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Chicago

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Orthodox Church in America

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Roman Catholic Church

Salvation Army

Serbian Orthodox Church

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McCormick Theological Seminary

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Chicago Center for Cultural Connections

Community Renewal Society



August 31, 2013

A STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF GREATER CHICAGO ON THE TRAGEDY OF SYRIAN VIOLENCE

The Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago joins with faith leaders across Chicago and our nation in being appalled at the continuing and now escalating violence in the nation of Syria. The use of chemical weapons and most recently incendiary devices--regardless of who has used them--is hateful and immoral. We declare that no government--and no other force--is free to use such weapons.

As the human toll of this conflict continues to grow, it is no less than a crime against humanity. In God's name, it must be stopped.

We are conscious of the pressure within our own and allied nations to initiate military intervention in the conflict. The nature of a proper response to the unspeakable violence in Syria is beyond our role and capacity as a council to determine.

Still experience makes clear that such actions are filled with danger and failure. Therefore, we urge our government to exercise great restraint in responding to the current situation, knowing that we risk adding destruction to destruction and violence to violence.

In the darkness of this time,

We pray for the immediate cessation of hostility.

We pray for the initiation of civil discourse among the many conflicting forces.

We urge that every means available of providing aid and comfort to the millions of victims flow into Syria's neighbors.

And we engage in urgent prayer for the victims of this horrible conflict.

God have mercy upon them.

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The Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC), a non-profit organization, is comprised of the head religious leadership of practically every major religious tradition in the broader Chicago area, representing nearly six million people. Through its work, the CRLMC speaks with a unified moral voice on issues of the day; creates a climate of better interfaith understanding and cooperation; and participates in programs which advance its work.