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Faithfully, Peter

PETER B. GUDAITIS, M.DIV.
Executive Director & CEO

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Following UK Arrests, US Raises Threat Level To "Severe"

■ NYDIS Statement

This morning Secretary Chertoff raised the national terrorism alert to Severe (Red) for the aviation sector. The alert was raised because, over the last few hours, British authorities have arrested a significant number of extremists engaged in a "substantial plot" to destroy multiple passenger aircraft flying from the United Kingdom to the United States.



Once again, the threat of terror will traumatize the public not only in the UK but also here in NYC and across the globe. NYDIS' leadership calls upon all New Yorkers to be vigilant in their personal safety and that of others. And to be aware of the ignorance that breeds backlash and violence against our Muslim, and perceived Muslim, friends and neighbors - speak out, keep safe.

NYDIS' partners from the Anglican, Buddhist, Catholic, Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Protestant and Sikh faiths extend our prayers for an end to hatred and religious extremism and our hopes for freedom from terror for our world.

As people of faith and religious leaders, we call upon our own communities here in NYC to do the following:

- Review your personal, household, and house of worship/agency preparedness plans. If you are not ready, please check out our website at www.nydis.org and those of our partner agencies to learn what you should have on hand. Let us know how we can help or go to www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/ready/ready.shtml.
- Be calm and be present - do all within your power to prevent backlash and combat intolerance against Middle Easterners, Muslims, Sikhs, South Asians and immigrants. Take the time to discuss and condemn backlash and hate crimes in a public forum. Give special attention to children and youth who are particularly impacted by hate. Gather the interfaith community together and stand in solidarity not only against terrorism, but against any and all forms of intolerance that violate our community, our neighbor's rights and everyone's well-being.
- Pay attention to those with special needs. For many in our city the UK terror threat against US airlines may create new anxieties and fears. Check in with the elderly, the young, and those still recovering from 9/11 or past trauma, to provide spiritual or emotional care as needed. For resources, go to www.nydis.org or call LIFENET at 800.543.3638 (English), 877.298.3373 (Spanish), 877.990.8585 (Asian), or 212.982.5284 (TTY).

Peter Gudaitis, Executive Director/CEO

■ **DHS Statement**

The Department of Homeland Security is taking immediate steps to increase security measures in the aviation sector in coordination with heightened security precautions in the United Kingdom. Over the last few hours, British authorities have arrested a significant number of extremists engaged in a substantial plot to destroy multiple passenger aircraft flying from the United Kingdom to the United States. Currently, there is no indication, however, of plotting within the United States. We believe that these arrests have significantly disrupted the threat, but we cannot be sure that the threat has been entirely eliminated or the plot completely thwarted.



For that reason, the United States Government has raised the nation's threat level to Severe, or Red, for commercial flights originating in the United Kingdom bound for the United States. This adjustment reflects the Critical, or highest, alert level that has been implemented in the United Kingdom. To defend further against any remaining threat from this plot, we will also raise the threat level to High, or Orange, for all commercial aviation operating in or destined for the United States. Consistent with these higher threat levels, the Transportation Security Administration is coordinating with federal partners, airport authorities and commercial airlines on expanding the intensity of existing security requirements. Due to the nature of the threat revealed by this investigation, we are prohibiting any liquids, including beverages, hair gels, and lotions from being carried on the airplane. This determination will be constantly evaluated and updated when circumstances warrant. These changes will take effect at 4:00 AM local time across the country. Travelers should also anticipate additional security measures within the airport and at screening checkpoints.

These measures will continue to assure that our aviation system remains safe and secure. Travelers should go about their plans confidently, while maintaining vigilance in their surroundings and exercising patience with screening and security officials.

The United States and the United Kingdom are fully united and resolute in this effort and in our ongoing efforts to secure our respective homelands.

Michael Chertoff, Homeland Security Secretary, DHS

For continuing updates and information:

www.dhs.gov

www.tsa.gov/press/happenings/threat-change.shtm

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