

AIUSA'S STANCE

Torture is

ILLEGAL

IMMORAL

INEFFECTIVE

NO EXCEPTIONS

TAKE ACTION

Go to www.amnestyusa.org
Click Torture and Terror
Under Our Priorities you can...

- Petition your Congressperson
 - Write letters to the media
 - Participate in a **Counter Terror with Justice** event
 - Conduct a Teach In

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Go to www.amnestyusa.org and click Torture and Terror under "Our Priorities". You'll find more information and resources:

- Torture as defined by international convention and national law
- Torture, ill-treatment, denial of rights, and renditions sanctioned and practiced by the US and other governments in the "war on terror"
- Statements by US military, intelligence, and law enforcement personnel condemning torture
- Effects of torture on individuals, families, communities, and society

¹Martinez, A. (1992). The ecology of human development. In S. Turitz, P. Davis, & J. Heisel (Eds.), *Confronting the Heart of Darkness: An International Symposium on Torture in Guatemala* Report of the Conference held by the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, Washington, DC, November 13-15, 1992 (pp. 22-25). Washington, DC: Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA.

²The United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)

³Johnson, Douglas, (1991). Forward. In G. R. Randall & E. L. Lutz (Authors), *Serving Survivors of Torture* (pp. vii-xi). Washington DC: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

⁴Martinez, *ibid.*



COUNTER TERROR WITH JUSTICE

AIUSA's stance

Torture is
IMMORAL
ILLEGAL
INEFFECTIVE

Look inside to learn more about
... torture ... its perpetrators ... its targets
... how it's been outlawed
... who's still using it, and
... how you can make a difference

WHAT IS TORTURE?

“Torture is the worst experience a human being can endure and survive.”¹

- ***“Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person...”²***
- Torture includes **cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment**
- Torture can be **physical...**
- Torture can also be **psychological**, including watching others being tortured

TORTURE LASTS A LIFETIME...AND BEYOND

Torture's purpose is to change the behavior, the thinking patterns, and the personalities of the victims - many do not survive it. By taking advantage of the person's values and fears, torturers cut the sources of personal strength needed to resist and recover. Effects are physical and psychological.³

Torture is the systematic destruction of person, family, neighborhood, school, work, formal and informal organizations, and nation, with the purpose of controlling a population the state perceives to be dangerous...⁴

WHO IS TORTURED?

Anyone can be tortured:

- People who stand up for human rights
- Criminal suspects/prisoners
- People are also tortured at random, to strike terror in a community

Amnesty International has documented that from 1997 to mid-2000 there were reports of torture or ill-treatment by state officials in more than 150 countries. In more than 70, they were widespread or persistent. In more than 80 countries, people reportedly died as a result.

Torture is not just a random act performed by a few “bad apples”; it is often used by groups, governments, and other institutions in a systematic way.

TORTURE IS ILLEGAL

The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1984 and entered into force on June 26, 1987.

The prohibition against torture is part of “customary international law,” which means it is binding on all states, whether or not they have ratified any of the international human rights treaties.

The United States ratified the Convention against Torture in 1994. In addition, the US has prohibited torture in law, policy, and procedure. Here is a sampling:

- United States Bill of Rights (1789), Amendment 8: “...nor (shall) cruel or unusual punishment be inflicted.”
- War Crime Act of 1996: The War Crime Act of 1996 makes it a criminal offense for U.S. military personnel or U.S. nationals to commit war crimes regardless of the circumstances. War crimes include, but are not limited to:
 - ◉ Mutilation treatment
 - ◉ Torture
 - ◉ Attacks on personal dignity
 - ◉ Humiliating and degrading treatment

- America Convention on Human Rights (1969) “...All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.”

TORTURE IS INEFFECTIVE

Governments try to justify torture by claiming it will keep their citizens safe.

The Facts:

- It often yields false information; people will say anything to end the pain
- People die before “confessing”
- Torture takes longer than other interrogation methods
- Torture corrupts the torturer and his or her society

Torturers become targets for torture themselves. When the US government sanctions and engages in torture, it puts our citizens and troops at a higher risk for being tortured.

TORTURE IS IMMORAL

Torture undermines the moral and legal principles on which society is based. Moral authority and the ability to pressure allies are lost when world leaders resort to torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading practices.

