OMNI TORTURE AWARENESS MONTH JUNE NEWSLETTER #1, JUNE 1, 2012. Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace.

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters: [http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/](http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/) For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change.

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National Religious Campaign Against Torture

**June is National Torture Awareness Month**

Posted by [ReligiousLiberty.TV](http://www.religiousliberty.tv) on April 16, 2012 · 1 Comment

Join the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) and congregations across the country in marking [Torture Awareness Month](http://www.nrcat.org/tam2012) this June. Under the theme “2012 – Confronting the Culture of Torture,” NRCAT has provided a variety of resources and suggested activities that congregations can use throughout the month. Worship resources; DVDs with discussion guides; banners, posters and bumper stickers; and resources for grassroots advocacy are all available at [www.nrcat.org/tam2012](http://www.nrcat.org/tam2012).

NRCAT is also helping to coordinate planning for joint efforts with other human rights and religious organizations, including a march in Washington, DC, on Sunday afternoon, June 24, and local vigils on Tuesday, June 26, which is the UN International Day in Support of Torture Victims. For more information, see [www.nrcat.org/tam-coalition](http://www.nrcat.org/tam-coalition).

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a membership organization of religious organizations committed to ending torture that is sponsored or enabled by the United States.

Since its formation on January 16, 2006, more than 300 religious organizations have joined and over 57,000 individual people of faith have participated in our activities. Members include representatives from the Baha’i, Buddhist, Catholic, evangelical Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox Christian, mainline Protestant, Quaker, Sikh and Unitarian Universalist communities. Members include national denominations and faith groups, regional organizations and congregations. [Click here for a complete list of NRCAT members](http://www.nrcat.org/members).
Coming in June: A Document a Day
Submitted by Larry Siems on Fri, 05/28/2010 -
Throughout June, we'll be observing Torture Awareness Month by posting a Document a Day here on The Torture Report Diary.
In 1997, the United Nations commemorated the 10th anniversary of the enactment of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by declaring June 26th the International Day of Support of Victims of Torture. On June 26, 2003, President Bush marked the day by issuing this statement:

Today, on the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the United States declares its strong solidarity with torture victims across the world. Torture anywhere is an affront to human dignity everywhere. We are committed to building a world where human rights are respected and protected by the rule of law.

Freedom from torture is an inalienable human right. The Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, ratified by the United States and more than 130 other countries since 1984, forbids governments from deliberately inflicting severe physical or mental pain or suffering on those within their custody or control. Yet torture continues to be practiced around the world by rogue regimes whose cruel methods match their determination to crush the human spirit. Beating, burning, rape, and electric shock are some of the grisly tools such regimes use to terrorize their own citizens. These despicable crimes cannot be tolerated by a world committed to justice.

Notorious human rights abusers, including, among others, Burma, Cuba, North Korea, Iran, and Zimbabwe, have long sought to shield their abuses from the eyes of the world by staging elaborate deceptions and denying access to international human rights monitors. The United States is committed to the world-wide elimination of torture and we are leading this fight by example. I call on all governments to join with the United States and the community of law-abiding nations in prohibiting, investigating, and prosecuting all acts of torture and in undertaking to prevent other cruel and unusual punishment.

A year later, two months after 60 Minutes II and The New Yorker broke stories featuring the Abu Ghraib torture photos, President Bush again asserted the U.S.'s "commitment to the worldwide elimination of torture," this time insisting America stands against and will not tolerate torture. We will investigate and prosecute all acts of torture and undertake to prevent other cruel and unusual punishment in all territory under our jurisdiction.

The United States also remains steadfastly committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions, which have been the bedrock of protection in armed conflict for more than 50 years. We expect other nations to treat our service members and civilians in accordance with the Geneva conventions. Our Armed Forces are committed to complying with them and to holding accountable those in our military who do not.

America supports accountability and treatment centers for torture victims. We stand with the victims to seek their healing and recovery, and urge all nations to join us in these efforts to restore the dignity of every person affected by torture.
Tens of thousands of pages of formerly-secret government documents leave no doubt that after September 11, 2001 the United States violated domestic and international bans on torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, committing abuses we shielded from the eyes of the world "by staging elaborate deceptions and denying access to international human rights monitors." Few of these abuses have been properly investigated and still fewer prosecuted, and there is virtually no public conversation whatsoever about our obligation under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to seek the healing and recovery of those we have abused.

I am working away on Chapter 5 of the Report; meanwhile I've gone back through my files and through the piles of documents and pulled some of the most compelling pieces of the documentary record. Stop by this space throughout Torture Awareness Month as we post a Document a Day.

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The Report Diary
"The Torture Report" Book Now Available in Print and Online
Submitted: 01/23/2012 - 16:42
“Endgame”
Submitted: 03/23/2011 - 14:11

The Report Chapters
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Creating the space for torture
Updated: 02/26/2010 - 13:46
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Experimenting With Torture
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Chapter 3 - Black Sites, Lies, and Videotapes
Black Sites, Lies, and Videotapes
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The Scheme
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The Story Unravels (Jose Padilla)
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Chapter 4, Part 3 – A Ponzi Scheme of Torture
The Story Unravels (Binyam Mohammed & Abu Zubaydah)
Updated: 07/26/2010 - 15:55
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  Conversations on Faith by Eric Hoey
- Swords Into Plowshares
Observe Torture Awareness Month

June 26 is United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Religious and human rights organizations in the United States have declared the month of June to be Torture Awareness Month as a way to provide greater visibility to this issue and provide an opportunity for coordinated actions across the country. Here are a couple of ideas for ways to observe Torture Awareness month:

The Church Responds to Torture includes a summary of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly statements on torture, prayers, a letter from PC(USA) Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons to President Obama, prayers, ideas for action and more.

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) encourages congregations and people of
faith to focus on passing legislation granting the International Committee of the Red Cross access to all detainees in U.S. custody. There are two ways to take part in this campaign:

Send an email to Members of Congress.

Organize an effort to send postcards to the local offices of Members of Congress or to their offices in Washington, DC. NRCAT has a couple of suggestions for how to participate in the postcard effort:

1. Print at your home or organization's office on postcard paper, such as Avery® 5689 (4 cards per sheet, each card is 5-1/2" x 4-1/4") - Download the postcard file.
2. Use any local or online printer and postcard weight paper and cut to size - Download the postcard file.

If the postcards will be mailed individually, you can use the blank side of the postcards to write the address for your Member of Congress. If you are collecting a bunch of postcards for hand delivery or to mail together as a package, individuals could write the Member’s name followed by a personal note.

Posted by Mark Koenig at 09:11 PM in Human Rights | Permalink

Technorati Tags: International Committee of the Red Cross, National Religious Coalition Against Torture, prayer, stopping torture, torture, United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

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JUNE 26 IS UN INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORMTURE