

# GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

QUARTERLY

SPRING 2007

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
 Citizens for  
Global Solutions

## It's Time to 'End Torture'



Citizens for Global Solutions has launched a bold new campaign, End Torture, in response to increasingly abusive and counterproductive interrogation techniques adopted by the United States government.

The End Torture campaign urges Congress to create an Independent Bipartisan Commission on Torture and U.S. Interrogation Policy. This Commission would bring together a broad range of experts from across the political spectrum. It would be tasked with objectively defining clear policy solutions to ensure that gross human rights violations committed by, and on behalf of, the U.S. will not continue.

Our campaign is predominantly an online initiative. It will educate and engage U.S. citizens, harnessing interactive technology and social networking channels. We have developed an innovative website ([www.endtorture.net](http://www.endtorture.net)) to serve as an effective educational tool for multiple audiences. The website is both informative and action orientated. It provides detailed information about torture, current legislation and has an "Updates" section, which is amended on a regular basis as we track news and policy developments around the world.

The website is built around a petition. Once a citizen adds their name, three letters are automatically sent - to their elected officials in the House and Senate

- calling for them to back the creation of an independent commission. Citizens for Global Solutions' members have been instrumental in bringing this key issue to their own communities. By doing so, we are demonstrating to Congress that the American public believes in human rights and the rule of law, and expect their elected officials to represent them accordingly.

Sadly, there is a need for such an initiative. Historically the U.S. has been a champion on human rights, as demonstrated by a longstanding commitment to the Geneva Conventions and United Nations Convention Against Torture. However, in recent years the sanctioning of unchecked executive power has brought about a number of damaging policy choices. The use of torture and other inhumane strategies masquerading behind the mantle of official U.S. interrogation policy has led friend and foe alike to question our commitment to human rights and the rule of law.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has publicly stated that the U.S. is "a country of laws." However, the Bush administration's foreign policy over the last five and a half years has been tarnished by a complete disregard for international law and established norms of government behavior.

Scandals such as the detainee abuse at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, the CIA

rendering of suspects to human rights abusing countries like Syria and Egypt and imprisonment of people without charge or due process, have all become synonymous with U.S. policy in recent years. The sanctioning of these abusive strategies has done serious damage to the reputation and integrity of our country.

More to the point, a recent study by the Intelligence Science Board, sponsored by the Defense Intelligence Agency, found that there is no credible scientific evidence to back up the use of controversial interrogation techniques in order to acquire information.

Opponents of this Commission may argue either that Congress has addressed the issue of torture or that analysis of this depth is not necessary. To either argument, the response is the same: The use of torture by, on behalf of, or as a consequence of U.S. policy decisions in this area, has resulted in massive human rights violations, significant damage to the image of our country and has placed U.S. service members at risk across the globe. For all of those reasons, and because we need to publicly recommit our nation to human rights and the rule of law, we need to create this Commission. ●

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*Contributing Writer: Tom Moran*  
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# Raj Purohit

Senior Fellow, International Law & Justice

**R**aj Purohit, Senior Fellow at Citizens for Global Solutions, is a specialist in International Law and Justice. Prior to joining our staff in 2005, he was Legislative Director for Human Rights First, where he represented them in a range of coalitions, including the Washington Working Group on the International Criminal Court, and was a media spokesperson. He also has served as Legislative Director for the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and as Director of Legal Services at the Center on Conscience and War.

Raj received his Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) from Sussex University (1995) and his Master of Laws (LL.M.) in International Legal Studies from American University, Washington College of Law (1997), where he also teaches. He is our organization's point person for the [www.endtorture.net](http://www.endtorture.net) initiative and can be reached at [rpurohit@globalsolutions.org](mailto:rpurohit@globalsolutions.org).

## Why do you think we need an Independent Bipartisan Commission on Torture and U.S. Interrogation Policy?

Despite two sustained efforts by civil society, retired military leaders and a few bipartisan legislators, the U.S. government has failed to seriously grapple with the ramifications of torture and interrogation. In its second effort, Congress passed the Military Commissions Act of 2006 and failed to address the problem. In fact, this bill further erodes global trust in the U.S. by giving the president sweeping discretion in the arena of interrogation technique assessment. Unfortunately, it seems too much to ask that Congress, unassisted, engage the White House and effectively tackle an issue that has stymied it twice in recent years.

