

Statement on the Mass Shootings in New Zealand

Women for Afghan Women condemns the violence that took the lives of 49 innocent victims

(New York, NY) March 15, 2019 – With profound sorrow, [Women for Afghan Women](#) (WAW) condemns, in the severest terms, the prejudice and violence that ended the lives of at least 49 innocent Muslim worshippers, and injured dozens more, at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.

WAW is deeply disturbed by the ignorance and discrimination that spurred this heinous attack—the worst mass shooting and act of terrorism in New Zealand’s history—and perpetrated in the name of white supremacy. As Americans and Afghans, we understand far too well the toll of violent ideology, extremism, and conflict grounded in hate.

WAW denounces the vitriolic belief that one race, gender, ethnicity, or religion is superior to another. Around the world, the rising tide of hateful rhetoric against Muslims, Jews, immigrants, refugees, the LGBTQ+ community, women, and additional “others” has set this fateful day, and far too many others before it, awash in sorrow.

Our sympathies and prayers are with those lost and injured, as well as their families and all New Zealanders, but we recognize that they are not enough. Until the hatred that turns people on each other is eradicated, and weapons of war are no longer available to civilians, we know that this will not be the last heartbreak-filled statement WAW issues.

We call on all people around the world to reject ideologies that give rise to extremism and violence, that pit one race, religion, or other identity against another, and that lead to further senseless loss of life. We call for the diverse communities of the world to raise each other up, reject bigotry in all its forms, and remember that the ties that bind us together can never be undone despite the vulgar attempts, like that made in Christchurch.

Today, WAW sends its deepest condolences to our Muslim family in New Zealand. Today—and every day—we stand in resolute solidarity with the them as they mourn their loss. We take solace in knowing that this anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, and hateful act will be met with proclamations of love, freedom, and unity. We celebrate the differences we engender that contribute to the rich tapestry of the human race. WAW stands together with our Muslim sisters and brothers, and all New Zealanders, united as one for peace.

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Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is a grassroots, non-profit organization dedicated to securing and protecting the rights of disenfranchised Afghan women and girls in Afghanistan and New York, particularly their rights to develop their individual potential, to self-determination, and to be represented in all areas of life: political, social, cultural, and economic. WAW advocates for women’s rights and challenges the norms that underpin gender-based violence wherever opportunities arise to influence attitudes and bring about change.