

Statement: Denunciation of the “*Charlie Hebdo*” Shootings

The Arab NGO Network for development (ANND) firmly denounces the cold blooded and terrorist attack that targeted a number of French citizens, the journalists and cartoonists of French satirical newspaper “*Charlie Hebdo*” among them. This crime took place on the 7th of January, in Paris, in broad daylight, causing the death of 12 people. ANND considers that such a heinous crime goes against the teachings of Islam and the internationally recognized moral norms and values. Terrorism is an unjustifiable crime, more so when its perpetrators are anti-democratic and are opposed to any form of freedom of expression, thought and religious belief.

On this day, ANND wishes to express its full solidarity with “*Charlie Hebdo*”, journalists across the world and in the Middle East. On this occasion, ANND also condemns all acts and practices that go against public and private freedoms, especially the freedom of the press. ANND also asks that these criminals be brought to justice and punished accordingly.

ANND would also like to stress on the potential vengeful acts that will exploit this event to push for collective punishment measures, which in turn, will only further tensions and divisions. ANND also calls on the French authorities, civil society organizations, and democratic political parties to act immediately in order to avoid potential violent reactions by a portion of the society that is opposed to the existence of an Arab and Muslim community in France. Needless to say, French Arabs and Muslims are an integral part of French society. Whether these reactions are spontaneous or systemized, they only serve the interests of extremists forces at work here, and will further the extermination of innocent French citizens. What is required is a union of efforts from all, democracy defenders, rights advocates and clerics to fight and prevent the rise of xenophobia and islamophobia. Concomitantly, we should also deepen our unity to fight the looming danger of terrorism that is spreading chaos, murder and that threatens not only the region, but also the world.

Beirut, on the 9th of January 2015