



THE SURVIVOR

State Legislative Resolution Highlights Torture Survivors and Treatment



San Diego area Senators Joel Anderson (far left) and Christine Kehoe (far right) greet torture survivors and representatives from the California Consortium of Torture Treatment Centers (CCTTC) on the California Senate Floor. SURVIVORS' Executive Director Kathi Anderson is third from left in the back row.

California legislators from both parties and across the state have rallied behind a resolution acknowledging the presence of torture survivors living here and celebrating the work of the state's torture treatment centers. The measure is authored by state senator, Christine Kehoe, D-San Diego, and coauthored by state senator, Joel Anderson, R-Alpine.

"Whereas approximately 100,000 residents of the State of California have found refuge here after enduring politically motivated torture in their home countries," the measure begins, marking a rare instance in which public officials have openly recognized just how large the torture survivor population is.

Senate Joint Resolution 6, or SJR 6, as the measure is formally known, goes on to highlight the contributions torture survivors have made to Cali-

fornia in spite of the lingering effects of torture. It also recounts California's unique and critical role in the development of the torture treatment field, another point that rarely garners much public attention.

"SJR 6 is, first and foremost, an opportunity to better inform elected officials and the public about the presence of torture survivors in California and this great network of torture treatment centers we have operating here," said Timothy Griffiths, government affairs director for SURVIVORS, which is one of the organizations sponsoring the resolution. "We've been talking about SJR 6 around the Capitol and showing people the data and their jaws drop. Most people have no idea just how prevalent torture survivors are in our communities. SJR 6 is all about changing that."

The response, says Griffiths, has been overwhelmingly positive. "This is a truly bipartisan measure. We have numerous coauthors from across the state. At a time when the word torture has taken on political overtones domestically, it's heartening to know that people remain sympathetic to survivors of international, politically motivated torture and can rally behind the cause of assisting in their healing."

Senate Joint Resolution 6 passed the State Senate 39-0 on May 9th and cleared the State Assembly on consent June 27th. The final version will be transmitted to the United States Congress as an expression of California's interest in the issue. •

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Congressman Hunter, Staffer Assist SURVIVORS

For torture survivors, the road to healing can be full of complicated twists and turns, not the least of which come in the form of the federal government's complex refugee resettlement and immigration system. Navigating that path requires resilience and tenacity. It also sure doesn't hurt to have capable, caring people on your side.

Enter local Congressional district office representative Holly Hough. Hough works the East County district of Duncan D. Hunter, R. Under his leadership, Hough has taken notice of San Diego County's emergence as the refugee resettlement capital of the nation and has made assisting refugees with federal agencies an integral part of the constituent services her office provides.

"We have a tremendous amount of refugee-related casework," says Hough, who worked for former

Hunter/Hough, continued on page 3

Mission Statement

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.

Congresswoman Davis and Staff Assist SURVIVORS

Maybe it's her background in social work or her time living abroad. Whatever the motivation, Representative Susan Davis, D-San Diego, has been a good friend to SURVIVORS since her election to Congress in 2000.

Each year for the past several years, Davis and her staff have co-

ordinated Congressional letters of support for SURVIVORS' federal grant applications and helped the organization clear up bureaucratic snags in Washington, D.C. Then, in 2009, when SURVIVORS lost a key federal grant, Davis was instrumental in securing alternative resources that

Davis/Staff, continued on page 4

Who Advocates For Our Clients?

By Jeanette Barrack, board chairperson, and Kathi Anderson, executive director

Since "lawyer" is a synonym for advocate, you might think first of the attorneys who help our clients navigate the legal system. And you'd be right. But then you might think of the physicians, therapists, and psychiatrists who have to complete hours of specialized training in order to help/advocate for clients. And you'd be right. Then, there are the many volunteers who serve as mentors and those people who contribute money to support all these services. And you'd be right. Plus the clients who are themselves advocates - by seeking asylum, asking for help, and working toward their own recovery. And you'd be right again.

But perhaps you have not considered another segment of the population — government officials, both elected and appointed. These are the people we want to recognize, and to thank in this column. In 1997, the United Nations established June 26th as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Through this action, this world body acknowledged the ugly fact that some governments engage in torture, and that the victims of this torture

deserve recognition and support.

