

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Washington, DC and Day Seven of the Fast for Justice. We are 40 or so in Washington, DC and over 100 throughout the country.

In this brief note, we hope to share with you some sense of what our days have been like as we pass the halfway mark of the Fast for Justice.

We have been getting to know Washington “[under the hood](#)” - so to speak- as we process in black hoods and orange jumpsuits. It is a strange and revelatory perspective on our Nation’s Capitol.

The landscape in DC is studded with monuments to war heroes, epic battles, and larger than life political figures. Our time here is not as enduring as granite and marble, bronze and steel, but we hope that our [impermanent memorials](#) to injustice can be striking and affecting as we render tableaux of silent suffering in black and orange, and interject the humanity of the imprisoned, tortured men through the repetition of their names and recitation of their poetry. We are a living monument, the injustice we mark is still happening.

We began [our time together](#) with a day of resistance and our presence blocking the entrances to the Department of Justice resulted in the building be closed for business for the better part of an hour but no arrests. We walked away from the Department of Justice knowing that we would be back each day to continue that witness, to surround the building with orange and black-- until we see action and results consistent with justice.

We are interspersing action with [education and analysis](#) , and so far we have spent time with investigative journalist Andy Worthington, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Juan Mendez and Leili Kashani from the Center for Constitutional Rights. We will continue to draw on their rich wisdom in the coming days.

Part of being in Washington and “walking with” those unjustly held is underlining and dramatizing the legal and political work that others are doing. In that vein, [we spent time outside](#) the Federal District Court while the American Civil Liberties Union argued on behalf of nine Iraqis tortured by Americans. Many of our group who sought to observe the oral arguments were turned away from the court building by security officers. Turns out that—in the minds of the Federal Court—the color orange is now not only synonymous with Guantanamo’s injustice but with [actions for justice](#) on behalf of the men held there.

Convinced that we must use all the tools in our toolbox, we also [brought our message](#) to Capitol Hill in traditional lobby visits with Senators and Representatives and a “letter drop” of the “
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[Guantanamo With Justice Now](#)

" statement.

We amplified that lobbying by conducting "

[Guantanamo Ghost Walks](#)

" through the halls of their buildings—haunting the consciences of those power brokers with the uncomfortable image of voiceless orange figures. We will return to this witness in the coming days.

We come from all over the country—Kansas, Ohio, Massachusetts, Iowa, New York, Illinois—for a specific purpose in this period between January 11th and 22nd. But it is also important for us to stand with

[the broader peace and justice community](#)

. On Martin Luther King's birthday—the day he would have been 82 years old—we gathered to mark 20 years since the beginning of the original "shock and awe," the first Gulf War, and to draw strength and inspiration and challenge from King's prophetic insight: "There is nothing, except a tragic death wish, to prevent us from reordering our priorities, so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war, there is nothing to keep us from molding a recalcitrant status quo with bruised hands until we have fashioned it into a brotherhood and sisterhood. We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation."

The community of fasters grows and shrinks, as people join the group for what days they can. One of our group has spoken repeatedly of the incandescent flash of power that occurs when anger and hunger connect like live wires. We are angry at injustice, angry at cruelty, angry at torture and we try to connect that anger with our hunger, so that our powerful hunger for food is transformed into an even more powerful hunger for justice—one that we channel into action and resistance.

And so, ever mindful of both Dr. King's words and our own hunger for justice, we move forward into day seven, eight and beyond of our fast, knowing that what we are doing—though small and inadequate—is as necessary as it is difficult.

In Solidarity, for Peace and Justice

Witness Against Torture www.WitnessTorture.org