



National Black Police Association UK

Statement on the death of George Floyd, Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

NBPA UK calls for global leadership on racism as a public health crisis

A crisis shared

In the US and the UK, the recent events in Minneapolis are another sickening example of the disproportionate and deadly use of force. It is made all the more tragic because George Floyd was not treated with basic humanity. The NBPA UK expresses its deepest and heartfelt sympathies to the family and loved ones of George Floyd.

His treatment was barbaric and undermined the rule of law. It broke trust and confidence in policing for **all** communities not just in the USA but also across the world.

In ceasing to see George Floyd as a human being, his distress was ignored, by the very people who are 'trained' to uphold and administer the law. The actions of those police officers, is the final straw and we are once again **all** reeling from a sickening case, where being Black, is a daily and deadly hazard.

For policing, the treatment of George Floyd has shown us that not much has changed since the Rodney King incident in 1991 which sparked the Los Angeles Riots. Like the Rodney King case, this incident has not only exacerbated existing tensions, it has laid bare the 400 year legacy of global white supremacy.

This is why it's so important for policing leaders to act decisively; to take necessary and swift action; to apologise, to understand. To appreciate the strength of feeling and the impact that incidents of this nature have on **all** communities and not just in the US. Decisive and authoritative words, backed by action and underpinned by valuing community and race relations are imperative.

Now more than ever, we need our policing and political leaders to go high and not steep low. Otherwise, we will not only find ourselves witnessing peaceful protests, in Trafalgar Square, the streets of Peckham and other cities in the UK. We will also find that we are sitting precariously on a 'Tinder Box' as we cautiously witness the sinister creeping of similar incidents on the streets of Peckham.



The George Floyd incident and the countless ones before and no doubt after it, inscribe into the hearts of all Black people, their brothers, mothers, sisters, aunts and uncles that they are only ever one step away from being a George Floyd, a Rodney King, a Sandra Bland, a Christopher Alder or a Sean Rigg.

Being Black, as this incident graphically shows, is a very real and dangerous hazard. This is why it's critical for our policing and political leaders to have an appreciation of the strength of feeling and the impact that incidents of this nature have on **all** communities.

We are heartened by the words of those police officers and leaders who have spoken out. Their words have meant something. They have shown compassion and understanding. At times like this, we need more of this and not less. However, those words now need to be converted into concrete actions, which are capable of ridding policing of this violent misconduct.

From London, Birmingham and across the UK, the George Floyd incident is swelling simmering tensions. At a time when we are grappling with the harsh reality that decades of structural and institutional racism has made us fodder not only to the disproportionate use of force in policing but also to COVID19. Surely, now is the time for us to scramble to rid the world of the scourge of racism, structural and institutional with the same intensity as shown to COVID19. If we do not, what happened to George Floyd and the others before him, will yet again be shunted to the annals of race and policing history and what happened to George Floyd and the reaction to it, will be repeated across the world. The time has come to accept that racism is clearly **the** public health crisis, sadly shared by the USA **and** the UK. It is imperative that both nations need to act now.