ACTION GUIDE 2012

THE AMERICA I BELIEVE IN

would close Guantanamo
end indefinite detention
& never use torture

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

security with human rights campaign
join us: www.amnestyusa.org/security
INTRODUCTION

Dear Friend,

Thank you for joining Amnesty International in taking action against Guantanamo, indefinite detention, torture and other human rights violations committed by the US government in the name of national security. These abuses are immoral and illegal under US and international law, and--according to military and security experts--ineffective and counterproductive. There is a better alternative: security with human rights.

Under international law, human rights violations--whether by armed groups or states--must end, those responsible must be held accountable, and the rights of victims must be fulfilled. Human rights mean security and justice for all of us. And I'm not the only one saying it. Military personnel, September 11th family members and people of many religious faiths and political beliefs are coming together to say enough is enough and demand that states and armed groups respect human rights. It's up to us, the people, to demand it.

Right now, our strategy is to focus on two important cases that illustrate all that is wrong with the US government's approach to national security: Shaker Aamer, a UK resident in his 10th year of indefinite detention at Guantanamo and Maher Arar, who was kidnapped by the US and sent to Syria to be tortured.

By focusing our activism on these two cases and spreading the word about the America we believe in, we can make progress toward closing Guantanamo and ensuring that the US never again uses torture or other ill-treatment. We need to show President Obama, his Administration and Congress that citizens demand an end to human rights violations--as well as accountability for them--by being visible in the streets, online and in the media.

This Action Guide is intended to help you do just that. By working together on a shared strategy and each doing our own part, we can collectively change the US government's course on human rights and make the America we believe in a reality.

Many thanks for all that you do,

Zeke Johnson
Director, Security with Human Rights Campaign, Amnesty International USA

PS Please let me know that you took action and contact me if you have any questions, ideas, feedback, video or photos. I am here to support your activism and to help build our movement for human rights. Reach me at zjohnson@aiusa.org, 212.633.4356, @ZekeJohnsonAI, or facebook.com/swhrcampaign.

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GOALS & OBJECTIVES
These are the human rights issues we seek to end through our activism. Goals are the long-term change we want to achieve; objectives are steps toward the goal.

Goal – Guantanamo & Indefinite Detention: Close Guantanamo & reform Bagram by ending indefinite detention and unfair trials and opposing detention provisions in the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA): Detainees are either charged and fairly tried in courts that meet international standards, or released to countries that will respect their human rights.

- Objective – Shaker Aamer: Guantanamo detainee Shaker Aamer is either charged and fairly tried in US federal court, or released to the UK, as the UK government has requested.

  About the case: Shaker Aamer has been held at Guantanamo without charge for over 10 years. He has British residency and the UK government has asked that he be released to his wife and children in London. We are calling for Shaker Aamer to either be charged and fairly tried in US federal court, or be released to the UK. For more information please read the case sheet at the end of this guide or go to www.amnestyusa.org/aamer.

Goal – Torture & Accountability: Ensure that torture and other ill-treatment are never used by the US government again and ensure accountability for torture and other ill-treatment, as required by law: through a full investigation, prosecution of all those responsible and remedy for all victims.

- Objective – Maher Arar: Maher Arar receives an apology and remedy from the US government for the torture, other ill-treatment and unlawful detention he suffered.

  About the case: Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen, was travelling home from visiting relatives in Tunisia in 2002. While changing planes in NYC, he was detained by U.S. authorities and sent to Syria, where he was held for a year and tortured. Canada compensated Arar for its role in his treatment, but the US government refuses to apologize or offer him any form of remedy. For more information please read the case sheet at the end of this guide or go to www.amnestyusa.org/arar.

STRATEGY
Our strategy is to combine your grassroots activism with AI staff advocacy through the media, web, research, lobbying and public outreach in order to influence President Obama, his Administration and Congress to change course on human rights.

We need your activism to be visible not just to government officials, but also to the media, your social networks and your local communities, in order to help educate others and build public opposition to human rights violations and support for security with human rights. The more people we have taking action with us, the more power we will have to influence elected officials.

This is especially important in an election year where a number of candidates, pundits and Members of Congress have called for Guantanamo to expand and for a return to “enhanced interrogation techniques”—a euphemism for torture and other ill-treatment.

We ask that you focus your activism and public outreach on three fronts, so that we can make the most of our collective effort: Shaker Aamer, Maher Arar and spreading the “America I Believe In” message and materials far and wide. In the next section, we suggested tactics you can use.

If you have any questions about what to do or need help tailoring an action to your local community and members of Congress, please contact us at zjohnson@aiusa.org or 212.633.4256.
KEY MESSAGES
January 11, 2012, marked 10 years of Guantanamo’s use by the US government as a prison to hold terror suspects outside of the law.

- Guantanamo and the US prison at Bagram in Afghanistan symbolize a decade of damage to human rights. This damage not only affects detainees, but each and every one of us.
- Military commissions and indefinite detention must be abandoned. Detainees must be charged and fairly tried in courts that meet international standards, or be released to countries that will respect their human rights.
- The US government must ensure torture and other ill-treatment are never used again, including by meeting its obligations under law to hold accountable those responsible for torture and other human rights violations.

Military commissions and indefinite detention must be abandoned. The US government should either charge Guantanamo detainees and ensure fair trials or release them.

- Guantanamo detainees should either be charged and prosecuted in fair trials in ordinary courts or released to countries that will respect their human rights.
- Shaker Aamer, a former UK resident, should be charged and fairly tried or released to the UK—as the British government has requested.
- It is not too late for the USA to abandon military commissions which, despite revisions, do not meet international fair trial standards.
- The use of military tribunals to try people who are not members of a state’s armed forces is incompatible with international human rights standards.
- The US government should abandon any pursuit of the death penalty. The imposition of the death penalty after a trial which does not fully meet international fair trial standards would amount to arbitrary deprivation of life in violation of international law.
- Any detainee whom the USA does not intend to prosecute should be released, into the USA if there is no other option available.
- It is shameful that the USA has failed to provide the victims and the general public the opportunity to see those accused of responsibility for the 9/11 attacks brought to justice in fair trials.

