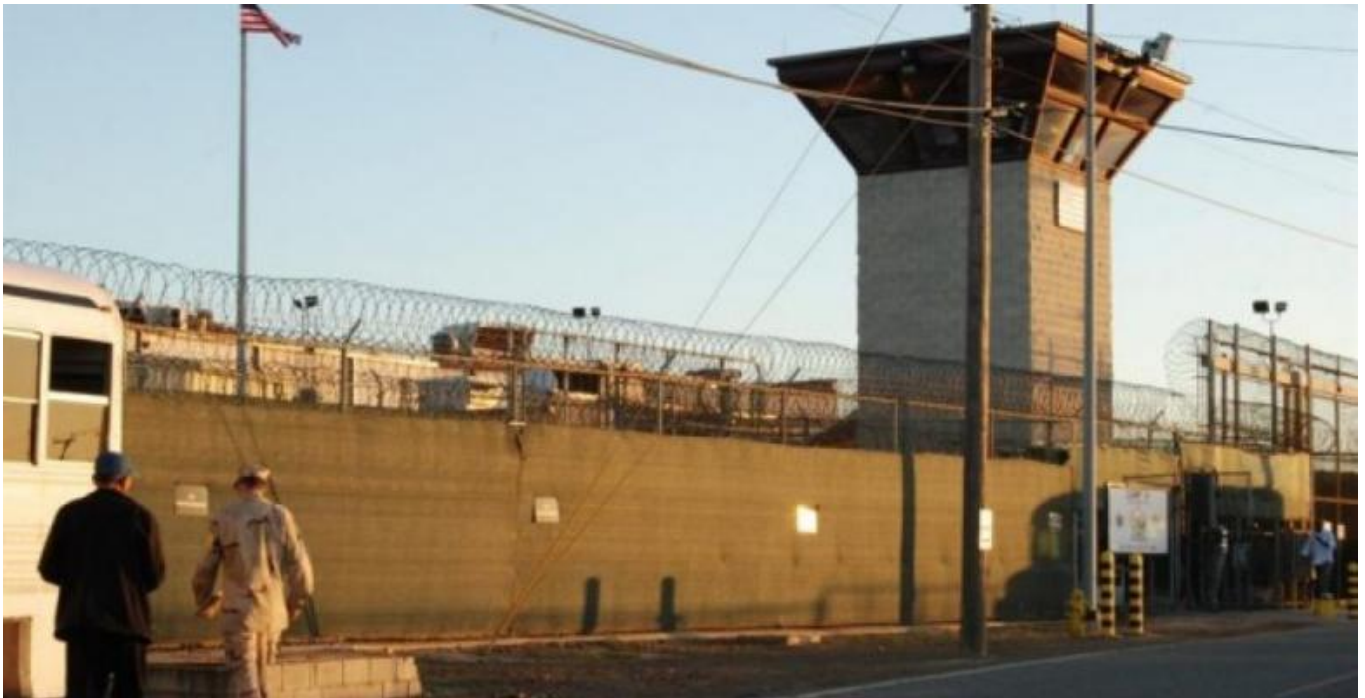Cuba helps put out fire at U.S. Guantanamo naval base: authority

01/03/2018

Units from the Cuban army helped put out a fire which broke out last week on the perimeter of the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay in the southeast of the island, local media reported Wednesday.

The official daily Granma quoted officials as saying that Cuba provided personnel, vehicles and a helicopter that dropped water from the air to extinguish the flames.

The situation, which saw the evacuation of a part of the American personnel, was brought under control on Feb. 22, despite the "logistical and practical complications" due to the "illegal" U.S. occupation of Cuban territory.

"In recent years, a level of communication has been maintained between Cuban and American authorities for emergency situations on the Naval Base," wrote Granma.

This facility was opened in 1903 and constitutes the oldest U.S. military base on foreign soil.

Cuba has repeatedly demanded the return of this territory, considering it an illegal occupation, where Washington has maintained a prison since 2002.

Despite pressure to close it, U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 30 to maintain the prison open.