

**International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
Tuesday, June 26, 2007**

**Reverend Noel Chin,
Superintendent of the NY Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church**

Good Afternoon.

This afternoon I stand here to represent Bishop Jeremiah Park, the Episcopal leader of over 120,000 United Methodists in the New York Metropolitan area, upstate New York and Western Connecticut.

As United Methodist we are completely opposed to the use of torture. Our social principles, which guide our involvement in the social issues of our day, firmly states:

“The mistreatment or torture of persons by government for any purpose violates Christian teaching and must be condemned and/or opposed by Christians and churches wherever and whenever it occurs” (#164 A)

At the 2004 quadrennial gathering of United Methodist delegates from all over the world, we readopted and amended a previous resolution on human rights.

One paragraph of this resolution proclaims loudly:

“We call upon all governments to accept their obligations to uphold human rights by refraining from repression, torture, and violence against any person. We further call upon all governments to ratify and implement international conventions, covenants, and protocols addressing human rights in the context of justice and peace.” (252, p. 642)

Torture dehumanizes its victims. None of us has the right to rob any of God’s children of her/his humanity. If we attempt to do this we will be trying to take onto ourselves powers not assigned by the Creator.

When we as a nation embrace the use of torture for any reason it seriously compromises our ability to be a moral leader in a world in which the events of our time clearly call for our moral leadership.

We cannot deny the privilege we have in this world because of our economic advantage. We cannot deny the influence we have in this world because of our domination of the international media and our achievements in the development and use of technology. We cannot deny the admiration others in the global community have for us because of the basic principles of the guarantee of human rights for all that was the basis of the founding of our nation.

In these serious times when our world continues to witness acts of conflict and human repression in various forms, we must stand up as a moral leader. The use of torture seriously compromises our ability to be a moral leader on the world stage. The world is looking to us to be a positive example. We cannot let the world down. Let us say no to torture and yes to respect for the rights of all!