The ban against torture and other ill-treatment in domestic and international law must be upheld.

- The Army Field Manual on Interrogation must be revised to ensure that no techniques permitted result in torture or other ill-treatment.
- The United Nations Convention Against Torture, binding law on the USA, is unequivocal that no circumstances whatsoever allow for torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- The Convention also requires accountability for torture, including full investigation, prosecution where warranted and remedy and redress for victims.
- Maher Arar, sent by the US to Syria to be tortured, has the right to remedy, including an apology, for what he suffered.

LEARN MORE

- Shaker Aamer [www.amnestyusa.org/aamer](http://www.amnestyusa.org/aamer)
- Maher Arar [www.amnestyusa.org/arar](http://www.amnestyusa.org/arar)

For the latest campaign news, analysis, actions and reports:
- Website: [amnestyusa.org/security](http://amnestyusa.org/security)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/swhrcampaign](http://facebook.com/swhrcampaign)
- Twitter: [@ZekeJohnsonAi](http://twitter.com/ZekeJohnsonAi)
- E-Mail: zjohnson@aiusa.org
  or call 212.633.4256
ACTIONS
We use the power of collective action—each of us doing a small part, in coordination with other people—to influence President Obama, his Administration and Congress to change course on human rights. Every action counts! Let us know what you’ve done: zjohnson@aiusa.org.

10 MINUTES
- E-Action on Shaker Aamer (Guantanamo, indefinite detention, NDAA): www.amnestyusa.org/aamer
- E-Action on Maher Arar (torture, accountability, rendition): www.amnestyusa.org/arar
- Share these e-actions—and facts, myths & quotes—with friends through e-mail, Twitter & Facebook
- Tweet @BarackObama @StateDept for #ShakerAamer & #MaherArar (use above URLs)
- Join us on Facebook facebook.com/swhrcampaign & follow us on Twitter: @ZekeJohnsonAI
- Set your Facebook & Twitter profile pics to the America I Believe In graphic
- Post comments to relevant online articles and blogs
- Post the “America I Believe In” poster around town or school, & distribute stickers and buttons
- Read and share our blogs: http://blog.amnestyusa.org/category/waronterror/

30 MINUTES
- Call the White House comment line on behalf of Shaker Aamer & Maher Arar: 202.456.1111
- Write a letter on behalf of Shaker Aamer (refer to the case sheet in this Action Guide for more info)
- Write a letter on behalf of Maher Arar (refer to the case sheet in the Action Guide)
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper (refer to the “How To” section of the Action Guide)

1 HOUR
- Write an Op-Ed to your local paper (refer to the How To section of the Action Guide)
- Meet with the Editorial Board of your local paper (refer to the How To section of the Action Guide)
- Collect petition signatures by tabling in a busy location (use petitions at the end of this Action Guide)
- Create & share a video telling everyone why the America you believe in would close Guantanamo

MORE ADVANCED – SEE THE “HOW TO” SECTION OF THIS GUIDE
Organize a demonstration, stunt, panel, teach-in or vigil—get creative!
- Choose a strategic location: outside the office of your Senators or Rep; courthouse; or busy location
- Build your own replica cell. E-mail zjohnson@aiusa.org for instructions.
- Contact us for orange jump suits, banners and to talk through messages and strategy
- Collect petition signatures and recruit people to join Amnesty International
- Use our PowerPoint Teach-In Tool: email zjohnson@aiusa.org to request it
- Publicize your event to the media and public, & work in coalition with other groups & orgs
- Share photos & video of your event at www.facebook.com/swhrcampaign.

Organize a screening & discussion of The Response or another film about Guantanamo & torture
- View a trailer of The Response at www.theresponsemovie.com & email us for a free DVD
- Invite speakers. Email us for suggestions and look at our Speakers List: http://bit.ly/oV8Flo
- Hold a virtual panel using testimony clips from www.witnessstoguantanamo.com
- Collect petition signatures for Shaker Aamer and recruit people to join Amnesty International
- Publicize your event to the media and public, & work in coalition with other groups & orgs

Lobby your Federal Senators or Representative
- Contact zjohnson@aiusa.org for more information and to be connected with your local AIUSA volunteer Legislative Coordinator. Note that July 2 – 6 will be a lobby week against torture.

>>Have another idea? Let’s talk about it! Email zjohnson@aiusa.org or call 212.633.4256.
CALANDER
You can use these key dates to organize and plan your activism. Please let us know if you take part in any of these key activism dates and feel free to ask questions: zjohnson@aiusa.org or 212.633.4256. See the rest of this guide for more information about actions and resources.

January 11, 2012: Day of Action Against Guantanamo & NDAA on 10 Year Anniversary of Guantanamo
- Demonstrations and solidarity actions around the world, to be visible to the US government
- January 23 we delivered over 168,000 petitions to President Obama to Close Guantanamo

February 14: Action to mark Shaker Aamer’s 10 years at Guantanamo
- E-Action to President Obama and the Department of Defense www.amnestyusa.org/aamer
- Tweets @BarackObama and State_DRL to charge or release Shaker Aamer

February 23-March 14: Joint action with AIUK to press UK Prime Minister David Cameron & President Obama to resolve Shaker Aamer’s case at their State Meeting March 13 & 14
- Collect signatures to the e-action at www.amnestyusa.org/aamer
- Tweet @BarackObama and State_DRL to charge or release Shaker Aamer from Guantanamo
- Call the White House Comment line (202.456.1111)

March 13-14: UK/US state visit: get Shaker Aamer on agenda
- Continue actions from February 23: e-action, calls to White House and Tweets

