



The Islamic Movement in Britain

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Introduction

This report is focused on a network of Muslim organisations and individuals that it refers to as the “Islamic Movement” in Britain. This name is sometimes used by protagonists comprising the network in reference to the collective, organised effort to “revive” and expand Islam’s role in social and political life, in the West, the former Islamic empire, and the world at large. Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, the Egyptian-born theologian and host of the Al Jazeera TV programme, “Shari’a and Life”, for example, explicitly refers to the “Islamic Movement” as such. The main purpose of this report is to describe this network in Britain.

Chapter 1 introduces the Islamic Movement in Britain, its origins in two strands of Islamic activism abroad, and its gradual transformation into a movement that transcends ethnic and linguistic boundaries. Chapter 2 describes the worldview, values, and motivations of the Islamic Movement in Britain. It observes several important shared features of the organisations comprising the Movement, including a proactive tendency to engage in social and political affairs, and the effort to represent social and political normative values through Islamic concepts and beliefs. Some analysts have described these organisations as non-violent Islamists, distinguishing them from violent jihadists, such as Al-Qaeda. But, as this report demonstrates, *jihad* is just as important to the Islamic Movement as it is to violent jihadists, with the important caveat that, for the former, *jihad* takes the form of education, advocacy, lobbying and other non-violent approaches to achieving their goals. A factor complicating this picture is the support they express for the Palestinian “resistance” in Israel, which they tend to see as a “defensive *jihad*”.

Chapter 3 describes some of the organisational connections of the groups comprising the Islamic Movement in Britain. It is impossible to provide a complete picture of these complicated and evolving relationships, so several key nodes will serve as a point of departure to map out some of them. These nodes include the Muslim Council of Britain and a lesser known group, the Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations. Organisational interconnections may also be mapped out to some extent by regarding some of the key international dimensions of the Islamic Movement in Britain. Connections between organisations in Britain and Europe, some with generous funding from Qatar, may be drawn, helping to provide a fuller picture of the network. The final chapter highlights the major campaign areas that the Islamic Movement in Britain has dedicated its energies to in recent years. These include Palestine; the British government’s counter-radicalisation programme, Prevent; and Islamophobia; as well as Muslim political participation and education.

In some of these areas, Islamic Movement groups have courted controversy. Some Islamic Movement organisations, for example, have attracted scrutiny for their alleged connections to extremist speakers or terrorist groups, including Hamas or groups linked to it. Perhaps some critical observers would say that some of these British-based organisations have not attracted enough scrutiny

for such links. In recent years, for example, some analysts have criticised the Charity Commission for being “soft” on a number of charities with alleged links to proscribed groups. But, even so, noting these allegations does not imply that all staff in these organisations support terrorism. Neither does it imply that all Islamic Movement organisations support terrorism. The Islamic Movement in Britain is not a network of terrorist groups. It is a network of activist, advocacy, and community organisations that broadly share a religiopolitical outlook. Nonetheless, some of the organisations and individuals comprising the Islamic Movement have attracted some interesting and important allegations. These should be contended with, not shied away from, if we are to better understand these organisations and the network that they form. Writing about these controversial and mostly contested connections is a delicate matter, but it is important to do so, not to tarnish any reputation, but, to obtain the most comprehensive picture of this network as possible, which is the main purpose of this report.

This report seeks to provide a picture of the overall network of the Islamic Movement in Britain, since although there have been some reports regarding specific groups, there are few that seek to map out the network as a whole – ideologically, organisationally, and in terms of the work they are engaged in. It admittedly falls short of being comprehensive, since the network is evolving and no doubt many connections exist beyond what can be viewed in publicly sourceable material. Nonetheless, it is hoped that what follows is an important step towards understanding the network of the Islamic Movement in Britain.

1. Introducing the Islamic Movement in Britain

Historical Origins

The self-declared “Islamic Movement” in Britain is comprised of a network of organisations and individuals with its roots in two overseas groups. These are *Jamaat-i-Islami*, the Islamic Society, established in colonial India in 1941 by Abul Ala Mawdudi, and *Jamiat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, the Society of the Muslim Brothers, or simply, the Muslim Brotherhood, established in Egypt in 1928 by Hasan Al-Banna. Members of these groups came to Britain from the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East and established their own organisations from the early 1960s. Other Muslim groups founded independently from the Brotherhood and the Jamaat, but sharing a similar religious and political outlook, and have since become part of the same network.

Collectively, these groups represent a particular strand of political Islam or Islamism in Britain. They do not speak for all British Muslims. They are distinct from both violent and non-violent Islamist groups that reject participation in the democratic process. As such, they have been referred to as “participationist” Islamists.¹ Acknowledging the importance of Al-Banna’s Brotherhood organisation as the key wellspring for the network in Europe and America, but recognising the operational independence of many of the groups comprising it, the network has also been referred to as “the New Muslim Brotherhood in the West”.² It has also been referred to as “the Global Muslim Brotherhood”.³ This report refers to the network simply as the “Islamic Movement”, since the prominent individuals within it sometimes refer to themselves in such terms, and this term avoids placing undue emphasis on the formal organisation of the Ikhwan centred in Cairo.

Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, widely recognised as a key spiritual leader for the Muslim Brotherhood has defined the Islamic Movement as the “organized, collective work that is undertaken by the people to restore Islam to the leadership of society and the helm of life”.⁴ Its purpose, he has stated, is “the revival of Islam”.⁵ Hence, the protagonists of the Movement are also sometimes referred to – by themselves and observers – as Islamic revivalists. Echoing Al-Qaradawi, the late Jama’at activist and director general of Islamic Foundation, Khuram Murad, described the Islamic Movement as “an organised struggle to change the existing society into an Islamic society based on the Qur’an and the Sunna, and make Islam, which is a code for the entire life,

1 On the term “participationists”, see Damon L. Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain: Non-Violent Extremism and the Battle of Ideas* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp.26-7.

2 See Lorenzo Vidino, *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2010).

3 The term “Global Muslim Brotherhood” was originally coined in 2007 by Steven Merley, who edits an informative and insightful website called “The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch”, available at <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/>. Merley uses this term in reference to the “global network of individuals and organizations that developed as Muslim Brotherhood members dispersed to other countries while fleeing the periodic crackdowns on the organization in Egypt” (see “Global Muslim Brotherhood”, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch*, undated, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/global-muslim-brotherhood/>).

4 Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase* (Swansea: Awakening Publications, 2002), p.1.

