

U.S. President Barack Obama Says Church Shooting Rekindles Dark Part of U.S. History



Washington, June 19 (RHC)-- President Barack Obama has said the shooting in a church in South Carolina has once again reminded us of "a dark part of our history" and the need to enforce gun controls.

On Wednesday night, a gunman opened fire at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, killing nine African Americans -- six females and three males, including the pastor of the church and state Senator Clementa Pinckney.

"I don't need to be constrained about the emotions tragedies like this raise," Obama said on Thursday. "I've had to make comments like this too many times. Communities like this have had to endure tragedies like this too many times."

"The fact that this took place in a Black church also raises questions about a dark part of our history," Obama added. The president said the gunman "who wanted to inflict harm had no trouble getting their hands on a gun." He went on to say that such "mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries. It doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency."

He described the incident as "senseless murders" in a place where people "seek solace and we seek peace." Obama also touched on gun violence in the US, saying gun controls must be implemented across the country. "It is in our power to do something about it. I say that recognizing the politics of this town foreclose a lot of those avenues right now. But it'd be wrong for us not to acknowledge it."

"At some point it's going to be important for the American people to come to grips with it, and for us to be able to shift how we think about the issue of gun violence collectively," he said.

In 2014, Obama described as "stunning" Congress' inability to get behind a single piece of gun control legislation following the Sandy Hook shooting which killed 20 children and left a total of 28 people dead.

He said the failure to enforce stricter background checks to handgun sales had been his "biggest frustration" as the president of the United States.

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