

Center for Constitutional Rights

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

<https://ccrjustice.org/no-more-guantanamo-no-torture-presidency-no-indefinite-detention>

Campaign and Advocacy

President Obama has failed in his pledge of eight years ago to close the U.S. detention camp at Guantanamo. Congressional obstacles, misinformation perpetuated in the media, and the president's own lack of will are all responsible for this policy disaster. Guantanamo remains a living symbol of U.S. torture and other human rights abuses and a place of misery for the dozens of men it still houses. Most of them have never been charged with, let alone tried for, any crime.

In the remaining weeks before he leaves office, President Obama must do what he still can: expedite the release of cleared men and release the full 2014 Senate Torture Report documenting CIA abuses.

Human rights and the United States' standing in the world face a new danger: the possibility that President-elect Donald Trump will adopt the use of torture. He has also called for increasing the prison population at Guantanamo.

Statements by Mr. Trump and members of his incoming administration to moderate his past positions offer little assurance that a Trump presidency will reject torture and respect the rule of law. Trump's blatantly Islamophobic campaign stokes fear of a new era of religious discrimination and other abuses of civil and human rights.

Human rights activists are gathering in Washington, DC, on January 11, 2017, to mark 15 years since the prison at Guantanamo opened. We come to state, in one loud voice, to President-elect Trump:

Torture, discrimination, and indefinite detention are wrong. There is no exception. Any attempt to bring back torture or to send new people to Guantanamo will be strongly opposed in the U.S. and throughout the world. Any effort to persecute Muslims or any other religious, racial, or ethnic group through special immigration or surveillance measures is unacceptable.

Mr. Trump must:

Make clear the absolute rejection of torture, as banned by U.S. and international law

Continue handling domestic terrorism suspects within the civilian criminal justice system and in accord with the U.S. Constitution

Continue the policy of transferring men from Guantanamo and work toward the closure of the prison, with its steep moral and financial cost to the U.S.

We hope Trump will listen to those at all levels of the U.S. government and those around the world who reject torture and want to end the blight of Guantanamo. We also have no illusions about the role that human rights violations and the persecution of Muslims could play in a Trump presidency. More than ever, our vigilance is required.

We also stand together with a plea to the public to those who have been part of longstanding efforts to oppose torture and close Guantanamo, as well as those new to this cause. We must hold the next administration accountable to the U.S. constitution, to human rights standards, and to the common-sense decency that guides us.

Endorsing organizations: Amnesty International, Bill of Rights Defense Committee & Defending Dissent, Center for Constitutional Rights, CloseGuantanamo.org, Code Pink, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, the Torture Abolition and Survivor and Support Coalition, Veterans for Peace, We Stand with Shaker, Witness Against Torture, World Can't Wait, and others.

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