Indian Diaspora Council International
Shared heritage, aspirations and interests
www.indiandiasporacouncil.org
Post Office Box 650523 New York 11365 USA

PRESS STATEMENT

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HONORING the LIFE & LEGACY of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.

The Indian Diaspora Council International (**IDC**) and its global affiliates join with other organizations, officials, individuals and institutions in the USA and worldwide in honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in commemorating the 95th year of Dr. King's birth.

The guiding principles, teachings and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have become vital and more relevant with the continuing struggles in 2024, as advocacy for voting rights, social justice and racial equality in the USA have become more prominent in recent years.

While there are many more racial barriers to overcome, the election of Kamala Harris as Vice President, the election of Congress Member Hakeem Jeffries as Minority Leader in US House of Representatives and more people of color and minorities elected at federal, state and municipal levels, are outstanding examples of recent racial progress.

"We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now".

We pay special homage and grateful recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's preeminent leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement, from 1955 to 1968, during which time African Americans achieved more genuine progress toward racial equality in America than the previous three centuries had produced. He championed equal rights which led to the 1965 US Civil Rights Act legally barring discrimination and segregation in all segments of American societv.

US President Joseph Biden's proclamation on Martin Luther King's Jr Day 2024 remarked that, *"Today, we reflect on the life and legacy of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and recommit to honoring his moral vision on the path to redeeming the soul of our Nation. The battle for the soul of our Nation is perennial — a constant struggle between hope and fear, kindness and cruelty, and justice and injustice. There are still those who seek to thwart progress and roll back our rights as Americans. But Dr. King and countless crusaders across the span of American history teach us that each generation must answer the call to perfect our Union. We must heed the whispers of our better angels. We must see each other as neighbors and not enemies. We must do our best to seek a life of light, hope, and truth. Because nothing is guaranteed about our democracy. We must fight to keep, defend, and protect it."*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement. He was born on January 15, 1929 and assassinated on April 4, 1968. Martin Luther King Jr. believed that peaceful refusal to obey unjust law was the best way to bring about social change. His adherence of Gandhian non-violence teachings for peacful protests to achieve freedom and social justice have inspired many to protest in peaceful ways against oppression, colonial rule, subjugation and violent discrimination in many countries.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived an extraordinary life. At age 33, he was pressing the case of civil rights with President John Kennedy. At age 34, he galvanized the nation with his famous *"I Have a Dream"* speech. At age 35, he won the Nobel Peace Prize. At age 39, he was assassinated, but he left a legacy of hope and inspiration that continues today to confront the ugly vestiges of racial discrimination especially during turbulent and alarming times.

The life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. provide inspiration, challenges and reminders of the possibilities for good, as well as the role and responsibility of everyone to be supportive of advancing social justice in even small ways. We owe Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a debt of gratitude.

For more information: Ashook Ramsaran at AshookRamsaran@gmail.com Mobile (USA) +1 917 519 5783

Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.