

June 5, 2020

## **Statement of Solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Movement**

The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), an intersectional feminist, human rights, peacebuilding organization, expresses its solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement for peace, equality, and justice in the United States of America.

As highlighted in the Sustaining Peace Agenda, peace cannot be defined merely as an absence of war or armed conflict. To women's civil society around the world, human security, development, good governance, and a harmonious community grounded in principles of human rights and equality are the true essence of peace. Civil liberties such as the right to dissent, peaceful protest, and the right to assembly must be protected as human rights, as enshrined in Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Systems and structural barriers that reinforce political, economic, and social exclusion and limit the meaningful and equal participation of historically marginalized communities in political decision-making, the economy, and peace and security processes must be transformed. GNWP condemns police brutality and institutional racism, which is perpetuated without accountability and justice. The perpetrators of these violent human rights violations against the Black community must be charged and convicted for the crimes committed.

The [Progress Study on Youth, Peace, and Security](#) highlighted the harmful gendered stereotypes propagated in policy discourse, media, and social norms, which posit young men, particularly members of historically marginalized communities, as perpetrators of violence, dangerous not only to their society but to national security. Although [police brutality and gender-based violence against women from historically marginalized communities is significantly underreported](#), young women of color experience multiple forms of discrimination due to their race, age and gender. These stereotypes of young people from minority communities contribute to their marginalization and stigmatization. They are framed as problems to be solved, rather than as partners for peace. However, globally, the contributions of young people to building sustainable peace and development, promoting equality, and advocating for justice are immense. The United States introduced the [Youth, Peace, and Security Act](#) of 2020 to the House of Representatives on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2020, which will dramatically shape American foreign policy to invest in the leadership of youth in preventing and resolving conflict. GNWP urges the American government to implement the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda domestically by recognizing, celebrating, and investing in movements for progressive transformation led by young people from historically marginalized, minority communities that fight bigotry, racism, violence, and discrimination.

GNWP echoes the [call from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People \(NAACP\) to the United Nations to "step up and classify the mistreatment of Black people in the United States of America by the police as human rights violations and impose sanctions if necessary."](#) We support their demands for police reform and federal legislation mandating a zero-tolerance approach in penalizing and/or prosecuting police officers who kill unarmed, non-violent, and non-resisting individuals in arrest. As a nonprofit organization headquartered in the United States, GNWP affirms its commitment to address forms of structural racism that exist in all places.

**Power to the people!**