

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION of NORTH AMERICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2026

Imam Elturk Joins Faith Leaders and Oakland County Sheriff in Denouncing Antisemitism

[WARREN, MI] – Imam Steve Mustapha Elturk, President of the Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) and Co-Chair of the Imams Council of Michigan, joined a coalition of faith leaders alongside Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard on Thursday, March 19, to strongly denounce antisemitism and all forms of hate.



Oakland County Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard speaks about antisemitism and the recent attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield Township during a press conference on Thursday, March 19, 2026 in Pontiac.

Katy Kildee, The Detroit News

This gathering comes in the wake of the recent active shooting at Temple Israel in West Bloomfield Township. On March 12, 2026, the day of the incident, the Imams Council of Michigan and IONA issued press releases condemning the attack in the strongest terms and expressing solidarity with the Jewish community.

The March 19 press conference brought together religious leaders from diverse faith traditions in a unified stand against rising antisemitism and bigotry.

Rabbi Josh Bennett of Temple Israel spoke about the rise in antisemitism and reflected on the recent attack, emphasizing the need for solidarity and vigilance. Bishop Geiger of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and The Rev. Dr. William Danaher of Christ Church Cranbrook also addressed the

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gathering, condemning antisemitism and underscoring the moral responsibility to confront hate in all its forms.

Imam Elturk reaffirmed the Islamic commitment to protecting human dignity and standing against injustice, including antisemitism. “As people of faith, we have a moral obligation to stand together against hatred, whether it targets Jews, Muslims, Christians, or any other community,” he stated. “An attack on one faith community is an attack on all. We must remain united in confronting prejudice and building bridges of understanding.”

Sheriff Bouchard echoed the call for unity and vigilance, stressing the importance of community partnerships in addressing hate crimes and ensuring the safety of all residents.

The event highlighted the shared values among faith traditions and the urgent need to speak with one voice against discrimination and violence. Leaders called on communities to reject divisive rhetoric and to uphold the principles of justice, compassion, and coexistence.

The press conference received coverage from major media outlets, including the *Detroit Free Press*, CBS News, and *The Detroit News*, amplifying the message of unity and collective responsibility.

The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) remains committed to fostering interfaith collaboration and standing firmly against all forms of hatred and injustice.

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Imam Elturk’s Full Statement:

In today's political climate, we are witnessing a disturbing surge in hate speech and hate crimes around the world. From antisemitic attacks to Islamophobic rhetoric, the forces of division are growing louder and more dangerous by the day.

Yet, as people of conscience, we must not lose hope or surrender to despair. Now more than ever, we are called to remain focused on unity, not division—on love, not hate. We must be the light that pushes back against the darkness.

This means standing in active solidarity with all marginalized communities. It means speaking out when we witness bigotry, whether against our Jewish neighbors, our Muslim brothers and sisters, or any group targeted simply for who they are.

We are called to support one another, to build bridges of understanding, and to live together in peace and harmony. Our diversity is not a threat—it is a strength. Our shared humanity is greater than any force that seeks to tear us apart.

Let us be people of principle. Let us be voices of compassion. And let us never stop working toward a world where everyone can live with dignity, safety, and respect."



Imam Steve Mustapha Elturk speaks about antisemitism and the recent attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield Township during a press conference on Thursday, March 19, 2026 at the Oakland County Sheriff's Office in Pontiac. - Katy Kildee, The Detroit News