

January 11, 2023

President Joseph Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
January 11, 2023

Dear President Biden,

In 2009 many retired senior leaders stood behind you as then President Obama signed an executive order to close the detention facility at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. That was nearly 14 long years ago, and yet Guantanamo remains open. We ask that you to do everything in your power to finally bring this dark chapter of United States history to a close.

Guantanamo is synonymous with inhumanity and injustice; an affront to the rule of law. It damages our international reputation, makes us less safe, and remains a target for charges of U.S. hypocrisy from the likes of China and Russia. All of this at the astronomical cost of \$540 million per year (over \$15 million per detainee).

We applaud your efforts to wind down the failed military commissions and encourage you to swiftly repatriate or resettle the twenty men who have been recommended for transfer by unanimous agreement of the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, and State; the Joint Staff; and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). Claims that these men are “too dangerous to release” are politically motivate fearmongering, not fact.

Former President George W. Bush – who transferred more than 500 men out of Guantanamo – determined that Guantanamo should be closed because, in his words, “...the detention facility had become a propaganda tool for our enemies and a distraction for our allies.” He was correct. Now is the time to finish the job.

Throughout our time in uniform, we stood up for the ideals of liberty and rule of law. Now as we look at Guantanamo entering its third decade service we cannot help but reflect on the damage it has done to the advancement of American values. Closing the detention facility would do much to end a chapter in our history that deviated from the lofty ideals that our nation strives evermore to achieve.

We appreciate that closing Guantanamo will not be easy, but with your leadership it is achievable, and the right thing to do. We stand ready to assist you in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

General David Maddox, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Lieutenant General Ben Hodges, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Lieutenant General Claudia Kennedy, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Lieutenant General Richard L. Kelly, United States Marine Corps, (Ret.)

Vice Admiral Lee F Gunn, United States Navy, (Ret.)  
Major General Antonio Taguba, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Major General Eric Olson, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Major General Eugene Fox, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Major General Paul Eaton, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Major General Michael Lehnert, United States Marine Corps, (Ret.)  
Rear Admiral Harold L. Robinson, United States Navy, (Ret.)  
Rear Admiral Joe Sestak, United States Navy, (Ret.)  
Rear Admiral John Hutson, United States Navy, (Ret.)  
Rear Admiral William J. McDaniel, United States Navy, (Ret.)  
Brigadier General Dennis Geoghan, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Brigadier General John Johns, United States Army, (Ret.)  
Brigadier General Leif Hendrickson, United States Marine Corps, (Ret.)  
Brigadier General Stephen Cheney, United States Marine Corps, (Ret.)  
Brigadier General Terrence P. Woods, United States Air Force, (Ret.)

CC: Hon. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State  
Hon. Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense