

# Families, Rights Groups Demand U.N. Investigate U.S. Police Killings, Protest Suppression

Families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Michael Brown, and Philando Castile Join Forces with Over 600 Groups from over 60 Countries Calling for International Scrutiny

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GENEVA — In an unprecedented move, the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Michael Brown, and Philando Castile, together with over 600 rights groups led by the American Civil Liberties Union and U.S. Human Rights Network, are [demanding](#) the United Nations Human Rights Council swiftly convene a special session to investigate the escalating situation of police violence and repression of protests in the United States. Additional signatories include Black Lives Matter and the NAACP.

“Mamie Till Mobley made a decision to open the casket of her son Emmett Till so the world could see the atrocities Black people faced in America. I want people across the world and the leaders in the United Nations to see the video of my brother George Floyd, to listen to his cry for help, and I want them to answer his cry,” said **Philonise Floyd, brother of George Floyd**. “I appeal to the United Nations to help him. Help me. Help us. Help Black men and women in America.”

The groups warn of an “unfolding grave human rights crisis” in the United States and write that the recent police killings of unarmed Black people as well as police use of excessive force and repression of protests violate United States obligations under international law. They call on the U.N. to mandate an independent inquiry into the killings and violent law enforcement responses to protests, including the attacks against protesters and journalists. The letter also calls for a U.N. investigation into the firing of tear gas by President Trump in violation of international standards on the use of force.

The United Nations Human Rights Council is the world’s highest multilateral human rights body. It is mandated to strengthen the global promotion and protection of human rights, and to address human rights violations. The council may hold special sessions to address human rights violations and emergencies if at least one-third of its member states demand.

Below is additional comment from:

**Professor Gay McDougall, co-drafter of the letter and former member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination:**

“The movement in the U.S. is resonating around the world, as minority groups in other countries are fighting common struggles against racism and exclusion.”

**Salimah Hankins, executive director of the U.S. Human Rights Network:**

“Police violence and repression is experienced by Black people all over the world as a result of experiencing and witnessing anti-black violent racism at the hands of law enforcement and racist vigilantes. We believe it is important to move this issue to the international stage to highlight the hypocrisy of the U.S. government's stance, where it calls out human rights abuses abroad, but ignores government-sanctioned violence at home.”

**Ben Crump, attorney for George Floyd’s family:** “The United States has a pattern and practice of condoning the torture and extrajudicial killing of African Americans. We have exhausted our domestic legal remedies on prior countless occasions to no avail. The George Floyd family appeals to the United Nations to intervene in his murder. Now, even though the murder of Black people is consistently captured on camera, we have yet to capture the minds and hearts of legislatures and jurors, and we have yet to capture the justice and equality promised in our Constitution and inherent in our human rights.”

**Jamil Dakwar, director of the ACLU’s Human Rights Program:** “It is time the United States face the same scrutiny and judgement it is quick to pass on to other countries. This accountability appeal to the United Nations follows the legacy of great Black leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X who believed in internationalizing the struggle for human rights and racial justice in the United States. As communities in the United States call on their leaders to divest from policing and end structural racism, the United Nations must support these domestic demands by holding the United States accountable for its human rights violations.”

The letter, and full list of signatories, is here: <https://www.aclu.org/letter/coalition-letter-request-un-investigation-escalating-situation-police-violence-and-repression>.