

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Archie Bolster, Senior  
Reviewer

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**From:** Posner, Michael H  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 12, 2012 1:34 PM  
**To:** Sherman, Wendy R; Sullivan, Jacob J  
**Subject:** FW: Rabbi Saperstein "Saddened and Appalled" by Tragic Violence in Libya, Egypt

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This is an excellent statement – our goal should be to get the Conference of Presidents, ADL etc to follow suit and use similar language

## **Rabbi Saperstein "Saddened and Appalled" by Tragic Violence in Libya, Egypt**

Contact: Sean Thibault or Benny Witkovsky  
202.387.2800 | [news@rac.org](mailto:news@rac.org)

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 12, 2012 -- In response to the recent violence in Egypt and Libya, and the deaths of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other US embassy staff, Rabbi David Saperstein, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, issued the following statement:

"I am saddened and appalled this morning to learn of the deaths of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three members of the U.S. consulate staff in Benghazi. I offer our deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of those killed. This act of violence, and the similarly threatening violence at the U.S. embassy in Cairo, must be condemned unequivocally. The losses of life in this manner are an affront to the values of humanity and tolerance that are at the core of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

I also stand here today to condemn the video that apparently spurred these incidents. It was clearly crafted to provoke, to offend, and to evoke outrage. The denigration of religion and religious figures and the intentional framing of religious texts and tenets in this manner must likewise be condemned.

The video and the views it espouses do not reflect the views of the overwhelming majority of Americans and people of faith. It is, purely and simply, a creation of those on the fringes of American society whether they are Christians or Jews or Muslims. I appeal to the religious leaders and to the media in the Muslim world to make that message clear and help bring an end to the violence before further tragedy occurs. Two years ago, it was Evangelical leaders who persuaded Terry Jones from burning the Koran. And it was the leaders of all the major religions in America that expressed universal condemnation of such religious hatred - in that case as now, anti-Muslim hatred.

We must oppose efforts to divide people - in the United States, in Egypt, Libya and around the world - along religious lines. Small violent groups of extremists, no matter their religious identity, cannot be allowed to define their religions or their nations. Instead, let us lift up those who appeal to the best in humanity, those who seek to build bridges over longstanding divides, and those who speak the language of peace and tolerance."

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The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism is the Washington office of the Union for Reform Judaism, whose more than 900 congregations across North America encompass 1.5 million Reform Jews, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, whose membership includes more than 1,800 Reform rabbis. Visit [www.rac.org](http://www.rac.org) for more.