At this juncture, it seems that the wisest course of action is for the new Congress to create an Independent Bipartisan Commission on Torture and U.S. Interrogation Policy; it is past time that the U.S. comprehensively address the scandals of Abu Ghraib and beyond.

## What would the Commission look like?

An Independent Bipartisan Commission on Torture and U.S. Interrogation Policy would bring together a broad range of experts. Working together they would be able to collectively comprehend the totality of the issue, its consequences and necessary policy prescriptions. The experts would be drawn from

the intelligence, foreign policy, law enforcement, military, veterans, legal and human rights community. Additional members could include representatives of the faith community, theologians, cultural specialists and historians.

## What would it do?

The mandate for the Commission would be, by necessity, broad. Since the issue of torture and interrogation penetrated the public conscience in early 2004, when the Abu Ghraib Iraqi prison scandal became global front page news, the story has grown in complexity. We now know that the U.S. military initially started investigating crimes committed by its personnel at Abu Ghraib in 2003. In Iraq, horror stories about the use of torture by U.S. military were prevalent over a year before the first Abu Ghraib pictures were publicly seen.

In addition to the appropriate, and necessary, focus on U.S. prisons in Iraq, the Commission would also be charged with investigating torture in Afghanistan, the CIA secret prison network, the U.S. facilities at Guantanamo, the use of rendition as a counter-terror tactic by the U.S., opportunistic use of torture by other governments and the use of torture in the U.S.

## What do you think will be the impact of recent developments on rendition practices across the European Union and what will this mean more broadly for U.S. interrogation policy?

I think that the CIA must be worried about using the EU as either a stop-over or final destination for its future renditions because prosecutors are onto them. Frankly, U.S. policymakers should be worried as we are seeing hard-nosed prosecutors in Germany and Italy start the process of bringing to trial CIA agents involved in the kidnappings.

## Do you think we can change U.S. policy and end the use of torture?

I believe that we can. More and more groups and individuals are starting to speak out on the issue of torture. These groups include youth, veterans, members of the faith community and human rights activists. One way to help is to sign our petition at the [www.endtorture.net](http://www.endtorture.net) website urging Congress to set up a Commission. You can also ask your local council or state legislature to pass a resolution supporting the formation of a Commission. Get together with your community, use the tools we have on our main website [www.globalsolutions.org](http://www.globalsolutions.org) and take action. The tide is moving in our direction and together we can create change. 🌟



# LEGACY

## What will be yours?

*What will you bequeath to future generations? How will the ideals you cherish be preserved? Who will work on your behalf for the sake of your grandchildren, your community and your world?*

*Citizens for Global Solutions will.*

With your support, Citizens for Global Solutions and the Global Solutions Education Fund will endure as a powerful voice, taking a stand for the beliefs you hold so dear. Not just today, but tomorrow too.

**Citizens for Global Solutions: Building peace, justice and freedom in a democratically governed world.**

For more information about remembering the Global Solutions Education Fund in your will or estate, please contact:

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## Energy Leadership – Not Energy Isolationism

From the Oscars to the president's State of the Union address, everyone is talking about the need for America to reduce its dependence on foreign oil and other fossil fuels. More often than not, the solution proposed is something called energy independence.

But what exactly does that term mean? What are we declaring independence from? And why? Such questions aren't often asked in the current debate – and even less frequently answered.

Those advocating energy independence usually focus on the need to free the United States from its reliance on foreign oil for roughly 60 percent of its energy needs. That is a laudable and worthwhile goal. But the real question is not what countries our oil comes from, but rather what kind of fuel our energy comes from. If we fail to make that distinction, then what some people call energy independence is in fact nothing more than energy isolationism.

If the U.S. stopped importing oil tomorrow, conflicts over oil wouldn't end. Billions of people would still struggle to get by without electricity. Global competition for limited resources would still be a major challenge. The rest of the world would remain addicted to oil. And neither our economy nor what passes as our foreign policy these days would be freed from oil's pernicious influence.

