

The hunger strike was also to protest the fact that the military classifies detainees by level based upon putative cooperation with interrogators and uses these classifications to grant a few additional privileges to some detainees.

Commenting on the lawyer's account, Nabeel Rajab, the vice president of the now dissolved Bahrain Center for Human Rights, said it was believed that the six demands put forward by the detainees are the same ones now fuelling a hunger strike by some 200 Guantanamo detainees that began several weeks ago.

"We have no way of confirming the present demands of the detainees that are presently on hunger strike, but it is likely that they restarted their strike because the camp authorities failed to improve the conditions since then," Rajab said.

US lawyers representing the Arab detainees had called repeatedly in recent months on the Arab governments to exert more pressure on the Washington to get their nationals returned home.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9668>

**SOURCE: Khaleej Times**

## **Fewer Guantanamo Inmates on Hunger Strike, US Says**

**By Will Dunham**

WASHINGTON, Sept 21 (Reuters) - The U.S. military said on Wednesday the number of Guantanamo detainees taking part in a hunger strike that began last month had fallen by nearly three quarters, but prisoners' lawyers said they do not believe it.

Thirty-six of the roughly 500 foreign terrorism suspects held at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, were on the hunger strike, down from about 130 last week, the military said. Officials did not give a reason for the decline.

Lawyers for Guantanamo prisoners said many had declined food since Aug. 8 to protest what they consider inhumane conditions and indefinite confinement without legal rights.

Sixteen hunger strikers are hospitalized and some are being provided fluids intravenously and fed through a nasal tube, the military said. The military defines a hunger striker as a detainee who refuses nine straight meals.

"Detainees' counsel have no reason to believe any of the numbers that are being provided by the Department of Defense, given the disparity on their statements throughout the summer about the hunger strike and what we have seen with our own eyes from going to Guantanamo," said Barbara Olshansky of the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights, which along with several affiliated lawyers represents about 200 Guantanamo detainees.

The group has estimated that about 210 Guantanamo prisoners were taking part in the hunger strike. Olshansky said she had no reason to believe the number had diminished. She said lawyers who have visited detainees in recent weeks have confirmed that the hunger strike is widespread.

"Our information indicates that there are still detainees who are joining on a daily basis," Olshansky said.

The United States opened the prison at Guantanamo in January 2002, with many of its detainees picked up in Afghanistan. Only four have been charged and many have been held more than three years. Some former prisoners have asserted they were tortured.

## **MEDICAL RECORDS**

Lawyers for Guantanamo prisoners on Tuesday asked a federal judge to force the government to give access to their clients' medical records. They said the military had refused to provide detainees' families or lawyers information regarding which prisoners are taking part the hunger strike, including those who are being force-fed.

"We encourage the detainees to eat. And if they get to a condition where their life is in jeopardy, then we will involuntarily feed them to protect their life," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Flex Plexico, a Pentagon spokesman.

The group Physicians for Human Rights faulted this force-feeding.

The group noted that international codes of medical ethics forbid doctors from force-feeding hunger strikers.

Doctors must respect the sanctity of life and act in their patients' best interests, but they have a greater duty to respect the autonomy of people who choose to refuse food or fluids and understand the consequences, it said.

"Department of Defense policy is to preserve the life of detainees. Detailed policy and procedures are in place to avert death from fasting and from failure to drink. The health status of detainees who are voluntarily fasting is closely monitored," Plexico said.

Plexico added that the policy at the prison for detainees on the hunger strike was "fully consistent with Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice regulations for prison inmates engaged in hunger strikes."

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9666>

**SOURCE: Reuters**

**September 24, 2005**

### **Guantánamo Hunger Strikers Critically Ill**

Several detainees on hunger strike at Guantánamo Bay are critically ill, according to lawyers who have recently visited the detention camp. Amnesty International is also concerned at reports that the camp's facilities are unable to cope with the medical crisis.

"The US military appears to be systematically downplaying the hunger strike in order to avoid international criticism," said Susan Lee, Americas Director at Amnesty International. "In July they denied the existence of a hunger strike two weeks after it had started. Now they seem to be understating the number of detainees involved and the gravity of the medical condition of several of the detainees. This policy once again demonstrates the lack of transparency around all US detention practices and policies in the 'war on terror'".

As many as 210 people are said to be taking part in the current hunger strike in Guantánamo Bay, although the US Department of Defense has put the figure as low as 36. Detainees' lawyers put this low figure down to the criteria used to determine who is technically on hunger strike. The US military defines a hunger strike as the refusal of nine consecutive meals within a 72 hour period. Reports from lawyers suggest that detainees are accepting one meal in this timeframe, but then flushing the meal down the toilet to avoid being force-fed through nasal gastric tubes.

"We are particularly concerned about the health of detainees who may have escaped this narrow definition of a hunger-striker. They may not be receiving any medical treatment," said Susan Lee. "We urge that independent medical experts be given access to detainees."

New details are emerging of the earlier hunger strike in Guantánamo, which took place over the summer. Lawyers report that a number of detainees collapsed in their cells and vomited blood.

"Faced with a worsening situation of its own making, the US government should close Guantánamo Bay and either charge and try the detainees in line with international law, or release them," said Susan Lee.

