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## **Stuck in Guantánamo**

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WASHINGTON -- Nearly 30 percent of the Guantánamo detainees have been cleared to leave the prison but remain jailed because the U.S. government has been unable to arrange for their return to their home countries, the Pentagon said Friday.

The Pentagon refused to identify these 141 men despite having released on Wednesday its first comprehensive list of detainees held at the prison for foreign terrorism suspects at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Of these 141 detainees among the 490 still at Guantánamo, various military reviews have cleared 22 to be freed in their home countries and the remaining 119 for transfer to the control of their home governments.

Defense officials said the United States has no interest in detaining anyone for any longer than necessary and has been able to arrange for some detainees to return to their home countries.

Officials cited U.S. policy not to expel, return or extradite individuals to other countries where it is more likely than not that they will be tortured or persecuted.

Asked why the government would not identify men cleared to leave Guantánamo, a military spokesman, Lieutenant Commander Chito Pepler of the navy, cited the sensitive nature of U.S. government discussions with other countries about the detainees.

"We do not discuss detainee movements or details related to their movements until after the movement has been completed for operational security reasons," Pepler said.

The Pentagon said the detainees hail from 40 countries and the West Bank, with the largest number from Saudi Arabia, followed by Afghanistan and Yemen.

Major Michael Shavers of the air force, also a military spokesman, said 10 detainees still at Guantánamo had been cleared for release to their home countries and 12 for transfer to the control of their home governments under review processes in place until July 2004.

Nine detainees still at Guantánamo were deemed by military panels not to be an "enemy combatant," with these decisions coming no later than March 2005.

Also still jailed are three detainees cleared for release and 107 cleared to be transferred to the control of their home governments by military panels that review each detainee's case at least annually, officials said. These hearings ran from December 2004 to December 2005.