



About the No More Guantánamos (NMG) Project

The Problem

The U.S. government's detainee policies and practices over the last seven years have denied hundreds of innocent men their freedom and have made the U.S. and the world less safe. The American public and the U.S. Congress are currently split on whether and when the Guantánamo Bay prison should be closed and what should replace it. The administration's positive moves toward closing the prison have been threatened by counter reactions, such as bills filed in Congress to stop the closing or to outlaw the prisoners' relocation within the U.S. or within certain states. Moreover, the administration:

- may resurrect military commissions as an alternative to trials in federal court,
- is considering adopting a permanent preventive detention scheme for prisoners whom it claims are too dangerous to release but who can't be tried
- is continuing the CIA rendition program
- has appealed a judge's ruling granting the writ of habeas corpus to certain Bagram prisoners and
- reserves the president's right to hold terrorism suspects indefinitely.

The Opportunity

President Obama's order to close Guantánamo prison by January 22, 2010, represents an important and symbolic historic event and an irreplaceable opportunity for the American people to engage in a thoughtful, informed debate about the prison and its remaining inmates, and about the responsibilities of the U.S. government and the American people to resolve problems related to the prison's continued existence.

Project Goals

The NMG project will engage, support, and coordinate local coalitions across the U.S. to:

- Transform the prisoners' images in the U.S. from faceless, nameless "terrorists" to human beings who deserve fair treatment and an presumption of innocence until proven guilty
- Use prisoners' stories as a launchpad to overcome unfounded fears of and hatred toward prisoners
- In some cases, enable prisoners who are slated for release and can't return home to settle in their communities or other U.S. communities.
- Involve the public in holding the government accountable for protecting prisoners' human rights and for implementing laws and policies to prevent future violations.

Human Rights Champion Cities

- Build a coalition/choose a prisoner to champion.
- Research and create a narrative. (NMG will help you contact the prisoner's attorney and,



- when possible, the prisoner and his family.) Options include print, video, media, public hearing or forum, sermons, street theater, house parties, etc.
- Present the prisoner's story locally and use Internet and other methods to present his story nationally.
 - Serve as a "truth squad" to help correct misperceptions and untruths about the prisoner you support or Guantánamo and Bagram prisoners in general.
 - Communicate with the prisoner and his family; let them know what your community is doing to help.
 - Communicate with legislators at the federal level and, if plans are made to give the prisoner sanctuary in your community, meet with state and local officials to overcome their concerns.

Human Rights Sanctuary Cities

- For some prisoners who can't go home, local coalitions offer sanctuary in your community AFTER building community support for their release and overcoming rumors and fears.

Contacts:

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