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Blair under New Pressure over Guantanamo

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Press Association (UK)
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Prime Minister Tony Blair today faced fresh demands to step up pressure on President George Bush to end human rights abuses at Guantanamo Bay.

Amnesty International's call comes ahead of the third anniversary of the detention camp's establishment on Monday.

The Prime Minister should use the milestone to secure judicial reviews and ensure the involvement of lawyers and independent rights monitors, according to the group.

UK director Kate Allen said: "Over the past three years, Guantanamo has become an icon of lawlessness.

"During the course of three years of executive detentions, Guantanamo has become a symbol of the US Government's attempts to put itself above the law."

The US naval base, on the tip of Cuba, has been housing terror suspects, mainly rounded up during the Afghanistan conflict, since January 10, 2001.

More than 500 detainees have been held without trial and there have been repeated claims of mistreatment and torture.

The US military yesterday announced an internal investigation into the latest allegations.

However, Ms Allen said a comprehensive independent commission of inquiry into detention and interrogation techniques was needed.

"No agency should be exempt from scrutiny and no individual exempt from prosecution if the evidence supports it," she said.