



Defending civil liberties in the United States and around the world is one aspect of UUSC's human rights work. A delegation of UUSC staff, members and supporters acted as observers during Guatemala's presidential election in 2003. (Photo by Cindy Karp/UUSC)

## Putting values into action for human rights

When we join hands together for human rights and social justice, we can envision a world free from oppression and injustice, where all can realize their full human rights. The pursuit of justice is work done by many communities in partnership, each contributing something unique.

The work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee began over 65 years ago, when our founders went to Europe to rescue victims of Nazi persecution. Today, we work in the United States and around the world, engaging our members and supporters to be activists; partnering with communities and organizations confronting unjust power structures; and challenging oppressive policies.

An independent human rights organization, UUSC works to eradicate economic injustice, promote environmental justice and defend civil liberties. We also respond to disasters in which human rights are threatened. Our work is made possible by the activism and generous support of more than 32,000 members and supporters.

### Defending labor rights

All over the world, the right to employment at a fair wage and under fair conditions is increasingly threatened. People of color in the United States and ethnic minorities in other countries, particularly women, face structural barriers to breaking out of poverty through employment.

UUSC defends people's right to work for a living wage in safe conditions and their ability to organize to defend that right. We specifically address race, class and gender issues that render particular groups of people vulnerable to economic injustice.

### Ensuring equitable access to water

More than one billion people around the world lack access to clean water. Vital sources of water are rapidly being polluted and depleted. ▶▶▶



After an unprecedented outpouring of generosity, UUSC launched a major response to the Indian Ocean tsunami to help survivors reclaim their lives and livelihoods. (Photo by Sofia Romero/UUSC)

## Disaster relief

UUSC provides an effective response to disasters in which the human rights situation is grave. We focus our relief and rehabilitation efforts on supporting grassroots organizations providing assistance to marginalized, neglected and politically oppressed populations who do not have access to traditional aid distribution.

Again and again, UUSC has helped channel the generosity of our members and supporters to people struck by unimaginable disaster. In 2005, we raised more than \$2 million to benefit the survivors of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. We are committed to providing long-term relief and rehabilitation in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, as well as to Burmese immigrants in Thailand.

## UUSC Mission Statement

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.



In many countries and cities, governments with inadequate resources to repair crumbling, substandard systems are turning to privatization for a solution. Unfortunately, privatization often leads to increased rates and water cut-off for those who cannot afford to pay the higher rates.

The best way to defend people's equitable access to water is to address the threats posed by privatization and depletion. UUSC works in partnership with organizations in the United States and around the world to help them defend the universal right to water.

## Ending U.S.-sponsored torture

In the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, laws and policies have curtailed civil liberties in the United States. The global war on terror has led to the ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As is now well known, detainees in those countries, as well as in the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, were subjected to shocking abuses, including torture. UUSC launched the STOP (Stop Torture Permanently) Campaign in 2004 to seek an end to U.S.-sponsored torture. Internationally, UUSC works to support human rights groups defending citizens' rights against repressive governments.

## Advocating for social change

Our members and supporters have multiplied UUSC's voice for social change by joining our Human Rights Defenders network. Their joint actions have resulted in changes in public policy that promote human rights.

Our Just Works program has brought more than 2,000 members and supporters into communities across the United States that are struggling with environmental injustice, racism, poverty and other major social issues.

These experiential learning opportunities have involved oppressed communities on Native American reservations in South Dakota, Washington state and upstate New York. People of all ages have retraced the struggles of the civil rights movement of the 1960s during our Freedom Summer workcamps and been inspired to become advocates on behalf of oppressed communities.



Participants at the Just Works Mohawk Valley workcamp in Fonda, N.Y. (Photo by Nguyen Weeks/UUSC)

## An invitation to membership

Our members and supporters bolster our influence in the United States and abroad as we advocate for justice and confront oppressive power structures.

We alone cannot fight injustice in the world. But with the power of our 32,000 members and supporters, we can. To learn more about how you can become involved and become a member, contact our Member Services office or sign up online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org). Join us in making a difference!



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