

There should be No More Guantanamo's in the World

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OPED

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BY HARUN YAHYA

Torture is an inhumane method that has been resorted to since ancient times for purposes such as interrogation, punishment, intimidation, or taking revenge on people. This primitive medieval practice is sadly favored by many nations today as well. Torture-based interrogation methods are sometimes adopted not only by authoritarian dictatorships but also by some modern states that claim to be pioneers of civilization and democracy.

One of the places where this affront to humanity is perhaps most heavily practiced, as is known to all, is the Iraqi and Afghanistan prisons that were introduced post-9/11, some ships in international waters and the US military prison, Guantanamo, the namesake of Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. The merciless practices that took place in Abu Ghraib prison were featured in the press with photographic evidence. One of the most fundamental violations at Guantanamo is that the detainees do not even know when, or even if, they will ever stand trial. Moreover, they have no means to apply to any legal system for recourse.

Karen J. Greenberg, the author of "Guantanamo's First 100 Days," describes how prisoners' right to trial, their most natural human right, is hindered by justice mechanisms:

Pretrial hearings, underway for years in the cases still pending, are expected to continue well into the 5th year since the attacks for which the defendants



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are to be tried took place. The chief prosecutor for the five 9/11 defendants who were brought to Gitmo in 2006 and charged in 2012, has recently — without the slightest sense of irony or remorse — proposed that their trials begin in March 2017. With appeals, they might conceivably conclude in the third decade of this century.

Another striking situation is that some prisoners are found innocent and released after many years of prison. For example, Mauritain Muhammad Ould Shahi, known as the most tortured prisoner in the history of Guantanamo, was released after 14 years of detention without any charges whatsoever.

In his book, *Guantanamo Diary* published in January 2015, Shahi provided the first ever in-depth account about the examples of torture prisoners were subjected to in Guantanamo prison. According to Shahi's claims, sexual abuse, standing punishment for prolonged periods, sleep deprivation, waterboarding, loud noise, forcing prisoners to drink salt water until they vomit, and beating them on the face and ribs while immersed in ice to hide the bruising are some of these torture practices.

Many organizations such as Amnesty International and the United Nations have repeatedly described the practices at Guantanamo that have been going on for over 15 years as a "human rights scandal" in their reports. However, they have proven ineffective in terminating this deep state-supported system.

Closing Guantanamo was one of former President Obama's most notable election promises before he took over the US presidency. But like his other numerous unfulfilled promises, Guantanamo still remains open today.

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prove beneficial in the advancement of human rights, nor will it pave the way for success in the war on terrorism. First of all, the fact that the CIA maintains scores of secret prisons and detention centers throughout the world finds frequent coverage in the media. Moreover, there are already numerous reports and evidence issued on the subject.

There are estimated to be thousands of "ghost prisoners" who have been detained for intelligence purposes in various countries and who are not legally entitled to any right of defense. The reason these people are called "ghosts" is that these prisoners have no official records in any judicial system. Reports published by the United States itself includes the grim truth - that they were subjected to suffocation with pressurized water, abuse, beatings, electric shocks and other tortures of much worse kinds during their interrogations.

In his article entitled "Afraid of the Dark in Afghanistan" featured on his own website, the *New York Times*' Middle East and Afghanistan correspondent and journalist Anand Gopal writes in detail the murders, kidnappings, unlawful detentions, interrogations and tortures taking place in the prison network in US military bases. Additionally, the HRC says that apart from Guantanamo, Afghanistan and Iraq, the CIA runs countless overseas secret prisons in 66 countries around the world.

According to the human rights organization Reprieve, as related by the *Guardian* in 2008, the CIA is holding at least 26,000 people in secret prisons all over the world. Apart from these, the CIA has a fleet of prison ships, at least 17 US naval vessels have been assigned to this job.

The US Senate Intelligence Committee's 6,000-page report, completed in January 2012, contains many important details about all the horrific practices used by

the CIA after September 11th. As of this moment, only 325 pages of the report have ever been shared with the public.

Of course, all illegal practices and torture, which is defined as a crime against humanity, does not change the fact that necessary precautions must be taken to combat terrorism. However, there is an explicit fact laid bare by the fight against terrorism ongoing for nearly 15 years, and it is that violence only begets more violence while the blood of thousands continues to spill in what might best be described as "an eclipse of reason." The main factor that will eliminate terrorism and violence does not lie in simply abolishing the prisons hidden in different parts of the world, unspeakable interrogation methods, abuse and tortures; it mostly rests in the ideological elimination of the causes and philosophies that give rise to and nurture terrorism. This can only be achieved through a comprehensive cultural undertaking.

Consequently, even if the Guantanamo camp, which is claimed to hold only 41 prisoners today, were to be shut down tomorrow, the wrong steps taken in the fight against terrorism will continue to cause both material and spiritual losses. What matters is to put an end to the mindset and system that deems it perfectly legitimate to trample on human rights in secret centers away from the public eye.

We expect the Trump administration, which criticizes the mistakes of the previous administrations and makes a point of not repeating them, to end this great human tragedy as soon as possible. We hope that Mr. Trump will no longer allow the CIA and the extensions of MI6 that are the masterminds behind the scenes to insidiously run their brutal and dreadful systems via US institutions"

—The author is a prominent Turkish writer. He blogs at: www.harunyahya.com

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Pre-trial hearings, underway for years in the cases still pending, are expected to continue well into the 16th year since the attacks for which the defendants are to be tried took place. The chief prosecutor for the five 9/11 defendants who were brought to Gitmo in 2006 and charged in 2012, has recently — without the slightest sense of irony or remorse — proposed that their trials begin in March 2018. With appeals, they might conceivably conclude in the third decade of this [century](#).

Another striking situation is that some prisoners are found innocent and released after many years of prison. For example, Mauritian Muhammad Ould Slahi, known as the most tortured prisoner in the history of Guantánamo, was released after 14 years of detention without any charges whatsoever.

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Adnan Oktar's piece in Kashmir Reader & Riyadh Vision:

<http://www.riyadhvision.com.sa/2017/05/27/there-should-be-no-more-guantanamos-in-the-world/>

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Harun Yahya

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