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## **Guantanamo Bay Timeline**

Below is a timeline of major events related to the controversial decision to hold prisoners captured in the global anti-terror operations at the military base.

2011

**April 4, 2011:** Attorney General Eric H. Holder announces that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and his four co-conspirators will be tried in military commissions rather than federal court.

**March 7, 2011:** Obama formally creates an indefinite detention system at Guantanamo Bay

**January 25, 2011:** Former Guantanamo detainee Ahmed Ghailani gets a life sentence for his involvement in the 1998 embassy bombings.

2010

**December 22, 2010:** Obama administration readies indefinite detention order for Guantanamo detainees.

**November 17, 2010:** Former Guantanamo detainee Ahmed Ghailani is acquitted on all but one of more than 280 criminal charges in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa.

**October 25, 2010:** Omar Khadr pleads guilty in his military tribunal. Under a plea deal, he will serve a reduced sentence, much of it in his home country.

**August 26, 2010:** Prosecution of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, the USS Cole bomber, is halted.

**August 12, 2010:** Omar Khadr's military tribunal begins, but is halted immediately when his attorney collapses during the proceedings.

**July 2010:** Obama administration secures its first conviction in the military tribunal system.

**March 5, 2010:** Obama advisers set to recommend military tribunals for alleged 9/11 plotters, a step that would reverse Attorney General Eric H. Holder's plan to try them in a civilian court in New York City.

**January 21, 2010:** A Justice Department-led task force concludes that nearly 50 of the 196 detainees at the US Military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, should be held indefinitely without trial under the laws of war, according to the Obama administration.

**January 5, 2010:** President Obama halts the transfer of detainees from Guantanamo to Yemen in response to the Detroit Christmas Day bomber.

2009

**December 9, 2009:** Fouad Mahmoud Al Rabiah is transferred to Kuwait. Judge Kollar-Kotelly ordered him released on September 17, 2009. ([Kollar-Kotelly's order to release Al Rabiah](#))

**December 1, 2009:** 1 Algerian detainee released to France, 1 West Bank detainee released to Hungary.

**November 30, 2009:** 2 Tunisian detainees sent to Italy to face trial.

**November 13, 2009:** Attorney General Eric Holder announces that five detainees, allegedly responsible for the 9/11 attacks, will be tried in federal court in the Southern District of New York.

**October 31, 2009:** 6 Uighurs transferred to Palau.

**October 9, 2009:** Two detainees transferred from Guantanamo Bay; one to Kuwait, one to Belgium.

**September 26, 2009:** Ireland accepts the transfer of two Uzbeks from Guantanamo Bay. One Yemeni is transferred from Guantanamo Bay to Yemen.

**August 28, 2009:** Two Syrian detainees transferred from Guantanamo Bay to Portugal.

**August 24, 2009:** Mohammed Jawad is transferred from Guantanamo to Afghanistan after a U.S. district court ordered his release.

**June 12, 2009:** Three detainees are transferred to Saudi Arabia.

**June 11, 2009:** Four Uighurs are transferred from Guantanamo Bay to Bermuda. One Chadian is transferred to Chad, and an Iraqi to Iraq. ([Post: Obama Bows on Settling Detainees \(June 12, 2009\)](#))

**June 9, 2009:** The first detainee, Ahmed Ghailani, who is not an American citizen is brought from Guantanamo Bay to the United States to face a federal trial. ([Post: Guantanamo Bay Detainee Brought to U.S. for Trial \(June 9, 2009\)](#))

**May 15, 2009:** Lakhdar Boumediene, an Algerian national, is released to France. He had been held since 2002 and lent his name to a landmark Supreme Court case which ruled detainees at Guantanamo Bay had the right to habeas corpus. ([Post: Freed Algerian Detainee Flown to France \(May 15, 2009\)](#))

**May 15, 2009:** President Obama announces he will revamp, rather than reject, the system of military tribunals that President George W. Bush created to try terrorism suspects. ([Post: Obama to Revamp Military Tribunals \(May 15, 2009\)](#))

**February 23, 2009:** Binyam Mohammed is transferred to the United Kingdom.

**January 22, 2009:** President Obama issues three executive orders--one ordering the closure of the prison at Guantanamo Bay in one year, another banning the use of controversial CIA interrogation techniques, and one ordering the review of detention policy options. ([Executive Orders](#))

**January 20, 2009:** President Obama is inaugurated.

**January 17, 2009:** Six detainees are transferred out of Guantanamo Bay--four to Iraq, one to Algeria, and one to Afghanistan.

