

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Statement on the International Day To Combat Islamophobia
March 15, 2024

Five years ago today, a gunman fired upon worshippers at the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Center in Christchurch, New Zealand, murdering 51 people, wounding 40 others, and forever shattering families in one of the deadliest mass shootings in history. Today, on the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, we remember these innocent souls who were stolen from us while peacefully praying.

We recognize the violence and hate that Muslims worldwide too often face because of their religious beliefs—and the ugly resurgence of Islamophobia in the wake of the devastating war in Gaza. And we rededicate ourselves to building a world where people of all faiths and all backgrounds are free to live without fear of persecution.

That includes right here at home. I've said it many times: Islamophobia has no place in our Nation. Yet Muslims in the United States frequently endure baseless fearmongering, blatant discrimination, harassment, and violence in the course of their everyday lives. Today Jill and I remember Wadea Al-Fayoume, a 6-year-old Palestinian American boy brutally killed in his own home last fall, a crushing loss for his family and community and a devastating reminder of how all Americans must unequivocally stand up against hate.

That's why, in 2022, my administration established an interagency policy committee to counter anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and related forms of bias and discrimination. We are also currently drafting the first-ever National Strategy To Combat Islamophobia and Related Forms of Bias and Discrimination. The goal of this strategy is to mobilize a whole-of-society effort to counter all forms of hate, discrimination, and bias against Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, and Arab American communities and to raise awareness about their heritage and invaluable contributions to our country. We are also strengthening the security of mosques and other places of worship and working to prevent and prosecute hate crimes against vulnerable communities. And my administration continues to implement the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism amidst the serious increase in anti-Semitism and to advance the White House Initiative on Hate-Motivated Violence. Put simply, we are taking concrete steps to make real for all Americans the promise of America: that we are all created equal and deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives. We have never fully lived up to that promise, but we have never walked away from it either, and for as long as I'm President, we never will.

Today, as millions continue to observe the holy month of Ramadan, Jill and I extend our best wishes to Muslims everywhere and continue to keep them in our prayers. And we reaffirm our commitment to do all we can to put an end to the vicious hate of Islamophobia, here at home and around the world.

NOTE: The statement referred to Brenton Tarrant, who was convicted in the 2019 shootings in Christchurch, New Zealand, and sentenced to life in prison.

Categories: Statements by the President : International Day To Combat Islamophobia.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Tarrant, Brenton.

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