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EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS

London / Düsseldorf / Madrid / Haarlem

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## **EUROPEAN LAWYERS CONDEMN CONTINUED ILLEGAL DETENTION AND TORTURE BY THE US AT GUANTANAMO**

The European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and Human Rights (ELDH), with members in 18 European countries, the Commission “Défense de la défense” of the European Democratic Lawyers (AED-EDL) and the League of Human Rights (Holland) condemn in the strongest terms the continued illegal detention and torture of 166 inmates of Guantanamo.

On Friday 17 May 2013 the current hunger strike by more than 100 detainees entered its 100<sup>th</sup> day. 23 of the hunger strikers are now being force-fed.

Fayiz Al-Kandari, a Kuwaiti held at Guantanamo for 11 years, but never charged with a criminal offence, has told his lawyer, Lt Col Barry Wingard: “They strap you to a chair, tie up your wrists, your legs, your forehead and tightly around the waist.” Wingard has added: “The tube makes his eyes water excessively and blood begins to trickle from the nose. Once the tube passes his throat the gag reflex kicks in. Warm liquid is poured into the body for 45 minutes to two hours. He feels like his body is going to convulse and often vomits.”

Another hunger striker is Shaker Aamer, who has been held in Guantánamo Bay since 2002. He is a legal permanent resident of the UK, married to a British national, with four British children living in London. Shaker has long been cleared for release by the United States. He has never been charged by the United States with a crime and has never received a trial. However, he has been repeatedly abused and subjected to extended isolation in Guantánamo Bay.

The detainees who are refusing food have been stripped of all possessions, including a sleeping mat and soap, and are made to sleep on concrete floors in freezing solitary cells.

The Human Rights Council of the United Nations has concluded that force-feeding amounts to torture. The American Medical Association says that force-feeding violates medical ethics.

But President Barack Obama, who promised a few days after his first inauguration to close Guantanamo, has done nothing of the kind, despite his previous promises and recent statements. Professor Marjorie Cohn, of the Thomas Jefferson School of Law and the

National Lawyers Guild, has shown in detail that Obama has the power and the opportunity to release the detainees – see “Death is Preferable to Life at Obama’s Guantanamo”, *Huffington Post*, 10 May 2013.

ELDH and AED demand

- An immediate end to force-feeding of hunger striker
- The immediate release of all remaining inmates of Guantanamo
- Full reparation including financial compensation and rehabilitation for all who have been illegally detained at Guantanamo

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**For more details, contact:**

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**Commission « Defence de la Defence » of AED-EDL,**

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