



“In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful”

IMPORTANT MESSAGE: RESPONSE TO NYPD SURVEILLANCE

The Columbia Muslim Students Association would like to inform its membership of recent developments related to the New York Police Department's (NYPD) surveillance on university campuses.

Information can be found at: http://www.ap.org/pages/about/whatsnew/wn_021812b.html

The Columbia Muslim Students Association is deeply saddened and disappointed by the news of the NYPD's surveillance and monitoring of Muslim college students across many campuses, including our own. Columbia is only the most recent addition to a series of sites that the NYPD has reportedly surveilled in New York City as part of its broad intelligence gathering program on Muslim communities in NYC, as reported by the Associated Press. We are disturbed by the fact that Muslim students are targeted and profiled based on their ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs alone, without any evidence or suspicion of wrongdoing. We are concerned that news reports about NYPD's presence on our campus have a chilling effect on the intellectual freedom necessary for a vibrant academic community.

We hope that President Bollinger, President Spar and the University will stand with our community during this difficult time and protect the student body from any violation of our civil rights. We would like our general body to know that we have reached out to the administration and are working with the university to ensure our community is safe.

In these times it is important that our members, as well as students generally, are informed of their rights:

- 1) If you are contacted by law enforcement, at school, at your home, or at the mosque, etc. you *always* have the right to remain silent. This applies regardless of your immigration status!
- 2) It is safer to refuse to talk until you have an attorney with you.
- 3) Have them contact your lawyer, ask for their business card and let them know that your lawyer will follow up with them.

If you do not have a lawyer, there are free legal resources available. If you have any concerns about law enforcement contacting you, we encourage you to reach out to the following resources:

Diala Shamas, CLEAR Project (Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility): (718) 340 4533

Cyrus McGoldrick, CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations)-New York: (212) 870-2002

If you are contacted by media, we encourage you to contact us before responding. It is in the best interest of our community that we are careful and united. If you feel uncomfortable or have questions or concerns, please reach out to us for assistance at msa@columbia.edu, as we have a designated press person.

Lastly, the MSA will do our best to provide you with clarity, guidance and support. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us, or our religious life advisor, Imam Khalil at ka2362@columbia.edu or (347) 819-2233.

This is a time for us as a community to be vigilant and pull together. Our organization will continue to work hard to promote social justice and a safe environment for our community.

Best, The CU-MSA

