



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF CHARLOTTE AND SURROUNDING AREAS (ECAC) ISSUES ITS SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE SEEKING RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY**

Charlotte, NC. June 7, 2020. All of us have been observing the state of chaos across the United States and the globe over the last several days following the tragic killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Sean Reed, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and others. The deaths of these citizens due to police violence has served to once more highlight the racial disparity that exists in the United States.

As we reflect on current events, all of us should be mindful of the troubled history of America around the issues of racial inequality and injustice, starting with its very founding. People of African descent were subjugated through slavery for over 200 years, and even following that suffered under Jim Crow laws, where they were subject to open persecution and hangings simply due to the color of their skin.

Not only did the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s pave the way to abolishing these laws and granting the right to vote to Black people through the Voting Rights Act of 1965, in the same year, it resulted in the passage of the Immigration Rights Act. This law abolished the race-based immigration quota system and also forbade discrimination in the issuance of immigrant visas on the basis of race, sex, nationality, place of birth, or place of residence.

Therefore, as Ethiopian immigrants to this country, we are the grateful beneficiaries of the struggles and sacrifices of our Black/African-American brothers and sisters, much of which continues to present day. The price they paid has enabled us to come to the United States, fleeing political instability and persecution in our native land and enjoy freedom and the pursuit of our individual versions of the American Dream.

This said, America has not yet achieved the ideals of its Founders – liberty and justice for all. Systemic racism, racial profiling and an inequitable judicial and law enforcement system are among the ways by which people of color, and especially Black people in America continue to suffer under. These recent events have ignited a movement, especially among young people that is pushing back against this system with a quest for lasting change.

The Board of Directors of the ECAC stands in solidarity with all those who are seeking to change and improve life for all citizens of America. We support the many efforts of our own Ethiopian and Ethiopian-American youth as well as many others in the local community and nationally who are undertaking action to have their voices heard and influence policy towards that all-American ideal of *a more perfect union*.

We also unequivocally echo the cries that Black Lives Matter and advocate for an end to racism in America.

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**About ECAC:** The Ethiopian Community of Charlotte & Surrounding Areas is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community-based organization established in Charlotte, North Carolina in September 1998. The Association is committed to serving the growing Ethiopian and Ethiopian-American population of the greater Charlotte area to empower and enable individuals to successfully integrate and pursue their dreams in their new country and to become contributing members of society.