



**Civil Rights Leaders Issue Statement on Armed White Militia Violence Against Protesters and Police Camaraderie with Militia Members**

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Contacts

**Phoebe Plagens, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund,**  
212.965.2235, [pplagens@naacpldf.org](mailto:pplagens@naacpldf.org)

**Shin Inouye, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights,**  
202.869.0398, [inouye@civilrights.org](mailto:inouye@civilrights.org)

**Don Owens, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law,**  
202.934-1880, [dowens@lawyerscommittee.org](mailto:dowens@lawyerscommittee.org)

**Marc Banks, NAACP,**  
443.608.4073, [dbanks@naacpnet.org](mailto:dbanks@naacpnet.org)

**Rachel Noerdlinger, National Action Network,**  
212.681.1380, [rnoerdlinger@mercuryllc.com](mailto:rnoerdlinger@mercuryllc.com)

**Lon Walls, The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation,**  
301.996.1669, [lwalls@wallscomm.com](mailto:lwalls@wallscomm.com)

**Teresa Candori, National Urban League,**  
212.558.5362, [tcandori@nul.org](mailto:tcandori@nul.org)

*Leading national racial justice organizational leaders issued a joint statement on armed white militia violence and police camaraderie with militia members following the arrest of a militia member in connection with the killing of two police accountability protesters in Kenosha, Wisconsin.*

“Last night, two protesters who were advocating for accountability following the horrific police shooting of Jacob Blake were allegedly shot and killed by a 17-year-old associated with a white militia group. We are outraged by these killings. The ability of a minor to travel from another state at the urging of adult white supremacists organizing on Facebook highlights the corrosive and dangerous convergence of race, police violence, and the presence of these violent groups. That this volatile cocktail was allowed to develop led directly to one of the most violent nights in the city’s history. In light of the fact that the suspect apparently crossed state lines in order to commit this crime, the federal government should launch an investigation to determine whether he was involved in an interstate criminal conspiracy.

“We are equally outraged by videos showing Kenosha Police Department Officers exhibiting camaraderie toward militia members – who were out in violation of the curfew before the shootings — and also seemingly ignoring protesters who tried to identify the shooter in this incident. Police solidarity with white militia members is abhorrent and intolerable – and it

represents a highly dangerous threat to the lives and rights of people of color. In addition, the fact that Kenosha Police Chief Daniel Miskinis blamed protestors for the killings is another example of the racially disparate treatment that Americans across the country have been protesting against since May and for decades before. We call on Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and Attorney General Josh Kaul, to immediately investigate and prosecute these killings, the shooting of Mr. Blake, and the increasingly pervasive issue of armed white militia members confronting and attacking protestors demanding police accountability. They must also demand the immediate removal of Chief Miskinis.

“Finally, turning to Facebook, the prevalence of armed white militia groups organizing on the platform is not new. Facebook must also be held accountable for its inaction while these violent groups have been allowed to grow and organize. Facebook must take immediate steps to ensure that its platform is not used to foment violence and hatred — and to take immediate and comprehensive action to put an end to groups using its services to organize activities that perpetuate racism and cause harm.”

The following leaders signed the statement:

- Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
- Reverend Al Sharpton, founder and president, National Action Network
- Melanie L. Campbell, president and CEO, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, Convener, Black Women’s Roundtable
- Kristen Clarke, president and executive director, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- Vanita Gupta, president and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- Derrick Johnson, president and CEO, NAACP
- Marc H. Morial, president and CEO, National Urban League

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*Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute (TMI) is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF and TMI on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).*

*National Action Network is one of the leading civil rights organizations in the Nation with chapters throughout the entire United States. Founded in 1991 by Reverend Al Sharpton, NAN works within the spirit and tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for one standard of justice, decency and equal opportunities for all people regardless of race, religion, nationality or gender. For more information go to [www.nationalactionnetwork.net](http://www.nationalactionnetwork.net).*

*The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP), founded in 1976, is one of the most active civil rights and social justice organizations in the nation “dedicated to increasing civic engagement, economic and voter empowerment in Black America.” The Black Women’s Roundtable (BWR) is the women and girls empowerment arm of the NCBCP. At the forefront of championing just and equitable public policy on behalf of Black women, BWR promotes their health and wellness, economic security & prosperity, education, and global empowerment as key elements for success. Visit [www.ncbcp.org](http://www.ncbcp.org) and follow us on Twitter @ncbcp and Instagram @thenationalcoalition.*

*The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. Now in its 56th year, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is continuing its quest to “Move America Toward Justice.” The principal mission of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is to secure, through the rule of law, equal justice for all, particularly in the areas of criminal justice, fair housing and community development, economic justice, educational opportunities, and voting rights.*

*The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 220 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States. The Leadership Conference works toward an America as good as its ideals. For more information on The Leadership Conference and its member organizations, visit [www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org).*

*Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation’s largest and foremost grassroots civil rights organization. The mission of the NAACP is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. Members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights and social justice in their communities. You can read more about the NAACP’s work by visiting [naacp.org](http://naacp.org).*

*The National Urban League is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment in order to elevate the standard of living in historically underserved urban communities. The National Urban League spearheads the efforts of its 90 local affiliates through the development of programs, public policy research and advocacy, providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people annually nationwide. Visit [www.nul.org](http://www.nul.org) and follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @NatUrbanLeague.*