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Re: Escalating Tensions Against Muslims on UMich Campus

Dear President Schlissel,

I write to you on the occasion of another disturbing report from University of Michigan students about hate messages in the middle of your campus, also known as the Diag.

As you are aware, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee of Michigan raised the issue to you last week on March 30, 2016 when a similar incident occurred. In our correspondence then, we stated clearly the extent to which your Arab, Muslim and other students felt intimidated, unsafe, and saddened by the graffiti, particularly the #StopIslam message.

Sadly, today's chalking on the Diag may be the result of what hatemongers are determining to be the university's tacit endorsement of such exclusionary messages. Furthermore, today's incident is one of the escalated messages of exclusion against Muslim students from the countries named in the graffiti. Contrary to the University of Michigan's stated mission of inclusion and intolerance, many feel that had the ugly messages been directed at any other group, a much more direct and strong message of disapproval by the University of Michigan would have occurred.

I cannot emphasize enough the extent to which Muslim students on campus have raised the issue of fears for their personal safety on campus in light of these and other incidences. Needless to say, your students have conveyed in clear terms to me that their interactions with some of your administrators have left them feeling that their needs and fears regarding their safety and that of other Muslim students in the campus community have not been met.

The ADC Michigan and a coalition of other organizations are at a loss to understand the University of Michigan's unwillingness to send an unequivocal message on this matter. We hope this matter can be resolved amicably and quickly.

Sincerely,

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