



Interfaith Communities United For Justice And Peace

817 W. 34th St. Los Angeles, CA 90089

ICUJP@pacbell.net www.icujp.org 213.748.1643

Religious Communities must stop blessing war and violence!

ICUJP Statement Denouncing the School of the Americas (SOA) – Adopted July 14, 2006

It is our responsibility as people of faith and conscience to speak out against violence, torture, and oppression wherever they occur.

We denounce the School of the Americas (SOA), or, as the US Government has renamed it, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The SOA has become a symbol of US intervention in the affairs of Spanish speaking countries in Central and South America. Hallmarks of our intervention in Latin America are torture, suppression of dissent, support for ruthless dictators, and educating the military in torture and murder.

Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.) has introduced HR1217, also known as the Latin America Military Training Review Act of 2005. HR 1217 would suspend operation of the school for six months and authorize a Congressional committee to review the history, practices, training manuals, and civil rights violations caused by SOA. Under HR 1217, the committee will make a "recommendation for action in response to any violations of human rights to which training the [SOA] contributed."

We are in favor of efforts by Congress to stop and examine the practices of the SOA. Religious communities must stop blessing war, torture, and violence everywhere. To remain silent is to give legitimacy to this intolerable institution.

For more information on efforts to close the SOA, see the SOA Watch web site at www.soaw.org.