

Peace and Social Order Committee

Dear Friends,

Peace and Social Order Committee of Pacific Yearly Meeting will present for your consideration the following minute, based on one from Santa Monica Friends Meeting:

As Friends, we stand firmly opposed to torture and support the work of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (<http://www.nrcat.org/>) as well as of Quakers Initiative to End Torture (<http://www.quit-torture-now.org/>). We call on our elected officials, and especially the President of the United States, to bring to justice those who have authorized torture in violation of US and international law. We also want the United States government to stop preventing the victims of US-sponsored torture from seeking redress and just compensation in US courts. Finally, we support the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), which can help prevent torture and abuse by requiring a ratifying country to establish National Preventative Mechanisms (NPMs) to monitor the treatment of prisoners. In addition to the NPMs, OPCAT allows for international oversight of places of confinement to ensure that torture and other abuses are not occurring.

As Quakers, we feel that torture is a moral and religious issue. We believe that there is "that of God" in every human being and therefore everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Torture does incalculable and long-lasting damage to both the torturer and the torture victim. Torture erodes our nation's moral fibre, diminishes our moral standing in the world, incites retaliation, and puts at risk the lives of Americans abroad and at home.

We want this practice to end.