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PRESS RELEASE:

**SHIA AND SUNNI MUSLIM LEADERS OF USA CONDEMN INCREASING  
SECTARIAN VIOLENCE**

On Friday, June 3, 2005 representatives from leading Sunni and Shia Muslim organizations came together to denounce sectarian violence and to connect to ongoing dialogue and collaboration. They issued the following statement:

*In the Name of Allah the Compassionate and Merciful.*

We, Shia and Sunni Muslims, come together to denounce the current campaign of sectarian terror, especially destructive of human life in Pakistan, Iraq and Afghanistan. Every day seems to bring news of atrocity, with worshippers murdered at prayer; children killed returning from school, crimes most horribly perpetrated in the name of Islam. This must stop.

All who believe in the Unity of Allah, and in the Prophet Muhammad and the Quran, should declare their unity in opposing these vile deeds. These deeds are unjust-- and only serve to divide the community of Muslims and benefit those who wish the destruction of people of faith.

There are those who exploit divisions within our community to obtain power and advantage. As Muslims, let us not allow ourselves to be manipulated and drawn into sectarian and political violence. We call on our leaders and people to avoid the traps of unbelief-- shirk, and kufr- in order to work together towards adl or insaf (justice) in society. For, on the Day of Judgment, prayers and worship will not help a person who tramples on the rights of others.

The Qur'an teaches us that killing an innocent person is like destroying the whole of humanity. It also encourages us to work together for a better world where there will be no poverty, illiteracy, hunger and want, and where all people will live in prosperity and harmony. Until that time comes, we Muslims must show tolerance (tahhamul), wisdom and compassion.

We call on all Muslims to speak out against injustice, violent acts and false, divisive teaching. We declare our intention to seek just solutions through negotiation and non-violent action, and call on other Muslims to join us in this declaration of solidarity.

At this time of danger, we pray to Allah the Almighty to watch over us in this endeavor, and to guide the community through the burning desert of hatred and human violence.

Signed:

Dr. Khurshid Khan, Islamic Circle of North America

Imam Sailani, Al Khoei Center  
Imam Shamsi Ali, Islamic Cultural Center of New York & Jamaica  
Muslim Center  
Dr Ahmad Jaber, Islamic Mission Of America, Masjid Dawood  
Islamic Institute of New York (Al Husseini Madresa)  
Shia Jamaat of New York  
Professor Hasan Raza, MSW  
Arab American Association of New York  
Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Masjid al-Farah/ ASMA Society  
Mohammad Razvi, Council Of Peoples Organization  
Turning Point for Women and Families, Robina Niaz, Executive Director  
Law Offices of Moushumi Khan  
Sr. Debbie Almontaser, Revson Fellow  
Tariqur Rahman, Executive Director Emeritus ICNA Relief  
Masjid al-Farah, New York, New York  
Syed Mahmoud Mousawi  
Dr Malik Sakhawat Hussain PhD  
Islamic Research institute, Dr Anwar Ali  
Nasir Shamsi, Trustee, Al-Huda Foundation, Inc. NJ  
Aisha Al-Adawiya, Women in Islam, Inc  
Imam Al-Hajj Talib 'Abdur-Rashid, The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood  
The Harlem Imams' Shura  
Justice Committee, The Majlis Ash-Shura of New York  
The Muslim Alliance in North America  
Muslim Consultative Network (MCN)  
Syed Ehtesham H. Naqvi, Chief Executive  
Shia Americans Relationship Council (SARC)  
Dr Faheem Butt, Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America  
Muslim Peace Fellowship; Rabia Terri Harris, Coordinator  
Nasir Gondal, President, CAIR New York  
Mir Murad Alikhan  
Dr. Ali Naqi Naqvi Syed  
Muhsin Dharamsi  
S. Idris Mirza  
Mohamed Ali Iqbal, Singapore  
Salman Meghani  
Amir Abdullah Mia Akbar, Caribbean American Program for Empowerment  
Suhail Muzaffer, Masjid al Noor  
Wissam Nasr, Exec Director, CAIR NY (Council on American Islamic  
Relations)  
The United Muslim Foundation, Masuma Virji - Director