

Amnesty Youth Group: Black lives matter, and this is what the world is doing about it

You've heard about the injustice of the Police system in America. You've heard about George Floyd. We can't ever be tired of hearing it, talking about it, acting upon it until everyone gets the rights they deserve. Being able to ignore something like this is a privilege.

We're not here to tell you what has been said before. We want to share what we must understand about responses to George Floyd and what is being done.

How the petitions help

The petition on [change.org](https://www.change.org), signed by more than ten million united people, makes it the biggest petition the platform has ever seen. This number alone signifies the power we have as a collective to end human rights abuses. You've signed for justice, but what exactly does "justice" entail? What's the result of the murderers being held accountable for their actions?

Punishment is how we handle such situations, but people aren't just looking for compensation, for payback. No punishment will bring back George Floyd or any of the countless black men that have been wrongly murdered. However, the more powerful aims of punishment, make a mark on our laws and actions.

This goes outside the United States laws, these are breaches of human rights that we all need to recognize: that cops are not above any law, that there is no excuse for murder of a complying man, that the law in racially diverse countries discriminate against black people because of institutional and internalized racism.

This recognition leads to a change of action in both lawmakers and society, in training of police forces, making them aware, and people that have or would have potentially falsely accused black men of crime. Awareness and deterrence is a way justice pushes society to move in the correct direction.

Discussion on violent protests

We should not condone violence. Sadly, sometimes it seems to be what makes people pay more attention. As a Daniel Q. Gillion, professor of political science at University of Pennsylvania puts it, "Nonviolent protest brings awareness to an issue; violent protest brings urgency to an issue." However, this may cause disruption to innocent citizens, and we need to consider what the end goal is and evaluate the weight of the cause against societal damage.

It is important to consider that violent protests are not one sided. Both parties can turn violent as authorities attempt to control the crowds, and it becomes less

safe in the midst of this. How the American police retaliated proves that violent protests are dangerous for the protesting party, and your safety should come first.

This violence has provoked many negative reactions, which damages the image of the cause and provides a catalyst for opposing groups to claim that the movement is "bad." But it should be known that violence does not reflect the black lives matter movement, as it has been shown that the majority of protesters tried to stop the chaos, and some of the violence was induced by the officers. They are aware that the only way to ensure violent reactions will be unlikely is to maintain a peaceful protest. Focusing on select individuals' choices should not be undermining the main cause. We are seeking for less violence in the world, after all.

Conclusion: power in numbers

We advise you to keep the idea of protest and petitions in mind, because we gather strength in numbers. Action is catalysed by the voice of the people which brings in even more to join the cause. Not only does this accelerate the extent to which policy makers are pressured to act upon the situation, but the individual influence that reminds us to be alert, to call out when something is wrong and to recognize in ourselves that some of us might need to change our viewpoint. We should not focus on what wrong we may have previously thought in the past, but what we can do in the future.

Thank you for listening to me, and please remember to not only share but to understand what you're sharing. If you ever feel like you aren't making a difference, remember that everything is made from little bits and pieces, all it takes is a lot of them.

If you have any questions in general, or just want to have a discussion with me or the Amnesty team, feel free to contact us! The Amnesty Google Classroom is accessible with the code: s5npphm.

Stay safe everyone,

Nuna Dumrongthai

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