

For Immediate Release
January 24, 2017

Media Contact
Marian Manapsal
mmanapsal@apalanet.org

Over 100 AAPI Organizations Commit to Resistance Following Inauguration and Weekend of Protests

Washington, DC – Following last Friday’s inauguration of Donald Trump as President of the United States and one of the largest weekends of protests, including the Women’s March on Washington and sister marches around the world, over a hundred Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) organizations have committed to resist Mr. Trump and his Administration. The signatories feature a variety of national organizations, local groups, and student organizations that focus on a range of issues from worker rights and economic justice to health and racial justice advocacy.

The joint statement rejects making racism, hate, xenophobia, and sexism normal, and details principles by which organizations will advocate, mobilize, and organize their respective constituencies together in our collective resistance and solidarity efforts.

Johanna Puno Hester, National President of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO and Assistant Executive Director of United Domestic Workers of American/AFSCME Local 3930, said: “It is so dangerous for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders – and any other communities of color and marginalized communities – to engage with the Trump administration. With an administration full of right-wingers and white supremacists whose statements and track records already have proven to be toxic for the new American majority and the planet as a whole, we need to lean on each other, collaborate, and co-conspire in the dark times ahead. Millions marched this weekend, including APALA members across the country, and we are ready to continue resisting.”

Fahd Ahmed, Executive Director of DRUM: Desis Rising Up and Moving, stated: “The communities – organizers, family, and friends – that are impacted the most by national and state policies ground this larger movement and vision for a just society that’s free from repression, bigotry and hate. Our collective activism and organizing are necessary not only to disrupt unjust systems, but also to build power from the ground up. Otherwise, we shortchange our communities if we don’t stand our ground now.”

Sung Yeon Choimorrow, Interim Executive Director of the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum, added: “All of us who have felt Trump’s attacks personally and communally know there is so much at stake. We need to come out in full force and resist this new administration, which has already promised to dismantle the rights of AAPI women and our communities. Now more than ever, we need to reaffirm our solidarity with all who are fighting for justice, whether that’s across the street or across the nation.”

Sarath Suong, Executive Director of Providence Youth Student Movement and a member of the Southeast Asian Freedom Network, commented: “This is more than just ‘getting through’ the next four years: this is about survival. As Southeast Asians, we know the full cost of survival when fascism rises to power. We have already seen increased attacks on our communities and organizations even before the inauguration, and we can expect nothing less during the upcoming years. We will not participate in silencing the trauma and struggles we’re facing. We must defend each other and build our collective resilience.”

Below please find the statement in full and the complete list of signatories. We continue to welcome new co-conspirators to our collective resistance. To sign on, please visit: bit.ly/AAPIStatementOfPrinciples.

As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, We Will Resist

We stand at a critical juncture in world history. The election of Donald Trump as president of the United States represents a direct threat to millions of people's safety and to the health of the planet. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) committed to equality, inclusion, and justice, we pledge to resist any efforts by President-Elect Trump's administration to target and exploit communities, to strip people of their fundamental rights and access to essential services, and to use rhetoric and policies that divide the American people and endanger the world.

Mr. Trump's campaign used explicit racial appeals to win the support of disaffected white voters, promising to restore their economic and social standing by deporting millions of immigrants, building a wall, creating a Muslim registry, banning Muslim immigration, and punishing Black dissent. He also engaged in deeply misogynistic language and behavior throughout his campaign. He insulted all people of color; people with disabilities; and women – all of whom amount to the majority of America. In the global arena, he has signaled at a new nuclear arms race, promised to expand the use of torture, and disparaged the United Nations.

Since his election, Mr. Trump has chosen known white nationalists, corporate moguls, religious zealots, climate deniers, hawkish ex-generals, anti-Islam spokespersons, and anti-government crusaders to serve in his Administration. Right-wing extremists now dominate his party, which will control all three branches of the federal government and the majority of state legislatures, and are positioned to jeopardize the future of the Supreme Court for the next generation and beyond. Together this new realignment of forces seeks to turn back the clock on civil rights and environmental protections, to maximize corporate profits by privatizing the public sector, and to create a racially and culturally exclusive America.

This is not business as usual, and we will not engage in business-as-usual tactics and strategies.

As AAPIs, our lives are rooted in the long arc of U.S. history, which was born out of racial violence and has been shaped by the struggles for freedom of oppressed peoples domestically and internationally. Some of our ancestors first arrived in what is now the United States as subjects of European empire over 400 years ago. Some of us are indigenous to this country as our ancestors' lands were occupied and colonized by the United States as they sought to expand their global military and economic power. In the centuries since, AAPIs have faced indentured servitude, exclusionary immigration laws, bars to citizenship and land ownership, mass deportation, mass incarceration, war, sexual and gender-based violence, forced displacement, vigilante violence, surveillance, and racial and religious profiling.

Today our movements include Southeast Asian refugees organizing to end criminalization and deportation; Muslims, Arabs, Sikhs and South Asians fighting surveillance, profiling, war, and hate violence; women reclaiming their bodies against trafficking, domestic violence, exploitation, and criminalization; low-wage workers standing up against wage theft, poor working conditions, and abusive employers; Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders building a generation to fight against generational poverty caused by loss of sovereignty, militarization of lands and people, forced displacement, and criminalization; and trans, gender-non-conforming, and queer people putting their bodies on the line to demand a different, more humane world. We have always fought injustice, and we are resolute to continue doing so.

