

**Press Release**

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**NATIONAL RELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN AGAINST TORTURE**

**NRCAT Decries President Bush's Executive Order Governing CIA Treatment of Detainees**

The following is a statement from Linda Gustitus, President, Board of Directors, National Religious Campaign Against Torture:

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture, a coalition of more than 125 religious organizations committed to ending U.S.-sponsored torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of detainees without exception, announced today its deep disappointment at the President's recently released Executive Order on the "alternative interrogation techniques" by the Central Intelligence Agency.

At the same time the Executive Order says it prohibits torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of detainees, it allows the CIA to continue to use undefined and undisclosed "alternative interrogation techniques," thereby calling into question whether the prohibition is real. In addition, the Executive Order does not close secret prisons nor prohibit sending detainees to countries which have been known to use torture in interrogation (rendition to torture), nor assure that every detainee has access to the International Red Cross.

With the President's Executive Order and the accompanying statements of the President and the Director of the CIA, the United States Government is reaffirming its policy of treating some human beings as outside the protection of any law and of using -- in the name of national security -- techniques that push (and may in fact exceed) the limits of the definition of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The U.S. government should be doing just the opposite -- affirming the right of every human being to be protected by the laws of civilized society and decrying any treatment that comes close to the edge of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

The issuance of this Executive Order is another shameful step in the U.S. treatment of detainees in the "war on terror." As people of faith -- who value our common humanity and our religious responsibility to treat all people with decency and the due process protections of civilized law -- we urge the President immediately to stop the use of interrogation techniques that are cruel and inhuman, to disclose what the "alternative interrogation techniques" are, to close all secret prisons, to stop rendition to countries that torture and to give the International Red Cross access to detainees held in U.S. custody. We call on Congress to prohibit the use of any CIA funds for programs or activities that fail to treat all persons detained with decency and the protections of due process.