



June is Torture Awareness Month

Donate today to support
Survivors of Torture
International!

Torture is a worldwide plague that often remains hidden from society, despite the long lasting physical and psychological effects on individuals and their families. We need you to help us raise awareness about torture and the importance of providing a safe haven for survivors of torture from all over the world. June 26 marks the 21st anniversary of June 26, 1987, the day the United Nations Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment entered force.

On Thursday, June 26, a group of SURVIVORS' clients, staff, and volunteers will participate in a Healing Club program that will involve a peaceful meditation circle and art projects. In addition, SURVIVORS' staff reached out to detained asylum seekers by mailing personalized note cards to all of SURVIVORS' clients who are in detention facilities. The cards explain the international significance of June 26 and emphasize the supportive community we have here for survivors of torture from all over the world.



To educate California senators and assemblymembers about the health access needs of torture survivors, SURVIVORS' board and staff members are meeting with legislators the week of June 26. The meetings are being held at offices in San Diego and Sacramento. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has issued a proclamation in support of June 26, 2008 that states, "On this day and all others, I encourage all Californians to help end persecution and take a stand to eliminate torture worldwide."

There in Sacramento, SURVIVORS will join with representatives from the other members of the California Consortium of Torture Treatment Centers, including: the Center for Justice and Accountability in San Francisco; the Center for Survivors of Torture in San Jose; the Institute for Redress and Recovery in Santa Clara; Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles; Program for Torture Victims in Los Angeles; and Survivors International in San Francisco.

[Please send an electronic postcard](#) and encourage your friends and family to support Survivors of Torture, International. Your help ensures that survivors of politically motivated torture living in San Diego County can continue to receive the specialized services they need.

News

[Detaining Asylum-Seekers and Torture Victims, Editorial by William J. Aceves](#) (*San Diego Union Tribune*: June 18, 2008)

An excerpt: "Asylum-seekers are regularly detained in facilities with convicted criminals. They are forced to undergo invasive searches and daily head counts. Even children are subjected to these security measures. Living conditions often fall well below U.S. and international standards. Medical treatment is spotty, and injuries may go untreated. Psychological care is seldom provided."

The plight of torture victims is particularly troubling. It is no surprise that many asylum-seekers are also victims of torture. But these victims are not receiving needed counseling while in detention. Studies have found high rates of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder among detained asylum-seekers. And the psychological harm worsens as the length of detention increases. Even the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has criticized this policy and the conditions of detention, arguing that they create a serious risk of psychological harm to asylum-seekers."

[Torture Awareness Month is an Opportunity to Live One's Faith](#) - .pdf (*The Southern Cross*: June 2008)

[Abuse of Detainees Routine at U.S. Bases in Afghanistan](#) (*Sacramento Bee*: June 16, 2008)

[Guantanamo Detainees Have Constitutional Rights, Supreme Court Says](#) (*Los Angeles Times*: June 13, 2008)

[Editorial: Dying in Detention](#) (*New York Times*: June 11, 2008)

[J.K. Rowling Discusses Her Experiences with Torture Survivors in her Speech at the Harvard Commencement](#) (*Harvard Magazine*: June 5, 2008)

[U.S. Nears Goal for Iraqi Refugees Admissions](#) (Associated Press: June 3, 2008)

Events

Public Hearings Sponsored by the California Commission on the Status of Women

Date: June 26, 2008

Time: 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Place: California Western School of Law's Moot Court Room
225 Cedar St., San Diego, CA 92101

Cost: Free

Details: The [California Commission on the Status of Women](#) will hold three public hearings throughout California to learn what issues women and girls are facing and what role the state can play in addressing them. Hearings will be made up entirely of testimony from individuals and organizations bringing their comments and recommendations to the Commission. Information from the hearings will help determine the Commission's legislative agenda, recommendations for administrative action and studies on issues impacting women and girls.

Alisa Shorago, an attorney and board member at SURVIVORS, is going to give the following recommendations to the state:

1. Consider specialized care especially in geographic regions where there are no treatment centers, such as the Central Valley;
2. Consider training for graduate students and professionals to identify torture survivors and respond accordingly. Professionals likely to encounter survivors include physicians, nurses, physical therapists, educators, and law enforcement officials;
3. Consider the increased revictimization of torture survivors. This often occurs because the offender believes the crime will go unreported due to victims' fear of authority figures and difficulty picking up social cues. As a result, torture survivors are more likely to be victims of crimes, including rapes, assaults, and other sexual abuse.

Human Rights Vigil with San Diego Pride and the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties

Date: July 18, 2008

Time: 6:30-7:45 p.m.

Place: The Pride Stage, Historic Balboa Park (Juniper and Balboa Dr)

Cost: Free

Details: The vigil will call on the San Diego community to bear witness to human rights abuses of LGBT people locally and globally, to educate and inspire them to action. In many countries, people are discriminated against and tortured on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. SURVIVORS' Associate Clinical Director Crystal Green will speak about this issue from her own experiences serving survivors of torture from the LGBT community. A global activist for social justice and LGBT equality, Peter

Tatchell, will be the featured speaker.

Ongoing Opportunities

- **Social Networks:** Connect with SURVIVORS on [Facebook](#), [MySpace](#), [YouTube](#), and [Del.icio.us](#).
- **Goodsearch:** Support SURVIVORS by searching or shopping online through [Goodsearch.com](#).
- **Ralphs & Food 4 Less:** Support SURVIVORS by linking your grocery store cards. Go to the [Ralphs](#) or [Food 4 Less](#) site, select "Participant," and enter # 84761.
- **Vehicle Donations:** Donate your car, truck, or RV through the [V-DAC program](#) to benefit SURVIVORS.
- **Recycle used Cell Phone and Ink Cartridges:** Do you have old cell phones, laser or ink cartridges? SURVIVORS collects these items to raise money for our programs. For more information contact [Charlene Pena](#) at (619) 278-2425.

Survivors of Torture, International:

- *Facilitates the healing of torture survivors and their families;*
- *Educates professionals and the public about torture and its consequences;*
- *Advocates for the abolition of torture.*



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