

Retired Generals and Admirals Urge President Obama to Close Guantanamo, Release Senate Report on CIA Torture

By [Global Research News](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#)

We bring to the attention of our readers the letter by 31 retired generals to President Obama. While the letter tacitly endorses the Obama administration without focusing on the illegality and criminal nature of the Guantanamo detention facility, it nonetheless constitutes a timely initiative.

The letter by the 31 retired military leaders calls upon President Obama to fully cooperate with the Senate intelligence committee to declassify and publicly release the 6000-plus page study that details the post-9/11 CIA rendition, detention, and interrogation program.

The following introductory text is by Human Rights First, followed by the transcript of the Open Letter (GR Editor M.Ch.)

Washington, D.C. – Thirty-one of the nation’s most respected retired generals and admirals today sent a [letter](#) to President Obama urging him to make good on his executive order to close the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. They also asked that he set the record straight on torture, a policy he also banned by executive order. Members of the coalition who signed today’s letter stood behind the president on January 22, 2009 – his second day in office – when the orders were signed.

“We appreciate your leadership this past year in recommitting to closing Guantanamo,” [wrote](#) the generals and admirals. “Guantanamo does not serve America’s interests. As long as it remains open, Guantanamo will undermine America’s security and status as a nation where human rights and the rule of law matter.”

Today’s [letter](#) comes as Congress and the Obama Administration have made progress toward putting Guantanamo on the path to closure. In December, Congress passed its annual defense bill that replaced confusing and cumbersome foreign transfer restrictions that the Obama Administration had said complicated the transfers of detainees to their home or third countries. The administration also transferred three Uighur detainees to Slovakia, ending the detention of men whom the administration says never posed a threat to the United States, but could not be repatriated to China where they faced certain persecution as a Muslim minority in that nation.

Progress toward closing Guantanamo continued this month as the Periodic Review Board (PRB), established by executive order in March 2011, concluded its first case. It ruled that Mahmoud Abdulaziz Al-Mujahid, a Yemeni citizen, no longer poses a significant threat to U.S. national security and is now cleared for transfer. In addition, media and nongovernmental

organizations have been invited to observe PRB hearings at the end of the month. Despite this progress, the pace of transfers will have to increase dramatically to achieve closing the prison by the end of President Obama's second term.

With regard to torture, the retired military leaders urged President Obama to direct his administration, particularly the CIA, to fully cooperate with the Senate intelligence committee to declassify and publicly release the 6000-plus page study that details the post-9/11 CIA rendition, detention, and interrogation program. The report, which was adopted by the committee over a year ago, has not yet come to a vote over declassification as the intelligence committee had been unable to move forward due to lack of cooperation from the administration.

"Former CIA officials who authorized torture continue to defend it in books and film, and public opinion is with them, based on mythology, not fact," stated the [letter](#).

"We believe that upon reviewing the facts the American people will agree that torture was not worth it, and that we as a nation should never return to the dark side."

TEXT OF LETTER

January 21, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

Five years ago tomorrow, members of our coalition of retired generals and admirals stood behind you in the Oval Office when you signed three executive orders that helped put our nation's counterterrorism efforts on a stronger footing, consistent with our laws and values. You banned torture, closed the CIA "black sites" where torture occurred, and put Guantanamo on the path to closure.

We appreciate your leadership this past year in recommitting to closing Guantanamo. Congress responded, passing an annual defense bill that provides you with substantial additional flexibility to repatriate or resettle the 77 detainees who have been cleared for transfer by our security agencies. We encourage your administration to transfer all cleared detainees as soon as possible and complete administrative reviews of the remaining eligible detainees by year's end to determine who else might be eligible for transfer. Guantanamo does not serve America's interests. As long

as it remains open, Guantanamo will undermine America's security and status as a nation where human rights and the rule of law matter.

While you have made progress on Guantanamo this past year, we are concerned about the enduring and false debate over torture by the CIA. Former CIA officials who authorized torture continue to defend it in books and film, and public opinion is with them, based on mythology, not fact. The American people deserve access to the voluminous, 6000-plus page study that details the post-9/11 CIA rendition, detention, and interrogation program, adopted by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. We call on you to direct your administration, including the CIA, to fully cooperate with the committee to declassify with minimal redaction and publicly release the study. We believe that upon reviewing the facts the American people will agree that torture was not worth it, and that we as a nation should never return to the dark side.

We thank you for your steadfast commitment to these issues at the heart of our national security and values, and stand ready to assist in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

General Joseph P. Hoar, USMC (Ret.)
General Charles C. Krulak, USMC (Ret.)
General David M. Maddox, USA (Ret.)
General Merrill A. McPeak, USAF (Ret.)
General William G. T. Tuttle, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Vice Admiral Lee F. Gunn, USN (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Arlen D. Jameson, USAF (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Charles Otstott, USA (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Keith J. Stalder, USMC (Ret.)
Major General Paul D. Eaton, USA (Ret.)
Major General Eugene Fox, USA (Ret.)
Rear Admiral Donald Guter, JAGC, USN (Ret.)
Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, JAGC, USN (Ret.)
Major General Michael R. Lehnert, USMC (Ret.)
Major General Melvyn S. Montano, USAF (Ret.)
Major General William L. Nash, USA (Ret.)
Major General Thomas J. Romig, USA (Ret.)
Major General Walter L. Stewart, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Major General Antonio M. Taguba, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General David M. Brahms, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General Evelyn P. Foote, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Dennis P. Geoghan, USA (Ret.)

Brigadier General David R. Irvine, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General John H. Johns, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Keith H. Kerr, CSMR (Ret.)
Brigadier General Richard O'Meara, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Murray G. Sagsveen, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Anthony Verrengia, USAF (Ret.)

Brigadier General Stephen N. Xenakis, USA (Ret.)

.. URL of Letter
<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/uploads/pdfs/Executive-Order-Letter-Jan-2014.pdf>

For more information or to speak with any of the signatories of today's letter, contact Corinne Duffy at DuffyC@humanrightsfirst.org or 202-370-3319.

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