



American Justice Center
Holding Human Rights Abusers Accountable

Statement by Joe Whittington Jr

President, American Justice Center

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Good Morning!

I bring to you greetings from Harvey, Illinois, a diverse community that celebrates our common humanity and looks forward with hope to the endless possibilities of the future.

I am Joseph Whittington Jr., the President of the American Justice Center . AJC is an organization established to secure justice for victims of mass violence and genocides, especially in cases where the perpetrators are deemed too powerful to hold accountable. Our vision of humanity is "We are one family in the eyes of God."

I stand before you today to announce that the AJC has filed a case against visiting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, brought by three survivors of the Gujarat massacres of 2002, under the Alien Tort Claims Act.

Our decision to hold Mr. Modi personally accountable is consistent with the findings of human rights organizations and independent citizen's tribunals in India. There is documented evidence that Mr. Modi's response to the horrific violence of 2002, including his public statements, contributed to the systematic massacre of over 2,000 people in Gujarat and the displacement of over 150,000 people, mostly from the minority communities. Our action is also consistent with the position of the US State Department that denied Mr. Modi entry to the United States since 2005 under the International Religious Freedom Act, for his "egregious violations of religious freedom." Mr. Modi is now able to travel to the US, under exemptions normally accorded to heads of state.

As the President of AJC, and as an African-American, I not only empathize with the situation of minorities in India, but also urge the international community to take note of the deteriorating situation with respect to human rights and religious freedom in India.

The Gujarat massacre was a monumental tragedy. It claimed the lives of innocent people running for safety, expecting the government to safeguard their lives and property. If Mahatma Gandhi were alive, he would certainly take up the cause of the Gujarat victims as a great moral issue.



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Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "Our lives begin to end, the day we become silent about things that matter." I say to you, and I believe Dr. King would agree, if he were alive; "The Gujarat massacre matters; justice for the innocent people killed matters, justice for the hundreds of women raped matters; more importantly, doing something to secure that justice matters."

There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor popular. There comes a time when one must stand up and be counted. We, at the American Justice Center applaud you, the citizens, for being here today, to stand up for justice and human rights. We applaud you for your courage in speaking truth to power, and in continuing the struggle for justice. The American Justice Center is with you!

Thank you and God bless you!!