**January 14, 2009:** A public statement saying that detainee was tortured is released for the first time by a senior Bush administration official responsible for reviewing practices at Guantanamo Bay. The statement said that the treatment of a Saudi national (Mohammed al-Qahtani) who allegedly planned to participate in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, met the legal definition of torture. ([Post: Detainee Tortured, Says U.S. Official \(Jan. 13, 2009\)](#))

2008

**December 27, 2008:** Salim Hamdan is freed in Yemen.

**December 16, 2008:** Three detainees are transferred to Bosnia, they are part of the Algerian Five who were ruled releasable in DC District Court in November. ([Post: Three Algerian Detainees Set for Transfer to Bosnia \(Dec. 15, 2008\)](#))

**November 25, 2008:** Salim Hamdan (alleged to be Osama bin Laden's driver) is transferred to the custody of Yemen. Hamdan was sentenced to 5 ½ years in prison, with 5 years and one month credited for pre-trial confinement.

**November 20, 2008:** Judge Richard Leon orders the release of five Algerian men.

**November 18, 2008:** The chief military judge at Guantanamo Bay announces his retirement, effectively ruining the small chance that the trial of conspirators in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks could get underway before the Bush administration ends. ([Post: Top Judge at Guantanamo Announces Retirement \(Nov. 17, 2008\)](#))

**November 11, 2008:** Two Algerians transferred to Algeria.

**November 4, 2008:** One detainee is released to Somaliland.

**November 3, 2008:** A military commission sentenced Ali Hamza Ahmad Suliman al Bahlul of Yemen to confinement for life for conspiracy, solicitation and providing material support to terrorism. Bahlul is serving his sentence in Guantanamo Bay ([Post: Guantanamo Jury Sentences Bin Laden Aide to Life Term \(Nov. 3, 2008\)](#))

**October 9, 2008:** Judge Ricardo Urbina orders the release of the 17 Uighurs from Guantanamo Bay into the United States.

**August 6, 2008:** A military jury finds Hamdan guilty of supporting terrorism but not of conspiring in terrorist attacks. ([Post: Hamdan Guilty of Terror Support \(Aug. 6, 2008\)](#))

**June 30, 2008:** Military Commission Charges sworn against Abd al Rahim Al-Nashiri

**June 12, 2008:** The United States Supreme Court rules 5-4 on Boumediene v. Bush and Al Odah v. United States that detainees at Guantanamo Bay should have a right to challenge their detention in US Federal Courts through habeas corpus petitions ([Post: Justices Say Detainees Can Seek Release \(June 12, 2008\)](#))

**June 5, 2008:** Five of the high value detainees at Guantanamo who were involved planning the September 11th attacks are arraigned at Guantanamo. ([Post: Five Detainees Charged in Sept. 11 Attacks to Be Arraigned \(June 4, 2008\)](#))

2007

**May 30, 2007:** A Saudi detainee committs suicide in Camp Five. ([Post: Death of Guantanamo Detainee Is Apparent Suicide, Military Says \(May 30, 2007\)](#))

**May 19, 2007:** Department of Defense announces the transfer of Australian David Hicks to Australian custody ([DoD Release Statement](#))

**April 27, 2007:** High Value Detainee, Abd al Hadi Al Iraqi, transferred from CIA custody to Guantanamo Bay. ([Bio for al Iraqi](#))

**April 24, 2007:** Military Commission charges referred for Omar Khadr. ([Charge Sheet](#))

**April 15, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Majid Khan. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**April 4, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Hambali ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 30, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Ammar al Baluchi ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 27, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Abu Zubaida ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 26, 2007:** AbdulMalik Abdul-Jabbar, a Kenyan, is transferred to Guantanamo Bay, marking the first time since September 2004 that a detainee has been directly transferred to Guantanamo. ([Abdul Malik is transferred to Guantanamo Bay.](#))

**March 26, 2007:** Australian David M. Hicks pleaded guilty to one charge of material support for terrorism during a brief military hearing. ([Post: David Hicks Pleads Guilty \(March 26, 2007\)](#))

**March 21, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Hawsawi ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 20, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Mohammed Nazir Bin Lep. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 17, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Ahmad Khalfan Ghailani. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 14, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Abd Al Nashiri. He claims torture made him confess to terrorist activities. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 13, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Mohamed Farik Bin Amin Zubair. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 12, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Tawfiq Bin Attash. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 10, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Khalid Sheik Mohammed. ([Transcript of Tribunal](#))

**March 9, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Abu Faraj Al Libi. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**March 9, 2007:** Combatant Status Review Tribunal held for Ramzi Binalshibh. ([Tribunal Transcript](#))

**January 18, 2007:** Department of Defense announces the creation of the Military Commissions Manual. ([Link to Military Commissions Manual](#))

2006

**December 31, 2006:** 114 detainees transferred out of the facility for the year (including the three who died of apparent suicides).

