

As the US administration prepares to put 10 alleged terrorists on trial, 30 more have been released by federal judges because of lack of evidence and 15 federal judges are expecting to hear dozens more challenges to detention in Guantanamo Bay.

There are around 215 detainees still at the US base on Cuba. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and 4 others will be tried in a federal court. 5 others will go before a military commission – one of whom is alleged to have been behind the attack on the USS Cole.

The detainees were called by former Defense Secretary "the worst of the worst", but so far, requests for release have been refused for only 8 of them. The judges have concluded that the evidence, where it exists in an admissible form, doesn't justify the detention of many more – even though much of it is heard behind closed doors – and some has been described as "hearsay".

But finding somewhere to which to send released prisoners is proving tricky. Only 2 have left Cuba since the election of President Obama. One Syrian detainee, Abdulrahim Abdul Razak al Gingo was tortured by Al Qaeda until he falsely confessed to being a US spy; was in a Taliban jail in Kandahar before being seized by US forces and taken to Guantanamo Bay. US District Judge Richard Leon has ordered his release.

Around 45% of detainees were originally from Yemen; 10% from Afghanistan and those from Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Tunisia amount to around 2%.