
US Clears 'Guantanamo Diary' Author for Release

21/07/2016



The author of the best-selling memoir "Guantanamo Diary," Mohamedou Ould Slahi has been cleared for release after being held at the military prison for 14 years without charge.

A Mauritanian prisoner who wrote a best-selling memoir about his long ordeal at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo has been cleared for release, his lawyers and a U.S. official said Wednesday.

RELATED: [Instead of Closing Guantanamo, the US Invests in Expansion](#)

A parole-style review opened the way for Mohamedou Ould Slahi, author of "Guantanamo Diary," to be moved out of the detention center at the U.S. naval base in Cuba. But he cannot leave until U.S. authorities arrange for him to be repatriated to his West African homeland or another country.

Slahi, 45, who arrived in Guantanamo in August 2002 and has been held without charge or trial, appeared before a Periodic Review Board, a multi-agency government panel, on June 2.

His release takes place as U.S. President Barack Obama renegs on his promise to close the military-run Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba. The president committed to close the center since before he ran for president in 2008, but despite years of promises he says now that he won't use his power as commander-in-chief to unilaterally shut the detention center.

Slahi became one of Guantanamo's most prominent inmates with the 2015 publication of his prison memoir in which he described his years of detention and interrogation, including being subjected to harsh techniques widely considered torture. U.S. censors heavily redacted the 466-page manuscript he gave to his lawyers.

RELATED: [Barack Obama Won't Use Executive Order to Close Guantanamo](#)

Slahi was first detained by authorities in Mauritania and was then sent to Jordan and Afghanistan and finally to the

Guantanamo prison, which was opened under President George W. Bush to hold terrorist suspects rounded up overseas following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The facility became a symbol of the excesses of Bush's war on terror.

Slahi was originally suspected of being a senior recruiter for al-Qaida.

The review board determined that Slahi "poses no significant threat to the United States," the American Civil Liberties Union said. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Slahi was cleared for release and the ruling would soon be officially released.

"We will now work toward his quick release and return to the waiting arms of his loving family," said Nancy Hollander, one of Slahi's attorneys, in a statement issued by the ACLU.

The timing of Slahi's departure could depend on whether he can return to Mauritania. Many cleared prisoners have been held for years while the U.S. government seeks a country to accept them.
