



## [U.N. Human Rights Experts Call on the United States to Address Violations at Guantanamo Bay](#)

A panel of United Nations human rights experts has called on the United States to address the ongoing treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay prison. The declaration from the U.N. comes in the aftermath of the Biden administration commissioning a study on the potential closure of the infamous facility. Human rights advocates have criticized the United States' operation of Guantanamo Bay for years, accusing the government of violations and improprieties. Reports of torture and other ill-treatment at Guantanamo Bay have plagued the credibility of the United States in its appeals for other nations to respect the rights of detainees. A total of 40 people remain incarcerated at Guantanamo Bay, and the United Nations has expressed that the U.S. should repatriate these individuals and close the facility entirely – a sentiment also echoed by the new Biden administration in recent weeks.

Earlier this month, the Biden administration commissioned a study on closing Guantanamo Bay before he leaves office. The first prospects of closing the facility occurred during the Obama administration, when the then-president sought to permanently shutter the prison. However, despite President Obama's desire to close the prison, he was never able to finalize legislation that would have done so. As one of his first acts in office, President Trump rolled back much of the Obama administration's progress in closing Guantanamo Bay, and kept it open. Now, President Biden is revisiting the idea of closing the facility. Reports surfaced that the president was expected to sign an executive order regarding the closure of the high-security prison in the coming weeks, due to the significant legal barriers involved in closing it. White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki also said Biden was seeking to close Guantanamo Bay entirely by the end of his presidency.

Presently, there are 40 detainees housed at Guantanamo Bay, none of whom have been formally charged or stood trial. Most of the prisoners held at Guantanamo have been incarcerated for over a decade. Widespread reports have criticized the United States' treatment of detainees at the facility, with allegations of torture and other abuses common. Guantanamo Bay became a symbol of the excesses of the United States' "war on terror" with most detainees housed at the location thought to be involved in radical extremist groups.

The United States has lost credibility in its calls for other nations to respect the human rights of prisoners due to its actions at Guantanamo Bay. While the United States has pressed countries to respect human rights by not arbitrarily detaining prisoners and treating inmates humanely, it has failed to heed its own advice in the operation of Guantanamo Bay – which has served as a black eye for the country. Human rights advocates and international organizations have long called for the permanent closure of the facility, and the United Nations' recent declaration on the prison is just the latest example of this. Analysts are hopeful that the recent position expressed by the new Biden administration and its decision to commission a study will provide renewed momentum to these efforts.