March 30-April 1: AIUSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Denver: www.amnestyusa.org/agm
- Panel on How to Close Guantanamo with experts, including a former Guantanamo prosecutor
- Panel will be recorded for use in house-party screenings – email zjohnson@aiusa.org for the link
- AGM actions on Shaker Aamer and Maher Arar

April 27- May 2: Week of Action for Shaker Aamer & Maher Arar
- May 1: NYC panel discussion on Shaker Aamer & NDAA– email zjohnson@aiusa.org for more info
- Hold your own solidarity event or take solidarity action

May 21: Day of Action for Maher Arar – Stand Against Torture
- We will deliver petitions for Maher Arar to the White House, urging President Obama to apologize on June 26, International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
- Call and Tweet the White House
- Continue to promote e-action at www.amnestyusa.org/arar
- Share our press release on Twitter and Facebook

June: Torture Awareness Month
Amnesty International and many other human rights groups have long marked June as Torture Awareness Month, because the United Nations Convention Against Torture entered into force on June 26, 1987, and that day has been designated International Day in Support of Victims of Torture by the United Nations.
- All month: take action for Maher Arar and Shaker Aamer, use the Action menu in this guide

June 22 – 26: Week of Action Against Torture, Guantanamo & Indefinite Detention
- Fri, June 22: Day of education: hold an evening film screening and discussion of The Response or another relevant film
- Sat, June 23: Tweet-in Day to @BarackObama @State_DRL @StateDept @DeptofDefense about #ShakerAamer (charge or release) and #MaherArar (apologize for torture). Include www.amnestyusa.org/aamer and www.amnestyusa.org/arar
- **Sun, June 24:** Day of Demonstration: Join our demo in Washington DC or organize your own in front of a court house or federal building. Invite the press (see below for how).

  **DC Demonstration Info:** Sunday 1:00PM – 2:30PM; Gather at the reflecting pool in front of Capitol; march in orange jumpsuits to the White House; bring signs that say “No Torture, No Guantanamo, No Excuses!” E-mail zjohnson@aiusa.org for more info.

- **Mon, June 25:** Call in Day to the White House on Shaker Aamer and Maher Arar. See below for numbers and sample scripts.

  - **Tues, June 26:** International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
    - Day of Vigil for Maher Arar and Shaker Aamer. Organize a candlelight vigil in a public space, read testimony from Maher Arar and notify the press.
    - Wed, June 27: Send us photos and video of your June activism! We will collect them in a video, send it to the White House and post on our Facebook page. zjohnson@aiusa.org.

- July 2 – 6: In-District Lobby week Against Torture, Guantanamo and Indefinite detention
  - E-mail zjohnson@aiusa.org to sign up and request more information

- August 27: Republican National Convention, Tampa
  - AIUSA is working on strategy now, please email zjohnson@aiusa.org for more info

- September 3: Democratic National Convention, Charlotte
  - AIUSA is working on strategy now, please email zjohnson@aiusa.org for more info

- **September 11:** Day of Vigil Against Terrorism - Anniversary of September 11 attacks
  - Urge Congress to fulfill the rights of first responders and other survivors of the attack by fully funding the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act: [www.amnestyusa.org/911act](http://www.amnestyusa.org/911act)
  - Organize vigils in memory of the attacks, calling for the rights of victims to be upheld and for those responsible to be held accountable through fair trials

- Oct 3 – 22: Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates (see [www.debates.org](http://www.debates.org) for schedule)
  - Take and share as many actions from the Action menu as you can during this period
  - Take part in any online debate-related platforms to submit debate questions on Guantanamo, torture, Shaker Aamer, Maher Arar and related issues.
  - E-mail zjohnson@aiusa.org for more info closer to the date

- October 17: Anniversary of the Military Commissions Act
  - Take action for Shaker Aamer

- October 28: Anniversary of President Obama’s revisions to the Military Commissions Act
  - Take action for Shaker Aamer

- **December 10:** AI Global Write-a-thon
  - Sign up at [www.amnestyusa.org/writeathon](http://www.amnestyusa.org/writeathon)

  - Take action for Shaker Aamer

- **January 11, 2013:** 11th Anniversary of Guantanamo prison
  - Take action for Shaker Aamer
  - Demonstrations in Washington DC & worldwide
  - E-mail zjohnson@aiusa.org closer to the date for info
HOW TO…

...Tweet & Facebook:
It’s easy! Go to www.twitter.com and www.facebook.com to set up your free accounts. Follow the instructions and connect with us on Twitter @ZekeJohnsonAi and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/swhrcampaign. These are important tools to help raise awareness, educate friends and inspire activism.

...Call the White House:
Dial the comment line on 1.202.456.1111 and feel free to modify these sample scripts:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from _____ to urge the President to ensure that Guantanamo detainee Shaker Aamer is either charged and tried fairly in US federal court, or released to Britain, as the UK government has requested. I oppose indefinite detention and want Guantanamo closed.

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from _____ to urge the President to apologize to torture survivor Maher Arar on June 26, the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, and fulfill his right to remedy. I oppose torture and call for full accountability for torture that has been carried out in my name.

...Organize a:
- Demonstration, stunt, panel or vigil
- Film screening & discussion
- Panel discussion
- Teach-In
- Lobby visit

Go to www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit for organizing tips and then email zjohnson@aiusa.org or your Field Organizer to discuss specifics and order materials. Distribute the facts, quotes and myth busters documents in this Action Guide at your events.

Look up your Federal Senators and Representative at Thomas.gov. Check out our Speakers List at http://bit.ly/oV8Flo. E-mail us for a list of films and free DVDs available: zjohnson@aiusa.org.

Be sure to use your event to raise the visibility of our issues in the media, fundraise and grow Amnesty membership. We will help you! Please email zjohnson@aiusa.org for support and see below for more “How To’s.”