**December 13, 2006:** Judge Robertson dismisses Hamdan habeas corpus case citing lack of jurisdiction due to MCA legislation, setting up an appeal to the Supreme Court. ([Post: Judge Rejects Detention Challenge of Bin Laden's Driver \(Dec. 14, 2006\)](#))

**December 7, 2006:** First detainees are transferred to the newly-constructed Camp Six

**November 17, 2006:** U.S. military announces a plan to build a new compound on the base to hold the military commission proceedings.

**November 17, 2006:** Final three detainees ruled to be No Longer Enemy Combatants are released to Albania. ([AP: 3 Detainees at Guantanamo Are Released to Albania \(Nov. 18, 2006\)](#))

**October 31, 2006:** John Bellinger gives a speech to the London School of Economics on holding detainees in the war on terror. ([Read Bellinger's Speech](#))

**October 17, 2006:** President Bush signs the Military Commissions into law. ([Post: President Bush Signs Terrorism Measure \(Oct. 18, 2006\)](#))

**September 28, 2006:** Newly crafted Military Commission Act passes Congress. ([Post: Senate Approves Detainee Bill Backed by Bush \(Sept. 29, 2006\)](#))

**September 26, 2006:** International Committee of the Red Cross sends a delegation to Guantanamo to meet with the 14 newly transferred prisoners.

**September 6, 2006:** 14 High Value detainees are transferred to Guantanamo from secret sites. ([Post: Secret World of Detainees Grows More Public \(Sept. 7, 2006\)](#))

**August 24, 2006:** Murat Kurnaz released. (In January 2005, U.S. District Judge Joyce Hens Green criticized the military for ignoring evidence in Kurnaz's favor and ruled that his detention was illegal. Her ruling was stayed while the government appealed.) ([Post: U.S. Frees Longtime Detainee \(Aug. 26, 2006\)](#))

**June 29, 2006:** Supreme Court rules 5-3 that the military commission system for Guantanamo Bay violates U.S. and international law, and that the Geneva Conventions apply to the detainees. ([Post: "High Court Rejects Detainee Tribunals" \(June 30, 2006\)](#))

**June 10, 2006:** Saudi Arabians Mani Shaman Turki al-Habardi al-Utaybi, 30, and Yasser Talal al-Zahrani, 22, and Ali Abdullah Ahmed of Yemen, who was 29 or 30, die by apparent suicide. ([Post: Three Detainees Who Committed Suicide Are Identified \(June 12, 2006\)](#))

**May 28, 2006:** The Department of Defense says 75 prisoners at the U.S. Naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, were on a hunger strike joining a few who have refused food and been force-fed since August 2005, a military official said.

**May 18, 2006:** Two detainees attempt suicide. A riot breaks out in reaction to the event. ([Post: Six Gitmo Inmates Hurt in Fight With Guards \(May 19, 2006\)](#))

**April 19, 2006:** The Department of Defense releases the names of 558 people who have been held at one time at Guantanamo Bay. ([List Released by Dept. of Defense](#))

**March 31, 2006:** Rear Admiral Harry B. Harris takes command of Joint Task Force - Guantanamo.

**March 28, 2006:** The Supreme Court hears oral arguments in Hamdan v. Rumsfeld

**February 15, 2006:** UN Report Recommends Closure of Guantanamo. ([Read the UN Report](#))

2005

**December 31, 2005:** 54 detainees transferred out of the facility for the year.

**December 30, 2005:** DTA is signed into law by President Bush.

**November 14, 2005:** District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly blocks the Pentagon from resuming Hicks's military commission proceeding until the Supreme Court rules on its constitutionality in Hamdan v. Rumsfeld.

**November 10, 2005:** U.S. Senate votes 49-42 to approve the Graham Amendment, which does not give the detainees the right to file habeas corpus petitions. ([Congressional Votes Database: How the Senate Voted](#))

**November 7, 2005:** The Supreme Court announces it will hear Hamdan v. Rumsfeld. ([Post: High Court To Hear Case On War Powers \(Nov. 8, 2005\)](#))

**July 15, 2005:** The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit Court unanimously upholds President Bush's powers to create military commissions to try Hamdan, overturning Judge Robertson's November 8 order. ([Post: Detainee Trials Are Upheld \(July 16, 2005\)](#))

**May 2005:** Riots break out internationally over alleged abuse of the Koran. ([Post: Muslims Rally Over Koran Report \(May 28, 2005\)](#))

