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The Honorable Leon Panetta
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon, Room 3E880
Washington, DC 20301-1000

October 3, 2011

Dear Secretary Panetta,

We are writing to follow up on the letter we sent in July concerning the logistical difficulties that in the past have prevented us from adequately performing our role as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) authorized to observe military commissions at Guantanamo Bay.

To date, we have not received a response to our letter.

Recent news reports suggest that the Office of Military Commissions may create a new venue in the United States where victims and media will be able to observe the military commission hearings. While we are encouraged that the commission may be expanding access to the commissions for some individuals and media, this new venue would not address any of the NGO observers' concerns about the commissions' lack of transparency, as set forth in our earlier letter.

In particular, the reported additional viewing venue does not address the problem that documents relevant to the upcoming hearings, and military commission judges' orders, are not made immediately available on the Office of Military Commissions web site and not given to the NGO representatives.

Our other specific requests included creation of a separate work space at the Guantanamo base for the NGO representatives that provides guaranteed 24-hour high-speed internet access for our laptops, functioning telephone lines, and a printer. In addition, we asked that military personnel at Guantanamo Bay be informed that during our visits, we are allowed to speak freely to the media, prosecutors and defense lawyers, and to enter the hangar where the media office is located and where press conferences are held.

We have attached a copy of the original letter to this message. We would greatly appreciate a response to the requests we have made.

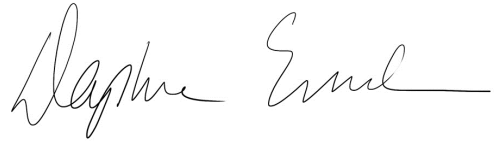
Sincerely,



Hina Shamsi
Director, National Security Project
American Civil Liberties Union



Susan Lee
Director
Americas Regional Programme
Amnesty International



Daphne Eviatar
Senior Associate
Human Rights First



Andrea Prasow
Senior Counterterrorism Counsel
Human Rights Watch



Norman L. Reimer
Executive Director
National Association of
Criminal Defense Lawyers



Elizabeth L. Hillman
President
National Institute for Military Justice

cc: Jeh Johnson, General Counsel, Department of Defense
William Lietzau, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Detainee Policy
Jeremy Bash, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense
Vice Adm. Bruce MacDonald, Convening Authority, OMC
Brig. Gen. Mark Martins, Chief Prosecutor, OMC
Col. Jeffrey Colwell, Chief Defense Counsel, OMC