...Request materials:
Contact zjohnson@aiusa.org or your local Field Organizer to order these materials:
- AIUSA brochure & membership info
- Campaign 1-sheet
- Case sheets & petitions
- Pocket Guide
- “America I Believe In” Stickers
- “America I Believe In” Poster
- Banners & signs
- Campaign t-shirt
- Orange jumpsuits
- Build your own cell instructions
- DVDs for film screenings

...Join Amnesty International:
Help build our human rights movement! Join Amnesty International and help recruit new members to join us. Go to amnestyusa.org/join. More people = more power for human rights!

...Contact us:
- Contact Security with Human Rights Campaign Director Zeke Johnson with any questions or requests: zjohnson@aiusa.org or 212.633.4256.

- Contact your Field Organizer and Regional Office by calling 1.866.A.REGION, toll free.

...Get Media Coverage for Your Event:
See below and go to www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit for tips on how to build relationships with local media, get coverage and draft press releases. Contact us with any questions!

...Write Letters:
Consult the case sheets on Shaker Aamer and Maher Arar included in this action guide for addresses and sample letters. Look up general writing tips at www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit.

...Write Letters to the Editor or an Op-Ed:
Respond quickly to relevant articles and Op-Eds with a short letter or submit a longer Opinion Editorial (Op-Ed). You may want to try and meet with the Editorial Board of your paper first, to gauge their interest.

For content for letters or Op-Eds, draw from the facts and case sheets in this action guide and look up general tips at www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit. You can email your draft to zjohnson@aiusa.org if you have questions or need help.

...Ge...
HOW TO...

...Promote your event:
1) Get clear on the details: It’s all about the 5 W’s! Everyone in your group should be able to rattle off the 5Ws and all your materials should clearly have this info:
   - **Who** (who’s the event for, who’s organizing it, who to ask for more info?)
   - **What** (what type of event is it)
   - **When** (give date and day of the week as well as time)
   - **Where** (provide a link to a map or directions and information on transportation and parking)
   - **Why** (what’s the purpose of the event)

2) Develop the tools:
   - (a) Basic email and flyer
   - (b) Handbill
   - (c) Online invitations or advertisements
   - (d) Media Advisory: See below

3) Cast the net: Brainstorm with your group about organizations, places and individuals you should get the materials and information to. What groups might have an interest in your topic? What are the ways folks get information in your community? Get other groups to cosponsor, and they can reach out to their networks. Plaster the flyers around, use the handbills to hand out to folks at your tabling events or at well-trafficked pedestrian areas and other types of events. Send the media advisory out to your local media. Give everyone in your group a stack of materials to distribute.

4) Do personalized outreach & follow up: The best way to get folks to come is to make as many personalized appeals as possible. Don’t rely on email, ask people in person where possible or call them up. Ask folks who put up flyers to check on them as flyers often get pulled down and sometimes damaged or defaced.

...Get your event in the media:
Most events can be media opportunities. Amnesty International groups can contact the media about vigils, demonstrations, guest speakers, protests, art shows, and many other activities. Read more at [www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit](http://www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit)

Getting the media to cover your event:
- Notify the media at least 48 hours before your event if possible.
- Write a media advisory (see below) and fax it to the local Associated Press and any other local media you can.
- Call or email the Associated Press and ask if they can list your event in the “daybook,” a calendar that local media read to learn of upcoming events.
- Time your event to make it convenient for newspaper coverage. As many weekly newspapers go to print on a Monday or Tuesday, time between a weekend event and going to press is short.
- Take photographs at your event and submit them electronically within 48 hours to your weekly paper. Make sure to label each photograph in the e-mail when you submit it. Strong visual events could also interest local television – new and creative ideas are always worth trying.
- Use Amnesty International banners or posters with “Amnesty International” clearly written on them at your event. Bystanders can identify you and if a picture is published it will indicate the host of the event.

...Write a media advisory:
- A media advisory should simply announce an event, along with relevant details (who-what-when-where-why). It should be as short and to the point as possible. It should also contain a key message along with a quote stating AI’s position on a relevant issue. Keep the message clear and concise, and use your follow up call as an opportunity to provide additional information.
- Send the media advisory to all relevant local media by fax or e-mail ideally one week before the event, but at least two or three days in advance.
- Identify the person you want to send it to beforehand. Address faxes and letters to them directly, and ask to speak to them when you follow up with phone calls. Get e-mail addresses whenever possible, so you can minimize the risk of individuals not receiving your advisory via fax.
- Follow up with a phone call and e-mail one to two days before the event, and perhaps again the day of the event as a reminder. Keep your conversation brief and courteous at all times. When following up, ask if they have a moment to speak since they are often on deadline; if this is the case, inquire when you should call back. The best time to place these calls is usually during the morning hours.
HOW TO...

...Talk about the issues:

- **Be polite**: show that your position is the one a polite and reasonable person would take.

- **Look for common ground**: for example, we all care about the safety of our families and friends.

- **Refer to the fact that military experts** have said Guantanamo and torture are ineffective & counterproductive to security. Refer to 9/11 family members who have said that they don’t want human rights violations committed in the name of the loved ones whom they lost.

- **Try to connect with people**, rather than disconnect; build bridges, don’t burn them. If someone is really angry and aggressive toward you, just thank them for their opinion and excuse yourself from the conversation.

- **Unless you know the facts** and the legal nuances, don’t get drawn in to legalistic or factual arguments; instead stick with what you know in your heart to be true: torture is wrong.

- **It’s helpful to have an “elevator speech”** ready, whether for an elevator ride, rally, tabling, vigil or the dinner table. Here’s an example (be sure to personalize it): Fighting terrorism with torture and unfair trials doesn’t work. It’s immoral, illegal and ineffective. Even military and intelligence experts say so. There’s a better way: use federal courts and standard law enforcement techniques instead. They have a proven record and don’t violate our laws & values. The best way to ensure security is with human rights.

