

**Statement from the Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity  
on the shooting at Pulse in Orlando, Florida**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** -- (Washington, DC - June 12, 2016) The Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity (MASGD) is devastated by the massacre at the Pulse gay nightclub in Orlando on June 12, 2016. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their loved ones. Although the facts are still emerging, as LGBTQ Muslims, we feel compelled to speak out to appeal for solidarity and to ask that we resist assigning blame to any individual or group beyond the shooter.

his senseless loss of life is a reminder of the violence that LGBTQ people continue to experience, despite many recent legal gains for our communities: it is not lost on us that this horrific tragedy occurred during LGBTQ Pride month and the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, typically a period of peace and self-reflection. It pains us that these periods of joy, celebration, and peace have been violently marred with horror.

There is no religious justification or precedent in Islam for mass shootings targeting any population, regardless of identity. This tragedy is a reminder of the terrible harm that can result from the availability and proliferation of guns, and acts of violence by individuals whose own values conflict with those of most people in the U.S., Muslims included, which hold human life to be sacred. With that in mind, we call for a renewal of the national conversation around strengthening gun control.

This tragedy cannot be neatly categorized as a fight between the LGBTQ community and the Muslim community. As LGBTQ Muslims, we know that there are many of us who are living at the intersections of different communities and identities, and we recognize the complexity of these experiences. No community is a monolith - not LatinX, Muslim, queer or trans\*. We honor the lives lost and those impacted by this tragedy, the vast majority of whom are LatinX, a fact being widely ignored. We stand in solidarity with communities of color and all who fight for the collective right to pursue lives of dignity and self-determination, without fear of harm.

We reject attempts to perpetuate hatred against our LGBTQ communities as well as our Muslim communities. We ask all people to resist forces of division and hatred, and to stand against homophobia and transphobia, as well as against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim bigotry. Tragedies often lead people to seek someone or something to blame, but we ask our friends to resist this temptation. Let us instead recommit ourselves to working toward a world without hatred and prejudice. We ask our straight Muslim allies, many of whom have stood in solidarity with us, to build support for LGBTQ people and in opposing homophobia and transphobia in whatever guise it presents itself. We ask our non-Muslim allies, especially within the LGBTQ community, to stand with us against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim bigotry, while we work to end

homophobia and transphobia. And to all peace-loving people everywhere, we ask for your compassion and your support at this very difficult time for our communities.

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*The Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity (MASGD) works to support, empower and connect LGBTQ Muslims. We seek to challenge root causes of oppression, including misogyny and xenophobia. We aim to increase the acceptance of gender and sexual diversity within Muslim communities, and to promote a progressive understanding of Islam that is centered on inclusion, justice, and equality. Learn more about MASGD at [www.muslimalliance.org](http://www.muslimalliance.org). Follow us on Twitter at [@TheMASGD](https://twitter.com/TheMASGD).*