

NEWS

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER
IN THE UNITED STATES

Media Contact: Robert Stronach, SFO, 315-796-9468, stronach@kateriregion.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 18, 2008

Secular Franciscans Condemn Violence in Orissa, India, Call for International Action and News Media Attention

NASHVILLE, TN -- The U.S. Secular Franciscan Order, conducting a national chapter in Nashville Oct. 14-19, condemned the violence against Christians in Orissa, India, and called for immediate international attention and action.

“Christians are being persecuted in a shocking display of a type of 'religious' cleansing,” said a statement unanimously approved by the delegate body. “According to impartial observers, there is a systematic attempt to remove all Christians from the area. Many Christians have already been killed. In addition, thousands of homes have been burned, and Catholic and other Christian Churches have been targeted in an organized manner, burned and looted.”

“We Secular Franciscans stand in solidarity with our suffering brothers and sisters in India and pledge our continued prayers,” the statement said. “...We denounce all violence.”

They commended Franciscans International for speaking out against the atrocities, noting: “This situation merits increased coverage in the national and world media.”

###