Guantánamo: International Day of Action

NO MORE TORTURE, NO MORE INDEFINITE DETENTION: SHUT DOWN GUANTANAMO

Description:

January 11: International Day of Action to Shut Down Guantánamo

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Today, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), representing its 155 member organizations from all regions of the world, its member league in the United States the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), and the American group Witness Against Torture, will engage in various actions to demand an end to six years of torture and abuse at Guantánamo and justice for those detained indefinitely in direct violation of American and international law.

January 11, 2008 marks six years of indefinite detention for nearly 300 men at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay. We, human rights defenders from all regions of the world, declare this day an International Day of Action to Shut Down Guantánamo.

Human rights advocates will march on the United States Supreme Court in Washington at 12 noon wearing orange jumpsuits and black hoods, representing each of the men still detained at Guantánamo. Our organizations today formally appeal to the nine Justices to affirm in Al Odah v. United States, a case in which CCR is a counsel, and Boumediene v. Bush, in which FIDH filed an amicus brief, what all the rest of the world knows: that torture and the suspension of habeas corpus (the right to challenge one's detention) are not only immoral and unconstitutional, but are crimes for which U.S. officials must be held accountable.

Despite repetitive calls to close down Guantánamo - issued by the United Nations, the European Union, foreign government officials, human rights organizations, former members of the U.S. military and others - approximately 300 men are still being held at the base. Many of these men have been cleared for release but continue to languish in Guantánamo simply because they have nowhere to go - their home countries would persecute or torture them if they were returned, and the United States has refused to provide them safe haven. Some Guantanamo detainees have been forcibly returned to countries that are known to commit egregious human rights abuses despite the pleas of these men not to be sent there.

The situation at Guantánamo affect all regions of the world, because it has set a dreadful precedent encouraging other States to also legalize the erosion of human, civil and political rights in the name of the fight against terrorism.

We, human rights defenders from all regions of the world, solemnly call on the U.S. government to:

▶ Charge and try or release all detainees;
▶ Clearly and unequivocally forbid torture and all other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, by the military, the CIA, prison guards, civilian contractors, or anyone else;
▶ Pay reparations to current and former detainees and their families for violations of their human rights;
▶ Repeal the Military Commissions Act and restore habeas corpus;
▶ Stop forcibly returning detainees to countries where they fear torture or persecution; and
▶ Shut down Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib, Bagram, and all other U.S. prisons overseas, including secret CIA detention facilities.

We also call upon European Union member States to resettle the Guantanamo detainees from third countries who would fear torture if they were sent back to their country of origin.