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### **NAME statement on Pittsburgh Synagogue Shootings and Hate Fueled Violence**

[The National Association for Multicultural Education](#) expresses its deepest sympathy for the victims, their families and surrounding community of the mass shooting at the [Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh](#), PA. What is clear is that bullying and hate-filled language communicate a verbal violence terrifying victims, bystanders and inspiring more perpetrators. NAME knows that even preschoolers possess this awareness and anxiously know that physical violence often follows. Bloodshed is almost certain when brutal language comes from authority figures. Third-grade Riceville, Iowa, teacher Jane Elliott explained that in the groundbreaking PBS Frontline documentary [“A Class Divided.”](#) Sam Keen also underscored that concept in his documentary [“Faces of the Enemy.”](#) saying “Before we make war, even before we make weapons, we first create the idea of an enemy whom we can fight.” It, therefore, makes no sense for President Donald Trump and the people in his administration to try to separate Trump’s media and political rally amplified angry, hateful rhetoric against Democrats, Mexicans and immigrants from the mass violence that marred the United States in October. A 46-year-old gunman, fueled by an anti-Semitic rage stoked by U.S. leadership, fatally shot 11 people and wounded several others on Oct. 27 inside the Pittsburgh synagogue.

The accused shooter spewed hatred against Jews and posted on social media that a Jewish affiliated refugee resettlement organization “likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in.” The gunman’s actions extended Trump’s hate-filled rhetoric against [immigrants](#) — particularly the thousands of Central American migrants making their way to the U.S.-Mexican border. Trump has, once again, responded to human need with violence, deploying 5,200 U.S. troops to the border to thwart entry into the United States. Trump [tweeted](#) recently: “Many Gang Members and some very bad people are mixed into the Caravan heading to our Southern Border. Please go back, you will not be admitted into the United States unless you go through the legal process. This is an invasion of our Country and our Military is waiting for you!” Then on Oct. 24, at a Kroger store in [Jeffersontown, Ky.](#), a white gunman fatally shot two black grocery store customers. The slayings are being investigated as a possible federal hate crime.

On Nov. 6, voters will determine whether Trump’s Republican Party maintains control over the U.S. House and U.S. Senate or if Democrats wrestle it from the president’s grasp. Trump knows his angry rhetoric unifies his base. His [incendiary language](#) has included calling Democrats “evil” and saying they are “too dangerous to govern.” At rallies, Trump has labeled himself a [“nationalist”](#) — an act NAME sees as a specific call to white supremacist groups and individuals to continue violence.

In addition, the president’s explosive words have led to [many Democrats](#) — including former President Barack Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Rep. Maxine Waters — being the targets of explosive devices sent through the mail. The 56-year-old Florida suspect, whom authorities have arrested, was an outspoken [Trump supporter](#), and [media footage](#) has shown him to have attended Trump rallies. In one case he was holding an anti-CNN poster. The national cable news network, which has been critical of the president, also received a bomb.

NAME knows the violence must end. But for that to happen, the president and the White House must declare a cease-fire to all of the hate-filled rhetoric, which fuels the animosity and bloodshed. Meaningful gun laws must be enacted.

Educators know that safety must come first in all schools if they are to get students of all ages to learn. The same is true in the communities where children live with their families and attend places of worship to pray for better tomorrows.