

July 4th, 2020

Portland Police Bureau/ City of Portland

C/O Chief Chuck Lovell

Dear Chief Lovell and Portland Police members,

We, Iraqi community leaders, welcome you as a new Chief of Portland Police Bureau, and we offer our support to you and your officers in executing your mission at this critical point of time in the history of our city.

We stand with you in solidarity and support of our police officers while they are doing their professional role to protect people and ensure we have a “State of Law” to live in peace and prosper. We also appreciate your efforts to effect change towards racial equity on a systemic level through analysis and dialogue.

We want to affirm that our values and justice goals align with your vision and the vision of your officers to work jointly with the community, in creating lasting solutions combating injustices, through open minds and hearts to heal some challenging power dynamics and create more collaboration on individual and system levels to create effective change with transparency and greater opportunity for the marginalized people.

We think it is paramount to bring the very people, who are being affected on various levels and causes, to the table to have a constructive and solution-oriented process and conversation. We propose bringing people, government, academia, and nonprofits (in the collective impact model of Stanford University) in a dialogue where we need to start even to begin analyzing and having a dialogue about systemic racism and to be able to include the perspectives and ideas of those most affected.

We support the efforts and advocacy for change and transformation of the criminal justice system, yet we are also aware that these processes need a non-violent conflict resolution oriented approach by the Police Bureau and impacted communities to engage in a constructive process. We are aware that our officers need a healthy environment to provide their primary public service and address crime/public safety-related concerns and not be distracted by mass violence.

We are appealing to those individuals who are engaging in violence and instability, thus directly disrupting the communities’ efforts and will to work jointly in building a new path for our community to resort to non-violent conflict resolution approach. We believe in holding our police accountable for their actions and want to work with their members in ensuring everyone’s rights are met and honored.

We know that police officers are also our community members and our neighbors and are as invested in peace and stability as our Iraqi refugee families are – therefore, we are all hoping for the same social goals. We want to work with our city leaders and police on addressing social

injustices, and we promote the community policing model, community-based partnerships, and workgroups to be a model for solutions as we move forward.

As a refugee community coming from a war-impacted region, we are traumatized by chaos, war, and civil war, and we want to support our Police and City leadership in identifying a common language and narrative to building a safer and prosperous community that is welcoming and thriving.

Chief Lovell and our police officers, thank you for your consideration and beginning a conversation about addressing barriers for implementing Equity and Social Justice values and practices internally as well as the community at large as the Police Department and officers are an essential component of the Community wellbeing.

Accept our Best Regards

Baher Butti, Iraqi society of Oregon, secretary of NPPC/ City of Portland

Muwafaq AlKatan, Iraqi Society of Oregon

Ahmed Alzubaidi founder & Executive director The Arabic House organization

Aras Dezay, Founder of Iraqi Arabic school

Ihab Abdulhasan, Muslim Advisory Council/ PPB

Zinah Mudhafar, founder of Alif Baa school

Rwayda Hasan, Development Analyst/ Multnomah County