This year, our legislature will declare June 26th a Day in Support of Victims of Torture in California. At a time when our state and our nation are dealing with many contentious issues, it is heartening to see our legislators come together on a bipartisan basis to support this resolution. By making a public statement about the importance of this issue, by recognizing the services provided by volunteers, both professionals and lay persons, and by welcoming the survivors as valuable, contributing members of our state, our legislators are advocates. And many legislators also provide direct services to survivors by helping them negotiate the regulations in a governmental system that is very different from the ones they fled. To experience these representatives of the government as advocates, rather than as oppressors is proof to our clients that they are indeed living in a better place. •

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Survivors of Torture, International *About Us*

Survivors of Torture, International was incorporated in February 1997 in response to a need in our community to bring assistance to the segment of the population that struggles with the wounds of politically motivated torture. It is estimated that at least 11,000 survivors of torture live in San Diego County and 500,000 live in the United States. Torture survivors may be left with lifelong physical and mental health problems if not treated by trained professionals.

Since 1997, SURVIVORS has engaged a caring network of professionals — board members, interpreters, therapists, physicians, dentists — and all of you in the community who give support and encouragement in many ways. Your support enables us to help torture survivors rebuild their lives. Treatment helps survivors heal, reconnect with their families, go back to school, and find employment.

Ninety-one cents of every dollar raised goes directly to SURVIVORS' programs.

Our Federal Tax ID Number is 33-0743869. Learn more at www.notorture.org. •

Survivors of Torture, International *Contact Information*

San Diego Office (Headquarters)

P. O. Box 151240, San Diego, CA 92175-1240 / P: 619.278.2400 / Fax: 619.294.9405 / survivors@notorture.org

Kathi Anderson, MA, NCC / *Executive Director* / P: 619.278.2407 / Fax: 619.294.9429 / kanderson@notorture.org

Mahvash Alami, PhD / *Program Manager* / P: 619.278.2403 / malami@notorture.org

Leilani Amiling / *Senior Administrative Assistant* / P: 619.278.2424 / lamiling@notorture.org

Suzanne Bacon, MA / *Individual Giving & Communications Coordinator* / P: 619.278.2421 / sbacon@notorture.org

Tricia Hilliard, MSW / *Senior Mental Health Clinician* / P: 619.278.2404 / thilliard@notorture.org

Alexey Kirillov / *Finance Manager* / P: 619.278.2406 / akirillov@notorture.org

Jan McKeel / *Grants & Data Manager* / P: 619.278.2422 / jmckeel@notorture.org

Ramsey Salem, MPH / *Medical Services Coordinator* / P: 619.278.2412 / rsalem@notorture.org

Timothy Griffiths, Esq. / *Government Affairs Director* / tgriffiths@notorture.org (Sacramento Office)

Hunter/Hough, cont. from page 1

Congressman Duncan L. Hunter from 2006 until he retired at the end of 2008, and has been working for Congressman Duncan D. Hunter since 2008. "It includes cases involving individuals that are still overseas, waiting on refugee status, family members concerned about loved ones still being there and related immigrant casework with newly arrived people."

For SURVIVORS' clients, this kind of assistance can be vital and affirming. Hough first became acquainted with SURVIVORS through a visit from Executive Director Kathi Anderson, and casework she did on behalf of a SURVIVORS' client. That client had been tortured under Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq.

"He came here because he had a wife and children who needed to come to the United States. I was able to see how Survivors of Torture, International was helpful to this individual who had no one here at the time. His whole family was overseas and he was really working on trying to rebuild his life."

Congressional offices can't dictate a particular outcome to the federal agencies, of course, but they can help focus bureaucrats' attention on an issue and try to move things along.

"When someone comes to us, it's usually because there is a problem, a speedbump, gridlock, or perhaps a wrong determination by an agency," Hough says. "One of the biggest things I try to do is streamline the process for folks that have already had tremendous hardships in their life. Work permits, green cards, getting family members here; all of that has a tremendous impact and we're aware of that."

