

## Guantanamo Prison Detains Alleged Terrorists Indefinitely

By Catherine Connor

Wednesday, January 11, marked the 10th anniversary of detaining alleged terrorists at the US military prison at Guantanamo, Cuba. Of the 171 inmates that remain, 87 have been approved for release, but they still remain in prison. Though President Obama signed an executive order to close the prison in January 2009, the recent signing of the National Defense Authorization Act mandates indefinite imprisonment without trial for prisoners suspected of terrorism.

Colonel Morris Davis, a former chief prosecutor at Guantanamo, believes that Obama has reversed his policies because of Congressional pressure and the desire to be reelected in 2012. Davis was fired for writing his opinion in The Wall Street Journal, which reprimanded the Obama administration for its lack of leadership in providing fair trials to Guantanamo detainees.

Davis, lawyers representing Guantanamo prisoners, freed Guantanamo prisoners, the FBI, CIA, and Guantanamo guards all have acknowledged that prisoners were tortured, including waterboarding, beatings, sleep deprivation, and sexual abuse. Some prisoners died in custody and others have lost limbs. Former prisoner Omar Deghayes lost his vision because of an alleged beating and attempted eye gouging by guards in order to incite fear among prisoners. Inmates who rebelled against the torture and who translated for other inmates have been further punished.

Few formal trials have been held and few releases have been ordered by trained judges, suggesting both disorganization and blatant injustice at the prison. Colonel Morris Davis resigned as chief prosecutor at Guantanamo, for he believes confessions given under the pressures of torture do not belong in American court cases. Torture, he says, goes against American human values.

On Guantanamo's anniversary this year, the Center for Constitutional Rights filed a lawsuit against the United States government for allowing torture in the name of national safety. London hosted an international conference featuring former prisoners who were tortured. Additionally, the conference screened a film commemorating prisoners who died as a result of torture. At Guantanamo itself, prisoners held a three-day hunger strike and formal protest in the prison's communal areas. Meanwhile, a peaceful Washington D.C. protest was held in solidarity for Guantanamo prisoners who remain in indefinite detention.