

IVAT Statement on Anti-Asian Hate and Violence

18 March 2021

We are outraged and saddened at the loss of 8 lives, including 6 women of Asian descent in Georgia on March 16, 2021 and the countless others harmed and hurting. While the law enforcement investigation has not connected the violence to hate crimes, we know there has been a major rise in xenophobia, harassment, and violence against Asians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders since the COVID-19 pandemic began, especially in recent months. As reported by STOP AAPI Hate, a coalition addressing anti-Asian discrimination during the pandemic, there have been around 3,800 reported incidents of attacks on Asian Americans¹ since March 19 of last year.

As with other forms of interpersonal violence, cultural and language barriers, as well as distrust in law enforcement, contribute to the underreporting of acts of hate and violence to authorities. Victim-blaming and misogyny are other contributing factors, and yet again, our country has suffered another mass killing at the hands of a white male. Whether motivated directly by Asian prejudice or not, the effect of a bias against women and Asians had an impact in this crime, and some comments by certain people of authority afterwards has exacerbated the victim blaming and minimization of the horror of this violence, even if not intentional nor conscious.

These killings are another catalyst for greater condemnation of gender and race-based violence. It is imperative that local and national leaders recognize the linkage between racism, sexism, classism, and this type of violence. This underscores the importance of speaking out against the increase in anti-Asian sentiment and hate that have been occurring throughout the United States.

The intersection of racism, gender-based violence, classism and gun violence is complex and complicated. As is the pain, anxiety, terror, and trauma millions of AAPI's are experiencing each day.

We must all work together to end bigotry, gender-based violence, discrimination, and gun violence. We must do better to ensure protection of all members of marginalized communities to promote equity, respect, and dignity. We must work harder to increase the representation of AAPI communities in all governing bodies.

Additionally, we echo our concern for the mental and physical health needs of AAPI individuals, given how clearly COVID's devastation has highlighted the disproportionate number of people of color suffering physically, emotionally, and economically.

For more information on actions to take now, please see recommendations from Stop AAPI Hate -<https://stopaapihate.org/actnow/>

¹. Russell Jeung Ph.D., Aggie Yellow Horse, Ph.D., Tara Popovic, and Richard Lim. "Stop AAPI Hate National Report: 3/19/20 - 2/28/21"

Sincerely,



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