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LOCAL NEWS

# Kuwaiti officially requests Gitmo detainees' release

Published Date: February 14, 2011

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti government has submitted an official request to United States President Barrak Obama appealing for the release of Kuwaiti citizens Fayeze Al-Kandari and Fawzi Al-Oudah from the Guantanamo Bay detention center, after the Gulf nation fulfilled all the US administrations conditions for the detainees' release.

The move was announced by Al-Kandari's attorneys, Lieutenant Colonel Barry Wingard and Lieutenant Commander Kevin Bogucki in an interview with Al-Qabas following their latest visit to Kuwait. During this visit, they met with the then-interior minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, who denied allegations that he had previously asked the US Ambassador to Kuwait, Deborah Jones, to ensure that the detainees were not returned to Kuwait.

Lt. Col. Wingard indicated that during their ten-day visit, he had also met with justice minister Rashid Al-Hamad, who is also the Deputy Prime Minister for Legal Affairs and State Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, as well as holding talks with foreign ministry undersecretary Khalid Al-Jarallah and US Embassy officials.

The attorney said that the all the officials he had met with had assured him that coordination is ongoing at the highest levels to ensure that either the Kuwaiti detainees are returned as soon as possible or that they are given a fair trial. Lt. Cmdr. Bogucki said that the Kuwaiti government's pressure on its American counterpart is a "huge step forward" in achieving the return of the Kuwaiti detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

He also expressed hope that the human rights campaigning body Human Rights Watch would intervene in this case to end the longstanding impasse that has now persisted for over a decade. He added that Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are shortly set to hold talks in order to devise a workable formula to end this critical situation.

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