George, Amal Clooney donate $1M to Southern Poverty Law Center to combat hate groups

If money talks, George and Amal Clooney made it shout Tuesday, by donating $1 million to the Southern Poverty Law Center to help fight hate groups in the wake of tragedy and violence in Charlottesville, Va.

The SPLC, a leading civil-rights group that monitors hate groups and campaigns against bigotry, is partnering with the Clooney Foundation for Justice to increase its ability to combat hate groups in the USA by highlighting the dangers of white-supremacist ideology.

The SPLC said further details on what the money will be used for will be available later.

"Amal and I wanted to add our voice (and financial assistance) to the ongoing fight for equality," Clooney said in a statement to USA TODAY. "There are no two sides to bigotry and hate.”

The latter comment was an allusion to President Trump's much-criticized assertions last week that neo-Nazis and white supremacists and anti-fascist counter-protesters who confronted them in Charlottesville were equally culpable for the violence that led to three deaths on the weekend of Aug. 11-12. Trump said there are "fine people" on "both sides."

"We are proud to support the Southern Poverty Law Center in its efforts to prevent violent extremism in the United States," the Clooneys said in their prepared statement. "What happened in Charlottesville, and what is happening in communities across our country, demands our collective engagement to stand up to hate."

Since Charlottesville, the center also has received major donations from Apple and from JPMorgan Chase, whose leaders — Tim Cook at Apple and Jamie Dimon at JPMorgan Chase — both spoke out on the need for America's leading business and cultural institutions to take stands against bigotry and hate.

George Clooney was a supporter of Democrat Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential campaign and is well-known as a leading Hollywood liberal. His wife, Amal Alamuddin, is a Lebanese-born British lawyer known for her human-rights legal work around the world.

The Clooneys founded and serve as presidents of the Clooney Foundation for Justice, established in 2016 "to advance justice in courtrooms, classrooms and communities" around the world.

SPLC president Richard Cohen  said hate-group monitors were "shocked by the size, ugliness and ferocity" of the white supremacist gathering in Charlottesville.

“It was a reflection of just how much Trump’s incendiary campaign and presidency has energized the radical right," Cohen said. "We are deeply grateful to the Clooney Foundation for standing with us at this critical moment in our country’s fight against hate.”