



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 14, 2016

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**RABBIS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE STATEMENT ON THE
SHOOTING OF NEW YORK IMAM AND HIS ASSISTANT**

BERKELEY, CA — Rabbis Against Gun Violence is shocked and saddened at the shooting death of Imam Maulama Akonjee and his assistant Thara Uddin in New York. We are still learning more details and do not know the motivation of the shooter. But one thing we know is that it is far too easy in our country for dangerous people to obtain guns and use them with deadly results.

“On Tisha B'Av, we recall the destruction of the Great Temple in Jerusalem. In many communities, it has become customary to recall other tragedies as well on this day,” explains Rabbi Robyn Fryer Bodzin, Co-Chair of Rabbis Against Gun Violence. “During prayers this morning, my community paused for a moment of silence, as we dedicated our hearts to the members of the Al-Furqan Jame Masjid community, only 7 miles away. Their Imam Maulama Akonjee his assistant, Thara Uddin were gunned down and murdered while walking home from their mosque after prayers. It is not lost on me that I too, was leaving my house of worship at the exact same time yesterday. As a rabbi and a leader in the gun violence prevention community, I refuse to let fear win. Whether this was an act of hate or not, people of faith, people of conscience, *all* people must take action to end this senseless loss of precious life.”

To reduce the gun violence that kills more than 90 Americans and injures hundreds more each day, we demand that our lawmakers act and work to keep guns out of dangerous hands.

About Rabbis Against Gun Violence

Rabbis Against Gun Violence is a national grassroots coalition of Jewish American leaders and faith activists from across the denominational spectrum mobilized to curb the current gun violence epidemic plaguing our communities. We believe in the inherent dignity and sacredness of every human life and believe that every gun death – whether from urban violence, suicide, domestic violence, accidental shootings, or mass shootings - diminishes us. We use our rabbinic voice to educate and advocate for positive, achievable solutions that will save lives and make our communities safer. You do not need to be a rabbi to be a member – just support the work of the group and recognize the important role that faith leaders have in addressing the devastating effect of gun violence. For more information or to get involved visit www.rabbisagainstgunviolence.org. Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/RabbisAgainstGunViolence/?fref=ts> and on Twitter @rabbisagstgv

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