Date: June 25, 2020

To: LaTonya Richardson, Director of General Assembly and Conference Services

Cc: Steven Ransom, GA 2020 Delegates, and other concerned Unitarian Universalists

From: U.U. Multiracial Unity Action Council (UUMUAC) Board of Directors

We are writing to protest the unfortunate decision to shut down the UUMUAC virtual exhibit booth at GA 2020, which we believe is unsupported by the facts and out of alignment with our 4th and 5th U.U. Principles. The fact that this action was taken without a hearing or other form of due process is also most inappropriate.

We will address the four reasons stated in your communication one by one.

1. “A previous history of disruptive and/or distracting behavior during prior General Assemblies and/or regional gatherings.” UUMUAC had an exhibition booth at GA 2018 in Kansas City and received no complaints about that booth. Our organization chose not to have an exhibition booth at GA 2019 due to staffing concerns. We have never received a complaint about an exhibition booth we had at a District or Regional Assembly. In 2019 the MidAmerica Region denied UUMUAC a booth at its regional assembly on the ground that UUMUAC’s disagreement with the use of “white supremacy culture” language was out of alignment with the UUA’s position on that language. We have distributed flyers at General Assemblies and the MidAmerica Regional Assemblies, such as to advertise UUMUAC workshops and activities, but what reasonable person would classify that as disruptive? In fact, Rev. Lisa Pressley of the Region approved our passing out flyers announcing our mini-workshops at the 2019 MidAmerica Region even though we were not allowed to have a booth.
2. “Social media content that includes the use of inflammatory language and/or accusations involving the UUA, its leadership and/or staff.” UUMUAC, as an organization, has not posted much to social media. Our Board’s positon is to criticize policies that we disagree with, but not people. We do not control or take responsibility for what UUMUAC members post to social media to express themselves as individuals. To judge UUMUAC and the expression of its views one should review the UUMUAC website ([www.uumuac.org](about:blank)) and scan copies of the MAC Arrow, our periodic journal.
3. “UUMUAC Learning Stage panelists who are out of right relationship with UU-affiliated associations”. The applicability of our 4th and 5th U.U. Principles are not contingent on whether particular panelists are in right relationships with a particular affiliate. The right of persons to follow their conscience and share their views, and for others to listen to and consider those views is not suspended by a person’s relationship to a UU affiliate.
4. “UUMUAC prior misconduct as an exhibitor at a UUA Regional Assembly”. As stated in our response to your first point, we have not been informed of any misconduct. If we had, we would have taken action to address the complaint. Indeed, as Steven Ransom, who is in charge of General Assembly exhibits, would testify, we have been good exhibitors; otherwise, he would not have worked with us so diligently to make our presence at GA2020 a success.

We ask that we receive a hearing by a neutral party, where multiple members of our Board can represent us. We understand that UUMUAC views do not always align with those dominant on the UUA Board of Trustees, but we are fellow Unitarian Universalists and expect the UUA to live up to our shared U.U. Principles, particularly the 4th and 5th Principles, which are at issue in this matter. And as a tertiary point, we are still a part of the interdependent web which makes up the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

The above letter is in response to the UUA communication pasted below/ next page

Dear Mr. Campbell and Mr. Lindrup,

Overnight and for much of today, our office and the office of the UUA President, received several emails from other registered participants at our virtual General Assembly raising concerns about your scheduled appearance on the GA Learning Stage and in the GA virtual Exhibit Hall. As you know from our Exhibit Hall Terms and Conditions, “the UUA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to dismiss, prohibit, or evict any exhibit or exhibitor that does not conform to the dignity and general business character of the General Assembly or to the stated principles of the UUA.” After reviewing the feedback, this letter is to inform you that your session on our Learning Stage has been cancelled, along with your virtual exhibit booth and we are processing a refund in the amount of $600. Some factors influencing our decision include:

1. A previous history of disruptive and/or distracting behavior during prior General Assemblies and/or UUA regional gatherings;
2. Social media content that includes the use of inflammatory language and/or accusations involving the UUA, its leadership and/or staff;
3. UUMUAC Learning Stage panelists who are out of right relationship with UU-affiliated associations; and
4. UUMUAC prior misconduct as an exhibitor at a UUA Regional Assembly.

The UUA, UUA Board, General Assembly Planning Committee, and dedicated volunteers will not be complicit when our intended audience, registered attendees of General Assembly, may be subjected to deliberately antagonistic and harmful rhetoric. Thank you in advance for your compassion as we make an intentional practice of being in right relationship with one another and building more beloved community.

Sincerely,

LaTonya Richardson

**LaTonya Richardson**  |  Director | General Assembly & Conference Services

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