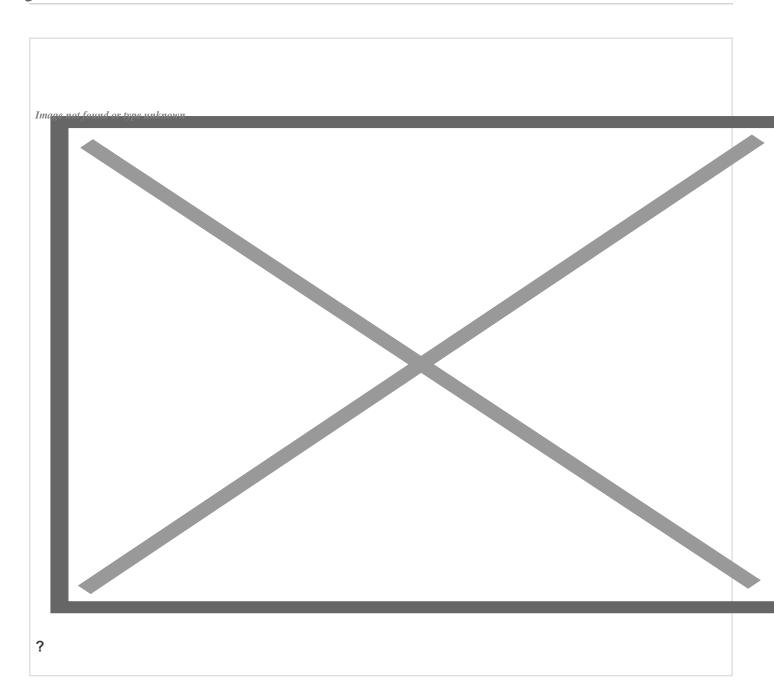# Guantanamo's oldest inmate Saifullah Paracha freed after 19 years without a trial

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Miami, October 29 (RHC)-- The oldest inmate at the United States-run Guantanamo Bay detention facility in Cuba Saifullah Paracha has been released to his home country Pakistan after nearly 20 years of detention without trial, the South Asian country's foreign ministry said.

"The Foreign Ministry completed an extensive inter-agency process to facilitate the repatriation of Mr Paracha," the ministry said in a statement on Saturday. "We are glad that a Pakistani citizen detained abroad is finally reunited with his family."

Businessman Paracha was arrested in 2003 in Thailand and accused of financing the armed group, but he has maintained his innocence and claimed a love for the United States. In May, the US approved Paracha's release concluding only that he was "not a continuing threat" to the U.S.

Like most prisoners at Guantanamo, Paracha – aged 74 or 75 – was never formally charged and had little legal power to challenge his detention. The secretive U.S. military prison was established in the wake of 9/11 to hold suspected al-Qaeda members captured during the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

But of the 780 inmates held during the US's so-called "war on terror", 732 were released without charge. Many of them were imprisoned for more than a decade without legal means to challenge their detention. Nearly 40 prisoners remain in the world's most infamous detention facility, which has become a symbol of human rights abuses.

Paracha's return home on Saturday comes after U.S. President Joe Biden last year approved his release, along with that of another Pakistani national Abdul Rabbani, 55, and Yemen native Uthman Abdul al-Rahim Uthman, 41.

Since it first opened, Guantanamo -- which illegally occupies Cuban territory -- has become notorious for human rights abuses and the fact that the United States administration did not consider its prisoners to be entitled to any protection according to international laws.

Radio Habana Cuba