5 *Ibid.*, p.6.

supreme and dominant”.⁶ Other Islamic revivalists have spoken about Islam itself as a movement. Khurshid Ahmad, a prominent Jamaati leader who played a key role in establishing the Islamic Foundation, for example, has stated, “Islam is a movement for social change”.⁷ This movement, he has said, is responsible for establishing “a new world order” based on Islam.⁸ Zahid Parvez, the current director of the Islamic Foundation’s Markfield Institute of Higher Education and a former president of the UK Islamic Mission, has expressed similar sentiments, describing Islam as “a global movement”.⁹ He has written an entire book chapter on the ideal characteristics of the Islamic Movement as a necessary, practical means to bring about the new world order that he, Ahmad and others desire.¹⁰ This perspective is shared across ethnic lines within the Islamic Movement. In a speech in 2005 to a Muslim audience in Britain, Anas Altikriti, the founding director of the Cordoba Foundation and former president of the Muslim Association of Britain, asserted, “Islam – and the *da’wa* of Islam – is by definition a reform movement, *harakat al-islam*”.¹¹

The first organisations of the Islamic Movement in Britain were established by Jamaati and Brotherhood members in the early 1960s, beginning with the Muslim Students Society (1961); the UK Islamic Mission (1962); the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (1963); and the Muslim Educational Trust (1966). The 1970s saw the creation of the Muslim Institute (1972); the Islamic Council of Europe (1973); the Islamic Foundation (1973); Muslim Welfare House (1975); and the Young Muslim Organisation UK (1978). Other key groups formed in the 1980s and 1990s include the Islamic Sharia Council (1982); Young Muslims UK (1984); the East London Mosque (1985);¹² Muslim Aid (1985); the Islamic Forum of Europe (1988); Dawatul Islam UK & Eire (1990); the Association of Muslim Schools UK (1992); the Muslim Parliament (1992); the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (1994); and the Palestine Return Centre (1996). The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), and the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) – three key Islamic Movement organisations active today – were all founded in 1997. The organisational network of the Islamic Movement in Britain continued to expand in size and scope in the 2000s, with the launch of Cage (2003); the East London Mosque’s London Muslim Centre (2004); the Islam Channel (2004); the Cordoba Foundation (2005); the Middle East Monitor (2009); and, most recently, Muslim Engagement and Development (2014). Although some of them have since closed down, moved away from Islamist positions on key issues, or become inactive in recent years, these organisations arguably represent the collective vanguard of the Islamic Movement in Britain.

6 Khurram Murad, *The Islamic Movement in the West: Reflections on Some Issues* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1981), p.3, cited in Caroline Cox and John Marks (2006), *The West, Islam and Islamism: Is Ideological Islam Compatible with Liberal Democracy?* (London: Civitas, 2006), p.73.

7 Khurshid Ahmad, “Man and the future of civilization: an Islamic perspective”, *Encounters*, vol.1, no.1, March 1995, p.46.

8 *Ibid.*, p.47. He elaborates, “Islam also launches a social movement, an international movement requiring all those who accept these [Islamic] ideals and values to establish the new world order. Islam is eager to establish this new model in any part of the world Once this model is established somewhere in the world, the experiment can be shared with everyone else, just as sunshine is shared by all”. *Ibid.*, p.50.

9 Zahid Parvez, *Building a New Society: An Islamic Approach to Social Change* (Markfield: Revival Publications, 2007), p197. For more on the views of Islamic Movement figures on Islam and social or political transformation, see chapter 2 of this report. See also Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, chapter 4.

10 Parvez, *Building a New Society*, chapter 9.

11 “RESPONSE TO THE CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES-BR ANAS AL TIKRITI”, YouTube, December 25, 2012. www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KkWItn07VE.

12 Although the East London Mosque was inaugurated at its current address on Whitechapel Road on July 4, 1985, it has an older history spanning back decades. See K. Humayun Ansari, “The East London Mosque.” Our Migration Story website, undated, <https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/the-east-london-mosque>, and “History”, East London Mosque website, undated, <https://www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk/history>.

Today, the Islamic Movement operates within and across a diverse range of fields of activity. These fields include community and charitable work, education and academia, journalism and media, law, and advocacy work in numerous policy areas, most notably education, social policy, human rights, counter-terrorism and counter-extremism.

The Islamic Movement in Britain is a complex organisational network operating not just in numerous fields of activity but also on numerous levels. Although this report focuses on organisations that operate at the national level, the network also incorporates some local and some international organisations. During the 1970s, key Ikhwani and Jamaati figures met in Europe to plan for the growth of Islamism in the West, and began establishing continental or international bodies, with which British groups made important connections, to further this project.¹³ These include the International Institute of Islamic Thought (1980), the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (1989), and the European Council of Fatwa and Research (1997). Today's Islamic Movement organisations in Britain are part of a wider, trans-ethnic network with strong connections abroad, not just for the purposes of an Islamic "revival" in Britain and the West, but also for political ambitions in the Middle East, most notably in favour of the Palestinians' cause.

Evolution as a Trans-ethnic Movement

Some of the early Islamic Movement organisations were established to serve specific ethnic or linguistic communities. The UK Islamic Mission (UKIM), for example, operates a network of around 50 mosques and Islamic centres across the country catering for Urdu speaking Muslims, and Dawatul Islam, a spin off from UKIM, has a handful of mosques catering to Bengali speaking Muslims. The Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), created by members of Dawatul Islam, also operates a small mosque network in cities around the country serving a predominantly Bengali speaking membership. Some Islamic Movement organisations providing community services were established by individuals with connections to the Arab Muslim Middle East, although the numbers they reach are relatively small. The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), for example, has 11 branches within the UK, and Muslim Welfare House (MWH) operates a network of Islamic community centres in England and Wales.

These community-oriented organisations remain significant players in the overall Islamic Movement in Britain, and remain largely dedicated to specific Muslim communities. The original goals of these organisations – to provide guidance to Muslim communities living in Muslim-minority Britain and the protection of their Muslim identity – remain important ones. However, in addition to their goals of serving particular Muslim communities were always loftier aspirations for the institutionalisation of Islamic values within mainstream society, and elements of their leadership have always been involved in other, trans-ethnic, organisations as well as pan-Islamic issues.¹⁴

¹³ Ian Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010), pp.194-197.

¹⁴ For example, trustee and former long-time president of UKIM, Zahid Parvez is the director of the Islamic Foundation's Markfield Institute of Higher Education and chief executive of the Muath Centre. He has also been a trustee of the Islamic Foundation and Muslim Aid, a member of MCB's national council, and a president of Young Muslims UK and the Islamic Society of Britain. Maulana Abu Sayeed is the chairman and former president of Dawatul Islam, a UKIM spin-off created to cater for Bengali speaking Bangladeshi Muslims. He is also the chairman of the Islamic Sharia Council. IFE was established by members of Dawatul Islam. Abdullah Faliq, a trustee of IFE, as well as its director of media and public relations, was involved in the creation of MCB and has remained active with the organisation. Faliq is also the head of research for the Cordoba Foundation and a trustee of the East London Mosque.

Furthermore, the Islamic Movement has evolved to include a far more diverse range of organisations, many of which are more outward looking and oriented to meet the needs of a singular, trans-ethnic Muslim community, the *umma*. The goals of many of these newer Islamic Movement groups are less concerned with meeting the needs of distinct Muslim communities in Britain, than with meeting the needs of the *umma*, both in Britain and abroad. There is a significant cluster of organisations that are dedicated to supporting the Palestinians, including Hamas in Gaza. But although these include organisations with links to the Muslim Brotherhood and the Middle East, they also include groups with Jamaati roots and those of a trans-ethnic, trans-sectarian composition. The Islamic Movement's focus on Palestine is perhaps an indicator of national or Arab interests for some activists in Britain, particularly those with family history in the Middle East, but it is undoubtedly also a reflection of the Movement's *umma*-centricity.

