



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE

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The Center for Victims of Torture Files Amicus Brief: the Human Cost of Guantanamo

ST. PAUL, Minn. and WASHINGTON — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) late yesterday filed an [amicus brief](#) with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in support of the [joint habeas motion](#) filed January 11th by 11 of the remaining Guantanamo Bay detainees. CVT's brief speaks to the serious medical consequences associated with prolonged detention without charge or trial, and the plight of torture survivors trapped in a constant reminder of their trauma where meaningful treatment is not, and cannot be made, available.

According to Scott Roehm, CVT director of the Washington office and author of the amicus brief, "We marked a gruesome anniversary this month when Guantanamo entered its 17th year. The prison has become a figurative graveyard for torture survivors. After so many years, continuing to hold men in noncriminal detention without regard to their individual circumstances, and in a place synonymous with torture, is simply cruel."

It is no secret that many men held at Guantanamo are torture survivors. Some were brutalized in the CIA's "enhanced interrogation" program, others by allied governments or third parties before arriving at Guantanamo, and some at Guantanamo itself. These facts are far too often ignored or minimized – in policymaking, in public discourse, and in the courts. The effects of torture are profound. Survivors' wounds do not simply heal with time. At Guantanamo, these wounds are exacerbated by the physical and psychiatric trauma resulting from indefinite detention. This human cost needs to weigh heavily in decisions about Guantanamo's future and fate of the men who remain there.

For more than three decades, CVT staff have worked with torture survivors as they heal. Effective rehabilitation after torture requires several critically important steps and proper conditions. Because these requirements include having a sense of control over one's own rehabilitation, having a consistent expectation of safety, and living with stability, there is no chance for meaningful recovery inside Guantanamo.

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The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit www.cvt.org

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