

PUBLIC

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UA 125/09 Health concern/detention without trial

USA/Yemen Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif, Yemeni national

Yemeni national Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif, who has made a number of suicide attempts in recent months, cut one of his wrists during a meeting with his lawyer in the US Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba on 10 May. Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif has been held in Guantánamo without charge for more than seven years. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for his physical and psychological health.

His US lawyer stated following the visit that Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif "chipped off a piece of the stiff veneer on the underside of our conference table and used it to saw into a vein in his left wrist...As he sawed, he drained his blood into a plastic container and, shortly before it was time for me to leave, he hurled the blood at me from the container." A spokesman at Guantánamo confirmed the incident took place but said it could not be classified as a suicide attempt.

Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif has attempted suicide several times since September 2008. He has told his lawyer that on one occasion in November 2008, he tried to hang himself twice in one day. At least one of these attempts was confirmed to his lawyer by an official at Guantánamo.

Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif has been held in solitary confinement in the psychiatric ward at Guantánamo since at least November 2008. He has told his lawyers that when he is awake he sees ghosts in the darkness, hears frightening voices and suffers from nightmares when he is asleep. He has also told his lawyers that he has ingested all sorts of materials including garbage bags, urine cups, prayer beads, a water bottle and a screw and that he has eaten his own excrement and smeared it on his body and that he has used his own excrement to cover the walls of his cell door, the camera on the ceiling of his cell and the air vent in his cell.

In addition to mental health problems Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif is reported to suffer from a number of physical health problems, including a fractured cheekbone, a shattered eardrum, blindness in one eye, a dislocated shoulder blade, and a possibly dislocated knee. He also says that he suffers constant throat and stomach pain which make it difficult for him to eat. Consequently he is force-fed up to three times a day with a tube that runs from the nose to the stomach whilst strapped to a restraint chair.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Barack Obama has ordered his administration to close the detention centre at Guantánamo by 22 January 2010, but the future for the approximately 240 men still detained there remains uncertain. President Obama also ordered a review to determine which detainees should be released or transferred, which should be prosecuted by the USA, and what other option there could be for detainees from whom neither trial nor release was deemed possible. To date, only one Guantánamo detainee has been released since President Obama took office, and none has been charged. Moreover, a number of detainees remain in indefinite detention in Guantánamo months after US federal judges ordered their immediate release.

There are approximately 100 Yemeni nationals detained at Guantánamo. It appears that the US and Yemeni authorities have failed to reach an agreement on possible return to Yemen, and recent reports suggest that US authorities are now trying to negotiate a deal which would return a number of the Yemenis to Saudi Arabia

where they would enter a 'rehabilitation' program run by the Saudi Arabian authorities. Amnesty International has no further information regarding the negotiations between the US, Yemeni or Saudi Arabian authorities.

Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif has family living in Yemen, including a 10 year old son. He does not have any family or other known connections in Saudi Arabia.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

To the USA authorities;

- expressing concern for the health and well-being of Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif;
- calling for him to have access to an independent mental health expert;
- calling for his conditions of detention to be improved, particularly an end to his isolation;
- asking that his lawyers be given full access to his medical records;
- calling for him to be released if he is not to be brought to fair trial in a civilian court;
- if he is not to be tried, calling on him to be returned to Yemen.

To the Yemeni authorities;

- calling on the authorities to make immediate representations to US authorities on behalf of Adnan Farhan Abdul Latif requesting that he be returned to Yemen without delay if he is not to be fairly tried.

APPEALS TO:

President Barack Obama
The White House,
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Washington DC 20500, USA

Email: president@whitehouse.gov

Fax: + 1 202 456 2461

Salutation: Dear Mr President

Attorney General Eric Holder,
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Washington, DC 20530-0001, USA

Fax: +1 202 307 6777

Email: AskDOJ@usdoj.gov

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

President

His Excellency General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
Office of the President of the Republic of Yemen
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: + 967 127 4147

Salutation: Your Excellency

and to diplomatic representatives of USA - Guantanamo accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 June.