

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

National Bar Association

December 23, 2014

## **THE NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION RESPONDS TO KILLING OF TWO NYPD POLICE OFFICERS BY A MENTALLY ILL MAN**

**Washington, DC** — The shooting death of two NYPD Officers was truly shocking and tragic. The National Bar Association extends its sincere condolences to the officers' families, the New York Police Department and the citizens of New York City in mourning this senseless loss of life. We also wish a speedy recovery to the Baltimore victim who was seriously injured by the assailant.

Like so many others we have experienced in this Nation, including the deaths of 20 first graders in Connecticut; the murder of 12 and wounding of 58 in the theater shooting in Colorado; and the killing of 6 and wounding of 13 in Arizona at a Congresswoman's political rally, the taking of these lives provide continuing examples of individuals suffering mental illness having easy access to guns.

Many pundits have already suggested a causal connection between the senseless killing of these police officers and recent protests and community activism focusing our Nation's attention on the issue of "police brutality" and "police shootings of unarmed African Americans."

"Any attempt to gain political mileage from this tragedy is divisive and only heightens the tension in communities across our Nation," stated Pamela Meanes, President of the National Bar Association.

"A careful and independent review of the killer's actions on the morning of the shooting and his background reveals that the senseless killing of these officers was not motivated by recent protests and activism, which for the most part have been peaceful and

orderly by people of all races throughout the world, "President Meanes said. "On the same day that he committed the murder of the police officers, the assailant attempted to kill his ex-girlfriend as she tried to stop him from committing suicide. More importantly, the now deceased assailant had a documented history of mental illness, criminally violent behavior, and easy access to guns," stated President Meanes.

The National Bar Association understands and respects the job police officers perform every day to keep communities safe. However, we still believe that "police brutality" and "police shootings of unarmed African Americans" are concerns that requires an open discussion to improve the trust between communities of color and law enforcement. We will not waver in our demand for accountability when unarmed African Americans are being shot and killed.

#### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION**

The National Bar Association was founded in 1925 and is the nation's oldest and largest national network of predominantly African-American attorneys and judges. It represents the interests of approximately 60,000 lawyers, judges, law professors and law students. The NBA is organized around 23 substantive law sections, 9 divisions, 12 regions and 80 affiliate chapters throughout the United States and around the world. For more information, visit: [www.nationalbar.org](http://www.nationalbar.org)

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