- **Be prepared**: read the facts, myth busters and quotes section of this action guide. Keep in mind that those who disagree with our position usually argue that torture, Guantánamo and indefinite detention are sometimes necessary to ensure security. This claim can be rebutted with quotes by military experts who say torture and other human rights violations are not only immoral and illegal, but also ineffective and counterproductive. However, don’t just rely on military experts—draw from your own sense of right and wrong and speak from the heart about the kind of world you want to live in.

- **Keep the “Three I’s” in mind**: Immoral, illegal and ineffective:
  - **Immoral**: We know deep down that torture, detention without charge and other human rights violations—as well as impunity—are immoral. We don’t need to refer to any other authority than ourselves on this point!
  - **Illegal**: Torture and other human rights violations are considered so heinous by society that they have been explicitly outlawed in US and international law. And the law requires accountability for human rights violations. The idea that we are somehow “at war” with terrorism does not justify torture or other human rights violations. They are illegal.
  - **Ineffective & counterproductive**: While the key point is that torture and other human rights violations are immoral and illegal, it can be worth noting that military and intelligence experts say that human rights violations are ineffective and counterproductive. You can cite Matthew Alexander, a former US military interrogator in Iraq who has written two books on the subject, including *How to Break a Terrorist: the US Interrogators who Used Brains, Not Brutality, to Take Down the Deadliest Man in Iraq.*
FACTS ABOUT GUANTANAMO, TORTURE & INDEFINITE DETENTION

11 January 2012 marked 10 years since the first detainees were transferred to the US detention centre in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. This fact sheet is accurate as of that date, facts are from Amnesty International.

171 men from more than 20 countries were still held at Guantánamo in early December 2011, four of whom were serving sentences after being convicted by military commission.

36 Guantánamo detainees are slated for military commissions that do not meet international fair trial standards. 46 detainees are slated for indefinite detention by the Obama administration. 89 detainees have been cleared for release but remain held.

90 of those still held at Guantánamo are Yemenis, including one serving a life sentence after being convicted by military commission. President Obama imposed a moratorium on detainee transfers to Yemen in January 2010. One Yemeni detainee has been released since then.

According to the US authorities, 779 detainees have been held in Guantánamo, the vast majority without charge or criminal trial.

The last detainee transferred to the base had been held in CIA custody at an undisclosed location before transfer to military custody in March 2008.

Since 2002, six detainees have been convicted by military commission, four of whom pleaded guilty under plea trial arrangements, two of whom have been repatriated.

Since 2002, eight detainees have died at the base, six by reported suicide, two as a result of natural causes.

The USA intends to pursue the death penalty against six detainees who have been charged for trial by military commission. All six were subjected to enforced disappearance in secret CIA custody prior to being brought to Guantánamo. All six were subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, held incommunicado in solitary confinement for up to four years. Two were subjected to “waterboarding.” Precisely what interrogation techniques and conditions of confinement detainees were subjected to in CIA custody remains classified at the highest level of secrecy.

In September 2011, 2,100 people were being held in US custody in the US Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP) on the Bagram air base in Afghanistan.

One Guantánamo detainee has been brought to the USA for trial in federal court. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in January 2011.

More than 600 detainees have been transferred from Guantánamo to other countries since 2002, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom and the USA.

It took six-and-a-half years of detentions at Guantánamo before the US Supreme Court ruled that the detainees had the right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention in US federal court. By the time that ruling, Boumediene v. Bush, was handed down in June 2008, over 500 detainees had been transferred out of the base.

Between June 2008 and late November 2011, there were 47 rulings by the District Court on the merits of habeas corpus petitions. In 22 cases, concerning 38 individuals (including 17 Uighurs) the judge ruled the detention unlawful. In 25 cases, the court ruled the detention lawful under the USA’s global “war” framework. On appeal, the Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit has issued 16 decisions – ruling against the detainee in 12 cases and remanding to the District Court for further proceedings in four cases.

At least 12 of those held at Guantánamo were under 18 years old when taken into custody.

One Canadian national taken into US military custody in 2002 at the age of 15 remains in Guantánamo where he has spent more than a third of his life.

Detainees have been taken into custody in at least 10 countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Azerbaijan, Zambia, United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Djibouti, and Afghanistan – before eventually being transferred to Guantánamo.
QUOTES ABOUT GUANTANAMO, TORTURE & INDEFINITE DETENTION

“If it were up to me I would close Guantánamo not tomorrow but this afternoon...Essentially, we have shaken the belief that the world had in America's justice system...and it's causing us far more damage than any good we get from it.”
- Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Source: Reuters

“I'd like to see it shut down...I believe that from the standpoint of how it reflects on us that it's been pretty damaging.”
- Admiral Michael Mullen, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Source: Miami Herald

“I consider the insistence on pressing ahead with cases that would be marginal even if properly prepared to be a severe threat to the reputation of the military justice system and even a fraud on the American people...After all, writing a motion saying that the process will be full and fair when you don't really believe it is kind of hard, particularly when you want to call yourself an officer and lawyer.”
- Major Robert Preston, former military commission prosecutor at Guantanamo
Source: ABC

“I expected there would at least be a minimal effort to establish a fair process and diligently prepare cases against significant accused... Instead, I find a halfhearted and disorganized effort by a skeleton group of relatively inexperienced attorneys to prosecute fairly low-level accused in a process that appears to be rigged.”
- Captain John Carr, former military commission prosecutor at Guantanamo. Source: ABC

“Torture and abuse cost American lives...I learned in Iraq that the No. 1 reason foreign fighters flocked there to fight were the abuses carried out at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo. Our policy of torture was directly and swiftly recruiting fighters for al-Qaeda in Iraq...How anyone can say that torture keeps Americans safe is beyond me -- unless you don't count American soldiers as Americans.”

