

A Community-Centered Response to Violence Against Asian American Communities

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Collective Statement - A Community-Centered Response to Violence Against Asian American Communities

On March 16, eight people were killed at three different spas in North Georgia including six Asian women. We are heartbroken by these murders, which come at a time when Asian American communities are already grappling with the traumatic violence against Asian Americans nationwide, fueled by the United States' long history of white supremacy, systemic racism, and gender-based violence.

As we collectively grieve and respond to this tragedy, we must lead with the needs of those most directly impacted at the center: the victims and their families. And during this time of broader crisis and trauma in our Asian American communities, we must be guided by a compass of community care that prioritizes assessing and addressing our communities' immediate needs, including in-language support for mental health, legal, employment, and immigration services.

We must also stand firm in decrying misogyny, systemic violence, and white supremacy. We must invest in long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence and hate in our communities. We reject increased police presence or carceral solutions as the answers.

For centuries, our communities have been frequently scapegoated for issues perpetuated by sexism, xenophobia, capitalism, and colonialism. Asians were brought to the United States to boost the supply of labor and keep wages low, while being silenced by discriminatory laws and policies. From the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, to the forced migration of refugees from U.S.-led military conflict in Southeast Asia, to post-9/11 surveillance targeting Muslim and South Asian communities, to ICE raids on Southeast Asian communities and Asian-owned businesses, Asian American communities have been under attack by white supremacy.

Working class communities of color are disproportionately suffering from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Trump administration's relentless scapegoating of Asians for the pandemic has only exacerbated the impact on Asian business owners and frontline workers and inflamed existing racism. The hypersexualization of Asian American women and the broad normalization of violence against women of color, immigrant women, and poor women make Asian American women particularly vulnerable. Hate incidents against Asian Americans rose by nearly 150% in 2020, with Asian American women twice as likely to be targeted.

We are calling on our allies to stand with us in grief and solidarity against systemic racism and gender-based violence. Violence against Asian American communities is part of a larger system of violence and racism against all communities of color, including Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

In this time of crisis, let's come together and build just communities, where we are all safe, where all workers are treated with dignity and respect, and where all our loved ones thrive.

INDIVIDUAL SIGN-ON