

French Judge Asked to Probe Guantanamo Torture



Paris, February 28 (RHC)-- Two former detainees at the notorious U.S.-run prison at Guantanamo have asked a French judge to subpoena a former prison commander accused of overseeing their torture, AFP reports.

Both inmates -- Nizar Sassi and Mourad Benchellali -- are French citizens and now live in France. According to the report, French investigators are probing into their case along with another former Guantanamo inmate, Khaled Ben Mustapha.

Detainees' lawyers accused retired major general Geoffrey Miller of "an authorized and systematic plan of torture and ill-treatment on persons deprived of their freedom without any charge and without the basic rights of any detainee," according to a report submitted to the investigative judge of the high court of Paris.

Miller, the report said, "bears individual criminal responsibility for the war crimes and acts of torture inflicted on detainees in US custody at Guantanamo and in Iraq" at the Abu Ghraib prison while it was run by the American military. The general was commander of Guantanamo between 2002 and 2004.

In 2002, the administration of former U.S. President George W. Bush approved enhanced interrogation techniques, including placing detainees in stress positions, stripping them, isolating them for extended

periods of time and exposing them to extreme heat and cold. And Miller implemented all these methods, the lawyers said.

"These acts constitute torture and violate, at a minimum, the Geneva Conventions prohibition on coercive interrogations," the lawyers said. There is a fear that the United States may try to block Miller's testimony.

"Considering the close relationship that exists between France and the United States, the U.S. should not block Geoffrey Miller's testimony; he has a lot to say," said William Bourdon, who represents the former detainees.

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