Hip Hop Summit Action Network Chairman, Russell Simmons released the following response to ADL Director, Abraham Foxman's letter urging prominent Black leaders to reconsider their support for the upcoming Millions More Movement:

NEW YORK--May 9, 2005--Hip-Hop Summit Action Network

Mr. Abraham H. Foxman

National Director

Anti-Defamation League

823 United Nations Plaza

New York, NY 10017

Re: Millions More Movement

Dear Mr. Foxman:

I am writing in response to your latest newswire release dated May 2, 2005 entitled, "ADL Urges Prominent African-American Leaders to Reconsider Their Support of the Millions More Movement." The upcoming commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the historic Million Man March in Washington, D.C., October 14-16, 2005 deserves the respect and support of all people of goodwill who cherish the universal love of humanity.

Very disturbingly and disrespectfully, you are quoted as stating, "When will someone in the African-American community stand up and say the Million Man March had a positive message, but the pied piper is a racist and anti-Semite? We cannot understand why good people continue to tolerate this outrage of anti-Semitic views and behavior. It seems there is a line of denial, indeed a blind spot among many, within the African-American community when it comes to anti-Semitism."

As Chairman of The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, I know that your above quoted statements and the urging and pressure of the ADL for African American leaders to reconsider their support of the Millions More Movement and the 10th anniversary of the Million Man March will do nothing more than increase the polarization of relations between millions of African Americans and Jewish Americans. It is a sad commentary that your actions will only help to spread anti-Semitism rather than help to end it.

The planned Millions More Movement commemoration this year is about the mutual love and respect of all people and the encouragement of taking personal responsibility to uplift African Americans and others out of the devastation of poverty and ignorance. Over 150 key leaders, including the NAACP, National Urban League and the National Rainbow PUSH Coalition, have signed on to be National Co-Conveners of the Millions More Movement and have all pledged to stay focused on the redemptive message and agenda of the commemoration.

Ten years ago, under the leadership of Minister Farrakhan, the Million Man March not only "had a positive message," it also had a positive and profound impact on millions of African Americans and others across America and throughout the world. After the Million Man March there was a dramatic decrease in self-destructive violence among young African American males in the major urban centers and a tremendous increase in youth mentorship, Big Brother, and child adoption programs and projects in every region of the nation.

Simply put, you are misguided, arrogant, and very disrespectful of African Americans and most importantly your statements will unintentionally or intentionally lead to a negative impression of Jews in the minds of millions of African Americans. Similar to how you single-handedly caused millions of persons to flock to see the "Passion of Christ" in defiance of your call for non-attendance, you are going to precipitate a tremendous negative defiance of your demands that will again severely hurt and harm relations between Jews and African Americans.

You should refrain from pressuring African American leaders to denounce Minister Farrakhan and the Millions More Movement. This commemoration is as a real opportunity for establishing healing, reconciliation and fostering a more effective environment for constructive dialogue between Blacks and Jews. We want a society and world were there is no hatred, anti-Semitism, violence, or poverty. For the record, we do not and would not support or endorse any person's viewpoint that is anti-Semitic, racist or hateful. You should, therefore, be working with us toward building more compassion and love among and between all people.

For over 50 years, Minister Farrakhan has labored to resurrect the downtrodden masses of African Americans up out of poverty and self-destruction. A few days ago I personally witnessed him affirm, "A Muslim can not hate a Jew. We are all members of the family of Abraham and all of us should maintain dialogue and mutual respect." Our work, commitment, and lives are all dedicated to uplifting all people through love, goodwill, equality, peace and justice for all.

Sincerely, Russell Simmons, President, HSAN