

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: A Statement on the Death of George Floyd

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Members of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in Europe and the Middle East have been deeply disturbed by the killing of George Floyd by a serving police officer in Minneapolis, USA. We are horrified by the escalation of violence and rioting throughout the United States. We join with many UK religious, civic and public organizations and EUME region in calling for a halt to the violence, a full inquiry, the unequivocal pursuit of justice, and above all a commitment to eradicate the twin cancers of racism and discrimination from public and private life. This must happen not just in the United States but in the United Kingdom and in all of the 70 nations throughout Europe and the Middle East where the Heavenly Parents Holy Community of the Family Federation is established.

In a statement this morning, three leading UK police bodies said that they were "appalled and horrified" by the way George Floyd lost his life. They admitted that there is much to do in the United Kingdom as well but called for restraint and caution for those planning protests in light of the ongoing Coronavirus crisis. Many other organizations have made renewed commitments to examine their own practices and policies to make sure that we do not directly or indirectly contribute to this existential problem. We commend these organisations including the three UK Police Bodies for their courageous efforts.

What can we all do? We must start by speaking out and not remaining silent. This is not just an isolated incident but part of a pattern of abusive and disgraceful treatment against black people and other minorities. It persists despite many, many public statements and commitments to make a lasting change. We empathize and understand the frustration and anger expressed by the Black Lives Matter movement and by many others. And yet, we recognize that the solution cannot simply be judicial, legal, or practical. There is a limit to the effectiveness of retributive justice, no matter how much our hearts cry out.

The founders of the Family Federation, the Reverend and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, often pointed to the example of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi in responding to hatred, violence and injustice with love and forgiveness. This was not a sign of weakness but of deep spiritual strength. As a young man, Rev. Moon practiced this himself. He stood up to prevent a mob of his Korean countrymen from attacking and revenge killing former Japanese police officers at the end of the occupation right after the end of WWII. Coming to America, he often spoke against racial prejudice saying "In the sight of God, there is no black, no white, no yellow. God is colorblind!"

In this time of trouble, we call on all people to Forgive, Love, and Unite. Let us honestly admit to Almighty God that we have fallen short, sinned against God and sinned against each other. We call on our own members to actively strive for equality by changing our hearts towards our black brothers and sisters, and joining the solution by signing petitions, making donations, writing letters, praying, educating ourselves, having personal conversations actively seeking reconciliation. Let us be willing to work together so that these horrors stop once and for all, and work to build a righteous, caring Holy Community where all the Heavenly Parent's children are valued, loved and respected.

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