In addition to her work on behalf of constituents, Hough is a regular participant in San Diego's monthly Refugee Forum, where service providers and community members gather to identify and resolve recurring refugee resettlement problems. While Hough is often the face people see, she is quick to point out that awareness and concern about refugee issues is close to her boss' heart.

~My healing place... ~

The Healing Corner

Do you have a special place that makes you feel relaxed? Being relaxed means that your body can better use its natural healing powers. Think about the natural way your body heals from a cut or scrape. Usually our bodies can naturally heal from these cuts without our thinking about it. Researchers believe that being relaxed helps our bodies access that healing power more easily. One way to help our bodies is by relaxing and going to or imagining a "healing place." Your healing place can be a place that makes you feel very relaxed. Is it inside a comfortable, cozy sunshine-filled room? Maybe it is outside in a field of flowers with a lake or river nearby. Imagine or discover your healing place and take some time to go there physically or in your mind and just feel relaxed. Help your body and mind heal through relaxation!

Are you a client of SURVIVORS? Make sure to check in with our clinical team to see what upcoming Healing Club activities we have planned. In our writing club you could write about your healing place. Come join us! Call 619-278-2400 or email survivors@notorture.org to find out when the next Healing Club activity is. •

...is filled with flowers!

"Congressman Hunter's wife came to the United States as a refugee," Hough explains. "She, her father, mother, and her sister escaped from communist Poland. They ran for it once near the Italian border, lived in a refugee camp in Italy for awhile, and were eventually sponsored to come here by a family in San Diego that didn't even know them. So, he's aware of the impact of the need to leave a situation that is not healthy and to come to the US and look for a better life because of that."

For SURVIVORS and its clients, this sort of engagement and understanding is important.

"Our local Congressional representatives are invaluable assets to SURVIVORS' work and to the broader refugee resettlement effort in our area," says Kathi Anderson, SURVIVORS' executive director. "Holly [Hough] is a real credit to Congressman Hunter. We are really fortunate here in San Diego to have this level of knowledge of and support for refugees and survivors of torture among our Congressional delegates and their staff, regardless of party. That doesn't exist everywhere and it makes a big difference." •

A Client's Thoughts

The following are thoughts shared from a client who recently lost her sight

There are two opposite sides to life. We see this expressed in our vision of heaven and hell. Light and dark. Life and death. It's important for a person to experience both sides to this life because it helps us to realize there is more in life than what can be seen. When the two sides come together, an energy is created that helps us to move. This knowledge helps us to move forward, upward, onward. Our spirit can then be free to move on to whatever comes next.

A week ago I could see with my eyes, but I woke up and my sight had been taken away. What started out as a frightening experience I now understand to be a privilege, a gift that has been provided to me. When you become blind you realize that all the energy that had previously moved your body each day was borrowed energy. From living and nonliving things. And one day you have to give it back, or it will be taken from you anyway. You will find yourself with no energy and you will be left alone like a tree in the desert. We all need energy to live, but we are not supposed to own it. We must understand it is borrowed and needs to be used wisely, it is not ours to misuse or abuse. I know this now. I wish for you to know it, too. •

Client Demographics

64 new clients were served
Jan. 1, 2011 - May 31, 2011

Geographic Origins

Africa	26
Asia	3
Eastern Europe	2
Latin America	8
Middle East	25

Ages	Gender	
0-20	7 Males	32
21-30	29 Females	32
31-40	7	
41-50	9 Detained	24
51-60	7 Nondetained	40
61 +	5	

Davis/Staff, cont. from page 1

allowed SURVIVORS to continue to serve clients with minimal interruption.

"Congresswoman Davis has been an amazing supporter of our work and our clients," says Kathi Anderson, executive director of SURVIVORS. "I've long since lost count of the times she has come to our aid. It's no exaggeration to say we probably would not be here today if it were not for her."

Although SURVIVORS serves clients from throughout San Diego County, its headquarters sit in Davis' district, so Davis' office typically takes the lead on coordinating actions in support of SURVIVORS among the San Diego Congressional delegation.

Anderson especially appreciates the efforts of Davis staffers Suzanne Swink, who operates out of Davis' Washington, D.C. office, and Deanneka Goodwin, Davis' longtime district office representative.

