

## New Jersey Interfaith Coalition Condemns All Acts of Violence and Hate For Immediate Release - July 5, 2016

On behalf of a broad coalition of faith organizations in New Jersey, we join all people of good conscience in categorically condemning the terrorist attacks around the world, including recent ones in Orlando (Florida), Istanbul (Turkey), Dhaka, (Bangladesh), Baghdad (Iraq), and the most recent attacks even in the precincts of the Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in Medina and in the cities of Qateef & Riyadh (Saudi Arabia),. We are very concerned about the increasing bigotry and hate spreading around the United States.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the deceased and the injured and the victims of all these attacks on humanity around the world. It is obvious that terrorism and hate coming from any source, know no borders and humanity is the victim of this ominous phenomenon. The faiths we represent call for peace, justice, mercy, love, tolerance, and helping the needy and the oppressed.

All scriptures prohibit killing innocents. The Qur'an states, "Whoever kills a (innocent and peaceful) person, it is as though he has killed all mankind. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved all mankind."

Similarly, the Talmud says, "Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world." Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin 4:1 (22a)

Both Jewish and Christian scriptures include this commandment, "You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)

As faith leaders coming from many diverse traditions, we wish to affirm our common humanity, denounce all violence perpetrated in the name of any faith and reject any attempts by anyone to divide us. We cannot let terror, violence, and hate become the norm and we re-commit ourselves to continue to work together for a more peaceful and just world.

*NOTE: This statement is supported by over 120 New Jersey faith-based and civic organizations listed in the attached spreadsheet. We expect this list to grow as more congregations and civic organization join this newly created New Jersey Interfaith Coalition. For additional information, members of the press may reach out to any of the following contacts.*

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