

Pennsylvania and Delaware Muslim Community Leaders Underline Their Solidarity with Shia Communities

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful,

We the undersigned Sunni-majority Muslim mosques, community organizations, and leaders underline our unequivocal rejection of anti-Shia bigotry and violence that was reportedly a major factor in the murders of 4 Muslim community members in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

We not only reject anti-Shia violence at home and abroad, but we also dedicate ourselves to strengthening our bonds with Shia Muslims across our communities. We also recognize that as a minority within a minority in North America, Shia Muslims are understandably shaken and concerned, especially since this tragedy took place during the sacred month of Muharram, on the heels of the Day of Ashura and at a time during which we collectively mourn the tragedies experienced by Ahlul Bayt (May Allah's Mercy engulf them all).

Just as it is the case with the Sunni community, the longstanding Shia communities of Pennsylvania and Delaware hail from diverse backgrounds: African American, South Asian, Middle Eastern, and various other racial, ethnic and geographical identities. We fully believe that Shia and Sunni Muslims should continue in their longstanding tradition of living in peace as believers.

Our Shia and Sunni communities are united by subscribing to the most important core tenets of our faith: the principle of tawhid, doing righteous deeds and other foundational beliefs and practices. Sunni and Shia scholars have also been vocal about their principled and civil disagreement on certain theological doctrines. None of these or any other differences justify any kind of violence, including sectarian hatred and violence - often sparked by modern political upheavals and ethnocentrism - and we reject any such violence categorically.

We also emphasize that from the Washington Declaration (washingtondeclaration.us) to the Amman Message (ammanmessage.com), there have been countless instances of North American & global Sunni and Shia scholars coming together to emphasize our unity and differences at once. We encourage our community members to study these documents carefully.

Importantly, the theological, sociological and political challenges facing our communities, Sunni and Shia alike, are similar. We are united by our collective efforts to uphold a moral and engaged faith community in increasingly challenging times.

We embrace this opportunity to reaffirm the hard work required in our Sunni communities to support a recognized and safe space for our Shi'i communities and invite all our community members to join forthcoming bridge-building efforts.

We pray for guidance from the Almighty Allah and may His (swt) peace and blessings be upon the Beloved Messenger and his (saws) family.

Signatures (in alphabetical order):

- Abdul Mughees Chaudhry
- Abdul-halim Hassan (Masjidullah)
- Ahmet Selim Tekelioglu (CAIR-Philadelphia)
- Alexandria Khalil
- Aliya Khabir
- Arqum Rashid (Islamic Society of Central Delaware and Riwaq Institute)
- Bushra Qureshi (Islamic Society of Chester County)
- CAIR-Philadelphia
- CAIR-Pittsburgh
- Carlin Saafir
- Christine Mohamed
- Dr. Rashidah Abdul-Khabeer
- Dr. Quaiser Abdullah
- Ejaz Sabir (Sabir Law Group)
- Emgage Pennsylvania
- Guangtian Ha
- Gulmakai Saleh
- Hadee Mosque
- Iftexhar Hussain
- Imam Daniel Hernandez (Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley)
- Iman Ahmad
- Indah Nuritasari
- Irfan Suwandi (Masjid Al-Falah Philadelphia)
- Islamic Community Center of Lancaster
- Islamic Society of Chester County
- Islamic Society Of Greater Valley Forge
- Jacob Bender (CAIR-Philadelphia)
- Mariam Mahmud
- Mirza Baig (Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley)
- Mohammad Aziz (Islamic Society of Greater Valley Forge)
- Mohammed Zubairu (CAIR-Philadelphia)
- Muhammad A. Ali
- Mukaram Syed (Islamic Community Center of Lancaster)
- Muqtedar Khan (Khanversations Institute)
- Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley
- Naj Farees
- Nicole Souadda
- Patricia Anton (Muslim Life at Penn)
- Quba Institute
- Rabiya Khan (Solidarity Society of South Central PA)
- Riwaq Institute
- Rubina Tareen
- Ruqayya Ali
- Salima Suswell (Emgage Pennsylvania)
- Samia Malik
- Sharif El-Mekki
- Umar Abdul Rahman
- Zehra Wamiq (Delaware Valley Speakers Bureau)