"We're lucky that Congresswoman Davis chose such dedicated people," says Anderson. "Deanneka is always looking for ways that the congresswoman can support SURVIVORS' work locally, and whenever we need assistance in D.C., we can count on Suzanne to help get things done on our behalf."

"We receive some public money and we are accountable for that," explains Anderson. "It's our job to make sure our Congressional representatives know what we're doing and that the quality of our work merits their support. There are a thousand demands on their attention coming from every direction, and yet Congresswoman Davis and her staff have consistently been there for SURVIVORS and our clients."

"When you consider that the vast majority of our clients won't be able to vote for years, it's all the more impressive. This is clearly something they do from the heart." •

Journal Israel: Board Member Jim Jaranson Visits Jerusalem on Behalf of IRCT

SURVIVORS' board member Jim Jaranson, M.D. was asked by the International Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), based in Copenhagen, Denmark, to participate in their Forensic Evaluation Against Torture (FEAT) project, funded by the European Union. Jaranson and Sidsel Rogde, M.D., a forensic physician from the Institute of Forensic Medicine at the University of Oslo in Norway, met in Jerusalem to evaluate several prisoners for the psychological and physical effects of alleged torture. They used the Istanbul Protocol for documentation, an instrument approved by the United Nations. Jaranson was one of the original 70 experts invited to work on the development of the Istanbul Protocol and Rogde was a member of the FEAT project. With the unrest in nearby Middle Eastern and North



Sidsel Rogde, M.D. and Jim Jaranson, M.D. in the old city of Jerusalem

African countries, there were concerns about the safety of taking this trip, but both doctors felt it was important to do this work. The following are excerpts from Jaranson's journal.

The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) in Jerusalem hosted us. PCATI was started in 1990 by Jewish and Palestinian lawyers, doctors, and nurses who were outraged at the findings by the Landau Commission that 85%

of prisoners in Israeli custody were subjected to torture, despite the laws against it. After many years of effort by PCATI and other groups, the Israeli Supreme Court in 1999 decided that interrogation must be free of torture "except in rare cases of necessity." Three of the four torture techniques were pronounced illegal, except for sleep deprivation. Up to 90 days of incommunicado

Journal Israel continued on page 5

Journal Israel, cont. from page 4

detention was allowed.

PCATI staff is very concerned about the frequent arrests of Palestinian boys and men who are then subjected to interrogation by Israeli security forces and sometimes incarceration in Israeli prisons. We spent three days interviewing several of these former prisoners in their home towns. All subjects had been allegedly tortured by Israeli security forces and were selected for interview by PCATI because their cases could help provide documentation in support of change in Israeli law and practices involving torture. The subjects had usually been arrested for throwing rocks at homes or at people or for belonging to an outlawed political organization. Our responsibility was to document torture using the Istanbul Protocol, not to determine whether the charges were justified.

The subjects were Palestinian males in their late teens or twenties, unmarried, poorly educated, either unemployed or underemployed, living with their parents, siblings, and extended family. They had often been beaten by soldiers during the arrest, by security forces during interrogation, or by guards in prison. In

prison, subjects were frequently told that their relatives had also been arrested and that only by their confessing would these relatives be released. Other forms of psychological torture included isolation, lack of light, sleep deprivation, and confined quarters. Subjects were often blindfolded, shackled, and then transferred from facility to facility. Trauma included sitting on chairs in painful positions and beatings not only to the torso and limbs, but on the head, at times to the point of losing consciousness. Doctors or other health professionals rarely saw the subjects and, if they did, seldom documented or treated any injuries. Often the subjects had suffered other significant trauma prior to their arrests, such as stabbings or gunshot wounds, and some of these injuries left scars. Psychiatric consequences included symptoms of major depression and posttraumatic stress, which are often seen in survivors of torture treated in resettlement countries such as the United States.

Unfortunately, few resources are available to help the individuals we interviewed. Often they are poorly employed, in part because they can no longer perform the higher paying

jobs that require physical stamina due to injuries incurred after their arrest. They cannot afford adequate living arrangements or pay for medications. This makes the job of the PCATI and other lawyers challenging and frustrating, often resulting in their own vicarious trauma.