Ending our dependence on foreign oil will do nothing to stop global warming. For governments whose citizens are living in poverty, economic development – most likely fueled by oil and coal – remains their top priority. If the United States turns inward for its energy solutions, we would do nothing to help these governments avoid the same mistakes we've already made. And we would do nothing to prevent either the new greenhouse gas emissions or pollution that such fossil fuel-driven development would generate.

For far too long, the United States has abdicated its leadership on climate change. We need our government to be a shining example for the rest of the world, not only cutting our own emissions but also helping to design international norms that everyone can support. Doing so will make it much more likely that other governments will follow our lead – especially if we share the technologies that will allow their economies to grow without putting either the environment or their own citizens' health at risk.

Ending our dependence on foreign oil also will do nothing to change the corrosive effect fossil fuels have had on U.S. foreign policy. Our thirst for oil has led us to prop up dictatorships and tolerate conflict. We have turned a blind eye to human rights abuses. We have not hesitated to use military force – or the threat of military force – to protect access to oil and gas reserves. But even if the United States walked away from foreign oil tomorrow, other governments would step in and make the same mistakes. The problems – and America's responsibility – would not go away.

If you doubt the cost of the world's fossil fuel habit, look at Darfur. Years ago, Western oil companies pulled out of Sudan in response to outrage over the government's horrific human rights record. In response, China and Malaysia stepped in, and hard currency has continued to pour into the Sudanese government's coffers. Sudan has the funds it needs to pursue its genocidal policies and China, reluctant to jeopardize its new source, has used the threat of a Security Council veto to prevent U.N. action to end the genocide.

The real issue is not whether we can end our dependence on imported oil, but rather whether we can reverse the disastrous global economic, environmental and security consequences of the world's continued reliance on carbon-producing forms of energy. To do so will require seeking freedom from fossil fuels,

not just for the U.S., but for the world.

As the world's largest consumer of energy, we have both a unique opportunity and a real responsibility to shape the world's energy future. We should be pushing the world to work together to make the transition to new technologies. We should be calling for new international mechanisms that can help us face the challenge of climate change without leaving the world's poor behind.

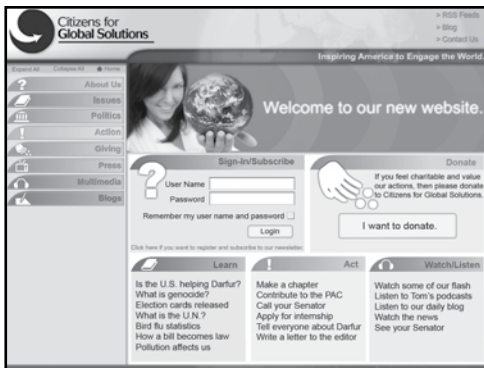
Imagine what would have happened sixty-five years ago if, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt had announced that our response would be to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world. Doing so would have given hope to our enemies, caused our friends to despair and done nothing to make us safer or more secure.

Today, the challenge may not be as immediate or as stark, but the potential damage could be as great. If we pursue a policy of energy isolationism, saving ourselves at the cost of the suffering of others, we will only increase our vulnerability to the very dangers we hope to avoid. Like a child closing his bedroom door to keep the monsters out, we will find that we are alone in the dark, and the monsters are still under the bed.

Let us choose a different path. Let us demonstrate that we can find real solutions to the world's energy challenges. Let us once again inspire the world not merely with our rhetoric, but with our actions. We are up to this challenge. We have led the world before. We can do it again. ☺

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-Charles J. Brown  
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## Check it Out!

We are excited to announce that the brand new Citizens for Global Solutions website is in the final stages of development. We anticipate its launch this spring. Here is a preview of what you can expect...

- a new look and feel
- simplified navigation
- expanded content
- enhanced grassroots action
- increased personalization

## Flash Movie Contest 2007

Our highly acclaimed Flash Movie Contest is back with a vengeance! The third installment asks young people to "Think Globally, Act Locally." Top prizes range from \$500 to \$2,000. *Deadline is April 1st.* Check the website for details!

[www.globalsolutions.org](http://www.globalsolutions.org)



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in a Democratically Governed World

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