

USA: letter to 3,500 mayors and governors calls for tighter security ahead of inauguration



PUBLISHED JAN 13, 2021
BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
UK

Amnesty researchers monitoring situation at state capitols and in Washington - available for interview

In response to the events of last week and in anticipation of more gatherings by white supremacists ahead of the inauguration, Amnesty International USA has sent a letter to 3,500 US mayors and governors calling on them to protect people from armed groups and to denounce white supremacy.

Amnesty USA's calls on mayors and governors includes requests that they:

- *Publicly condemn and demand accountability for incitement to violence and the enabling and abetting of white supremacy at the highest levels of government, including by President Trump and other government officials

- *Publicly condemn armed groups and individuals as a threat to public safety and human rights, and speak out against white supremacy, discrimination, xenophobic rhetoric and incitement to violence by such groups and individuals

- *Issue executive orders, emergency orders or other temporary special measures to prevent armed white supremacist individuals or groups from intimidating or threatening people

- *Temporarily prohibit the open and "concealed carry" of firearms in Capitol buildings and in public - including parks, recreational areas, religious institutions and schools

*Direct police departments to adopt and follow Amnesty's best practice guidelines on the policing of demonstrations, and ensure that all law-enforcement agencies facilitate freedom of peaceful assembly - without discrimination - particularly in the context of volatile counter-protest situations, with commitments to ensuring transparent investigation and prosecution of unlawful use of force, and vigilantism by armed groups

A lack of restriction on guns, combined with the embrace of white supremacists by Donald Trump and other government officials, continues to put the country at risk of further violence.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of Amnesty International UK, on Jan 13, 2021. For more information subscribe and follow us.

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