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PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RALIANCE Statement on Systemic Racism and Police Brutality

In response to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, and the protests against systemic racism and police brutality that have followed, RALIANCE Executive Director Ebony Tucker issued the following statement:

In the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor by police, the lynching of Ahmaud Arbery, and the countless acts of brutality against Black people that came before, it cannot be ignored how systemic racism and the support for those systems makes Black men and women especially vulnerable to all forms of violence.

As a Black woman, I am sad, frustrated, and exhausted – but also incredibly angry. The murder of George Floyd is just one in a long history of injustices inflicted on the Black community, and our collective outrage is justified. We are being treated as less than human by those who perpetrate violence against us while watching the condonement of our dehumanization by those who declare that all lives matter. Black people have to clearly state that #blacklivesmatter, and the long history of racialized violence with no accountability makes it clear how necessary the statement is. If all white people knew our lives were as valuable as theirs, we wouldn't have to say it.

Though the scourge of police brutality is an epidemic, it is not the only form of oppression. We must all recognize and work to abolish every form of white oppression. Systemic racism was created purposely and is working as planned, resulting in few economic opportunities and poverty that runs from generation to generation in the Black community. Black people built this country through forced unpaid labor, yet white households have 10 times more wealth than black households. Black households also earn only 60 percent of income of white households and still only represent 13 percent of the US population.¹ That is marginalization that cannot be ignored.

¹<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/03/politics/black-white-us-financial-inequality/index.html>

Racialized violent incidents are only a symptom of the systems that have perpetuated it and allowed it to become possible. As a part of the sexual violence movement, it is our work to prevent and respond to sexual violence holistically. This means we have to understand the various challenges of communities of color and respond with the appropriate knowledge and resources. This is not just about a training or a conference session on diversity. It is about trusting and following Black and brown leadership. It is also about law enforcement and prosecutor accountability. We must challenge the unchecked rule and authority of the criminal justice system that has, since its inception, allowed and committed violence against people of color, especially Black people. Predominantly white organizations cannot continue their complicity, enabling systems that harm us because pushback is difficult. For white leadership and staff, it is time to be active in the fight against white oppression.

Throughout the week, we've read many open denunciations of white supremacy from corporations and other predominantly white organizations, but what does this mean? What are the steps that white people are willing to take to change their own everyday behavior that negatively impacts people of color? Acknowledging privilege is important, but that acknowledgement must come with a full understanding that your white privilege is the result of someone else's disenfranchisement. How will you try to correct that imbalance? Though letters of support are greatly appreciated, a plan for how you will help make tomorrow different from today is what's needed.

It is also not the time for white people to ignore their own complicity because they haven't committed physical violence against Black people. White people must examine their own microaggressions, macroaggressions, and biases; their support for and upholding of systems that abuse us; how their actions affect people of color; and develop an active plan for how to live and work differently.

Even in the face of these recent tragedies, I'm encouraged by those fighting for change – whether by partaking in nationwide protests, donating to the cause, or educating themselves on the issues. Please join us in learning more and supporting these causes: [Black Lives Matter](#), [Community Bail Funds for Protesters](#), and [Reclaim the Block](#).

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RALIANCE is a national partnership dedicated to ending sexual violence in one generation. RALIANCE partners with a wide range of organizations to improve their cultures and create environments free from sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse. Every day, RALIANCE helps leaders establish safe workplaces and strong communities by advancing research, influencing policy, and supporting innovative programs. RALIANCE is based in Washington, DC and combines decades of experience and resources from three leading national sexual violence prevention organizations into a single, unified force. Visit us at www.RALIANCE.org for more information.