

Secretary Antony Blinken
United State Department of State
2200 C Street NW
Washington DC 20037, USA

Dear Secretary Blinken,

The US government's use of indefinite detention without charge at the military base in Guantánamo Bay as a response to 9/11 has been unlawful from the outset. I urge you to immediately prioritize and expedite the closure of the detention facility at the base. Many of the men have already been cleared for release and should be expeditiously transferred to countries that respect their human rights. This detention regime must be brought to an end.

One man who is currently detained, Toffiq al-Bihani, has been held since early 2003 without being charged with any offense. He was subjected to torture and other ill treatment at the hands of US authorities. He has been cleared for release since 2010, yet he remains still imprisoned in Guantánamo today. It is entirely unclear why he has not yet been transferred to another country to be reunited with his family. His continued detention is unconscionable and arbitrary, a clear violation of his human rights.

There are currently 19 men total cleared for transfer and they should be moved out of the facility immediately. In addition to the ongoing violation of their rights, Guantánamo is an all-too-easy location for future abuses to occur. Transferring out the men who have already been cleared will pave the way for the detention facility to be shut down once and for all. There are also 17 men detained who have not yet been cleared and are also arbitrarily detained, many have been subjected to torture.

The impunity that persists in relation to the torture, enforced disappearance and other human rights violations committed against these detainees is outrageous. Torture and enforced disappearance are crimes under international law.

I urge you to work toward a lawful solution for the detainees still held at Guantánamo by either transferring them to other countries where their rights will be protected or by supporting fair judicial resolutions of the cases of those charged with crimes. Those detainees who suffered torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment must receive genuine access to an effective remedy, including rehabilitation and redress. Those responsible for the detained men's torture and enforced disappearance should be brought to justice in a fair trial without recourse to the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,