Reflecting back on the sentiments of the founders of the Muslim Institute in 1972, Ghayasuddin Siddiqui captured sentiments fairly typical of the Islamic Movement in Britain, stating, "our hopes and aspirations were for the global Muslim community".¹⁵ Yet, a pan-Islamic Muslim identity transcending ethnic origins did not begin to emerge in Britain until the 1980s and 1990s. This coincided with "a broad and effective shift in the representation of Muslim identity politics to the national arena".¹⁶ A number of factors contributed to this shift, including solidarity with Muslim victims of the first Gulf War and the Bosnian War.¹⁷ A key milestone in this shift to serving the global community of believers, the *umma*, in Britain was the 1989 Rushdie Affair and the subsequent creation of MCB as the first government-endorsed national interlocutor for Muslims. The MCB reflected a growing official appetite for national Muslim representation and the sharpening of an emergent solidarity amongst British Muslims across ethnolinguistic lines.¹⁸

The MCB is no longer the sole voice of British Muslims.¹⁹ But, as this report makes clear, it continues to serve as a hub for individuals working towards Islamic Movement goals. And despite the plurality of voices representing Muslims at the national level, Islamic Movement groups, or those at least sympathetic to them, have come to serve, or aimed to serve, as interlocutors for Muslims in many more specialised fields of activity. These include the Muslim Educational Trust, the Association of Muslim Schools UK, the Association of Muslim Lawyers, the National Association of Muslim Police, and Muslim Engagement and Development.

15 "Speech by Dr Siddiqui at Muslim Institute Re-launch Planning Conference 2009", Muslim Institute website, undated, <https://musliminstitute.org/freethinking/muslim-institute/speech-dr-siddiqui-muslim-institute-re-launch-planning-conference-2009>.

16 Seán McLoughlin, "Recognising Muslims: Religion, Ethnicity and Identity Politics In Britain", *CEMOTI (Cahiers d'Études sur la Méditerranée Orientale et le monde Turco-Iranien)*, vol.33, January-June 2001, p.54.

17 On the significance of these wars on the formation of a pan-Islamic Muslim identity in Britain, see Anthony McRoy, *From Rushdie to 7/7: The Radicalisation of Islam in Britain* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006).

18 See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.92.

19 The government suspended formal ties with MCB in March 2009 after MCB deputy secretary general Daud Abdullah signed the Istanbul Declaration, a document in support of Hamas. The suspension was lifted in January 2010, after MCB assured the government of its support for British troops across the world, and of its opposition to antisemitism and other forms of racism. However, the government now consults much more widely with various Muslim groups. See Hazel Blears, "Our shunning of the MCB is not grandstanding", *The Guardian*, March 25, 2009, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/mar/25/islam-terrorism; Daud Abdullah, "My reply to Hazel Blears", *The Guardian*, March 26, 2009, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/mar/26/hazelblears-islam>; Nicholas Watt, "Government restores links with biggest Muslim group", *The Guardian*, January 15, 2010, www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/jan/15/government-relations-muslim-council-britain-mcb; and MCB, "Contributing to a just and cohesive society", MCB Annual Report 2009-2010, http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Annual-Report_2009-2010.pdf, pp.6-7.

The groups comprising the Islamic Movement in Britain are diverse in a number of ways. Some of them serve Muslim communities of various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Most, however, are in the service of the Muslim *umma* in Britain, focusing on specific issues in various fields of political and cultural activity. Most of them operate at the national level, but some operate at the local level, and others at the continental or international level. A few of them are focused on matters overseas, but most of them are focused on Britain. Islamic Movement groups are diverse in their size, the sector in which they operate, and the extent to which they focus inwardly on Muslim communities or outwardly to the mainstream. What links them, however, is a shared set of religiously-informed perspectives, values and beliefs, and, related to this, a shared inclination to activism.

2. Ideology, Values and Beliefs

The protagonists of the Islamic Movement in Britain share intimate organisational connections, as described in chapter 3 of this report, but such connections, as well as their patchwork cooperation on key campaigns, are based upon a shared religiously-informed way of seeing and evaluating the world.²⁰

This is evident in how they view and distinguish themselves from others, both Muslim and non-Muslim: They understand themselves as the vanguard of a singular, collective body, the *umma*, possessing the correct understanding of Islam and tasked with conveying the true teachings of the prophet Muhammad and with remedying incorrect understandings of Islam held by both Muslim and non-Muslims. The broadly shared worldview and values of Islamic Movement figures is evident in how they understand their role as active participants for social change, and the purpose of their work to serve and please Allah: They are duty bound to further Islamic values and practices within British society inasmuch as Britain's secular political and legal structures allow, whilst seeking to influence these structures. Their shared worldview and values are manifest in the way in which they understand Islam and in the importance they attach to obtaining the authority to determine and propagate normative social values. They see this as inseparable from their faith and the intrinsic mission it provides to them.

Collectively, Islamic Movement activists aspire for a comprehensive transformation within mainstream social and political structures, one based on Islam, both in Britain and globally.²¹ Whether or not they describe the end goal of their work as an Islamic state, they nonetheless tend to view themselves as working towards an "Islamic revival" in which the key values and eventually the laws underpinning society are derived from classical *shari'a*. They also typically share the conviction that their work, whether or not in their own lifetimes, will bring about the social and political embrace of Islam in Britain, Europe, and beyond.

Da'wa, Shari'a, and the Islamic State

A defining characteristic of Islamic Movement individuals and groups is their inclination to activism, which they understand in Islamic terms as their duty to conduct *da'wa*. This may be described as a mission not just to proselytise, but to exemplify Islamic values in every deed and word for two key purposes, namely, to ensure Islam is understood

²⁰ See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, chapters 3 and 4.

²¹ Altikriti, for example, has called for a comprehensive social transformation that does not just concern spirituality, education, finance, or politics, but every aspect of human existence. Similarly, the Islamic Human Rights Commission openly calls for "a new social and international order". The alternative nature of this new world order relates to an alternative understanding of human rights conceived as "divinely granted" and "revealed for human beings" by Allah. This resonates with the 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, which states that all rights and freedoms "are subject to the Islamic Sharia". See "Anas Altikriti – A New Dawn", YouTube, September 8, 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBCy60x3qw. See also Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.117. For IHRC, see "Aims & Objectives", IHRC website, undated, <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/about/aims-and-objectives/>; and "Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam", OIC website, webpage captured February 4, 2016, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160204165950/http://www.oic-oci.org/english/article/human.htm>.

and practiced “correctly” within Muslim communities, and to expand the domain of Islam by attracting non-Muslims “back” into the fold of the faith.²² The belief in the ultimate purpose of *da’wa* as serving and pleasing Allah gives Islamic Movement activists a divine purpose. Crucially, Islamic Movement activists share a belief in spreading Islam through non-compulsive means, and for this reason do not advocate cultural isolation or violence. Hence, they are critical of “quietist” Muslim groups who prefer not to engage in politics and activism, as well as those advocating or conducting violence in the name of Islam. Their sense of duty to spread Islam without imposition is driven by the desire for a genuine embrace of the faith by the masses. And this is what prompts them to engage with and seek to influence, rather than shun, mainstream cultural and political institutions.

