

GUANTANAMO – AND AFTER

Thursday 6 October 2011, Oslo



FRITT ORD

BORGEN PRODUKTION AS

Human rights organisations all over the world have condemned the unlawful treatment of the 778 prisoners in the Guantanamo Bay detention camps. In recent years, 600 of them have been released but they have been denied any opportunity to have their cases tried before US courts. What conditions are these extrajudicial former detainees and their families living under today? What is the fate of prisoners who still remain at Camp Delta? How long can the US and Europe continue to overlook this “legal black hole” without facing the inhumanity of Guantanamo, including its unconstitutional origins and its permanent pain?

SEMINAR PROGRAM

10.00-12.30

Terje Svabø, moderator: Welcome

THE MAIN PROBLEMS FOR GUANTANAMO DETAINEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Moazzam Begg, London

TESTIMONIES

Sami al-Hajj, Qatar
Walid Muhammad Hajj, Khartoum
Omar Deghayes, London

LEGAL ISSUES

Talal al-Zahrani, Medina
Mark Denbeaux, New Jersey

EUROPEAN ACCOUNTABILITY

Irmina Pacho, Warsaw
John Peder Egenæs, Oslo
Michael Ratner, New York

SHORT BIOGRAPHIES

Sami al-Hajj (b. 1969, Sudan). He lives in Qatar. The only journalist imprisoned at Guantanamo. He was working as a camera man for *Al Jazeera* when he was arrested and brought to Guantanamo where he was held for more than six years. Today he is in charge of *Al Jazeera's* human rights office. He participated in many of the hunger strikes at Guantanamo.

Talal al-Zahrani from Saudi Arabia. He is a former colonel in the Saudi Arabian police. His son Yasser died inside Guantanamo in 2006. On his behalf, the US human rights organisation the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) has filed a civil action against Donald Rumsfeld (*Al-Zahrani v. Rumsfeld*).

Moazzam Begg (b. 1968) from Birmingham, England. He spent three years in captivity at the US detention facilities in Afghanistan and Guantanamo, including almost 20 months in solitary confinement at Guantanamo. Released in 2005. Begg has written a book about his Guantanamo experience: *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantanamo and Back* (2006). He is presently director of Cageprisoners, London, the human rights organisation that raises "awareness of the plight of the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay and other detainees held as part of the War on Terror".

Omar Deghayes (b. 1969, Libya). He lives in London. Spent five years at Guantanamo, experiencing severe torture and mistreatment. He is a member of the leadership of Cageprisoners.

Professor Mark Denbeaux, Seton Hall University School of Law, New Jersey. Director of the Seton Hall Law School Center for Policy and Research, which is best known for its dissemination of the internationally recognised series of reports on the Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp. Professor Denbeaux's interest in the conditions of detainment arose from his representation of two detainees there.

John Peder Egenæs from Oslo. Secretary General of Amnesty International Norway, which for years has concentrated on the rights of Guantanamo prisoners and Norwegian accountability.

Walid Muhammad Hajj (b. 1974) from Sudan. He lives in Khartoum. Served six years and seven months at Guantanamo. He has written a book about his experiences at Guantanamo.

Irmina Pacho, Polish lawyer, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights. Coordinator of the project "Observatory of CIA Activities in Poland".

Michael Ratner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), one of the most important human rights organisations in the United States. CCR has led the legal battle over Guantanamo for more than eight years, sending the first ever habeas attorney to the base. On 12 June 2008, CCR helped win a historic Supreme Court victory in *Boumediene v. Bush*, securing the right for the men at Guantanamo and other non-citizens to challenge the legality of their detention through habeas corpus proceedings in federal courts. Ratner has written several books, including *Guantanamo, what the world should know* (2004).

Terje Svabø Oslo/Vienna. Norwegian journalist and author. Previously *Aftenposten*, *VG*, NRK, TV2, and head of the liberal-conservative think tank Civita in Oslo. Since 2009 free-lance writer and conference moderator.

"I've spent my whole life representing people on death row in America. And Guantanamo, as a prison, is worse than any death row in the United States."

Clive Stafford Smith, lawyer and president of Reprieve, London