One of the key points that detainees say drove them to hunger strike was the lack of access to a court to challenge their detention. They said beatings and other ill-treatment were another reason. Amnesty International has long campaigned for access to courts for Guantanamo detainees, as well as an end to torture and ill-treatment.

In a worrying development, lawyers working with the Center for Constitutional Rights who are representing a number of the hunger strikers say they are being denied access to the detention camp hospital. Their clients are taken from their sick beds, some so weak they cannot sit up, and moved to cells for interviews with their lawyers.

"Not only should the US administration release full details of this hunger strike and keep detainees' families informed on their health, it should open up Guantánamo and all other 'war on terror' detention facilities to independent scrutiny," said Susan Lee.

## **Background**

An unknown number of detainees resumed an earlier hunger strike around 12 August because camp authorities had not kept promises that conditions in the camp would be improved, according to reports. During the first hunger strike, which took place over the summer, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Flex Plexico denied any knowledge of it despite consistent reports from lawyers.

Amnesty International believes the conditions in Guantánamo Bay amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The organisation is campaigning to stop torture and ill-treatment in the "war on terror".

For more information, please go to the campaign home page: <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/stoptorture-index-eng>

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<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9725>

**SOURCE: Amnesty International**

## **121 Guantanamo Detainees to be Released to Saudi Authorities**

**By Turki Al-Saheil**

Riyadh, Asharq Al-Awsat- Saudi citizens detained at the US military prison in Guantanamo Bay will soon be released and handed over to the Saudi authorities, as talks between US officials and their counterparts in the Kingdom reach the final stages, Asharq al Awsat has learned.

Ahmad Mazhar, head of a team of lawyers hoping to return the detainees to Riyadh told Asharq al Awsat his country had taken large steps towards ensuring its 121 detainees are handed back. He hoped US/Saudi discussions would conclude after the last details are agreed on and indicated that the Saudi government had been in constant contact with Washington since learning Saudi men were being held at the military base in Cuba.

Meanwhile, the US government and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) discussed how to end the hunger strike started by a number of detainees, mostly from countries of the Persian Gulf , on the 8 th August, in protest at their continued incarceration without trial.

Dr. Amer al Zamaly, advisor to the ICRC on Muslim affairs, told Asharq al Awsat the international organization was closely following the hunger strike and greatly concerned about their health condition. He called upon Washington to ensure the prisoners' health did not deteriorate further and insisted the reasons behind the hunger strikes needed to be addressed. Al Zamaly also said the US government needed to understand the harsh psychological and physical

conditions the detainees were suffering from which cause depression, hopelessness, a range of illnesses and epidemics.

With conflicting reports on the number of prisoners on hunger strike, al Zamaly indicated that discussions between the ICRC and the US military authorities were under way to determine how many men were refusing food. Guantanamo's second in command also responsible for the health care of the detainees, had revealed 87 men were on hunger strike, in what is the largest strike since the detention center opened in 2002.

Currently, 520 men are detained in Guantanamo Bay, some for over three years, following the US war on terror. Several men have refused food and water in the past to protest against their continued incarceration without access to legal counsel and trial in US federal courts.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9710>

**SOURCE: Asharq Alawsat**

## Passive Resisters

### Editorial

The numbers are in dispute, but the fact remains: Dozens of men imprisoned at the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, are starving themselves. At least 16 are in the infirmary, being tube-fed sustenance to prevent their deaths. It's an ugly reaction to an ugly fact: They are being mistreated by the United States.

After three-plus years in confinement, only four of the 504 prisoners have been charged with a crime; none knows what will happen next or when - if ever - he will be released. At least some have been brutalized by their captors. Many are invisible to the world, their names never released to the public or their families. Many apparently have lost faith in their fellow man, or at least Americans. As one told his lawyer last month, "Look, I'm dying a slow death in this place as it is. I don't have any hope of fair treatment, so what have I got to lose?"

They cannot be doing it merely for publicity - there are precious few prisoners who have any contact with the outside world, and even those few lawyers allowed to see specific prisoners must promise not to tell all they've heard and seen. There were other hunger strikes in 2002 and 2003, as well as earlier this year, unacknowledged by the military until news of them spread recently because repeated court rulings requiring that prisoners have access to outside counsel have pried open the prison windows a crack.

The summertime hunger strikers, tipped over the edge after seeing a fellow prisoner being abused, accepted sustenance after officers agreed to create a prisoners' grievance committee, according to lawyers for some of the prisoners. Days after forming the committee, authorities disbanded it. Now more are fasting.

The current wave - 36 men, according to the Pentagon; more than 210, according to lawyers who visited the prison last month and this week - seeks what past waves sought. Humane treatment. A trial. A chance to be heard. It's only fair.

Not only is imprisonment without charges illegal under U.S. and international law, it does not stop terrorism. In recent years, for example, such internment did not work for the British dealing with Irish Republican Army suspects. Resistance, and the bombings, continued. Al-Qaida and other terror groups are less centrally organized than the IRA; interning these men has not broken the "network."

Charging them, showing how a democratic system embodies justice and fair treatment, is the best argument against a world view that chaos is the only way to change one's situation. Barring that, for these prisoners, death does seem the only logical way to get out of the prison.

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=9709>

**SOURCE: Baltimore Sun via CommonDreams.org**