The non-violent engagement of Islamic Movement groups and individuals with mainstream political authorities and processes, including education and outreach, is typical of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has historically sought to transform society from within, rather than impose change through violent or revolutionary means.²³ According to spiritual guide of the Brotherhood, Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *da’wa* is the means by which Islam will conquer the West. Al-Qaradawi, who has been praised by numerous members of the Islamic Movement in Britain, has predicted, “Islam will return to Europe as a conqueror and victor after being expelled from it twice ... the conquest this time will not be by the sword but by preaching and ideology”.²⁴

Da’wa was a central concept in the work of the late Khurram Murad, the founding director general of the Islamic Foundation and an associate of Al-Qaradawi. For Murad, *da’wa* was necessary for “preserving and expanding Islam’s presence within Western societies”.²⁵ Murad asserted, “Da’wah, prior to everything, is a state of mind, a world view, an attitude to life, indeed a kind of life”. His son, Farooq Murad, the former secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the current director of the Islamic Foundation, echoes his father’s view in noting, “If you live Islam, you cannot but be doing *da’wa*”.²⁶ He has remarked that whilst MCB is not officially involved in *da’wa*, it is involved in addressing misconceptions about Islam, which itself can be seen as a form of *da’wa*.

Muhammad Abdul Bari, another former secretary general of MCB and the long-time director of the East London Mosque, described *da’wa* as “the most important duty of Muslims”.²⁷ Echoing this, the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS), which runs an annual

22 Non-Muslims are typically viewed as having forgotten their birth-endowed “natural” status as Muslims, hence referred to as “reverts” rather than converts when discovering and embracing Islam. For example, see “Support for Revert Muslims”, UKIM website, undated, <https://www.ukim.org/appeals/dawah-in-the-uk/support-for-revert-muslims/>.

23 In a 2013 report published by the Cordoba Foundation, this distinction between the ideological and strategic approaches of the Brotherhood and militant Islamist groups, such as Al-Qaeda, is accurately described as such. However, as the report admits, “there are some ideological similarities between the Brotherhood and certain [violent] extremist groups, above all, their conservative defence of an Islamic culture, their shared long-term aim to create an Islamic caliphate for Muslim citizens and the use of *Shari’a*, Islamic Law, as a legal source. Both types of groups have a global scope, oppose the progressive international process of Westernisation and criticize the United States’ cultural and political domination of the Middle East”. See “Muslim Brotherhood and the Myth of Violence and Terrorism”, TMC Advisory Group, September 2015, <https://www.thecordobafoundation.com/publication.php?id=4&art=84>, p.67.

24 “Leading Sunni Sheikh Yousef al-Qaradhawi and Other Sheikhs Herald the Coming Conquest of Rome”, Middle East Media and Research Institute (MEMRI), Special Dispatch no. 447, December 6, 2002, <https://www.memri.org/reports/leading-sunni-sheikh-yousef-al-qaradhawi-and-other-sheikhs-herald-coming-conquest-rome>.

25 Nina Weid, “Dawa and the Islamist Revival in the West”, in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 9, The Hudson Institute Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World, December 2009, p.124.

26 Author interview with Farooq Murad, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.99-100.

27 Muhammad Abdul Bari, *Race, Religion, & Muslim Identity in Britain* (Swansea: Renaissance Press, 2005), pp.124, 127.

da'wa-oriented “Islam Awareness Week”, urged its members, “it is obligatory upon to Muslims to call others to Islam”.²⁸ Anas Altikriti, the former president of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), described MAB’s primary function in terms of this religious duty: “MAB is essentially a *Da'wa* (propagation) organisation,” he wrote. “We must never forget that, even when we’re occupied by a political event, a media campaign, a youth project or a charitable function”.²⁹ The Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE) has stated that through the principle of “Islamic Dawah” the “responsibility of promoting Islam is a duty placed on us all”.³⁰

Other Islamic Movement groups that are actively involved in *da'wa* include the Islam Channel and the UK Islamic Mission (UKIM). The Islam Channel was established by Mohamed Ali Harrath as a modern vehicle for *da'wa*. The channel was created as part of Harrath’s Dawah Project, the website for which states: “‘Dawah’ (inviting others to Islam) is an obligation upon all Muslims. Thus, it is our duty to educate people about Islam, subsequently to have a better understanding of the Muslim way of life”.³¹ UKIM runs a project called “Dawah in the UK” which includes support for Muslim “reverts” and Islamic legal scholars. UKIM’s website states that “As Muslims, it is our duty and responsibility to spread the word of Islam far and wide”.³²

Da'wa is the Islamic Movement’s *modus operandi* to achieve its goal of a society – including cultural practices and political organisation – informed by and infused with Islamic values. These values are grounded in *shari'a*. Protagonists consistently refer to *sharia* as a comprehensive ethical and legal code revealed by Allah that applies to all spheres of individual and collective human activity, from personal conduct to the state’s organisation of political, economic and military affairs. This is understood as derived from the Qur’an and the *sunna*, the exemplary behaviour and sayings of the prophet Muhammad, as recorded in the *hadith* literature and his biography, the *sira*.

The comprehensiveness and purposiveness of *shari'a* for Islamic Movement activists is aptly expressed by Muhammad Faruq Khan in a book edited by Abdur Rashid Siddiqui, the secretary and treasurer of the Islamic Foundation. Khan writes, “the Islamic moral system ... does not demand reform only in an individual’s personal life. Rather, it seeks to transform the entire collective social life”.³³ The submission of individuals’ egos “to the dictates of the Shariah” is the “the most valued sacrifice”, Siddiqui himself opines, since it is the necessary requirement for the Islamic revival.³⁴ Suhaib Hasan, the president of the Islamic Sharia Council, explains, “*Shari'a* covers all the aspects of a Muslim’s life”, including matters of personal conduct, such as worship, eating and dress, as well as all matters of criminal and international law. “Everything is covered by *shari'a*,” he asserts.³⁵ Ibrahim Mogra, the former assistant secretary general

28 FOSIS, “Islam Awareness Week – a brief guide”, undated, p.1. This document, previously available at <http://fosis.org.uk/resources/resource-pool/iscc/ireland/80-guidesislamawarenessweekfinal/file>, has been removed from the Web, but lies in the author’s possession.

29 “Message from MAB President to the Members”, MAB website, February 27, 2018, <https://www.mabonline.net/message-from-mab-president-to-the-members/>.

30 “Introduction To Women’s section”, IFE website, webpage captured September 26, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150926121150/http://www.islamicforumeurope.com/live/ife.php?doc=womens>.

31 ‘About Us’, Dawah Project website, webpage captured August 6, 2015 at <https://web.archive.org/web/20150806163100/http://www.thedawahproject.com/about-us/>.

32 “Dawah in the UK”, UKIM website, undated, <https://www.ukim.org/appeals/dawah-in-the-uk/>.

33 Muhammad Faruq Khan, “Self-development and its role in life”, in Abdur Rashid Siddiqui, *Tazkiyah: The Islamic Path of Self Development* (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 2004), p.56.

