



To the ZAMWI community,

These past few weeks have undoubtedly been a very frightening and mournful time for Black Americans. ZAMWI stands firmly in solidarity with the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and all victims of institutionalized racism and police brutality. We ask every Zoroastrian not only to feel compassion and solidarity with Black Americans, but to see the interconnections of our humanity, our communities, the responsibility we all have to work for justice, and to confront the roles we play in anti-Black racism.

ZAMWI stands firmly with Black Americans and all organizations working to remake systems of justice, to advance economic opportunity, and to advance democratic principles of equality and accountability.

We know many communities face injustice in America, but there is an urgency to supporting Black Americans who face brutality and a level of injustice that is extreme due to the persistence of systems centuries in the making. We encourage you to participate in any way you can to demand and work for justice for Black lives. Sign petitions and write to your elected representatives. If you are financially able to, donate to community-based organizations led by Black Americans, or bail funds for those who have been unjustly arrested.

Most importantly, we ask each one of us to educate ourselves on the roles we play in this time of crisis, the roles we play in perpetuating oppression, and to find our own individual voices in bringing about change. The systematic oppression of Black Americans was entrenched in the United States long before its establishment, and it exists throughout the world in both Iran and India as well. Black Americans are disproportionately harmed by the COVID 19 pandemic, revealing centuries of inequality in health, housing, security and economic opportunity. We can – and we must – take the time to read, listen to, and research our histories, and to learn how we have been complicit in maintaining an unjust society and how we can be part of the change. Solidarity on social media cannot stand alone. It must be accompanied by actions against racism and anti-blackness, especially within our own communities.

Our Zoroastrian faith calls on us to seek knowledge with an open mind. The Gathas teach us that the search for truth and knowledge, the good mind, and ultimate happiness is a lifelong process and a very challenging process. We each have responsibility for our thoughts, words and deeds, and must recognize the impact we have on the world in which we live.

Let us commit to learning, understanding and examining our underlying prejudices, not let pride or ego stand in the way, and acknowledge that being actively anti-racist is a lifelong process. Our world will be a much better place for it.

Inspired by our youth and led by our youth, ZAMWI will host upcoming conversations on racism, opportunities to learn, ask questions, and understand the interconnections across our communities. More information will follow in the coming week along with resources you can access. We recognize the challenges ahead, but commit to the process of engagement and learning. We hope you will join us.

In warmth and solidarity, The ZAMWI Board

Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds