

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Guled Hassan Duran v. Donald J. Trump

Civil Action No. 1:16-cv-2358 (RBW) · No. Civil Action No. 1:16-cv-2358 (RBW) · Decided June 16, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Columbia addresses a Guantanamo detainee’s motion for discovery, the government’s motion for an exception from disclosure of classified information, and the petitioner’s motion to compel a classified deposition. The court applies the Case Management Order, protective orders, and the D.C. Circuit’s standards governing disclosure of classified information in habeas proceedings. Based on its in camera review, the court grants the government’s exception from disclosure and denies the petitioner’s discovery and deposition motions in relevant part.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Columbia
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Reggie B. Walton
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Columbia
DECIDED	June 16, 2026
DOCKET	Civil Action No. 1:16-cv-2358 (RBW)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner sought habeas relief challenging his detention at Guantanamo Bay and moved for additional discovery, including disclosure of classified circumstances evidence and a classified deposition of Glenn Carle. Respondents moved for an exception from disclosure under the Case Management Order.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under the Case Management Order, additional discovery must be narrowly tailored, identify the requested discovery, explain why it is likely to produce evidence demonstrating unlawful detention, and explain why it would permit rebuttal of the factual basis for detention without unfairly disrupting or unduly burdening the government. Disclosure of classified information requires a showing that the information is relevant and material, counsel's access is necessary to meaningful habeas review, and no effective substitute exists for unredacted access.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published district court memorandum opinion and order; persuasive authority within the District of Columbia but not binding on appellate courts.
PARTIES	Guled Hassan Duran v. Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, et al.

TOPICS

discovery dispute federal habeas corpus civil procedure evidence due process

PRACTICE AREAS

habeas corpus national security law military law civil procedure evidence

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Duran was entitled under the Case Management Order to additional discovery concerning classified circumstances evidence related to statements relied on by the government.
2. Whether respondents established grounds for an exception from disclosure of classified information to Duran's counsel.
3. Whether the court could compel respondents to make former government employee Glenn Carle available for a classified deposition.
4. Whether the court should authorize a subpoena for Carle's testimony under the Case Management Order.

HOLDINGS

1. A court may compel disclosure of classified discovery in a habeas proceeding only when the information is relevant and material in the sense that it is at least helpful to the petitioner's case, counsel's access is necessary to facilitate meaningful review of the habeas petition, and no effective substitute exists for unredacted access. Applying that standard, the court held that the withheld information need not be disclosed.
2. Discovery is not required under the Case Management Order when the requested circumstances evidence is not exculpatory or material to the court's review of the basis for detention, even if it might permit an attack on the authenticity or reliability of a witness's statements.
3. Circumstances evidence bearing on whether statements directly implicating the petitioner were produced by coercion or torture is material because indications of unreliability are at least helpful to the petitioner's habeas case, but disclosure may nevertheless be denied when the government provides adequate national-security justifications and effective substitutes support meaningful judicial review.
4. The court lacks authority to compel respondents to make a former government employee who is not associated with a party available for a classified deposition.
5. A subpoena for discovery is not warranted where the petitioner fails to show that the proposed testimony is likely to produce evidence demonstrating that detention is unlawful under the Case Management

Order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A habeas petitioner, unlike the usual civil litigant in federal court, is not entitled to discovery as a matter of ordinary course.” (6)

“Thus, in order to compel the disclosure of the classified information at issue in the parties’ motions in this case, the Court must determine that (1) the information is “both relevant and material[] in the sense that it is at least helpful to the petitioner’s case[,]”” (7-8)

“Because the respondents have explained their justifications, which implicate serious national security concerns; provided disclosed redacted documents and a declaration to the petitioner; and provided the Court with unredacted copies of the documents at issue in camera, the Court concludes that granting the petitioner’s request for additional discovery as to this circumstances evidence is not necessary to facilitate the Court’s own “meaningful review” of the evidence.” (22)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Duran was captured in Djibouti in March 2004, transferred into CIA custody, and later transferred to Guantanamo Bay in September 2006, where he remained detained without being charged. The government relied on statements and related records in support of his detention, while Duran sought circumstances evidence bearing on the reliability and voluntariness of those statements. The government withdrew reliance on some statements, produced recordings and other circumstances evidence, and sought to withhold additional classified information concerning sources, methods, and other sensitive matters.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Duran filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus in November 2016. He later moved for discovery concerning statements relied on by the government and for a classified deposition of former CIA officer Glenn Carle. After supplemental submissions, in-camera review, and multiple hearings, the court denied the discovery motion, granted respondents' motion for an exception from disclosure, and denied the motion to compel or authorize a subpoena for Carle.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Al-Adahi v. Obama, 597 F. Supp. 2d 38, 44 (D.D.C. 2009)
- Bracy v. Gramley, 520 U.S. 899, 904 (1997)
- Al Odah v. United States, 559 F.3d 539, 544-48 (D.C. Cir. 2009)
- Boumediene v. Bush, 553 U.S. 723, 783 (2008)
- United States v. Yunis, 867 F.2d 617, 623 (D.C. Cir. 1989)
- United States v. Rezaq, 134 F.3d 1121, 1142 (D.C. Cir. 1998)

- Khan v. Obama, 655 F.3d 20, 31 (D.C. Cir. 2011)
- Mousovi v. Obama, 916 F. Supp. 2d 67, 74-75 (D.D.C. 2013)
- Al-Hela v. Biden, 66 F.4th 217, 237, 242 (D.C. Cir. 2023)
- Bin Attash v. Obama, 628 F. Supp. 2d 24, 41 (D.D.C. 2009)
- Al-Adahi v. Obama, 616 F. Supp. 2d 3, 4-5 (D.D.C. 2009)
- Latif v. Obama, 677 F.3d 1175, 1180, 1185-86 (D.C. Cir. 2012)

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