



THE ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PSYCHOLOGISTS, INC.

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The Association of Black Psychologists Supports Black Life Activism

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) condemns the actions of law enforcement in the recent shootings of 37-year old Delrawn Small by an off-duty police officer during an act of road rage in Brooklyn, NY on July 4, 2016, 37-year old Alton Sterling outside of a convenience store in Baton Rouge, LA on July 5, 2016, and 32-year old Philando Castile during a traffic stop in St. Paul, MN on July 7, 2016. We continue to share our strong concern with these and other egregious acts of police brutality against Black men specifically and Black people in general. The common elements in each of these murders is police officers and Black men. Though it is understood that Police officers have the right of "Use of Force" it is apparent that the use of *deadly* force against Black men has become an unfortunate outcome of far too many interactions between Black men and police officers' standard procedure for routine stops. These murders demonstrate that Black lives continue to be devalued.

An atmosphere that is filled with racial intolerance can be implicated in influencing the behaviors of these law enforcers. As mental health professionals (healers) we advance that the psychological well-being of the entire Black community is negatively impacted by the law enforcers' misuse of force. Such acts unchecked operate in opposition to the Black inalienable right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We also want to emphasize that we do not condone acts of violence in response to the murders, in particular, the murders of police officers in Dallas, Texas and other parts of the country. Rather, we support efforts to transform the use of force policies. We recommend that an impartial body for all law enforcement departments conduct a review of the use of force policies where police brutality has occurred. We also recommend that appropriate review of civil rights violations be instituted. We advance that trauma interventions associated with race and police brutality for children, adolescents and adults be established nationwide starting with the states with the highest occurrences of police brutality including but not limited to Texas, Louisiana, Ohio, Mississippi, Florida, California, South Carolina and New York.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of all of the victims. We encourage all who carry the weight of injustice to seek professional support. A list of available psychologists in your area can be found on the ABPsi website: www.abpsi.org. Furthermore, we stand willing to assist with the healing that must take place in our nation in order for everyone to move forward.

The Association of Black Psychologists is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that seeks to promote and advance the profession of African psychology, influence and effect social change, and develop programs that address and work to alleviate problems of Black communities and other ethnic groups. www.abpsi.org.