During our stay we also trained about 30 human rights lawyers and a psychologist about both the methods and the consequences of torture. Three days after our return, the central bus station, not far from our hotel in Jerusalem, was bombed, injuring two dozen and killing one person. The trip to Israel was indeed a learning experience in a potentially risky environment. •

June is Torture Awareness Month

SURVIVORS Welcomes New Staff



Martina Fait, M.D.

SURVIVORS is excited to welcome our new psychiatrist, Dr. Martina Fait; program manager Dr. Mahvash Alami; and senior administrative assistant, Leilani Amiling.

Dr. Fait attended George Washington University for medi-

cal school and did her residency at the University of California, Davis in psychiatry. She currently practices in North County and is also very excited to be here.

Dr. Alami received her Ph.D. in psychology from Alliant International University and obtained her license as a psychologist in July 2004. She is certified in domestic violence work and psycho-social rehabilitation. She has been providing treatment to survivors of torture for the past 20 years. She has experience working in crisis environments, an in-patient psychiatric hospital, outpatient programs, and private practice. She is bilingual and speaks Farsi (Persian).

Leilani brings to SURVIVORS extensive experience in office administration

and a passion for helping refugees and asylum seekers in need. She studied sociology at San Diego State University and continues to be active in volunteering her time towards ending human trafficking. •



Mahvash Alami, Ph.D. and Leilani Amiling

Thank you to all of our community supporters who donate their time, skills, and goods!

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We are grateful for your generous support. The lists cover support received January 1, 2011 - May 31, 2011. We apologize for any errors or omissions and extend our gratitude for support that may not have been recognized. (Please contact Suzanne at 619-278-2421 for corrections.) *

SURVIVORS is now accepting donations. Use the enclosed envelope, visit our website at www.notorture.org, or contact us at 619-278-2400 to make a financial donation or to donate your time, services, or goods. Thank you for your support!

SURVIVORS' Wish List

- New hygiene items (shampoo, tooth paste, etc.) to give to our clients. Or consider doing a hygiene items drive!
- Tickets to outings or events for clients
- Volunteer drivers to take clients to appointments
- Blank books or journals for our client writing group
- Volunteer locksmith to re-key cabinets
- "Befrienders" in SURVIVORS' Friendship Circle (where San Diegans meet in social settings with our clients)
- Speaking engagements at your organization, church, club, etc.
- "Ambassadors" to help us invite people to our Journey to Healing Tours
- Clinicians, especially in East County (psychologists, LCSWs and MFTs)
- Own rather than rent space for our programs & services

Please contact Suzanne if you can help (619-278-2421 or sbacon@notorture.)

SURVIVORS Thanks Spring Public Policy Interns



Kimberly Rosenberger Omar Qureshi

Two public policy interns helped boost SURVIVORS' advocacy mission this spring. Operating out of San Diego, UCSD student Omar Qureshi initiated new relationships with several local elected officials, raising awareness about the presence and needs of torture survivors in our region. Highlights of Qureshi's work included meeting with El Cajon Mayor Mark Lewis, who went on to support an important SURVIVORS' initiative, and securing a City of San Diego Proclamation declaring June 26, 2011, a Day in Support of Survivors of Torture. While Qureshi's advocacy work with SURVIVORS now comes to an end, he plans to continue with us as a participant

in the Befriender program.

Working out of the Sacramento field office, McGeorge Law School student Kimberly Rosenberger teamed with SURVIVORS' government affairs director to help advance legislative measures intended to address the needs of torture survivors. On the state level, Rosenberger researched and wrote legal memoranda seeking to convince the Senate Business and Professions Committee to strengthen laws prohibiting the participation of California-licensed medical professionals in the use of torture. She was also instrumental in convincing several state legislators to coauthor a state resolution regarding torture survivors and their treatment in our state. Finally, on the federal level, Rosenberger helped promote the Domestic Refugee Reform and Modernization Act among California's Congressional delegation. We're pleased to report that Kim has secured summer funding that will enable her to extend her internship with SURVIVORS through the summer.*

Thank you to all of our financial supporters!