“Physical coercion—torture—has nothing to do with a useful interrogation. Torture is simple, crude, obtuse, and immoral, and does not work. It is patently stupid, an offense to any understanding of how a mind works, independent of its illegality and barbarity, independent of how it corrodes the principles the CIA is sworn to protect and U.S. society defines itself as embodying.”

"I have been hard pressed to find a situation where anybody can tell me that they've ever encountered the ticking-bomb scenario... a show like 24...makes all of us believe that this is real--it’s not. Throw that stuff out, it doesn’t happen.”
- Jack Cloonan, former FBI special agent. Source: Foreign Policy.com

“My approach was what we call a relationship-based approach, far more than just rapport-building. I've never felt any necessity or operational requirement to bring physical, psychological or emotional pressure on a source to win their cooperation. I feel unconstrained in my ability to work in the paradigm that I've taught for so many years.”
- Colonel Steven Kleinman, U.S. Air Force Reserve, former military interrogator. Source: Senate transcript

“Cruelty disfigures our national character. It is incompatible with our constitutional order, with our laws, and with our most prized values ...there is no more fundamental right than to be safe from cruel and inhumane treatment. Where cruelty exists, law does not.”
- Alberto Mora, former general counsel of the United States Navy. Source: JFK Library, Profile in courage award acceptance speech
MYTH BUSTERS: GUANTANAMO, TORTURE & INDEFINITE DETENTION

Myth: The U.S. is engaged in a “war on terror.” In a war like this the government can detain terror suspects without trial until the end of hostilities under the Geneva Conventions.

Wars are fought between states – not between states and criminal gangs. Under the laws of war, the U.S. is not permitted to detain al-Qaeda and Taliban suspects indefinitely without trial. Only in international armed conflicts do states have the right to detain prisoners of war (POWs) until the end of hostilities. The U.S. conflict with al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan is essentially a non-international armed conflict for purposes of the Geneva Conventions, because it is not a conflict between two states. In a non-international armed conflict, the POW concept does not apply. Detainees must either be released or turned over to domestic authorities for prosecution for alleged crimes in regularly-constituted courts, as required by Common Article III of the Geneva Conventions. Furthermore, even when the Geneva Conventions apply, they do not automatically displace other human rights laws that require fair trials and due process, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. To invoke the laws of war in situations that do not constitute armed conflicts under the Geneva Conventions gravely undermines the framework of human rights and the ordinary criminal justice system, and distorts the application of the rule of law itself. Human rights law and the ordinary system of U.S. justice—not the laws of war—constitute the overarching legal framework for counterterrorism measures.

Myth: The US government wouldn't send innocent men to Guantánamo; we only put terrorists there. If they’re at Guantánamo, then they’re guilty and don’t deserve a trial.

First, of the 171 detainees currently at Guantánamo, 89 have been cleared for release. Second, of the 779 people who have been held at Guantanamo since 2002, the vast majority—at least 500-- have been released. Third, the legal way to determine guilt or innocence is through due process of law, habeas corpus and fair trials. The principle that a defendant is “presumed innocent until proven guilty” is a keystone of the U.S. judicial system. Simply labeling a person as a “terrorist” does not make him so. Even if one were to argue that this protection does not extend to foreign terror suspects, the U.S. is required under international law – under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights -- to presume innocence and prove guilt. Moreover, despite the U.S. government’s insistence that detainees have posed, and continue to pose, a national security threat, there is no compelling evidence that many of the detainees are guilty of anything. In 2009, Larry Wilkerson, former chief of staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell, told the Associated Press that, during his tenure, many detainees at Guantánamo "clearly had no connection to al-Qaeda and the Taliban and were in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Myth: Though an unpleasant choice, “enhanced interrogation techniques” are an effective tool for extracting information from detainees; these measures are necessary to protect American citizens from future attacks.

Military and intelligence experts have said that, in fact, torture and abuse are ineffective and counterproductive. But even if torture and abuse were effective, they are still immoral and illegal, no exceptions. There is broad consensus among professional interrogators that rapport building tactics are much more likely to achieve actionable intelligence from detainees than torture and other coercive techniques. For instance, FBI supervisory special agent Ali Soufan, has spoken of his success in using traditional interrogation techniques, “Along with another F.B.I. agent, and with several C.I.A. officers present, I questioned him (Abu Zubaydah) from March to June 2002, before the harsh techniques were
introduced later in August. Under traditional interrogation methods, he provided us with important actionable intelligence. We discovered, for example, that Khalid Shaikh Mohammed was the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. Abu Zubaydah also told us about Jose Padilla, the so-called dirty bomber. This experience fit what I had found throughout my counterterrorism career: traditional interrogation techniques are successful in identifying operatives, uncovering plots and saving lives. There was no actionable intelligence gained from using enhanced interrogation techniques on Abu Zubaydah that wasn’t, or couldn’t have been, gained from regular tactics. Further, countless examples have come to light of false confessions made because of torture. For example, Maher Arar, a Canadian-Syrian citizen rendered to torture in Syria by the U.S. but subsequently fully exonerated, “confessed” to having gone to Afghanistan even though he had never been there.

**Torture is counterproductive.** As Matthew Alexander has noted, “I learned in Iraq that the No. 1 reason foreign fighters flocked there to fight were the abuses carried out at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo. Our policy of torture was directly and swiftly recruiting fighters for al-Qaeda in Iraq. The large majority of suicide bombings in Iraq are still carried out by these foreigners. They are also involved in most of the attacks on U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq. It's no exaggeration to say that at least half of our losses and casualties in that country have come at the hands of foreigners who joined the fray because of our program of detainee abuse.”

**Torture and forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment are illegal under international and U.S. domestic law.** The U.N. Convention Against Torture, to which the U.S. is a party, defines torture as "the intentional infliction of severe physical or mental pain or suffering for purposes such as obtaining information or a confession, or punishing, intimidating or coercing someone." Regardless of circumstances, torture is always illegal. "No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture." Furthermore, the law requires accountability for torture and other ill-treatment: full investigation, prosecution of all those responsible and remedy for victims.

