

GTMO UPDATE - AUGUST 4, 2003**WHAT'S NEW**

LIT

Senator Cornyn (R-TX) visited GTMO Monday to view U.S. detainee detention facilities and conditions.

MESSAGES**Detainee status**

- There are currently about 660 detainees at GTMO. To date, we have announced the release of 64 detainees (27 in July, 14 in May; 18 in March, and five in 2002). In May, four detainees were transferred for continued detention to the Government of Saudi Arabia.
- Before we can release any detainee, we must first ensure that they are no longer a threat to the U.S. or its allies; that we have gleaned all information or intelligence that could be used to prevent further terrorist attacks; and that the individual is not somebody who should face prosecution for criminal activity. This is a slow methodical process that we are actively working.

Suicide attempts

- Suicide attempts now total 29 at GTMO (by 18 individuals).
- We take suicide attempts seriously. While we will not go into details of the attempts, we continue to make every effort to limit these attempts.
- All the individuals were seen by medical personnel. Discovery and rapid intervention by military guards have prevented detainee deaths. We also have mental health and security teams that work together to prevent these injuries.

Juveniles

- We don't discuss specifics of any detainees – to include their ages or nationalities. There are three detainees whom we have assessed to be under

the age of 16. It is difficult to determine exact age as birth records are not readily available for many enemy combatants.

- Like other detainees, these individuals were transferred to Guantanamo because they were captured while actively participating in hostilities against U.S. forces. As with other enemy combatants, it is important that we assess their potential to provide information in the ongoing war on terrorism and that we remove them from the battlefield.
- Age is not a determining factor in detention. We detain enemy combatants, those who are engaged in armed conflict against us.
- We recognize very unfortunate circumstances brought them here. The fact that juveniles are being used as combatants is a reality in many parts of the world.
- JTF GTMO has evaluated them and, consistent with military requirements, provided for suitable detention facilities and treatment. Every effort is made to provide them a secure environment, segregated from the older detainee population, as well as the special physical, psychological and related care they may need.

Humane treatment

- Consistent with U.S. policy, all detained enemy combatants are treated humanely and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. Among other things, detainees are given adequate food, water, shelter, clothing, medical treatment, and the freedom to practice their religion.
- Personnel detained at Guantanamo Bay are "enemy combatants" and are being held for reasons of security and necessity. They have demonstrated their will to cause harm to U.S. and allied forces prevent them from continuing to fight against the U.S. and our partners in the War on Terrorism.
- The Secretary of Defense has emphatically stated that the Department of Defense has no interest in detaining enemy combatants longer than necessary.

SOURCE

SOUTHCOM (PA); JTF GTMO PA

Coordination
A/O

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