

**11 January 2023:
21 YEARS
of Guantánamo**

[Action Circular]

AI Index: AMR 51/6288/2022 USA
Amnesty International
International Secretariat
To: All Section/Structure, Campaign Coordinators
From: IS North America team & AIUSA & LPP
November 2022



**CLOSE
GUANTÁNAMO**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Summary

11 January 2023 marks **21 years since the opening of the detention facility at the US naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba**. President Biden in the USA promised to close it, yet his progress has been extremely slow.

This Action Circular outlines the activities for sections, structures, and national entities to engage in a global day of action to close Guantánamo on 11 January 2023. President Biden will only have 739 days to close the facility before his term is up.

Updates on Guantnamo

- Guantánamo is still open, and houses 35 detainees who have been there for nearly two decades without a fair trial. Most have never even been charged with a crime.
- President Biden has transferred five men out of the facility so far.
- There are now 20 men cleared for release.
- There has been no accountability in the US for the significant violations of human rights law perpetrated by the US, including torture, enforced disappearance, and a complete lack of due process.

Goal

Pressure the Biden administration to finally close Guantánamo before his presidential term is completed, through transfer and release of the men detained there; or if there is sufficient admissible evidence under international law to prosecute internationally recognisable criminal

offences then to do so through fair judicial resolution before a federal court without recourse to the death penalty. If we demonstrate to President Biden that he has global and domestic political support to close Guantánamo, he will do it sooner rather than later, because he will believe it is a popular political decision and that the continued existence of the facility is an international embarrassment.

Objectives

- The Biden administration is pressured into closing Guantánamo through domestic and international advocacy.
- New audiences/partners/coalitions are brought into campaigning for the closure of Guantánamo.
- Significant media attention is given to this issue on the anniversary.
- EU member states and other governments commit to helping the US repatriate or resettle those detainees who are released.
- The Biden administration works with other states to ensure that each man who is released is safely repatriated or resettled in a safe third country.
- **Utilize new framing around a countdown: 11 January marks 739 days that Biden has left to close Guantánamo!**

Campaigning

Sections worldwide are working on this campaign, including Amnesty USA, France, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Italy, Canada francophone (Montreal), Australia, Norway, Ireland, Germany, Argentina, Belgium (FR), Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, Austria, Iceland, and more.

So far in 2022 we have:

- [Published an op-ed](#) by Agnes Callamard in Al Jazeera
- Published a [press release](#) about the 20th anniversary of the opening of the facility
- Launched a [global poster contest](#)
- Organized a [side event](#) at the virtual Human Rights Council's 49th session entitled *Guantánamo Bay: The International Road to Closure*
- Hosted a [virtual rally](#) about the 20th anniversary featuring formerly detained men
- Hosted a webinar about Guantánamo and Islamophobia
- Launched an [urgent action](#) calling on the US government to release the cleared men
- Created an [online action](#) urging President Biden to transfer all cleared detainees and close Guantánamo once and for all.



Tactics

Before and on the 21st anniversary on 11 January 2022, we plan to:

- **Postcard:** We're asking activists around the world to print out and send in [these](#) postcards to the head of the US Department of State.
- **E-mail:** Sections can create their own online actions urging their governments to pressure the USA to close Guantanamo.
- **Protest:** Sections/structures/national entities are encouraged to plan protests in front of US

Embassies or local landmarks on the anniversary day wearing orange jumpsuits, black hoods, fake chains. You can find previous photos of protests for inspiration [here](#). **There are 35 men left in Guantanamo, if you can gather 35 people in jumpsuits, that would be even better.** Other stunt ideas: paint murals near US Embassies, poster around the neighborhood, leave chalk messages on the ground, project onto US Embassies.

- **Countdown:** If Biden doesn't win another presidential term, on 11 January he will only have 739 days to close Guantánamo.

19 Feb 2023	700 days
30 May 2023	600 days
7 September 2023	500 days
16 December 2023	400 days
25 March 2024	300 days
3 July 2024	200 days
11 October 2024	100 days
30 November 2021	50 days
25 December 2024	25 days

- **Media:** Generate media attention around the topic, share the Amnesty International press release or draft op-eds for your local papers.

Ideas for activities your section/structure can engage in to keep up the momentum to close Guantánamo on 11 January and beyond:

- Encourage members to read the new book by former detainee Mansoor Adyafi, [Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo](#).
- High-profile newspaper ads calling on Biden to close Guantánamo.
- Encourage members to write letters to their local newspapers saying their country should be pressuring Biden to close Guantánamo, and should offer to help resettle detainees.
- Ads in film magazines/publications (like [this one that AI Denmark had placed](#))
- Messages to Biden from foreign government officials, for example, Members of the European Parliament. Tell them to urge Biden to close Guantánamo, and to offer to help resettle current Guantánamo detainees.
- S/s can host virtual events featuring former detainees, especially if former detainees are living in your country. There are a number of former detainees in Europe, for example, and perhaps organizing events or op-eds with them could also help highlight the struggle for some of life after Guantánamo. Share [this video](#) of former detainees at last year's virtual event to encourage more activism!
- Encourage members to take the Amnesty Academy HRE course on [the right to freedom from torture](#).

Material

[OpenSend Folder with all Gitmo material](#)

- Jan 2021 Report [USA: Right the Wrong, Decision Time on Guantanamo](#)

- Photos from Guantánamo protests

On 11 January 2021, Amnesty released a new report, [USA: Right the Wrong, Decision Time on Guantánamo](#), detailing the human rights abuses that have occurred at Guantánamo

Contact

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