34 Abdur Rashid Siddiqui, “Time for Sacrifice”, Moon Research Centre website, 2008, www.mrc.org.uk/sacrifice.html.

35 Author interview with Suhaib Hasan, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.120.

of MCB, concurs with this, noting, “Muslims see Islam as a way of life. That would mean that everything is lumped into that way of life, including politics”.³⁶

The inseparability of religion and politics is a distinguishing characteristic of revivalist thought. This is expressed in typical terms by Zahid Parvez, the director of the Islamic Foundation’s Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), who writes,

*[I]n order to administer justice and establish a peaceful society, political power is essential in the eyes of Islam. In fact, Islam obligates its followers to engage with power and enjoins social and political participation. It sees power as a moral and civilising force if it is utilised in accordance with God’s law [shari’a]. A just social order cannot be established through sermons and preaching only.*³⁷

However, Parvez elaborates, the social conditions for the acceptance of an Islamic state – as a political, economic, and legal system – must first be in place.³⁸ The Islamic state, he cautions, must grow from the seeds of Islamic religiosity. A similar view was expressed by Omer El-Hamdoon when he was MAB president. MAB isn’t in Britain to establish an Islamic state, he stated, because Islam, as a way of life, can only be realised when voluntarily embraced.³⁹ Discussing this in the context of *da’wa*, he cautioned, “If you just focus on the Islamic state and you don’t focus on changing the individual, the state will not survive because the state is made out of individuals”. Other Islamic Movement figures have voiced similar views about the secondary importance of the Islamic state.⁴⁰

Contrary to the British government’s description of “Islamist extremism”, Islamic Movement activists do not “demand a caliphate, or a new Islamic state” – certainly not as an immediate, practical political objective.⁴¹ Such an objective might be held by rejectionist Islamists, whether violent jihadists or non-violent agitators like Al-Muhajiroun. But such rejectionist Islamists should be distinguished from the Islamic Movement revivalists, who are the focus of this report. The latter believe in inculcating and institutionalising Islamic moral and legal codes within the fabric of British society, aiming to transform first Muslim communities and then mainstream social and political life. The attainment of an Islamic state, however fanciful it seems, is a secondary concern in relation to an Islamic society, which begins with the individual and proceeds through the family and the community to the mainstream, typically in the form of education and advocacy work.⁴² Suhaib Hasan, who is also the acting president of the European Council of Fatwa and Research, provides perhaps the clearest exposition of this position, in Islamic terms, in stating that

36 Author interview with Ibrahim Mogra, *ibid.*

37 Parvez, *Building a New Society*, p.39.

38 *Ibid.*, p.39, 41, 173-4.

39 Author interview with Omer El-Hamdoon, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.122-3.

40 See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.121-124.

41 This phrase is from Home Secretary Theresa May’s speech in March 2015. The description she gave of “Islamist extremism” was derived from the report of the prime minister’s Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism, published in December 2013. It re-appears in different wording in the 2015 Counter-Extremism Strategy. See, “A Stronger Britain, Built On Our Values”, British Government website, March 23, 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/a-stronger-britain-built-on-our-values>; Cabinet Office, *Tackling extremism in the UK: Report from the Prime Minister’s Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism*, December 2013, available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263181/ETF_FINAL.pdf; and HM Government, *Counter-Extremism Strategy*, Cm 9148, October 2015, available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf.

42 For a discussion of mainstream Islamists’ views of the Islamic state, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.107-8, 119-28.

the Islamic state is not, strictly speaking, an objective. It is, rather, a promise, a reward from Allah, for the attainment of the actual objective, which is the pleasing of Allah with widespread piety.⁴³ He elaborates:

The main objective of a Muslim is to please Allah and to worship Allah ... Now comes the secondary issue. When you are a group of people living at a certain place, you have to organise your matters. On what basis you are going to organise yourselves? [The Islamic state] comes as a natural outcome of a Muslim gathering at any place, as it came to Medina where the Prophet moved and then he was accepted as a ruler and he started implementing the shari'a of Allah. So, this comes as a gradual process, but it is not the objective.

In the final analysis, the Islamic Movement's desire for an Islamic society is inseparable from its desire for an Islamic state, since the state provides the political and economic structures regulating social activity. Hasan has described the features of such a state, as desired by Islam, as follows:

Today's false idols, which dominate over the entire world, are Democracy, Capitalism, Socialism and communism. Instead, Islam calls for a Khilafa (caliphate) based on consultation, and a just economic system based on Zakat [alms] and a prohibition of usury. If you remove any of these three characteristics, you make it impossible for Islamic law to operate properly.⁴⁴

Since *shari'a* is understood by Islamic Movement protagonists as comprehensive and therefore inclusive of politics and governance, several questions therefore arise: How can pious Muslims be content with a situation in which *shari'a* remains restricted to personal matters and not applied by the state? How can such a scenario please or fulfil the will of Allah? To this dilemma, they present a consistent two-pronged response. The first is that Islam cannot be imposed. Farooq Murad exemplifies this response, stating,

There is no compulsion in religion. This is a basic fact of the Qur'an. Islam is a voluntary idea of life. If God wanted to make all of us Muslims he could have done it. He decided not to. He wants to test us, check or see who wants to please him, who wants to come to his ways. This is absolutely a fundamental principle. So we begin from that.⁴⁵

The second is that Islam's triumph in Britain, the West and eventually the world, has been prophesied and will come even if it takes years beyond their lifetimes. Hasan has expressed his firm conviction in return of the caliphate, not just in Europe but worldwide, stating, "It will come because it is prophesied [*sic*] by the Prophet".⁴⁶ This belief has been expressed by other Islamic Movement figures, including Al-Qaradawi.⁴⁷ Altikriti has stated that he shares

43 See Suhaib Hasan, "The Current Problems of the Muslim Ummah and their Solution in Light of the Purified Seerah", Suhaib Hasan's blog, April 8, 2014, <http://sheikhsuhaibhasan.blogspot.co.uk/2014/04/the-current-problems-of-muslim-ummah.html>; and author interview with Suhaib Hasan, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.122.

44 Suhaib Hasan, *Why Do We Pray?* (Dar-us-Salam Publications, 1995), p.9. Available at <https://islamfuture.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/why-do-we-pray-by-dr-suhaib-hasan.pdf>.

45 Author interview with Farooq Murad, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.125.

46 Author interview with Suhaib Hasan, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.127-8.

47 See Jonathan Dahoah-Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative to al-Qaeda or a Partner in Global Jihad?", Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, November 1, 2007, <http://jcpa.org/article/the-muslim-brotherhood-a-moderate-islamic-alternative-to-al-qaeda-or-a-partner-in-global-jihad/>.

