

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<http://www.nrcat.org/about/nrcat-press-releases/763-president-obama-calls-for-closing-guantanamo-says-torture-compromised-our-basic-values->

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Media Advisory

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**President Obama calls for closing Guantanamo,
says torture compromised our basic values**

National interfaith group calls on Obama to back words with action

Washington, D.C. During a speech today at the National Defense University, President Obama committed his administration to working to transfer detainees out of the detention center at Guantanamo Bay and condemned torture as compromising our basic values. Rev. Richard Killmer, Executive Director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, released this statement in response to the speech:

The detainee center at Guantanamo Bay represents both torture, which our government used at the prison, and imprisonment without charge or trial, which is the circumstance most detainees there continue to face. Torture is a grievous sin, and we should not continue the existence of such a prominent symbol of torture. Likewise, prolonged imprisonment without charge, trial or hope of release is contrary to fundamental American values.

President Obama spoke strongly about torture itself today, condemning it as having compromised our basic values. People of faith agree with the president and believe that in order to prevent the future use of torture, the public needs to have access to the facts about our governments past use of torture. These facts are included in a more than 6,000 page report written and adopted by the Senate Intelligence Committee in December. That report remains classified.

Religious organizations including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, and the diverse faith-based organizations across the country which are members of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture have called for release of the Senate Intelligence Committee report. This report needs to be released to the public the public needs to know the facts about torture so that we wont repeat the same shameful behavior again and can instead return to the basic values of our great nation.

On his second full day in office, President Obama committed to ending torture and closing the prison at Guantanamo Bay. Today, he addressed the need to transfer additional detainees from Guantanamo and forcefully condemned torture. We stand expectant that the president will back his words with action by moving expeditiously to transfer all of the 86 cleared detainees from Guantanamo, and by supporting the release of the Senate Intelligence Committee report.

***The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT)** is a membership organization committed to ending U.S.-sponsored torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Since its formation in January 2006, more than 320 religious organizations have joined NRCAT, including representatives from the Catholic, evangelical Christian, mainline Protestant, Unitarian Universalist, Quaker, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, Buddhist, and Sikh communities. Members include national denominations and faith groups, regional organizations and local congregations. www.nrcat.org*

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