

# Physicians for Human Rights

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://phr.org/our-work/resources/twelve-years-later-the-current-state-of-guantnamo/>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Andrea Gittleman, JD, and Tyler Bellstrom on January 11, 2014

January 11, 2014 marks the 12th anniversary of the arrival of the first detainees at the Guantanamo Bay detention center. Such an anniversary is an appropriate time to reflect on the commitment President Barack Obama made to closing the detention facility and press for greater progress toward this ultimate goal.

In recent months we have seen some progress toward closing Guantanamo, as individual detainees have been transferred out of the facility, but serious obstacles remain. The 2014 National Defense Authorization Act prohibits the use of funds to transfer detainees to the United States for any purpose even to obtain medical care. Policies at the facility continue to allow for the force-feeding of hunger strikers, despite clear professional ethics that forbid such acts by medical professionals. Perhaps most disturbingly, twelve years after the opening of the detention facility for war on terror detainees, not a single public official has been held accountable for abusive interrogation techniques used at Guantanamo.

As Physicians for Human Rights looks forward, we will continue pressing for the release of information concerning torture and other abuses on the part of U.S. officials, accountability for any crimes, a revision of policies so that they comply with internationally-recognized medical ethics, and ultimately the end of indefinite detention and the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention center.

This is the current state of Guantanamo:

5: Years since President Obama signed an [executive order](#) to close the Guantanamo detention center and curb abuse in interrogation

155: Detainees who remain in Guantanamo Bay detention facility as of January 11, 2014

166: Detainees in Guantanamo Bay detention facility one year ago

77: Detainees in Guantanamo that have been cleared for release by the United States government but still remain in the facility

17: Years it will take to bring the population of detainees in Guantanamo down to zero, if the current rate of transfer continues

106: Guantanamo detainees who were on hunger strike in summer 2013

45: Detainees who underwent force-feeding in summer 2013

0: [Differences between](#) the ethical obligations of medical professionals caring for detainees in Guantanamo and medical professionals caring for patients in non-detention settings

0: Situations in which the World Medical Association finds [force-feeding of hunger strikers to be justified](#)

Unknown: number of current hunger strikers (because the Obama Administration [stopped releasing this number to the public](#))

150: Number of doctors who signed a letter to allow independent medical care for Guantanamo detainees

2: Special envoys whom President Obama appointed in 2013 to specifically address detainees in Guantanamo Cliff Sloan was appointed as a Special Envoy in the State Department and Paul Lewis became a Special Envoy in the Department of Defense

6,000: Approximate number of pages in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence report that details CIA interrogation and detention practices; those familiar with the reports contents have indicated that it reveals torture and other abusive practices committed by interrogators

0: U.S. officials held accountable for crimes of torture against detainees in Guantanamo

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