Al-Qaradawi's conviction: "I believe in it because that is the prophecy of the Prophet. It's not an invention of Sheikh Qaradawi".⁴⁸

To understand *shari'a* from an Islamic Movement perspective, consider the suggestion of El-Hamdoon, who recommended to the author of this report a book called *'Umdat al-Salik (The Reliance of the Traveller)*. This is a fourteenth century manual of the Shafi'i school of Islamic jurisprudence authorised by Al-Azhar University.⁴⁹ Acknowledging that there are several schools of orthodox Islamic jurisprudence, he said, "It presents just one school of thought", adding, "but it's a good book". The book begins with rulings relating to personal purification, but also contains those relating to matters of state governance. These include some incredibly inhumane corporeal (*hudud*) punishments, such as the cutting of hands for theft,⁵⁰ stoning for adultery,⁵¹ stoning for homosexuality,⁵² and the killing of apostates.⁵³

Leading Islamic Movement figures acknowledge such punishments as part of *shari'a*.⁵⁴ But rather than reject them as a matter of principle, they tend to deflect criticism of them either by highlighting the fact that they make up only a small proportion of *shari'a* rulings or by referring to their non-applicability in a Muslim-minority setting.⁵⁵ Some Islamic Movement figures in Britain have made explicit their belief that prior to *hudud* punishments being applied, Islam has to be firmly embraced within society and *shari'a* lived out as a moral code. For example, Abdullah Faliq – who has senior roles in the Cordoba Foundation, IFE, Education Aid for Palestinians, and other Islamic Movement groups – asserts that *hudud* punishments are not applicable in Britain:

*When it comes to ruling, it doesn't apply to us here. We don't have an Islamic system of government, so hudud punishments shouldn't even arise as a question. You follow the law of the country, as long as it doesn't make you compromise your Islamic faith.*⁵⁶

The same position is taken by Muslim Educational Trust (MET) director, Ghulam Sarwar, in his book, *Sex Education: The Muslim Perspective*. After describing the punishment for sex outside marriage ("fornication") as 100 lashes, the punishment for adultery as stoning to death, and the punishment for homosexual acts as either lashes or death, Sarwar offers what he considers as important context, namely that these punishments can only occur "in an Islamic society implementing Shariah (Islamic Law) in its totality", i.e. "in a fully-fledged Islamic state".⁵⁷ His former MET colleague, Interpal chair Ibrahim Hewitt, has likewise echoed these sentiments in his book, *What Does*

48 John Ware, "Time to Wise Up to the Muslim Brotherhood", *Standpoint Magazine*, July/August 2013, <https://standpointmag.co.uk/features-july-august-13-time-to-wise-up-to-the-muslim-brotherhood-john-ware/>.

49 Author interview with Omer El-Hamdoon, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.121. This is not to say that El-Hamdoon necessarily endorses all that is in this book. But when asked if he could recommend a book on *shari'a* – in the context of a conversation on understanding what *shari'a* is – he named this book. He said, "We believe in God, and we believe in *shari'a* and we do not give up *shari'a* ... We don't believe *shari'a* is discriminatory, that *shari'a* is prejudiced".

50 Ahmad ibn Naqib Al-Misri, *'Umdat al-Salik – Reliance of the Traveller, A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*, ed. and trans. Nuh Ha Mim Keller (Beltsville: Amana Publications, 1994), pp.613-5 (o14.0-6), 668 (p.21.0).

51 *Ibid.*, pp.610-611 (o12.0-6). For someone to be convicted of adultery – called "fornication" in *shari'a* – four male witnesses are required; see p.638 (o24.9).

52 *Ibid.*, pp.610-611 (o12.0-6), 664-665 (p.17.0-17.2). As with those convicted of adultery, for someone to be convicted of homosexuality – referred to in terms of the act of "sodomy" – four male witnesses are also required; see p.638 (o24.9). "Lesbianism" is considered as adultery, inviting the same punishment; see p.665 (p.17.3(3)).

53 *Ibid.*, pp.109 (f1.3), 595-8 (o8.0-7).

54 The former chair of the Association of Muslim Schools UK, Mohamed Mukadam, for example, stated that Islamic law is clear that in an Islamic state the punishment for apostasy is death. See Faisal, "The penalty for apostasy", Spittoon blog, March 30, 2010, <http://web.archive.org/web/20100407163056/http://www.spittoon.org/archives/5719>.

55 See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.121.

56 *Ibid.*

57 See Ghulam Sarwar, *Sex Education: The Muslim Perspective* (London: Muslim Educational Trust, 2004), p.16.

*Islam Say?*⁵⁸ He attracted controversy in 2014 when, on *Newsnight*, he said he'd like to live under *shari'a* and refused to condemn *hudud* punishments as a matter of principle.⁵⁹ It is noteworthy that this position – that *hudud* punishments can only be applied in an Islamic state – is entirely consistent with the vision of classical *shari'a* as outlined in *'Umdat al-Salik*.⁶⁰

Thus, in summary, the Islamic Movement position is that Islam is a “complete way of life” including governance, the basis of and guidance for which is classical *shari'a*; this cannot and should not be imposed, since people are free to choose to submit to Islam, but it will be applied in its entirety, including *hudud* punishments, when Muslims become a majority. This situation is hoped for and believed to be prophesied destiny.

Speaking for Muslims and Islam

Since their emergence in the 1960s and 1970s, Islamic Movement organisations have sought to promote what they deem as the authentic understanding of Islam. This can be seen as a form of internal *da'wa*, imparting the allegedly correct understanding of Islamic values – and combatting the allegedly incorrect understanding of such values – amongst Muslim communities.⁶¹ The Islamic Foundation, for example, began publishing books to provide guidance on “the roles and responsibilities” of Muslims living in a Muslim-minority country. Islamic Movement community organisations, including UKIM, IFE and MAB, seek to promote and protect what they see as true Islam through activities including workshops, seminars, courses, retreats, and training programmes for religious leaders.

The larger task of speaking for Islam to the broader public has been and continues to be the responsibility of MCB. Although no longer the sole or primary interlocutor for Muslims in Britain, MCB continues to pronounce on Islamic matters on behalf of British Muslims of diverse origins. MCB claims to be non-sectarian and not to have a role in dispensing judgements of Islamic law. But it has occasionally taken a public stance on matters which clearly promotes a specific and contentious understanding of Islam and, connected with this, a preference for what other Muslims consider outdated interpretations of *shari'a*.

In 2008, a model marriage contract was drawn up by the Muslim Institute, which aimed to empower women by modernising the Islamic legal requirements for an Islamic marriage (*nikah*). The contract allowed women to initiate divorce on equal terms as men, eschewed the requirement for a male guardian (*wali*) to oversee the process,

58 See Ibrahim Hewitt, *What Does Islam Say?* 4th ed. (London: Muslim Educational Trust, 2004), pp.25-7.

59 “What should be taught in Muslim schools? – Newsnight”, BBC Newsnight, June 4, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JlUMY8l6bE>.

60 Al-Misri, *'Umdat al-Salik*, p.638 (0.25.0).

61 According to the Foundation's former executive director, Irshad Bacqui, it was important for such organisations to create a new mindset of “how to live according to Islamic values” in the new British environment. Author interview with Irshad Bacqui, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.95. Omer El-Hamdoon, the former president of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), for example, describes MAB's work as promoting “the correct understanding of Islam ... The people who have deviated in Islam are the people who have deviated from the texts ... We hope that the Muslim Association of Britain tries to correct Muslims' understanding of Islam, so they are not narrow minded”. Author interview with Omer El-Hamdoon, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.96.

and enabled women and non-Muslims to be witnesses.⁶² Although MCB initially supported the contract, it quickly rescinded its support. MCB spokesman Reefat Drabu stated that it was “misguided” and “incorrect” to describe the contract as a “re-invention of Shari’ah” or as a “modern” or “reformist” view of it: The Muslim Institute had misinterpreted *shari’a*.⁶³ MCB’s assistant secretary general, Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, defended the group’s rejection of the contract, stating that *shari’a* is the domain of Muslim jurists and theologians and that Islamic law is clear that Muslim brides-to-be require male guardians.⁶⁴ MCB’s claim to be “non-partisan on issues of theology”⁶⁵ appears somewhat shallow in rejecting Muslim perspectives that differ from classical readings of Islamic jurisprudence.⁶⁶ Its view was supported by other Islamic Movement organisations. The Islamic Sharia Council, for example, also rejected the model contract, saying, “it is unacceptable to claim earlier generations were marrying according to a faulty system which we now have to put right”.⁶⁷

MCB and the Islamic Sharia Council are not alone in taking a stance on gender equality issues that clash with liberal human rights norms. The European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR), established by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi in 1997 to provide guidance for Europe’s Muslim-minority population regarding their practice of Islam, published a *fatwa* (edict) in 2002 that states, “As a point of principle, Islam granted the right of divorce *to the man*”.⁶⁸ Women can “divorce themselves” if the husband grants her the authority, or if she marries on the condition that she has the authority to divorce. She can also seek the support of a Muslim judge, who can grant her a divorce only if attempts at reconciliation fail. Women clearly do not have equal rights to men in matters of divorce.

