

Saber Lahmar Released from Guantanamo Bay

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French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner have agreed to welcome Saber Lahmar to France, after nearly eight years of imprisonment at Guantanamo Bay.

Lahmar's release to France follows the successful resettlement of Lakhdar Boumediene, who entered France from Guantanamo in May 2009. Click [here](#) for the full press release concerning Mr. Boumediene.

In October 2001, Messrs. Lahmar and Boumediene were two of six Algerian-born men arrested by Bosnian authorities at the demand of the US, based on an alleged plot against the US embassy in Sarajevo. In January 2002, after a 3-month investigation failed to find any evidence justifying their detention, the Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina ordered their release. Instead of releasing them, however, Bosnia illegally delivered the six men to US forces. The men arrived at Guantanamo in January 2002.

An international team of WilmerHale lawyers provided pro bono representation to Mr. Lahmar and the other men, including a habeas corpus proceeding commenced in July 2004 in Federal Court in Washington DC. The case went to the US Supreme Court – which determined that the men had a right to a habeas corpus hearing under the US Constitution. On November 20, 2008, after a seven day trial, Judge Richard Leon held that the US had no legal basis to detain Mr. Lahmar and four others, and ordered the US to release him. By then, the US had disavowed any allegations of an embassy plot.

The resettlement of Mr. Lahmar to France is a further diplomatic success for the Obama Administration, which has been working closely with European allies, such as France, to resettle many of the approximately 215 remaining men held at Guantanamo.

Critical documents in the case are available at <http://www.wilmerhale.com/boumediene>.