**March 29, 2005:** The CSRT process is complete. 558 detainees completed the process; 38 were judged as No Longer Enemy Combatants and eligible for release. ([Read the CSRT Document](#))

2004

**December 31, 2004:** By December 31, 114 detainees have been transferred out of the facility for the year.

**November 8, 2004:** U.S. District Judge James Robertson orders the Pentagon to halt the trial of detainee Salim Ahmed Hamdan who allegedly worked as Osama Bin Laden's driver, saying the military commissions are unlawful and cannot continue in their current form. ([Post: Judge Says Detainees' Trials Are Unlawful \(Nov. 9, 2004\)](#))

**August 30, 2004:** CCR attorney is the first civilian attorney to meet with detainees at Guantanamo.

**August 24, 2004:** First military commission is begun.

**August 13, 2004:** Combatant Status Review Tribunals (CSRTs) start for the detainees. The tribunal involves three officers who present the unclassified summary evidence against the detainee and question him about his role in events. The three judge panel then decides whether the detainee is an enemy combatant or if he is releasable.

**July 7, 2004:** In response to the decision, the Pentagon creates special military panels (Combatant Status Review Tribunals) to determine each detainees "enemy combatant" status. ([Read the Defense Dept. Order](#))

**June 28, 2004:** Supreme Court rules 6-3 in *Rasul v. Bush* that Guantanamo Bay detainees can use federal court to challenge their captivity. ([Read the Supreme Court Opinions](#))

**April 20, 2004:** Supreme Court hears arguments on the Guantanamo detentions.

**March 2004:** Major Jay Hood becomes the commander of Joint Task Force - Guantanamo.

**March 22, 2004:** Department of Defense announces that Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller, Commander, Joint Task Force - Guantanamo, United States Southern Command, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba is moving to Deputy Commander for Detainee Operations, Combined Joint Task Force - 7/Multinational Force -- Iraq

**January 12, 2004:** Five military lawyers assigned to defend detainees say they plan to tell the Supreme Court that some of the rules drawn up for the military tribunals are unconstitutional.

2003

**December 31, 2003:** By December 31, 83 detainees transferred out of the facility.

**December 3, 2003:** Australian detainee David Hicks becomes the first prisoner to be given a lawyer.

**November 10, 2003:** U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear the Guantanamo case.

**October 9, 2003:** The Red Cross issues a public statement noting "deterioration in the psychological health of a large number of detainees."

**September 2003:** Arrests become public of two translators and a Muslim chaplain who worked at Guantanamo on charges relating to alleged espionage and improper use of classified documents. The case against the chaplain later unravels.

**July 3, 2003:** Bush designates six suspected al Qaeda terrorists eligible for military tribunals -- the first since World War II.

**May 9, 2003:** Guantanamo hits its peak population of 680. (All told, the camp has processed 779 detainees, but 680 is the largest number of detainees there at one time.)

**March 11, 2003:** Federal appeals court rules that the detainees have no legal rights in the United States. ([Read the Ruling](#))

2002

**December 31, 2002:** By December 31, 5 detainees are transferred out of the facility.

**October 27, 2002:** Four detainees -- three Afghans and a Pakistani -- are released.



**September 20, 2002:** Army Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. assigned as commander, Joint Task Force - Guantanamo, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

**June 11, 2002:** Yasser Hamdi files a writ of habeas corpus.

**April 28, 2002:** Detainees are moved from Camp X-Ray to Camp Delta, a more permanent detention center.

**April 25, 2002:** Construction of the new 410-bed Camp Delta is completed.

**March 21, 2002:** The Bush administration announces new military tribunal regulations.

**February 21, 2002:** Federal judge dismisses a challenge to the detentions.

**February 19, 2002:** Center for Constitutional Rights files Rasul v. Bush, a habeas petition, in the D.C. circuit court on behalf of David Hicks, Shafiq Rasul and Asif Iqbal.

**February 12, 2002:** U.S. officials say they envision a long-term prison camp on the island.

**January 27, 2002:** Vice President Cheney calls the detainees "the worst of a very bad lot. They are very dangerous. They are devoted to killing millions of Americans."

**January 22, 2002:** After a Navy photo is released showing detainees in goggles and masks, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld defends the detentions of "committed terrorists."

**January 18, 2002:** President Bush decides detainees' standing as terrorists disqualifies them from prisoner-of-war protection under the Geneva conventions.

**January 11, 2002:** First group of 20 detainees arrives at Guantanamo Bay's Camp X-Ray, where they are housed in open-air cages with concrete floors. The International Committee of the Red Cross makes its first visit six days later.