



**For Immediate Release  
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**LDF Releases Statement in Response to the Conviction of Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke**

*Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) issued the following statement in response to the conviction of Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke for the 2014 murder of Laquan McDonald, a 17-year-old Black man:*

“Today a jury found Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke guilty of second-degree murder and 16 counts of aggravated battery for the shooting death of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald. In doing so, the jury found what many Americans realized as soon as the Chicago Police Department (CPD) was compelled to release the video of Laquan’s death: that officer Van Dyke had committed murder.

“Too often, police officers have been acquitted for their role in the deaths of Black Americans. This has been especially true in Chicago, where officer Van Dyke was the first officer to face murder charges in more than 30 years, despite CPD’s long record of abuse and misconduct. We hope that this verdict sends a clear message that police officers can no longer act with impunity against Black Americans, and that this new era of accountability inspires systematic police reform not only in Chicago, but throughout the United States.”

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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 and 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 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.*