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Authors: (ECoBA board)

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ECoBA: Statement on Orlando Shooting

We, ECoBA (Eastern Churches of the Bay Area), unite our voice with religious leaders throughout the Bay Area, the U.S., and abroad in condemning the recent act of violence and hatred in Orlando, FL.

With Pope Francis, we join "the families of the victims and all of the injured in prayer and in compassion, and sharing their indescribable suffering we entrust them to the Lord so they may find comfort."

We revoice the Orthodox Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan Tikhon's message rooted deeply in the Christian faith: "Together with many people of faith we repudiate the use of religion to justify and promote hatred and violence. While the use/misuse of Islam confronts us with a global challenge, no religion is exempt from such manipulation. We join with all those religious leaders who promote and advance respect for human life. We see in each human being the image and likeness of God. We decry hatred and violence as ultimate assaults on God's intention and love for each man and woman."

Coming from communities which have been enduring atrocities from Jihadists throughout the modern age, we call upon the international community to effectively address the fundamentalist organizations that spread senseless hatred and incite violence against the innocent.

Addressing historical and contemporary injustices demonstrates commitment to responding to this growing threat to peace and human dignity. We urge the international community to follow the praiseworthy declaration of the German government in acknowledging the Armenian genocide of 1915. We also urge leading powers to take demonstrable actions in stopping the bloodshed caused by extremist groups against religious minorities in the Middle-East and hence elsewhere.

Lastly, we recommit our own communities to the calling of living as positive examples of Christian love and respect, while not succumbing to fear or intolerance.

United in prayer for Peace in Christ, Our Lord.