



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

FEB 16 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

Our Total Force readiness requires a climate of inclusion that supports diversity and promotes a culture of respect. The rise of racism, xenophobia, and inflammatory rhetoric surrounding the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has contributed to acts of intolerance against people of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. The DoD condemns and is committed to preventing such racism, xenophobia, and intolerance.

Long-standing policy of the Department prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, or national origin. Expanding on this policy — and consistent with the Presidential Memorandum, “Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States,” January 26, 2021 — any official actions, documents, or statements, including those pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic, that exhibit or contribute to racism, xenophobia, or intolerance against AAPIs, are prohibited.

We must honor the proud history of Military Service by members of the AAPI community at all times, and ensure we condemn acts of intolerance against any Service members or civilian employees based on their race or ethnicity. We must ensure inclusive climates in which every member of the Total Force is treated with dignity and respect. All leaders must ensure this requirement across your teams to encourage unity among the Total Force and uphold equal opportunity for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. J. Austin", is centered below the main text.



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