



Amnesty International Lethbridge Action Circle

NEWS
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News Release

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USA: World MPs back Amnesty International demand for Guantánamo closure and end to illegal detentions

(**Washington**) On the sixth anniversary of the first transfers to the US detention centre in Guantánamo Bay, Amnesty International, backed by over 1,200 parliamentarians from around the world, has presented the US administration with an agenda to end illegal detentions in the “war on terror”.

Amnesty International’s action plan consists of 13 recommendations to end illegal detentions in the ‘war on terror’ without compromising the government’s ability to combat terrorism and it gives the authorities the practical suggestions they’ve asked for to close Guantánamo.

“Guantánamo is an anomaly that must immediately be corrected and the only way to do so is by closing it down,” said Irene Khan, Amnesty International’s Secretary General.

The action plan – signed up by parliamentarians from the UK, Israel and Japan, amongst many others – calls for restoration of *habeas corpus*, an end to secret detention and for any detainees to be charged and tried in independent and impartial courts if they are not to be released. It stresses that lawful and safe solutions must be found for those who are freed.

“The illegal practices adopted by the US government in its ‘war on terror’ – exemplified by Guantánamo and the CIA program of secret detention – have promoted the dangerous notion that fundamental human rights can be set aside in the name of national security,” said Irene Khan.

The approach to detentions taken by the USA has had a corrosive effect on the rule of law and respect for human rights. From Pakistan to East Africa and Europe, other governments have become complicit in the illegality or themselves pursued similar unlawful practices. For example, the recent reappearance of people previously considered disappeared in Pakistan has once again highlighted that particular human rights violation in that country.

Amnesty International knows of at least 38 people believed to have previously been held in secret detention by the CIA and whose fate and whereabouts remain unknown. The CIA’s rendition and detention program could not have operated without the cooperation of other governments. Other governments have also been complicit in the Guantánamo detentions.

“Arbitrary and secret detentions violate fundamental human rights principles. Such injustices have no place in the XXI century – their perpetuation breed resentment and threatens rather than promotes security,” said Irene Khan.

Amnesty International calls on the USA to finally listen to parliamentarians and others around the world calling for real change. At the same time, all governments should ensure they too are meeting their international human rights obligations in the context of counter-terrorism.

For further information, please see the following documents:

[Facts and Figures: Illegal US Detentions](#) (AMR 51/165/2007, December 2007)

[Framework: End Illegal US Detentions](#) (AMR 51/167/2007, December 2007)

[Illegal US Detentions: Recommendations to Other Governments](#) (AMR 51/181/2007, December 2007)

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