**Torture is immoral.** As President Obama has said, “Torture is contrary to the founding documents of our country, and the fundamental values of our people. It diminishes the security of those who carry it out, and surrenders the moral authority that must form the basis for just leadership.” The immorality of torture is not just political rhetoric. Glenn L. Carle, a member of the CIA’s Clandestine Service for 23 years, has written, "Torture is simple, crude, obtuse, and immoral, and does not work. It is patently stupid, an offense to any understanding of how a mind works, independent of its illegality and barbarity, independent of how it corrodes the principles the CIA is sworn to protect and U.S. society defines itself as embodying.”

Myth: If a detainee has critical information about an imminent terror attack (the “ticking time bomb” situation), authorities need to have the freedom to extract information from that person in any way necessary in order to save innocent lives.

Real interrogators say that, if there ever was a “ticking time bomb” situation, torture would be ineffective. Former FBI interrogator Ali Soufan has said that even within the fictional “ticking time bomb” situation, torture is less likely to extract actionable intelligence than traditional, legal interrogation techniques such as rapport-building.

Myth: Most of the hijackers from 9/11 were young Arab men, so it makes sense to profile people based on their ethnicity or appearance.

**Discrimination based on race, religion or other attributes is immoral and illegal under international law and human rights standards.** By engaging in racial profiling, the United States violates its obligations under international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which explicitly prohibit racial discrimination. Intelligence experts caution against the use of racial profiling as a counterterrorism tool. Using racial profiling to determine suspicion means that law enforcement agents are shifting their attention away from what matters - what people do – to what doesn’t: what people look like. Vincent Cannistraro, former head of counterterrorism at the CIA, has said, “It’s a false lead. It may be intuitive to stereotype people, but profiling is too crude to be effective. I can’t think of any examples where profiling has caught a terrorist.”
CLOSE GUANTANAMO & END INDEFINITE DETENTION:
THE CASE OF SHAKER AAMER

SHAKER AAMER, a former UK resident, has been held without charge at the US detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for over 10 years—despite the UK government’s request that he be returned to his wife and four children in London. He says he was living in Afghanistan with his family and running humanitarian aid projects, including a girls’ school, when in the autumn of 2001 he was seized by Afghan forces, sold for a bounty and transferred to US custody.

According to lawyers, Shaker Aamer has spoken of abuse and torture in US custody. Lawyers familiar with Shaker’s case have expressed concern that he continues to be detained only because the US government is wary of allowing him to speak freely about what he has experienced and witnessed in detention. Despite President Obama’s January 2009 order to close the detention facility at Guantánamo within one year, the prison remains open, and the President and Congress have embraced indefinite detention.

As of January 1, 2012, there are 171 people detained at Guantanamo: 46 are slated for indefinite detention by the Obama administration, 36 are slated for trial by military commission in proceedings that do not meet fair trial standards and 89 are cleared for release. Over 2,000 people are detained at the US prison at Bagram in Afghanistan. Indefinite detention is a human rights violation and it must end. Detainees, including Shaker Aamer, must either be charged and fairly tried, or be released.

TAKE ACTION
1) Sign and share the online petition: www.amnestyusa.org/aamer

2) Contact US government officials by e-mail, phone, letter, fax, Facebook and Twitter, expressing the points below. We know from survivors of human rights abuses that public pressure does make a difference. Please let us know that you took action: e-mail security@aiusa.org.

- Express concern that Shaker Aamer has been held without charge for over 10 years & the UK government requests his return.
- Urge the US government to either charge and fairly try Shaker Aamer in US federal court, or release him to the UK.
- Indefinite detention is a human rights violation; Guantánamo & Bagram detainees must be charged & fairly tried, or released.

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500
Comment line: 202-456-1111
Fax: 202-456-2461
Online form: whitehouse.gov/contact/
Salutation: Dear Mr. President
Twitter: @BarackObama

Secretary of Defense
Leon Panetta
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301
Comment line: 703-571-3343
Fax: 703-571-8951
Online form: www.defense.gov
Salutation: Dear Secretary of Defense
Twitter:@DeptoDefense

Secretary of State
Hillary Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520
Comment line: 202-647-6575
Fax: 202-647-1579
Online comment form: www.state.gov
Salutation: Dear Secretary of State
Twitter: @StateDept

3) Get more involved: Request our free Action Guide: e-mail security@aiusa.org or go to www.amnestyusa.org/security/action

4) Join Amnesty International as a card-carrying member. It benefits you and human rights. www.amnestyusa.org/join
ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TORTURE:
THE CASE OF MAHER ARAR

MAHER ARAR, a dual Canadian/Syrian citizen and father of two was arrested at New York City’s JFK airport in 2002. He was travelling home to Canada from visiting his wife’s family in Tunisia. After 12 days held by US authorities, he was clandestinely sent, via Jordan, to Syria, where he was held for a year and tortured, including by being whipped on his back and hands with a two inch thick electric cable.

Maher Arar was eventually released without charge and allowed to return home to Canada, where authorities formally apologized and provided him with compensation for Canada’s role. The United Nations Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other human rights treaties obligate states to never use torture or other ill-treatment, and require accountability, including a full investigation, prosecution where warranted and remedy and redress for all victims.

US authorities have failed to apologize to Maher Arar or to offer him any form of remedy. A lawsuit filed on his behalf was dismissed, without ever having been considered on its merits. Given that access to a judicial remedy for Maher Arar has been blocked, the non-judicial branches of the federal government have no excuse not to take measures to meet the USA’s obligation under international law to ensure that he has access to remedy, including an apology.

TAKE ACTION
1) Sign and share the online petition: www.amnestyusa.org/arar

2) Contact US government officials by e-mail, phone, letter, fax, Facebook and Twitter, expressing the points below. We know from survivors of human rights abuses that public pressure does make a difference. Please let us know that you took action: e-mail security@aiusa.org.

