



## STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO US TRAVEL BAN

Diakonia Council of Churches is appalled by the travel ban imposed by US President Donald Trump on citizens from seven majority Muslim countries.

The reasons for the travel ban are short-sighted and ill-informed by facts. The Human Rights Watch have issued a table (attached) in which the numbers of Americans killed by other humans is listed, using a ten-year average. The total killed by Islamic Jihadist immigrants; far right-wing terrorists; and all Islamic Jihadist Terrorists (including US citizens) is 16. The total killed by being shot by another American is 11,737, plus 21 killed by armed toddlers. The President is targeting the wrong risk to American lives, and should, but won't, target gun ownership and the irresponsible use of fire-arms within the US. Instead he has focussed on what appears to be an easy target group, and has contradicted the words written for the Statue of Liberty, from which his ancestors benefitted as immigrants:

“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” (Emma Lazarus)

We are deeply concerned by the swing to the right, fed by fear of the ‘other’, that has occurred in the US. The source of our fear is not so much in the leader himself, frightening as his stance may be, but in what and who he represents – people who think like that in his country. We would rather see a focus on building human community across the globe than a retreat into laagers and taking on imagined threats while ignoring the real threats which lurk within the US from among their own.

Revd Ian Booth, Chairperson, Diakonia Council of Churches

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