ECFR states, “Islam gave the woman her full rights without her even demanding these rights”.⁶⁹ But it conceives of equality between the sexes very differently from Western liberal equalities legislation. Men and women, it declares, achieve “the equality of rights and responsibilities” through different but complementary roles. One ECFR *fatwa* states, “A man is obliged to work hard outside his house to provide for his family and a woman must work inside the house to care for the family”.⁷⁰ The *fatwa* allows for women to have their own professions, but a basic difference in duties prevails. Even working wives are urged not to contribute more than a third of the family’s living costs, since the husband is obliged to pay twice as much as his wife. This obligation rests upon the fact that “he has the right to double

62 Urme Khan, “New Sharia law marriage contract gives Muslim women rights”, *The Telegraph*, August 7, 2008, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2518720/New-Sharia-law-marriage-contract-gives-Muslim-women-rights.html>. For the marriage contract, see “Muslim Marriage Contract”, The Muslim Institute, August 2008, captured at <https://web.archive.org/web/20080908101713/http://www.muslimparliament.org.uk/Documentation/Muslim%20Marriage%20Contract.pdf>.

63 “MCB, “STATEMENT: Muslim Marriage Certificate”, MCB website, August 15, 2008, captured at http://web.archive.org/web/20080824221846/http://www.mcb.org.uk/article_detail.php?article=announcement-734.

64 Allen Esterson, “The MCB and the Muslim Marriage Contract”, Butterflies and Wheels blog, August 24, 2008, <http://www.butterfliesandwheels.org/2008/the-mcb-and-the-muslim-marriage-contract/>.

65 Reefat Drabu, “A marriage of convenience will not do”, *The Guardian*, August 21, 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/aug/21/islam.religion>.

66 A counter-argument to this view has been voiced by Usama Hasan. He has noted that the requirement for a male guardian derives from “sound” (*sahih*) *hadiths*, but adds that the Hanafi school of jurisprudence never accepted the notion that a specific *hadith* can override a principle from the Qur’an, and that such a principle exists that women can marry out of free choice. The issue may not be clear-but, but MCB, rather than accept that there is a diversity of scholarly opinion on the matter and supporting the contract as one that Muslims may choose to use if they so wish, decided not just to withdraw support for it, but claim that it contravened *shari’a*, belying a particular viewpoint on what counts as *shari’a* and what doesn’t. See John R. Bowen, *On British Islam: Religion, Law, and Everyday Practice in Shari’a Councils* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), p.214.

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Fatwas of the European Council for Fatwa and Research*, trans. Anas Osama Altikriti and Shakir Nasif Al-Ubaydi (Cairo: Islamic INC, 2002), fatwa 16, p.144, emphasis added.

69 *Ibid.*, fatwa 27, p.73.

70 *Ibid.*, fatwa 24, pp.66-67.

her share of any inheritance”.⁷¹ ECFR holds the view that Islamic inheritance law – which stipulates a male heir receives twice that of a female sibling – is simply non-negotiable. The reason provided is that Islamic texts have made this sufficiently clear:

*European norms and traditions are valueless if they contradict clear Islamic texts such as calling for equality between man and woman in inheritance under the guise of the change of time and place. This is because the rules of inheritance are determined by clear texts unaffected by changing time and place.*⁷²

In response to the question regarding to whom a Muslim woman in the West should turn in the case of domestic problems with her husband, another *fatwa* states that it is incumbent upon Muslims in a non-Muslim society to create their own institutions – arbitration or reconciliation councils – to handle such matters.⁷³ Although the *fatwa* does not mention domestic violence, the indication is that Muslims should take family problems into their own hands, without recourse to the marriage counselling or mediation services available through existing governmental agencies.

According to Mogra, MCB “signposts” people to *shari’a* councils,⁷⁴ implying endorsement of the particular interpretation of Islamic law being used to arbitrate on divorce and other matters. But in recent years, *shari’a* arbitration has attracted numerous critical reports, highlighting the discriminatory treatment of women, and the handling of criminal matters outside their remit, such as domestic violence.⁷⁵ These, no doubt, informed the government’s decision, announced in October 2015, to conduct an independent review into the application of *shari’a* in England and Wales.

The response of MCB and other Islamic Movement groups has been to defend *shari’a* councils, minimising concerns about them. MCB stated, “Where there are concerns of discrimination and illegality, these should be dealt with under the full force of the law”.⁷⁶ But it diminished the seriousness of these concerns by claiming that much of them have been “generated through rumours or one-off incidents promoted by ideologically-driven and misinformed journalists or politicians”. MCB proclaimed that the councils “are a voluntary method of alternative dispute resolution ... Those who use these institutions do so out of free will”.⁷⁷ This blanket assertion showed it doesn’t take very seriously the claims made by some women’s rights advocates that some women have been pressured to attend *shari’a* council hearings, risking ostracisation or worse if they do not.

71 *Ibid.*, *fatwa* 27, pp.73-75.

72 “Final statement, The 24th Ordinary Session of The European Council for Fatwa and Research Held in Istanbul [August 16-19, 2014]”, ECFR blog, November 4, 2017, <https://www.e-cfr.org/blog/2017/11/04/24th-ordinary-session-european-council-fatwa-research-held-istanbul/>, emphasis added.

73 *Fatwas of the European Council for Fatwa and Research*, trans. Altikriti and Al-Ubaydi, *fatwa* 29, pp.77-79.

74 Author interview with Ibrahim Mogra, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.189.

75 See Elham Manea, *Women and Shari’a Law: The Impact of Legal Pluralism in the UK* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2016); Machteld Zee, *Choosing Sharia?: Multiculturalism, Islamic Fundamentalism and Sharia Councils* (Utrecht, Netherlands: Eleven International Publishing, 2016); Caroline Cox, “A parallel world: confronting the abuse of many Muslim women in Britain today” (London: Bow Group, 2015), available at www.bowgroup.org/sites/bowgroup.uat.pleasetest.co.uk/files/Bow%20Group%20Report%20-%20A%20Parallel%20World%20-%20Confronting%20the%20abuse%20of%20many%20Muslim%20women%20in%20Britain%20today%2024%2003%2015.pdf; Maryam Namazie, Yassi Atasheen and Anna Waters, “Sharia Law in Britain: A Threat to One Law for All and Equal Rights”, London: One Law for All, 2010), available at www.onelawforall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/New-Report-Sharia-Law-in-Britain_fixed.pdf; and Denis MacEoin, “Sharia Law or One Law for All?”, ed. David G. Green (London: Civitas, 2009), available at www.civitas.org.uk/pdf/ShariaLawOrOneLawForAll.pdf.

