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ESTHER Statement on the Detention of Salah Sarsour

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ESTHER (Empowerment, Solidarity, Truth, Hope, Equity, Reform) joins faith communities across Wisconsin in expressing deep concern over the detention of Salah Sarsour, President of the Islamic Society of Milwaukee, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. Mr. Sarsour has been a lawful permanent resident of the United States for more than three decades and a respected faith leader in Wisconsin's Muslim community.

Federal officials have now issued public allegations related to Mr. Sarsour's immigration history, allegations that members of his family, legal representatives, and community supporters strongly dispute. Regardless of those claims, every person is entitled to due process, humane treatment, and a fair opportunity to respond through established legal proceedings.

As an interfaith social justice organization, ESTHER believes that detention actions involving long-standing community members and faith leaders must be handled with full transparency, clear communication, and respect for human dignity. This case has caused deep fear and concern within Wisconsin's Muslim community and far beyond, particularly given Mr. Sarsour's longstanding public role and community relationships. This detention also raises broader concerns for many Wisconsin residents about whether Muslim, Palestinian, and immigrant community leaders are receiving equal treatment under federal enforcement systems.

We stand in solidarity with Mr. Sarsour's family, the Islamic Society of Milwaukee, and all those affected by this detention. We call on federal authorities to ensure that his rights are fully protected, that legal proceedings are conducted fairly, and that elected officials continue to seek accountability wherever civil liberties and humane treatment are at stake.

At a time when many faith traditions call people toward mercy, justice, and compassion, ESTHER reaffirms that dignity belongs to every person, and that communities are strongest when rights are protected for all.

Tom Denk and Steve Hirby, ESTHER Co-presidents