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 Calvary Lutheran Church, Solana Beach
 Change A Life Foundation
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Human & Civil Rights Organizations of America, a Federation in the Combined Federal Campaign
 Lawyers Club of San Diego Fund for Justice at The San Diego Foundation
 Price Family Charitable Fund
 San Diego County Employees Charitable Organization (CECO)
 St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, San Diego

Because of you, survivors are rebuilding their lives. We are grateful. **These lists cover the period of January 1, 2011, through May 31, 2011.** We apologize for any errors or omissions and extend our gratitude for support that may not have been recognized. (Please contact Suzanne 619-278-2421 for corrections.)*

St. Martin of Tours Church, La Mesa
 The Kroger Company
 The California Endowment
 The William H. Donner Foundation
 United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement

Getting the Most Out of Your Donations

Did you ever wonder how much of your donation goes to direct services? In the case of Survivors of Torture, International, our 2010 audit shows that 91 cents of every dollar goes directly to serving torture survivors. We are very proud of our financial stewardship. As part of that, we want to let our supporters know about other aspects of making donations. For example, there may be costs to a nonprofit for the process or convenience of receiving a donation. Most credit card donation systems charge a small fee (3-4%) to process a donation. That means if you make a donation of \$100, the nonprofit receives somewhere between \$96 and \$97.

As an organization, we want to provide convenient, easy ways for people to make donations, while maximizing their dollars. We shop around to find the payment services with the lowest fees. "It can be upsetting to learn that dollars are being subtracted from your donation. The convenience is nice, but especially when you are making a

larger donation, you may want to consider the way you do it," said SURVIVORS' staff member Suzanne Bacon. This is not something unique to SURVIVORS; all nonprofits are charged this fee, unless they can arrange a special deal.

From the chart on the right, you can see the types of fees associated with each type of giving. SURVIVORS received a special grant from Google Grants that allows all donations made through Google Checkout on www.notorture.org to have no convenience fee until the end of November, 2011. It has been a very valuable gift from Google that equates to hundreds of dollars that can go towards client services. If you are aware of other options for giving with no fees or if you have questions, please contact Suzanne Bacon 619-278-2421 or sbacon@notorture.org.

Type of Service	Fee
Google Checkout	No fee through Nov. 2011
Check mailed to SURVIVORS	No fee
Paypal or credit card	3-4%
Bill pay through your bank	No fee to SURVIVORS; check with your bank to see if there are fees for you
Repeat donations through bank account	25 cents per transaction
Matching gifts	No fee for SURVIVORS
United Way	84% goes to SURVIVORS

What did you do the last time you were at SURVIVORS? (Question asked of clients)

The staff was helping me about different educational programs. It was really good because I was looking for a program on justice and peace, but I didn't know how to find it. Now I feel good. My expectations have been met. It gives me a good feeling. After I was granted asylum, education was my focus and working. I got positive impressions and they made a lot of contacts for me. It shows the staff cares for me. There are people here who care about you and help you to find out things. That's cool.

-- A male client from Africa

Today I had my medical evaluation for my asylum case. I saw a doctor who examined me and asked me questions about my experiences. The doctor said he will write a report that the judge will use to decide about my case. The staff told me that now I am a client and that I can use any of the services. I am hopeful for my asylum case.

--A male client from Central America

I came to celebrate with the staff and my befriender because I just won my asylum case! It was so long, but now I am so happy. I hope I can find my family now. That is my dream.

--A female client from Africa

I came to see my therapist. It is a long time I have been seeing her now. She knows me so well and helps me so much. And tomorrow I will go to the writing group for the first time!

--A female client from South America

I am new at SURVIVORS. I saw the therapist and also got help with my medical appointments. There are many things I don't know because I am new here, but I always get help when I go to SURVIVORS.

--A female client from the Middle East

The Strength to Survive. The Power to Heal

Learn more about SURVIVORS at our Journey to Healing Tours, twice a month. Upcoming dates: July 26, 8:00-9:00 a.m.; August 9, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; August 23, 8:00-9:00 a.m. For more information go to www.notorture.org/events or call 619-278-2421.

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Survivors of Torture, International
P.O. Box 151240
San Diego, CA 92175-1240

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