RCGA Condemns Racist and Police Violence

The Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs strongly condemns the heinous murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. Along with other acts of police brutality, criminality, and the racist criminalization of Black Americans, this murder underscores the deep inequities and systemic racism that operate in our society and the need to name and combat the racist violence that has plagued America since its founding.

Given the longstanding disregard for Black Americans’ human rights (while shocking to all, Mr. Floyd’s murder was shocking but not surprising to Black Americans), the pain and anguish Americans are expressing across the country are justified and entirely understandable. We are heartened by the thousands of people in America and beyond who are raising their voice, taking a stand, and demonstrating their commitment to confront these wrongs and work toward a more just and equitable world. We join other civic leaders and civic minded organizations in calling on law enforcement officers who respond to demonstrations to exercise restraint and to employ tactics to de-escalate rather than escalate tensions further.

The murder of Black Americans by police and vigilantes is wrong. It must stop, as must the criminalization of Black Americans for doing mundane things—barbecuing in a park, birdwatching, mowing the lawn, playing with toys, shopping at Walmart, sleeping in a dorm, selling water, or using an Air BnB. The Rohatyn Center affirms our commitment to Black Americans’ human rights and to the principles of racial equity, justice, and nonviolence.