



A former chief prosecutor for the controversial American prison camp at Guantánamo Bay has called for the prison to be closed, launching an online petition that has gathered some 60,000 signatures in less than 24 hours.

Col Morris Davis served for two years as the chief prosecutor for terrorism trials at Guantánamo. He decided to campaign for the closure of the camp in the wake of a hunger strike that now involves more than 100 prisoners, including some 21 who are being force fed to keep them from starving to death.

Davis's petition comes after President Barack Obama on Tuesday vowed to make good on a broken 2008 campaign promise to shutter the prison camp, which still houses some 166 prisoners despite more than half having been cleared for release.

Davis told The Guardian that he had been appalled at the concept of the prisoners going on hunger strike, in the light of the fact that so many of them have been kept in jail without trial for more than a decade. "As illogical as suicide seems, sitting there for the rest of their lives probably makes it look like a rational choice," he said.

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