**UUSC Statement on Syria**

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The violent civil war in Syria has devastated the population, killed approximately 100,000 people, and created misery and chaos for the two million refugees who have fled the country. The suffering of the Syrian people, exacerbated by the inhuman use of chemical weapons, is a cause for moral outrage for people all over the world.

The United States government is now debating whether or not to militarily intervene in Syria after the use of chemical weapons there. As a human rights organization, we uphold the principles of international humanitarian law, which prioritizes the rights and protections of civilians in times of war and seeks to reduce their vulnerability. These principles require armed parties to respect the principles of distinction between combatants and noncombatants, consider proportionality of violence used, and take precaution against disproportionate effects of military attacks on noncombatants.

UUSC’s fundamental concern in the events in Syria is for the well-being, rights, and protection of the Syrian people. In this moment, we call on the president and Congress to ensure that any American actions taken are designed to protect the rights and lives of the Syrian civilians above all other considerations and to conform with international humanitarian law.

As captured in the Unitarian Universalist Association [2010 Statement of Conscience, “Creating Peace,”](http://www.uua.org/statements/statements/13394.shtml) Unitarian Universalists are committed to both actively creating peace and holding our responsibility to be in solidarity with others countering aggression. We advocate that any action our government takes to respond to the crisis in Syria is taken to bring about an end to that conflict and a means of moving toward lasting peace in that country.