

CVT Commends Transfer of Abdul Latif Nasser out of Guantánamo Prison

ST. PAUL, Minn. and WASHINGTON — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) today issued this statement as Abdul Latif Nasser is transferred out of the Guantánamo prison.

"Mr. Nasser's transfer is a much welcome step towards closing the Guantánamo prison, and hopefully will allow him to begin to heal and reclaim his life after 19 years of injustice. The Biden administration needs to follow his transfer with swift and decisive action. Guantánamo is the iconic example of United States' post-9/11 disregard for human rights and the rule of law; closing it is necessary to ending the forever war, as the president has pledged to do," said Scott Roehm, CVT Washington director.

Mr. Nasser was cleared for transfer out of Guantánamo, through the [Periodic Review Board](#) process, in July 2016. That means that cabinet-level officials from all relevant departments and agencies of the government's national security apparatus determined that he did not pose a continuing significant threat to U.S. national security. The Secretary of Defense, however, makes the final decision on transfers, in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Director of National Intelligence. Thirty days prior to a detainee transfer, the Secretary of Defense must explain to Congress – through a [certification process](#) Congress has imposed – what steps will be taken to substantially mitigate the risk that the transfer might pose, and why the transfer is in U.S. national security interests.

In February, more than 110 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – working at both the local and national levels, and on issues including immigrants' rights, racial justice and combatting anti-Muslim discrimination – [wrote to](#) President Biden urging that he act without delay to close the prison. Additional calls for closing Guantánamo have ranged from [President Bush](#) to [President Obama](#), the [military](#) to [medical professionals](#), [international jurists](#) to a wide range of [human rights organizations](#) and [local activists](#), to the late Senator John McCain. Among the [former government officials](#) who support closure are five Secretaries of Defense, eight Secretaries of State, six National Security Advisors, five Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and dozens of retired generals and admirals.

Thirty-nine men still remain at Guantánamo, many of them torture survivors. Some were disappeared at CIA "black sites" before being sent to Guantánamo (as documented in the [executive summary](#) of the Senate Intelligence Committee's 2014 report on the CIA's so-called "enhanced interrogation" program). Some were [tortured at Guantánamo](#) (as documented in the Senate Armed Services Committee's 2008 [report](#) on the treatment of detainees in U.S. custody). All of the men have been exposed to the [physical and psychological trauma](#) associated with prolonged indefinite detention. They are aging rapidly and [increasingly exhibiting](#) complex medical conditions that staff at Guantánamo are not equipped to manage.

-###-

The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit www.cvt.org.