

U.S. Sends Five Guantanamo Bay Detainees to UAE



Washington, November 16 (RHC)-- The United States has sent five inmates of America's notorious military prison at Guantanamo Bay to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The five men, who have been held for more than 13 years at the U.S. prison -- located on illegally-occupied Cuban territory -- have been released and sent to the UAE, the Pentagon said Sunday. The Yemeni prisoners were accepted for resettlement in the Persian Gulf nation after U.S. authorities determined they no longer posed a threat, AP reported citing a Defense Department statement. Their release brings the Guantanamo prison population to 107.

The men, who arrived in the UAE on Saturday, were identified as Ali Ahmad Muhammad al-Razihi, Khalid Abd-al-Jabbar Muhammad Uthman al-Qadasi, Adil Said al-Hajj Ubayd al-Busays, Sulayman Awad Bin Uqayl al-Nahdi, and Fahmi Salem Said al-Asani.

None of them had been charged with a crime, but had been detained as so-called 'enemy combatants.' They could not be sent to their homeland because the U.S. considers Yemen too "unstable" to accept prisoners from Guantanamo. These are the first prisoners accepted by the UAE for resettlement.

The report said U.S. President Barack Obama has reduced the number of prisoners by more than half since he took office in 2009.

Obama had promised to close the Guantanamo Bay prison in his election campaign in 2008, citing its damage to the U.S. reputation abroad. However, later on, the president backed away on his pledge due to stiff opposition from Congress.

As many as 775 detainees are said to have been brought to the Guantanamo Bay prison, which was set up after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

Washington says the prisoners are 'terror suspects,' but has not pressed charges against most of them in any court. Many detainees have been on hunger strike for months to draw attention to their condition at the U.S. military prison.

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