The majority of AAPI voters rejected Mr. Trump's candidacy. Indeed, while Mr. Trump won the Electoral College – a problematic system with its own deep history rooted in slavery and racial inequities – he lost the popular vote. And with only 58% of eligible voters casting ballots in this election, the vast majority of American voters did not vote to elect Mr. Trump. He and his Administration have no mandate to govern.

For all of these reasons, we commit to the following principles and ask all AAPIs to join us:

- We will center and stand up for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community members who are likely to face increased levels of hate violence, targeting, and policing. We will center and uplift the experiences and calls to action of undocumented immigrants, Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim, refugees, women, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) community members. We will also support the organizing and resistance strategies of AAPI groups and our allies closest to the ground in local communities.
- We will defend all targets of bigotry, repression, and hate made by Mr. Trump's Administration, or caused by the Trump Effect, with a broad principle of solidarity: "An attack on one is an attack on all."
- We will refuse to legitimate or normalize Mr. Trump's Administration, which has already violated the core principles of American democracy by using explicit appeals to racial and religious bigotry, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and misogyny to gain political power. We will reject ideas, statements, and policies that strengthen the incoming Administration's legitimacy, including divide-and-conquer tactics or strategies that position AAPIs as a racial wedge against other communities of color.
- We will reject any attempts by the Trump Administration to use AAPIs to make a case for their legitimacy and diversity, and will not compromise our values and agency to gain a "seat at the table" in pursuit of narrow benefits. Nor will we conflate marginal visibility for genuine power and influence for our communities.
- We agree to be transparent about our engagement with the Trump Administration, and to be held accountable for our organizational strategies and decisions.
- We will raise awareness about how AAPI communities are affected by discriminatory and divisive rhetoric and policies, and will stand firm in opposing them.
- We will support those who assume personal and organizational risk to defend democratic institutions and practices including human, civil, and constitutional rights, against unjust laws and actions by the government, any group, or individual.
- We will seek unity in pursuit of shared goals, knowing that defending democracy will require various kinds of movements and tactics to weather the coming period of increased repression, and to build a more humane and sustainable world.
- We will work tirelessly toward an inclusive and democratic vision that ensures the safety, self-determination, and wellbeing of all people, and we will model this in our resistance and solidarity efforts.

Signatories (as of January 24, 2017):

18MillionRising.org
 AAPI Feminism Workshop
 Alliance of South Asian American Labor (ASAAL)
 Alliance of South Asians Taking Action
 API Equality - Northern California (APIENC)
 Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
 Asian American Millennials Unite
 Asian American Organizing Project
 Asian American Psychological Association
 Asian American Resource Workshop
 Asian American Student Union (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)
 Asian American Studies, UC Davis
 Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Asian Law Caucus
 Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
 Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Los Angeles
 Asian Americans United
 Asian-American Women's Political Initiative
 Asian Counseling and Referral Service
 Asian Pacific American Heritage Week, University of Pennsylvania

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA)
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Alameda Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Los Angeles Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - New Jersey Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Sacramento Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - San Diego Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - San Jose/San Mateo/Santa Clara Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Seattle Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Texas Chapter
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Washington, DC Chapter
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)
Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON)
Asian Prisoner Support Committee
Asians for Black Lives (A4BL) -- San Diego
CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities
Chinese for Affirmative Action
Chinese Progressive Association - San Francisco
CHOW Project
Critical Filipinx Scholars Collective
DC Asian American and Pacific Islander Democratic Caucus
Densho
Department of Asian American Studies, UC Davis
DRUM - Desis Risng Up & Moving
East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU)
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Filipino Advocates for Justice
Filipino American Democratic Club of New York
Freedom at Emory University
Freedom Inc.
Freedom Trainers
GABRIELA USA
Hep Free Hawaii
Hepatitis Education Project
Hmong National Development
Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement
Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Student Association
Jahajee Sisters Empowering Indo-Caribbean Women
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)
Japanese American Citizens League - New York
Korean American Resource and Cultural Center
Korean Resource Center
Kuya Ate Mentorship Program
Lionswrite Communications
MekongNYC
Midwest Asian American Students Union
National Alliance for Filipino Concerns
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum - Philadelphia
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)

National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
National Organization for Women's (NOW) Inaugural Virtual Chapter: Young Feminists and Allies
OneAmerica
Penn Taiwanese Society, University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia South Asian Collective
Pilipino American Unity for Progress, Inc. (UniPro)
Progressive Asian Network for Action (PANA)
Providence Youth Student Movement (PrYSM)
Rad Azns
REACH! Asian Pacific Islander Recruitment and Retention Center
Reappropriate
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)
SHK Global Health
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Spice Collective, University of Pennsylvania
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southeast Asian Coalition
Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN)
Stanford Asian American Activism Committee
UPenn Asian Pacific Student Coalition
UPLIFT
UXO Clearance Laos
VietLead
VietUnity - Bay Area
VietUnity - Los Angeles
Visual Communications
Wakefield Asian Club, Arlington, Virginia
Yale Asian American Studies Task Force
Yellow Rage