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Kuwait Times: Gitmo Kin Decry 'Attacks'.

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KUWAIT: Female family members of Kuwaiti detainees held at the US military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba gathered yesterday at the house of the head of the society of Guantanamo detainees' families to protest against articles published recently in a local Arabic daily. The articles and a column attacked Khaled Al-Ouda and accused him and the committee of protecting terrorists, and included allegations of financial irregularities among others.

Another full-page article detailed allegations levelled by the former wife of Adel Al-Zamel, one of the Kuwaiti detainees who arrived in Kuwait from Guantanamo this month. In the article, she insulted Zamel, who is the father of her daughter, and alleged that they haven't received any financial support, although she is married to other man. The family of Zamel and other women at Ouda's house strongly denied the claims and agreed that Ouda has helped all of them and does not deserve to be attacked in this way.

Ouda said he called for the meeting to clarify and reply to the attacks against him in the papers. "All that was written is false, and I felt obliged to reply, as I am working as the head of the committee for around four years, and have put in a lot of effort in securing the release of six Kuwaiti detainees from Guantanamo."

He said he will not respond to any further attacks. "We will now only concentrate on the release of six Kuwaiti detainees still imprisoned at Guantanamo. But I'm afraid that such discussions may affect their return. And I strongly hope that the American government will respect their promise and release the detainees by February." Al-Ouda said the released detainees, who are now at the Central Prison, were in good condition after ending their hunger strike. "This whole issue arose during the first three days of their return, when they were housed at the prison with those who were arrested over terrorist attacks in Kuwait. I believe that they will have a fair trial in Kuwait, independent of any outside influence."

Ouda thanked the attendees for their support, reiterating the "committee will continue its work and won't be affected by such things". "We trust in God, the government and the committee and hope to have our detainees back home, as they are not terrorists and nobody has the right to call us that," added Ouda's wife.

The wife of Fuad Al-Rabea, who is still held at Guantanamo, praised the work of the committee. "I received the last letter from my husband two months back. After he found out that I had received only four of the thirteen letters he has written, he protested and has stopped writing," she complained. The sister of Rabea said: "Without this committee we wouldn't have seen our detainees released. Kuwait was one of the first countries to hire a lawyer to defend our detainees, and they even helped detainees from other countries. The committee made us aware about the plight of all detainees and not only our sons. Khaled Al-Ouda cared more about others than his son. He preferred helping married detainees before the unmarried, and we all must thank him for his efforts."

"I don't have any of my family members among the detainees, but I want to help them as a humanitarian gesture," said Thikra Al-Majdali, a lawyer and columnist. "I disagree with what was written in the paper, and at the same time, I'm surprised that they didn't publish my reply to one of the articles that attacked the committee

and one of the detainees. I denounce the paper for not letting the other side reply. How can they just publish a one-sided view? Where is press freedom?" he demanded.