



Statement on Uprisings for Racial Justice

The Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies (WIPCS) stands in solidarity with those seeking justice and a true peace that is void of structural violence including the systemic racism that has led to uprisings all over our country. The oppression, marginalization, and overt violence directed at communities of color in the United States is inexcusable, undeniable, and must be remedied. Furthermore, peaceful protest has always been a necessary and meaningful strategy to move our country forward. State repression and violence towards peaceful protesters is immoral, unethical, and unconstitutional.

Although the protests were sparked by the murder of George Floyd we recognize them as the culmination of generational trauma and righteous indignation against centuries of white supremacy. WIPCS believes that peace education has a critical role to play in understanding the causes of this oppression and finding solutions that can help us create a nonviolent society. Now more than ever, students, faculty, and staff must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and courage to build equitable communities where everyone has the opportunity to live lives of dignity, free from oppression, marginalization, exploitation, and the fear of violence. WIPCS is committed to its mission of supporting the kind of education that helps develop civically engaged people equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to struggle for justice and freedom.

Institutions of education at all levels cannot be neutral in the struggle for justice. We may be uncomfortable talking about issues like racial injustice but remaining silent – inside or outside of our classrooms - implicitly supports the current status quo which has led to the oppression and even death of black and brown people in this country. As educators, we have a moral and civic responsibility to actively teach anti-racism and address the ways schools perpetuate violence. Therefore, WIPCS supports educators working to support the struggle for justice and freedom in our communities and in our schools.

To that end, during the next year WIPCS will take the following steps:

- We will support the work of K-12 teachers in developing age-appropriate anti-racist, peace education curriculum.
- We will develop and share intersectional, anti-racist and justice-oriented curriculum for adults of all ages, encouraging its use especially in courses on peace, conflict and/or human rights.
- We will dedicate our 2021 spring conference to the role of activism in supporting democratic, nonviolent communities founded upon justice.
- We will create more opportunities for people to educate themselves on peace and justice related issues by building a rich online curriculum.
- We commit our board to its own deep exploration of how our organization contributes to the perpetuation of silence around white privilege and power resulting in organizational decision-making.

In summary, we are committed to building a society where there is no question that black lives matter and ALL people have the opportunity to reach their human potential and become fully free.

In solidarity with all those seeking peace and justice,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Handley", written in a cursive style.

Jim Handley, Executive Director
Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies