

November 5, 2015

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Nearly seven years ago, on your second full day in office, members of our group of retired flag and general officers of the U.S. Armed Forces proudly stood with you in the Oval Office as you signed Executive Orders to end torture, shut down CIA secret prisons, and begin the process of closing the Guantánamo Bay prison facility. Thank you for your efforts since then to close the detention facility. In 2009 there were 242 detainees at Guantanamo; today there are 112. We write to express our conviction that closing the detention facility at Guantanamo is a national security imperative and reiterate our support for your efforts to do so.

You have repeatedly argued that the continued operation of the detention facility at Guantanamo is a stain on America's reputation, emboldens our enemies, and undermines relationships with our allies. We agree.

We continue to be disappointed by the efforts of some to engender fear among the American people about the prospect of bringing suspected terrorists to the United States for trial. Our prisons house hundreds of convicted terrorists. None has ever escaped.

Ultimately, though, the way forward depends principally on strong, persistent leadership from you and your administration. You have no doubt faced real opposition, but the effort your administration has dedicated to overcome it has been inadequate to the task. We therefore urge you to put forward your plan to close Guantanamo as soon as possible, as Congress has requested and as your administration has promised to deliver. Providing such a plan—including where inside the United States the remaining detainees will be held—will demonstrate your commitment to closing Guantanamo before you leave office and communicate your seriousness about working with the Congress to find a responsible way to shutter the facility.

We stand ready to support your efforts. Closing Guantanamo will make Americans more secure and remind the world that we are prepared to live by the rule of law and values we cherish.

Sincerely,

General Charles Krulak, USMC (Ret.)
Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona, USPHS (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Richard L. Kelly, USMC (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Norman R. Seip, USAF (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Keith J. Stalder, USMC (Ret.)
Rear Admiral Don Guter, JAGC, USN (Ret.)
Major General Michael R. Lehnert, USMC (Ret.)
Major General William L. Nash, USA (Ret.)

General William G.T. Tuttle Jr., USA (Ret.)
Lieutenant General John Castellaw, USMC (Ret.)
Vice Admiral Lee F. Gunn, USN (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Charles Otstott, USA (Ret.)
Lieutenant General Harry E. Soyster, USA (Ret.)
Major General Eugene Fox, USA (Ret.)
Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, JAGC, USN (Ret.)
Major General J. Michael Myatt, USMC (Ret.)
Major General Eric T. Olson, USA (Ret.)

Major General Walter L. Stewart, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General Evelyn P. Foote, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Leif H. Hendrickson, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General John H. Johns, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Daniel P. Woodward, USAF (Ret.)

Major General Margaret Woodward, USAF (Ret.)
Brigadier General David M. Brahms, USMC (Ret.)
Brigadier General James P. Cullen, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Gerald E. Galloway, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General David R. Irvine, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Murray G. Sagsveen, USA (Ret.)
Brigadier General Stephen N. Xenakis, USA (Ret.)