

# **If Obama Closes Guantanamo, Two Thirds (64%) Say Prime Minister Harper Should Ask to Bring Omar Khadr Back to Canada, Not Keep in U.S. (36%)**

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**Ipsos Reid**

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## **If Obama Closes Guantanamo, Two Thirds (64%) Say Prime Minister Harper Should Ask to Bring Omar Khadr Back to Canada, Not Keep in U.S. (36%)**

**Toronto, ON** – Incoming President Barack Obama is expected to issue an order to close the Guantanamo detention center in his first week in office, and prisoner Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen and the only Western citizen still held at the detention camp who is scheduled to stand trial later this month, could be transferred to U.S. civilian detention or returned to Canada if Prime Minister Stephen Harper asks the Americans to repatriate him.

Mr. Khadr, 22, faces charges for allegedly killing a U.S. soldier in Afghanistan with a grenade when he was 15. He was arrested in July of 2002 after an intense battle during which he was severely wounded.

The results of a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Canwest News Service and Global Television reveals that two in three (64%) Canadians ‘support’ (27% very much/36% somewhat) ‘Prime Minister Harper asking the Americans to repatriate Mr. Khadr and bring him back to Canada’. On the other hand, one in three (36%) Canadians ‘opposes’ (17% very much/19% somewhat) this course of action.

- Atlantic Canadians (69%) are most supportive of the Prime Minister asking the Americans to repatriate Omar Khadr, followed by those living in British Columbia (67%), Ontario (65%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (64%), Quebec (61%) and Alberta (58%).



- Younger Canadians (73%), aged 18 to 34, are significantly more supportive than middle-aged (61%), aged 35 to 54, or older Canadians (59%) of this idea.
- Women (70%) are more likely to support this plan than are men (58%).

When compared to Ipsos Reid data collected in July of 2008, it appears that with the prospect of the Guantanamo detention center being closed, public opinion regarding Mr. Khadr has done an about face: in July, six in ten (60%) Canadians believed that he 'should remain in U.S. custody because he is being tried by a U.S. military court, and that Canada needs to allow this legal process to finish before deciding whether or not to ask for his return' to Canada.' This compared to four in ten (40%) Canadians who believed at the time that since 'Mr. Khadr is a Canadian citizen, the U.S. military has no right to detain and try him, and our government should be asking for his immediate return to Canada'.

*These are the findings of a poll conducted on behalf of Canwest News Service and Global National from January 13 to 15, 2009. This online survey of 1016 Canadian adults was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results of these polls are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls, however, an unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had the entire adult population of Canada been polled.*

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