

The letter is dated September 27, 2002

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Head of Legal Affairs

To: Attorney Peter Althin
STOCKHOLM

Regarding Mehdi Mohammed Ghezali

After we had our last contact in the middle of August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has had a meeting with the father. At that meeting the Ministry informed the father that his son is alive, at good health, receiving food and first class medical attention and, like the other prisoners, was kept under regular supervision by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Since the beginning of September, we still haven't received any reaction from the Americans concerning our questions. Therefore, Cabinet Secretary Hans Dahlgren called for a meeting with the American Ambassador on September 3. The Cabinet Secretary repeated the questions at that meeting and stressed the urgency that the Swedish Government, as well as the family, has the right to receive an answer. Further, the Cabinet Secretary forwarded a request on humanitarian grounds to visit the Swedish prisoner at the Guantanamo base. A formal request was made by the Swedish Embassy in Washington a few days later.

I can also inform you that this issue has been addressed by the Minister of Justice, Tomas Bodström, when he, on September 14, met his American colleague John Ashcroft at the informal meeting with EU Justice and Internal ministers.

Last Tuesday we received the reaction. The Americans are repeating their earlier arguments that they consider the prisoners at Guantanamo as "enemy combatants", and that these prisoners can be detained for as long as the conflict with Al Qaida is continuing. This conflict is, according to the Americans, still going on irrespective of whether the prisoners are prosecuted or not. The Americans say that so far nobody has been prosecuted and no decision has been made on when such processes might occur. The Americans also emphasize that the detention at Guantanamo is not a punishment, but aims at preventing the prisoners from re-engaging in any actions against the United States.

In addition, the Americans assert that the prisoners are treated according to the Geneva Convention, gets three meals per day, medical attention and the possibility to practice their religion. Prisoners are allowed to both send and receive letters from family

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members, but they point out that not all prisoners have received letters and also that not all have used the possibility to send letters themselves. They state that no confirmation regarding specific letters can be made.

Finally, references are made to the Swedish request regarding a new visit. They only allow police- or intelligence agency related visits. Other kinds of visits, including consular, are not allowed.

The American answer is – not unexpectedly – of course a disappointment. The Swedish Government is now considering how to move on. You will naturally be informed about the ongoing developments in this matter.

Regards,

Carl Henrik Ehrencrona

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