



Civil Liberties Coalition Concerned About Police Conduct in Arrest of Attorney

(New York, NY, September 24, 2014): As a New York-based coalition of citizens, community and faith leaders, organizers, advocates, attorneys, and organizations, the Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition (MACLC) views with great concern the recent arrest of noted civil rights attorney Chaumtoli Huq, including her allegations of rough and discriminatory treatment. It is a stark reminder of the urgent need to address discriminatory policing that plagues New York City, and the country.

Ms Huq is highly respected in the legal community as well as in the South Asian, Arab and Muslim communities we serve. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of New York workers and low-income residents in the many different roles she has occupied over the years.

Accounts of Ms Huq's arrest earlier this month are troubling. Based on publicly available accounts, the arresting officer Ryan Lothrop knew she was waiting for her children and that he told Ms Huq "You're my prisoner!" and "In America, wives take the name of their husbands." This is completely unacceptable behavior for an NYPD officer.

Unfortunately, Ms. Huq's experience, as described in her complaint in a lawsuit, is emblematic of a larger pattern of discriminatory policing on the part of the NYPD. As the events of this past summer have shown, including the killing of Eric Garner, police brutality and discriminatory policing remain an urgent matter that must be addressed at the top levels of the administration. Ms. Huq's arrest and circumstances surrounding it are but one of the many reminders from the recent months that police accountability reform is urgently needed.

Discriminatory policing, when unchecked, sends a message to the public that legitimizes prejudice against these groups. In light of the recent peak in hate crimes, MACLC feels that the administration should speak loudly and clearly on such incidents. See, e.g., <http://www.brooklyneagle.com/articles/2014/9/17/nypd-hate-crimes-nyc-increase>.

MACLC aims to give voice to absent perspectives on issues of national security, counterterrorism, law enforcement, and civil rights, especially as they impact Muslim communities in post-9/11 New York City. MACLC urges that the NYPD conduct transparent investigations into cases involving discriminatory policing, including that of Ms. Huq, and take appropriate action to ensure police accountability.