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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid, NYCLU Joint Statement on DOJ Investigation Into the NYPD's Response During the George Floyd Demonstrations

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society and the New York Civil Liberties Union released the following statement responding to a [report](#) issued today by the New York City Department of Investigation into the New York Police Department's response to the George Floyd demonstrations:

“This report confirms that the shocking violence the NYPD employed during the George Floyd protests was directly traceable to the leadership failures of Mayor de Blasio, Police Commissioner Shea and other police leaders who created a de facto policy permitting and encouraging individual officers to target protesters for brutal treatment and unlawful arrests. Removing a terrorism-focused unit like the Strategic Response Group from the equation is a positive step, but simply instituting more training and shifting responsibilities around is not a solution. The fundamental problem is a Department whose leadership and culture allowed the events of this summer to unfold, refuses to confront its own conduct, and does nothing to address the root causes of these long-standing problems.

Lastly, Mayor de Blasio's mea culpa comes a day late and a dollar short. It should not have required a City investigation for him to reach the same conclusion as millions with eyes to see bore witness to this past summer."

Background

This past October, Legal Aid and NYCLU filed a [lawsuit](#) on behalf of 11 plaintiffs against Mayor Bill de Blasio, Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, Chief of Department Terence Monahan, the City of New York, and several individual police officers for their roles in the indiscriminate brutalizing of peaceful protestors during the protests following the police killing of George Floyd.

The suit addresses the first month of protests between May 28 and June 28, where swarming officers used batons, pepper spray, and other aggressive techniques to retaliate against New Yorkers for showing their support of Black lives and demanding an end to police violence. Such uses of excessive force against these demonstrators violated their First and Fourth Amendment rights. The Lawsuit highlights the widespread and widely-publicized instances of indiscriminate force by police officers during the protests in late May and June following the police killing of George Floyd, and claims the mayor and city instituted a de facto policy allowing individual officers to violently target protestors by repeatedly approving forceful deployments and refusing discipline or repercussions for blatant officer misconduct.

This matter is currently pending before United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

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