

US Sponsored Torture: Former Guantanamo Prison Chief Geoffrey Miller Faces French Court Inquiry

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Guantanamo prison ex-chief Geoffrey Miller has been summoned by a French court over the use of torture in the detention facility a decade ago, following a lawsuit from two French citizens who were former inmates of the infamous military jail.

French citizens Nizar Sassi and Mourad Benchellali have filed a lawsuit in a French court against the former Guantanamo chief, demanding a criminal probe into his actions.

On Thursday, the court granted the complaint, summoning the former American general to France for a hearing.

The French judge's decision might set a precedent for more prosecutions of US military personnel who served at Guantanamo Bay.

"The door has opened for civilian and military officials to be prosecuted over international crimes committed in Guantanamo," the former Guantanamo prisoners' lawyer William Bourdon said. "This decision can only... lead to other leaders being summoned," Bourdon said as cited by AFP.

Sassi and Benchellali were some of the first prisoners incarcerated in Guantanamo in late 2001, after their arrest in Afghanistan by US forces. Sassi was released in 2004, Benchellali was set free in 2005, and both were brought back to France.

In a report submitted to a French court in 2014, the former Gitmo inmates accused Geoffrey Miller of *"an authorized and systematic plan of torture and ill-treatment of persons deprived of their freedom without any charge and without basic rights."*

Geoffrey Miller, who was commander of the Guantanamo Bay prison from 2002 to 2004, *"bears individual criminal responsibility for the war crimes and acts of torture inflicted on detainees in US custody at Guantanamo," the French court claims. The ex-general headed the facility after President George W. Bush approved "enhanced interrogation techniques."*

Despite President Barack Obama's promises to shut the detention facility down, the prison that once held 779 detainees still houses more than 100 detainees. The US government is slowly releasing terror suspects, some of whom have spent over 10 years at Guantanamo without any charges brought against them.

In Russia, retired US Army Major General Geoffrey D. Miller is on a black list.

In 2013, in response to the so-called 'Magnitsky list,' Russia named 18 Americans banned from entering the Russian Federation over alleged human rights violations. Former commandant of Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO), the organization that runs the Guantanamo Bay detention camps, was added to that list, along with other American governmental officials *"involved in legalizing torture and indefinite detention of prisoners (The Guantanamo List)."*

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