

## **AHEPA Statement in the Wake of the Killing of George Floyd and Civil Unrest**



Supreme President George G. Horiates has issued the following statement:

The Greek American and African American communities have shared strong ties and moments of history together in America.

Young Greek men in the South were taken along with young black men from their jobs by the KKK to lynching “parties” in the woods as a means of intimidation where Greeks were roughed-up and were told to leave town. The black men were not so fortunate and were lynched.

Archbishop Iakovos marched with Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Selma. Fifty years later, Ahepans returned to Selma to walk with the African American community. AHEPA has partnered with organizations to combat modern-day bigotry.

AHEPA today is firmly committed to the principles that undergirded its founding and encourages the public to learn more about it. We unequivocally condemn all acts of racism, discrimination, bigotry and hatred and senseless acts of violence. We stand with the African American community in the pursuit of justice in the killing of George Floyd and in holding all those responsible for his tragic death accountable, including the other three police officers present with officer Derek

Chauvin.

The civil rights of every person – regardless of the color of their skin, of their creed or religion, from where they or their family have come, of their health or ability, of their gender identity, or whom they love – are protected by law, and the state and its officials are bound by those laws. As much as we encourage swift, transparent, fair and thorough justice from state and federal governments that are accountable to We the People, we also remind everyone who is angry and outraged that the best way to continue the fight against racism and bias in our culture is for all of us to unite in informed, honest, respectful and passionate advocacy. Together.

Peaceful, non-violent protest is a core principle in effecting change and administering justice. Those that pervert this core principle by rhetoric or senseless destruction damage our union and inflict harm on our society.

In a 2015 address to AHEPA, Civil Rights Icon U.S. Congressman John Lewis quoted the late A. Philip Randolph, organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, saying: “Maybe our foremothers and forefathers all came to this great land in different ships, but we are all in the same boat now.” Congressman Lewis also thanked the Greek American community for answering the call in 1965 and 2015. The hand of philotimo is extended again.

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