



The Prime Minister
10 Downing St
London
SW1A 2AA

26 January 2015

Re: Shaker Aamer

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you from legal charity Reprieve, where I am one of British resident Shaker Aamer's Guantanamo lawyers. We are, of course, grateful that you raised Shaker's case with President Obama during your recent visit, and for your ongoing engagement with us on this issue.

However, I wanted to warn you that, despite the Obama administration's claim that they would "prioritise" the case, there appears to be a lack of any real progress on their part. Worryingly, US Defense Secretary Hagel told reporters last week (22 January) that there are no more Guantanamo transfers awaiting his signature.¹ You will, of course, be aware of the significance of this: the Defense Secretary is responsible for signing off on all transfers of detainees out of the prison. That Shaker's case is not even on his desk – despite your Government having regularly raised it with the US since 2010 – is therefore cause for concern.

As you know, Shaker has never been charged with any crime during his near-13 years of imprisonment, and indeed has been cleared for release under both the Bush and Obama administrations. It is therefore bewildering that he continues to be detained, when Britain has made repeated demands that he be returned home to London.

The mismatch between the Obama administration's words and actions on his case suggests they may be facing two ways on this. Are they genuinely prioritising his

¹ On 22 January 2015, the Miami Herald's Guantanamo correspondent, Carol Rosenberg tweeted: "Just back from presser with SecDef Hagel. He says there are no more #Guantanamo transfers awaiting his signature. So much for acceleration."

<https://twitter.com/carolrosenberg/status/558336297644081153>

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transfer, or would they rather he remains imprisoned for fear of what he may say about the widespread abuses of the 'War on Terror' on his release?

I would be grateful if you could shed any light on this question: what assurances were you given regarding Shaker's case by the President during your visit, beyond what the NSC spokesperson said publicly on Mr Obama's behalf? Did the President provide any indication on when Shaker's family can expect to see him returned to London? Did you ask the President to ensure that Shaker's case was sent to Secretary Hagel for his consideration? And finally, in the light of Secretary Hagel's comments, will you now press the Obama administration on providing a concrete timetable for Shaker's return?

This issue remains urgent as releases from Guantanamo appear to be dropping in frequency; I therefore look forward to hearing back from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

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