

CARNAGE OF MUSLIMS IN CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND (MARCH 15, 2019)

The Salaam Network (TSN) is profoundly shocked and saddened by the March 15 carnage of Muslims who had come to offer Friday prayers at the Al-Noor and Linwood Mosques in central Christchurch, New Zealand. In a horrific and methodical afternoon killing spree, the brutal assassin identified as 28 year old Australian Brenton Harrison Tarrant killed at least 49, and seriously wounded at least 40 more. The gunman, a white nationalist extremist, had posted a lengthy racist manifesto online, expressing hatred toward Muslims and asylum seekers. He live streamed the attacks using a mobile phone app which allows users to broadcast directly to Facebook from personal body cameras.

TSN, like many others, mourns deeply for the grievous loss suffered by the Muslim community in Christchurch. We pray that God grants the souls of those who lost their lives eternal peace and blessedness, and grants courage and patience to those who grieve for them in their own community as well as in the world at large. We are all diminished each time any human life is destroyed by a hate crime. Muslims are sorely tried when a horrendous crime targeting them is justified by people such as Australian Senator Fraser Anning who have articulated unmitigated hatred not only toward Muslim immigrants but also toward Islam and Prophet Muhammad. However, the voices that are being raised across the world to condemn the dreadful hate-crime in Christchurch, and express sincere solidarity with Muslims are a sign of the love, justice and compassion that gives strength and hope to everyone who is potentially vulnerable to forces of darkness and destruction in an increasingly divided world.

In faithfulness to its mission “*Striving to Make the Beloved Community Whole,*” *TSN* reiterates its commitment to promote education and understanding amongst the diverse individuals and groups that live in Louisville and beyond. The eradication of prejudice, bigotry, ignorance, racism, sexism, and other negative forces in our community requires the ongoing effort of all who believe in the ideal of creating an environment in which the equality, dignity and security of all is assured. A heart-and-soul-wrenching act of hatred such as the one perpetrated at Christchurch calls to all of us to join hands and work together with greater determination to bring harmony and wholeness to our community and the world.

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