

Guantanamo survivors' extradition request dropped

The Spanish government has dropped its attempt to extradite Omar Deghayes and another former Guantanamo Bay detainee Jamil El-Banna. 'I'm very happy, really delighted,' said Omar. Christians Against Torture campaigned for his return from Guantanamo for two years, and more than 2,400 people signed a petition in support.

The Madrid Judge Baltazar Garzon Real accepted medical reports which found both men were suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and depression, and would have difficulty instructing their lawyers, listening to evidence and giving their own accurate testimony. Omar is also blind in one eye and has fractures in his nasal bone and right index finger.

Both men were returned to Britain in December when the judge made the request on the basis of evidence widely held to be discredited. Christians Against Torture invited him to withdraw it 'in order that these men may be spared further unjust detention, and their families spared further anxiety'

Omar spent six years in US custody, five of them at Guantanamo Bay, without charge or trial. He has had refugee status in the UK since 1987. His mother fled Libya with her five children after their father, a trade union leader, was executed by President Gadaffi's secret police.

The Home Office has said that his immigration status, and that of Jamil El-Banna, is 'under review.'

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