

UN Experts: Guantanamo detention of Ammar al Baluchi breaches human rights law



Geneva, March 1 (RHC)-- The U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention said on Wednesday that a Pakistani man held at the U.S.-run Guantanamo Bay detention facility since 2006 should be released immediately and given a right to compensation.

“The detention of Ammar al-Baluchi is arbitrary, breaches international human rights law and has no legal basis,” according to a written opinion issued by the group of five independent experts, who report to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

“Al Baluchi has been deprived of due process and the fair trial guarantees that would ordinarily apply within the judicial system of the United States,” the group said. “This act of discrimination on the basis of his status as a foreign national and his religion has denied him equality before the law.”

The experts say al Baluchi’s detention contravenes no fewer than 13 separate articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Guantanamo Bay detention center was opened at the illegally occupied territory of the US Naval Base in Guantanamo, in Eastern Cuba, by President George W. Bush to hold terrorism suspects captured overseas after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

The Working Group, which has previously expressed concerns about Guantanamo to the U.S. government, said its closure must remain a priority, adding that systematic imprisonment in violation of the rules of international law may constitute crimes against humanity.

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