New Zealand: Thinking Points & Talking Points

**Friday | Rajab 8, 1440 AH | March 15, 2019**

Assalamu Alaikum:

To God we belong and to Him we return.

We are waking up on this blessed day of Juma, Friday, to horrific news from New Zealand: At this writing, at least 49 Muslims have been killed and 20 people injured in shootings at two mosques. They include a five-year-old girl.

We ask that all Imams in America and around the world raise their hands in prayers for those who were murdered and their families.

While we pray for peace and safety, we must not remain silent. We must speak up and speak out. We must act. Here are some things we can do.

**Talking Points: It’s Islamophobia stupid**

* Islamophobia kills.
* Whether it is Christchurch in New Zealand, Quebec City, Canada, Oslo Norway, or the daily “beef lynching” in India, hate against Muslims is directly responsible for these murders.
* The $200 million dollar Islamophobia machine, based in the [United States](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=h8Y%2B7xSdIpOSFfK45xS2LhCin2mKHv2G), inspires killers at home and abroad.
* Both the 74-page manifesto of the Christchurch terrorist and the 1,500-page manifesto of Anders Breivik, the Norway killer who murdered 70 young people are inspired by and quote Islamophobes in the USA.
* This hatred is no different than that which led to attacks on the Jewish community in Pittsburgh last October, Parkland and the black churches by white supremacists.
* While focus is on White supremacists as the number on threat in America, much less attention is paid to the role Islamophobia plays in the mass displacement of Muslims as inconvenient minority.
  + Islamophobia has created the largest refugee camp in the world in Burma, composed of Rohingya Muslims. This has been declared a genocide by the U.S. government
  + China's irrational fear of Islam has created the largest concentration of any people in the world, sending three million Uighur Muslims to prison without trial
  + Indian Islamophobes have stripped four million Muslims of citizenship, leading the U.S.-based group Genocide Watch to issue a genocide alert
  + All mosques (almost 500) in the Central African Republic have been destroyed as per the U.S. Mission chief at the United Nations

**Thinking Points:**

* What resources have you allocated to fight Islamophobia at your Masjid, Islamic center, Islamic school, or Islamic organization?
* Do you have a written plan as a family and as an organization to fight Islamophobia?
* Do your interfaith partners have a program to fight Islamophobia along with other forms of hate, racism, and anti-Semitism.
* Do you use the term “Islamophobia” when talking about hate against Muslims? If you have been avoiding this, consider that unless we name the problem, we cannot fight it. “Islamophobia” is as important to name, identify, and fight against as racism and anti-Semitism
* Do our neighbors know how to fight Islamophobia?
* How many books does your library have about Islamophobia?
* How do we balance our open mosque culture with the rising needs of security?

**Action Items**

* Do not be silent.
  + Appoint armed guards at every entrance of your Masjid. This is especially important during Friday prayers.
  + All Islamic schools should do the same. Extra police officers should be stationed throughout the school
  + Tweet and post on Facebook connecting the dots.
  + Make sure they know that there have been [constant mosque attacks](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=jHbY7WxaVAH%2B%2BU3I4Pi89xCin2mKHv2G) in the U.S. as well, and that the New Zealand mosque shootings are not just an international story, but a local one as well
* Enhance security
  + Appoint armed guards at every entrance of your Masjid. This is especially important during Friday prayers.
  + All Islamic schools should do the same. Extra police officers should be stationed throughout the school
* Talk to Children:
  + Teach children and remember to say the prayers for protection when leaving home and when in a state of fear
  + [Talk to your children](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=WuAG2o6RCwDDg69jHzvNZhCin2mKHv2G) about this if they know about it and understand what happened. It is especially important to let tweens and teens talk about their feelings without interruption or lectures
  + Organize a community town hall with Imams, leaders, and Muslim therapists and counselors to discuss the tragedy and what we can do about it here in America
* Fight Islamophobia:Determine how you can fight Islamophobia  
  [14 ways you can fight Islamophobia](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=R8x4gYxyFssskQ1DFL9D7RCin2mKHv2G)  
  [8 ways Interfaith can fight Islamophobia](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=AC9iZiMBIjkW6q5j6oXixBCin2mKHv2G)  
  [How individuals can fight](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=Z1VLePd0%2B8E9UcE%2FNoqWWxCin2mKHv2G)   
  [What your Masjid can do](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=xBxIJzZAdmpm2kd3T62U2M0cBrAW56XL)  
  [How MSAs can fight Islamophobia](http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=ouwIjoyE87YupfgRR8O%2FhxCin2mKHv2G)

May Allah keep our community, neighbors of other faith and our houses of worship safe. May He heal us of hate and bigotry. May He guide the misguided. May He bring justice and the best outcome out of this situation. And may He comfort the families and loved ones of those who were killed.

Salam,

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