

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

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

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On Eve of UN Committee Against Torture Meeting, U.S. Faith Leaders Urge Rejection of Bush Administration Approach to Convention Against Torture

WASHINGTON On Wednesday, the United States will appear before the Committee Against Torture in Geneva to discuss U.S. compliance with the Convention Against Torture, which was ratified by the United States in 1994. Media reports have suggested that the Obama Administration may use this opportunity to affirm the Bush Administration position that the Convention does not prohibit the U.S. from engaging in cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in other countries. In response to this concern, two prominent American faith leaders urged the President to maintain his administrations opposition to torture:

Rev. Ron Stief, executive director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, said, The consensus of the U.S. faith community is that cruel and inhuman treatment is wrong in all circumstances, whether conducted on U.S. soil or not. If President Obama tells the world that he doesn't think the Convention Against Torture applies to us outside our borders, the faith community will not sit quietly in the face of this moral backpedaling.

Diane Randall, Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) added, The use of torture anywhere demeans all people everywhere. As Quakers, we are called to recognize that of God in every person; this is the basis of our opposition to torture. The use of torture violates our relationship with God and our fellow human beings. The Friends Committee on National Legislation calls on our President to state clearly and boldly that our country will not engage in torture and that the use of torture anywhere is cruel, inhuman and degrading.

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 300 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.

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