

TRABAJADORES

ÓRGANO DE LA CENTRAL DE TRABAJADORES DE CUBA

January 15, 2024 by Yimel Díaz Malmierca <https://www.laprogressive.com/war-and-peace/close-guantanamo-military-base>

US calls for closure of Guantánamo prison

"The Guantánamo prison has been open for 22 years. For anyone 30 years old or younger, it should seem normal to be part of the American landscape, rather than the constitutional aberration that it is," said Jon Krampner, spokesperson for the organization Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP) during the demonstration that took place on January 11 in front of the federal government building in Los Angeles.



Photos: Courtesy of the Hands-Off Cuba-Los Angeles Committee

The protest was one of many that has taken place in the United States with the purpose of demanding the closure of the prison located in the military base located, illegally, in a portion of the territory of Guantánamo Bay, against which the Government and people of Cuba have stated.

In a note sent to our editorial team by Mark Friedman, a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1484, one of the organizations that joined the march, he recalls that the Washington government has committed several crimes in Guantánamo and other so-called sites. CIA blacks, including kidnapping, arrest without charge, imprisonment without trial, deprivation of due process, torture and murder.

Friedman specifies that "torture violates the Eighth Amendment of the United States Constitution, common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT) and 18 United States Code 2340 (a), the Statute on Torture."

The pro-Cuba activist and fighter against the US blockade reminded protesters that President Joe Biden spoke in his 2020 campaign that he would work to "restore the soul of the country," but "if he really wants to do it, he has to close Guantánamo. "She is an affront to the Constitution and she is the soul of this country," he said.

Another participant in the protest in Los Angeles was the Rev. Kelvin Sauls, board member of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, who also spoke on behalf of the LA Hands-Off Cuba Committee: "I stand before you as a proud South African," he said, referring to the lawsuit filed by the Government of South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, "just as our complete liberation is inextricably linked to that of the people of Palestine, so too "It is to the people of Cuba."

Sauls insisted that "we must accept the fact that the repressive, exploitative and destructive tentacles of Western empires are connected. "We meet to speak and defend ourselves as protagonists of the humanity, dignity and sovereignty of the Cuban people."

The religious representative denounced that the United States, "as one of the Western empires, has perpetrated, facilitated and coordinated a triple effect of torture and trauma on the people of Cuba." He ratified the commitment of American activists in the fight to

remove the Greater Antilles from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT), for the end of the illegal blockade, for the lifting of travel and trade bans and sanctions ; as well as for the return of the portion of land occupied by the United States Naval Base in Guantánamo to its legitimate owners.

“We meet to speak as protagonists of humanity and defend the dignity and sovereignty of our Cuban sisters and brothers. The combination of torture and trauma orchestrated, organized, maintained and sustained by the United States against Cuba are acts of economic occupation that amount to a slow motion massacre! We are in this fight for the long haul because, in the words of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “the moral arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice!”

Diverse voices demand closure of Guantánamo

The Julian Assange Defense Committee in the United States was also at the protest organized in Los Angeles against the Guantánamo prison. Its spokesman, Vinnie DeStefano, assured that the actions of the authorities in that prison have confirmed “that our ideals were nothing more than myths. They were the lies we told ourselves to feel that we were fair when in reality we were no better than our adversaries.”

“The prison that our government decided to build in Cuba destroyed all my illusions about the moral superiority of the United States,” DeStefano acknowledged. “We were worse than the rest of the world because, for a time, we were the only superpower on the planet and, with all that power, instead of living up to our ideals, we chose a path that was morally bankrupt.”

Annie Ehler, a member of Jewish Voices for Peace (JVP-LA), welcomed the invitation to participate in the protest: “Today we share stories that intertwine our lives, forging a connection that transcends ideology or affiliation. Our struggles may seem very different, but they share a common thread: the dehumanization of people based on their faith, their background, and their identity. It is a thread that unites the reality of the prisoners of war in Guantánamo with the realities faced by those in Palestine.”

“The pain of families destroyed by blockades, economic strangulation, colonial triangulation tactics and other practices are not distant realities, they are part of our lived experiences,” Ehler reflected. The opening of the prison at the Guantanamo Bay military base marked a dark chapter in American history, he said.

The Jewish activist denounced atrocities committed there in the last 22 years, which have been documented with “memorandums about torture, attempts to cover up crimes against humanity with pseudo-legality and the illegal occupation of a sovereign nation. “They are indelible stains on our collective history.”

“I am here today because this fight transcends borders, oceans and geographical limits. The revelation that, at its peak, the prison at Guantánamo Bay housed some 800 Muslim men and boys (most never charged with a crime), cannot be separated from the more than 7,000 Palestinians imprisoned in Israeli prisons, the more than 2 thousand in administrative detention without charges or trial.”

“As anti-Zionist Jews and people of conscience, we resist occupation in all its forms, whether Israeli in Palestine or American in Guantánamo, Hawaii and Puerto Rico,” Ehler said. “Our sincere call is driven by a deep love and dedication to humanity. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. “From Palestine to Guantánamo, all these walls have to disappear!” urged the JVP-LA activist.

Shaheen Nassar came representing a Muslim civil liberties organization. He assured that “as a Palestinian from Gaza who has recently lost loved ones” he attests to the existence of common elements between the events that occurred in the US prison in Guantánamo and Israeli war crimes. We are witnessing the dehumanization of Muslims, he explained, including “the dramatic increase in hate crimes against Muslims across the United States.”

Other speakers at the combative day were lawyer Mohammed Tsjar and the president emeritus of the National Lawyers Guild James Lafferty.

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