

UN group says systematic imprisonment at Guantanamo is violation of international law

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United Nations, June 8 (RHC)-- A United Nations group of rights experts has released a scathing report criticizing the United States and some of its allies for the torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. The group, made up of five independent experts, compiled the report in November 2022, but did not release it until last week.

The experts stressed that while they were addressing Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri's case, a Saudi prisoner of Yemeni descent currently awaiting a death penalty trial, in particular, "the conclusions reached here also apply to other detainees in similar situations a Guantanamo Bay."

They cautioned that "under certain circumstances, widespread or systematic imprisonment or other severe deprivation of liberty, in violation of international law, may constitute crimes against humanity." In

the case submitted to the group last June, lawyers maintained that after Nashiri was captured in Dubai in 2002, he spent four years shuttled between various CIA black sites in Afghanistan, Lithuania, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates, being tortured and abused.

The group determined that all the eight countries were "jointly responsible for the torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment" of al-Nashiri. "The submissions that Mr. al-Nashiri was tortured stand unrefuted," it said, also finding that all the eight countries were responsible for his "arrest, rendition and arbitrary detention."

Al-Nashiri arrived at Guantanamo Bay in 2006, where he remains detained. He was only charged in 2008, and his military commission death penalty case still remains in pre-trial proceedings.

The experts called on the countries to "take the steps necessary to remedy the situation of al-Nashiri without delay." They said "the appropriate remedy would be to release Mr. al-Nashiri immediately," and provide him compensation and reparations. And they called for "a full and independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding the arbitrary deprivation of liberty of Mr. al-Nashiri, including an independent inquiry into his allegations of torture."

"The Working Group is obliged to remind the government of the United States that all persons deprived of their liberty must be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person."

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