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TORTURE

## **Expanding the Guantánamo Migrant Operations Center is Immoral, Dishonest and Cruel**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** —On January 29, 2025, the White House issued a memo calling for expansion of the Guantánamo Migrant Operations Center (GMOC) so that the Trump administration can use it to detain up to 30,000 migrants who are currently in custody in the United States. This action is not only unrealistic but needlessly cruel. The first flight transferring migrants from the U.S. to Guantánamo took place on February 3, 2025. By February 8, tents [were reported](#) to be going up on the island to prepare for more arrivals.

“The Trump administration is not protecting American citizens from dangerous criminals with this action; it is engaging in a performative show of raw power in order to demonize immigrants and refugees,” said Yumna Rizvi, CVT senior policy analyst.

While the Trump administration’s proposed expansion of migrant detention at Guantánamo Bay is a separate issue from the Guantánamo military prison that CVT has fought to close for many years, it is deeply problematic.

There is decades-long history of holding small numbers of migrants at the GMOC; this is not new. Migrants who have been held at the GMOC were interdicted at sea in the Caribbean region by the U.S. Coast Guard. Historically, the interdiction program has kept refugees, mostly Cubans and Haitians, including families, from reaching the United States.

The GMOC is located at the Guantánamo naval base but is a separate facility from the infamous military prison where 15 detainees from the so-called “Global War on Terror” remain. However, some migrants, which the government claims as alleged “high threat” members of Tren de Aragua have been placed in the military detention facility as the tents go up. Migrants cannot be lawfully held in military custody.

“The Trump administration is using the infamy of Guantánamo to create the illusion that these migrants deserve to be held in the worst place known to the United States,” said Rizvi. “Expanding any form of detention at Guantánamo Bay is not only cruel and inhumane, it is also absurd in terms of its proposed breadth and raises serious concerns about due process, oversight and the treatment of vulnerable populations.”

Read CVT’s [Fact Sheet](#): Detention Operations at Guantánamo

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