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Appeal: After the Charlie Hebdo's massacre - Support those who fight the religious-right

Saturday 19 March 2016, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 7 January 2015).

After the massacre in Charlie Hebdo in Paris today, January 7, 2015, expressing indignation, as so many are doing, is not enough.

A quick look at the English-speaking media shows that whilst many condemn the violence itself, they also assert that Charlie Hebdo courted (and maybe deserved?) a strong response from "Muslims". Charlie's regular cartoonists did not spare Islam, any other religion, nor fanatics and bigots.

This trend in the media requires our attention. Apparently secularists, agnostics and atheists must keep silent and do not deserve the kind of respect that believers are entitled to; nor can they enjoy free speech to the same degree.

In the name of "respect" of religions and of the religious sentiments of believers, it is indeed the fanatical religious-Right that is being supported and given centre stage. Meanwhile, those who are on the forefront of countering armed fundamentalists are left to their own devices. It is high time to give these secularists prominence, to recognise their courage, their political clarity and to stop labelling them "Islamophobic".

In October 2014, secularists - including atheists, agnostics and believers from many countries, in particular many Muslim-majority countries, met in London to denounce the religious-Right and to demand being seen as its alternative. It is high time to learn from their analysis and lived experience.

Today's tragic massacre in Paris will undoubtedly give fuel to the traditional xenophobic far-Right and the immediate danger is an increase in racism, marginalization and exclusion of people of Muslim descent in Europe and further. We do not want to witness "anti-Muslim witch hunts" nor do we welcome the promotion of "moderate Islamists" by governments as official political partners. What is needed is a straightforward analysis of the political nature of armed Islamists: they are an extreme-Right political force, working under the guise of religion and they aim at political power. They should be combated by political means and mass mobilisation, not by giving extra privileges to any religion.

Their persistent demand for the extension of blasphemy laws around the world is a real danger for all. France has a long - and now growingly endangered - tradition of secularism; which allows dissent from religions and the right to express this dissent. It has had a rich tradition to mock and caricature powers that be - religious or otherwise. Let us keep this hard won right which cost so many lives in history, and, alas, still does - as Charlie Hebdo's twelve dead and numerous wounded demonstrate today.

Updated list of signatories January 9, 2014:

Marieme Helie Lucas, Algerian Sociologist and Secularism is a Women's Issue Founder

Maryam Namazie, Iranian-born Spokesperson of Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, One Law for All and Fitnah and Co-host of Bread and Roses TV

Karima Bennoune, Professor and Martin Luther King Jr. Hall Research Scholar, University of California, Davis School of Law

Adriane Choukour Wali, Gender and Development Consultant

Albert Beale, Peace Activist

Ali al-Razi, Ex-Muslim Forum

Alison Assiter, Professor of Feminist Theory at the University of the West of England
Retour ligne automatique

Amel Grami, Professor at the Tunisian University of Manouba

Amie Joof, FAMEDEV-Inter Africa Network for Women, Media, Gender and Development

Anissa Daoudi, Birmingham University, Head of Arabic Section

Ayesha Imam, Coordinator of the Nigerian Women's Rights Organisation BAOBOB

Ariane Brunet, Centre for Secular Space

Braema Mathi, Human Rights Activist, Singapore

Bronwyn Winter, University Professor

Charlotte Bunch, Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies at Rutgers University

Chris Moos, Secularist Activist and Researcher

Christine M. Shellska, President of Atheist Alliance International

Codou Bop, Groupe de recherche sur les femmes et les mois au Sénégal

Daayiee Abdullah, Imam of Light of Reform Mosque

Deeyah Khan, Norwegian Filmmaker and Founder/CEO of Fuuse

Elahe Amani, Gender, Peace and Social Justice Activist

Elizabeth Cox, Feminist and Rights-based Development Specialist

Elham Manea, Writer, Academic and Human Rights Activist

Esam Shoukry, Defence of Secularism and Civil Rights of Iraq and Left Worker Communist Party of Iraq

Fahima Hashim, Director of Salmah Women's Resource Centre in Sudan

Fariborz Pooya, Founder of the Iranian Secular Society and Co-host of Bread and Roses TV

Farzana Hassan, Writer

Fatou Sow, International Director of Women Living Under Muslim Laws

Fiammetta Venner, Writer and Filmmaker

George Broadhead, Secretary of Pink Triangle Trust

Glen Carrigan, Secular Activist and AHS Society Founder

Gita Sahgal, Founder of Centre for Secular Space

Gona Saed, Campaigner and Activist

Hala Aldosari, Women's Health Researcher and Women's Rights Women's Activist

Harsh Kapoor, South Asia Citizens Web

Houzan Mahmoud, Kurdish Women's Rights Activist

Imad Iddine Habib, Founder of the Council of Ex-Muslims of Morocco

Inna Shevchenko, Leader of FEMEN

Julie Bindel, Writer

Kate Smurthwaite, Comedian and Activist

Laura Guidetti, Marea Italian Feminist Review

Lila Ghobady, Iranian Writer and Filmmaker

Lino Veljak, Philosopher, University of Zagreb

Madhu Prasad, Former Leader of the Delhi University Teachers Trade Union

Magdulien Abaida, Libyan Activist and President of Hakki (My Right) Organization for Women Rights

Maria Emília Novo, Researcher

Meredith Tax, Centre for Secular Space

Mina Ahadi, International Committees against Stoning and Execution

Minna Salami, Writer, Blogger and Founder of MsAfropolitan

Muniza Khan, Registrar of Gandhian Institute of Studies

Nadia El Fani, Tunisian Filmmaker

Nahla Mahmoud, Spokesperson of Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain

Naouel Hamm Miss, Agent d animation collectivités territoriales 66

Nazanin Borumand, Zentralrat der Ex-Muslime Deutschland

Nina Sankari, Vice President of Atheist Coalition of Poland

Nira Davis-Yuval, Founder member of Women Against Fundamentalism and the International Research Network on Women in Militarized Conflict Zones

Peter Tatchell, Director, Peter Tatchell Foundation

Pragna Patel, Director of Southall Black Sisters

Rahmatu Ahmed, African Life Centre

Ramin Forghani, Founder of the Ex-Muslims of Scotland and Vice-Chair of the Scottish Secular Society

Richard Dawkins, Scientist

Safak Pavey, MP for Istanbul, Turkish Parliament

Sally Armstrong, Journalist

Sara Hakemi, Secular Greens and Giordano Bruno Foundation

Shareen Gokal, Association for Women's Rights in Development

Siamak Bahari, Political Activist and Editor of Children First Publication

Stasa Zajovic, Founder of the Women in Black in Serbia

Sukhwant Dhaliwal, Researcher and Women's Rights Activist

Sultana Kamal, Bangladeshi Human Rights Activist

Taslima Nasrin, Bangladeshi-born Writer

Tehmina Kazi, Director of British Muslims for Secular Democracy

Soad Baba Aïssa, Founder of Association pour la mixité, l'égalité et la laïcité

Terry Sanderson, President of the National Secular Society

Waleed Al-Husseini, Palestinian blogger and Founder of the Council of Ex-Muslims of France

Yasmin Rehman, Women's Rights Advocate

Yolanda Rouiller, Filóloga, Activista de Mujeres de Negro

Zazi Sadou, Algerian Feminist

P.S.

* <http://siawi.org/article8509.html>