

Gitmo Detainees Held at Former CIA-run Camp Should Get Reduced Sentences, Lawyers Say

Lawyers are inspecting the now-abandoned Camp 7, where the US kept its most highly valuable detainees

By [Middle East Eye](#)

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Defence lawyers have argued that prisoners held at a secretive CIA-run camp at the [Guantanamo Bay](#) detention centre should receive reduced sentences because the conditions to which they were subject were “exceedingly disturbing”.

Lawyers for the detainees held at Camp 7 from 2006 to 2021 are currently inspecting the site, and have [told The New York Times](#) that conditions at the camp were substandard, with the experience of imprisonment there being like getting “buried alive”.

They are currently gathering information and evidence, including taking photographs and bringing experts to inspect the now-abandoned site. The attorneys also want anything that the men said while detained at the camp to be excluded from their cases, arguing that the camp was “indistinguishable” from the CIA black sites where detainees were tortured.

Susan Hensler, who represents Iraqi detainee **Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi**, told The Times that the place was “chilling” and “akin to being entombed”.

“You’re disappeared off the face of the map at Camp 7,” said **Alka Pradhan**, who represents **Ammar al-Baluchi**, a defendant in the 9/11 case.

Another criminal defence lawyer, **Christine Funk**, said of the camp:

“I’ve seen everything from minimum to medium to maximum security [prisons]. I’d stay in any one of them rather than stay in that prison down at Guantanamo.”

Camp 7 was a once-secret prison camp that held the most high-level detainees who were transferred to the site in 2006 after being held in CIA custody.

However, after several years, military officers described the site as in need of an entirely new facility with the current camp having serious structural problems, including its foundation having shifted.

The military had sent multiple funding requests in the tens of millions of dollars.

But instead of building a new facility, it was [closed](#) in April 2021. The US military had long refused to acknowledge the location of the camp, and journalists have been denied access to it.

“It feels like there’s an element of unpredictability built into that prison at Guantanamo, by design, that is its own form of torture,” Funk told The Times. “I’ve never seen anything like it.”

The Biden administration has repeatedly stated it aims to close the prison.

Of the 37 prisoners that currently remain in the prison, 19 have been approved for transfer, six are in indefinite detention, 10 are awaiting trial, and two have been convicted, including Majid Khan who has finished his sentence and is in need of a country to be transferred to.

Earlier this week, the US approved the transfer of another detainee, **Said bin Brahim bin Umran Bakush**, the last [Algerian](#) national to be held at the detention facility.

Last month, **Mohammed al-Qahtani** was transferred to his home country of [Saudi Arabia](#) where he will receive treatment for schizophrenia after nearly two decades of imprisonment.

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