- Express concern that Maher Arar was rendered by the US government to Jordan and Syria, where he was tortured.

- Urge the US government to fulfill Maher Arar’s right to remedy for the torture he suffered, including an apology.

- Call for accountability for US torture, including a full investigation, prosecution where warranted and remedy for all survivors.

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500
Comment line: 202-456-1111
Fax: 202-456-2461
Online form: whitehouse.gov/contact/
Salutation: Dear Mr. President
Twitter: @BarackObama

Attorney General
Eric Holder
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20530
Comment line: 202-353-1515
Fax: 202-514-4507
E-mail: askDOJ@usdoj.gov
Salutation: Dear Attorney General
Twitter: @TheJusticeDept

Secretary of State
Hillary Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520
Comment line: 202-647-6575
Fax: 202-647-1579
Online comment form: www.state.gov
Salutation: Dear Secretary of State
Twitter: @StateDept

3) Get more involved: Request our free Action Guide: e-mail security@aiusa.org or go to www.amnestyusa.org/security/action

4) Join Amnesty International as a card-carrying member. It benefits you and human rights. www.amnestyusa.org/join
USA: END INDEFINITE DETENTION AT GUANTANAMO & BAGRAM

Charge and fairly try, or release Shaker Aamer & all other detainees
www.amnestyusa.org/aamer

To President Barack Obama, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta & Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: We are calling on you to either charge and fairly try Guantanamo detainee Shaker Aamer in US federal court, or release him to the UK--as the UK government has requested. Indefinite detention is a human rights violation and it must end. All detainees at Guantanamo and Bagram must either be charged and fairly tried, or released. Sincerely,

NAME

CITY, STATE

E-MAIL

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MAHER ARAR

Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen and father, was travelling home to Canada from visiting his wife’s family in Tunisia in 2002. While changing planes at New York City’s JFK airport, he was detained by U.S. authorities and then transferred secretly, via Jordan, to Syria, where he was held for a year and tortured.

The Canadian government subsequently apologized and compensated Arar for its role in his treatment. In contrast, the U.S. government has failed to apologize or offer Arar any form of remedy.

Under the UN Convention Against Torture, and other human rights treaties, the U.S. government is obligated to fulfill the right of torture victims to remedy and redress—including an apology—for what they suffered.

TORTURE IS IMMORAL, ILLEGAL AND A CRIME. HELP END IT FOREVER. Urge President Obama and Congress to apologize to Maher Arar and fulfill his right to remedy by joining Amnesty International USA’s “I Apologize” action.

ACTION INSTRUCTIONS:

» SIGN this sheet at left. Please print clearly!
» FOLD into a paper airplane (see instructions below).

» SEND it to Amnesty International, Security with Human Rights Campaign. 5 Penn Plaza, 16th Floor, NY, NY 10001. (Send in an envelope, fold plane in half to fit.)

» WE WILL DELIVER the paper airplanes and online petition signatures to President Obama and Congress

» GO TO WWW.AMNESTYUSA.ORG/APOLOGIZE to sign the full petition and read more about the case.

» GET MORE INVOLVED: Collect signatures and host film screenings. Find out how by e-mailing us at security@aiusa.org or visiting www.amnestyusa.org/apologize.

WHY A PAPER AIRPLANE? Maher Arar is a survivor of “extraordinary rendition”—the U.S. government’s illegal practice of kidnapping and flying people to countries known to use torture.

PRESIDENT OBAMA & CONGRESS:

I apologize to torture survivor Maher Arar and urge you to do the same.
Accountability for torture now!

APOLOGIZE TO MAHER ARAR

50 YEARS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

SECURITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
amnestyusa.org/apologize

amnestyusa.org/apologize

SECURITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

50 YEARS
Terror. Torture. These words rightly make us shudder. Around the world, from Iraq to Sri Lanka to the USA, the cycle of violence between states and armed groups is a global human rights crisis. Countless people have been killed, tortured or held outside the law.

Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen and father, was travelling home from a family trip when he was detained at New York City's JFK airport and secretly sent to Syria, where he was held for a year and tortured. Canada apologized and compensated Arar, but the USA has failed to apologize or offer him any form of remedy.

When states respond to the threat of terrorism by abusing human rights, they are not solving the problem but fuelling it. We are all affected. Our rights and safety are imperiled when the rights of anyone are violated.

There is a solution: security with human rights. Under international law, acts of terror and torture by states and armed groups must end, those responsible must be held accountable, and the rights of victims must be upheld. Human rights mean security and justice for all of us.

We’re not the only ones saying it. Military personnel, September 11th family members and people of many religious faiths and political beliefs are coming together to say enough is enough and demand that states and armed groups respect human rights. It’s up to us, the people, to demand it. Join us.

CAMPAIGN GOALS
1. UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF ARMED GROUPS. The deliberate targeting of civilians for attack can never be justified. We support victims of armed groups by working for their rights to truth, justice and reparations.

ACTION: Thank Congress for passing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 and ask them to ensure the Act is fully funded: www.amnestyusa.org/911act.

2. ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TORTURE. States and individuals responsible for torture and other human rights violations must be held accountable to the law, so that victims and the public have justice.

ACTION: Urge President Obama and Congress to apologize to torture survivor Maher Arar and fulfill his right to remedy: www.amnestyusa.org/apologize.

3. END UNLAWFUL AND ABUSIVE DETENTION All people are equal before the law. Every person has the right to either be charged and fairly tried, or be released—and not tortured or abused.

ACTION: Call for Guantanamo detainee Shaker Aamer, held without charge for over 8 years despite the UK's request for his return, to be charged or released: www.amnestyusa.org/aamer.
The America I believe in would close Guantanamo, end indefinite detention & never use torture.

Amnesty International

Security with Human Rights Campaign

Join us: www.amnestyusa.org/security