76 See “Home Office Announcement of Independent Investigation into Sharia law”, MCB website, October 14, 2015, <https://mcb.org.uk/general/home-office-announcement-of-independent-investigation-into-sharia-law/>.

77 *Ibid.*

Other Islamic Movement organisations have similarly defended *shari'a* councils from official scrutiny, even as a matter of principle. IHRC, for example, described the government's concern about these councils – not any restrictive measures against them, but the grounded concern to know more about them – as an assault on Islam, as “part of a wide, insidious and relentless attack on the whole Muslim way of life under the pretext of security and anti-terrorism”.⁷⁸

Yet, the interpretation of Islamic law used in *shari'a* councils is contentious. Muslim academic Elham Manea describes it as belonging to “the medieval jurisprudence tradition, which freely violates human rights and the concept of gender equality”.⁷⁹ She compares it unfavourably with reformist interpretations in the Middle East, noting the irony that “at a time when the essentialists are pushing to introduce Islamic law in the Western legal systems, the trend in the Arab and Islamic countries is to push for the reform of Islamic law”.⁸⁰ It seems reasonable to take the view that the MCB, IHRC and other Islamic Movement groups' uncritical support for these councils effectively protects an illiberal religious ideology and associated practices.⁸¹

MCB has also taken a particular stance on education that, despite the group's claim to represent a diversity of Muslim interests, advocates an interpretation of *shari'a* that, whilst orthodox, is contentious and arguably unsuitable for modern Britain. In 2007, MCB published guidance for schools on the allegedly distinct needs of Muslim children. Authored by the man at the centre of the later Trojan Horse controversy, Tahir Alam, the guidance states that girls and boys ought to be subject to specific dress codes. Ignoring the diversity of Islamic scholarly opinion on this matter, it asserts, “In public boys should always be covered between the navel and knee and girls should be covered except for their hands and faces, a concept known as ‘hijab’”.⁸² This prescription regarding dress is presented as the authoritative Islamic view. Other stipulations take a similar line, obscuring Muslim diversity and encouraging the perception of Muslims as a distinct and homogeneous group deserving of unique rights in the public space: Muslim children should be exempt from mixed-sex dance, swimming and PE lessons, and should not be taught figurative art or certain types of music.

This view on what constitutes normative Islamic values is strikingly similar to, and perhaps based upon, guidance published several years earlier by another Islamic Movement organisation, Muslim Welfare House.⁸³ This document describes aspects of the curriculum that are deemed acceptable and unacceptable for Muslim children, the latter defined more gently as things to which Muslim parents would likely object. Admitting to some diversity between Muslim families, the document nonetheless advocates restrictions for Muslim children in the subjects of art, music, dance and drama. It also advocates sex-segregation in PE and swimming. Whilst it could be read as merely suggesting these restrictions, in the area of dress its advocacy

78 IHRC, “A letter to Nick Clegg regarding the government's proposed new plans to ‘combat Islamic extremism’”, IHRC website, March 11, 2015, www.ihr.org.uk/activities/campaigns/11382-a-letter-to-nick-clegg-regarding-the-governments-proposed-new-plans-to-combat-islamic-extremism.

79 Manea, *Women and Shari'a Law*, p.120.

80 *Ibid.*, p.212.

81 *Ibid.*, pp.180-1.

82 MCB, *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools: Information and Guidance for Schools* (London: The Muslim Council of Britain, 2007), p.20, emphasis added. Document available at <http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2007/02/20/Schoolinfo guidance.pdf>.

83 Muslim Welfare House, *Understanding the Educational Needs of Muslim Pupils: Guidance for Schools, Teachers & Local Education Authorities* (London: Muslim Welfare House, 2004), available at <https://mwht.org.uk/downloads/Understanding-the-Educational-Needs-of-Muslim-Pupils.pdf>.

appears unambiguous, describing what it claims as “the Islamic point of view on clothing”, which aligns with MCB’s guidance on this as outlined above.⁸⁴

These representations of Muslim children’s needs in schools are no mere textual matter. They have been communicated as advice to local authorities for decades by MET, which has also published its own books similarly seeking to portray the authoritative Islamic view on education and other matters.⁸⁵ And unfortunately, the advocated restrictions on Muslim children have been put into practice in some schools in Britain. In November 2014, the head of Ofsted, Michael Wilshaw, expressed concern that hundreds of children in six of Tower Hamlets’ private Islamic schools were intensely focused on “developing Islamic knowledge and understanding at the expense of other important areas of the curriculum”.⁸⁶ They were, he said, at risk of “extremist influences and radicalisation”. Consistent with MCB’s guidance, music, art and drama were rarely taught. In all six schools, wrote Wilshaw, “pupils’ physical and educational welfare is at serious risk”.⁸⁷

Jihad and Attitude to Violence

For the Islamic Movement, the obligation to propagate Islam as a complete way of life through *da’wa* is a form of *jihad*, or struggle. *Jihad* is an important element of Islamic Movement solidarity and a key conceptual component of its religiopolitical worldview. The two founding fathers of the Islamic Movement, Hasan Al-Banna and Abul Ala Mawdudi, both lauded *jihad* as a collective duty for Muslims to effectuate a global Islamic revival. Both, in fact, saw the neglect of this duty as a sin.⁸⁸ Al-Banna understood *jihad* as both defensive and offensive, for the protection and spread of Islam, acknowledging its support in the Qur’an, the *sunna*, and the four schools of classical Sunni Islamic law.⁸⁹ Mawdudi shared this view.⁹⁰ But both also

84 *Ibid.*, p.18.

85 For example, Ghulam Sarwar, *Islamic Education: Its Meaning, Problems and Prospects* (London: The Muslim Educational Trust, 2001) and Ghulam Sarwar, *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings*. 8th ed. (London: Muslim Educational Trust, 2006).

86 Michael Wilshaw, “Advice note from Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, to the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon. Nicky Morgan MP, on school inspections in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets”, November 21, 2014, available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/386594/Tower_20Hamlets_20advice_20note.pdf.

87 *Ibid.* The most recent Ofsted reports for these schools, however, show improved ratings. This coincides with a more inclusive curriculum and improvements in school management. In Jamiatul Ummah School, for example, Ofsted reported that students now show “respect and tolerance for those who are different from them, including gender and sexual orientation” and staff “have a thorough knowledge of the issues related to radicalisation and extremism, female genital mutilation and forced marriage”. The school’s overall rating has changed from “inadequate” to “good”. See Jamiatul School Ofsted report for January 2018, <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2772131>.

88 See Charles Wendell (trans. and annot.), *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949): A Selection from the Majmu’at Rasa’il al-Imam al-Shahid* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp.133, 147; and Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, trans. Khurram Murad (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1980), p.100.

89 *Jihad*, according to the precepts of classical Islamic law, wrote Al-Banna, includes “the slaying of the unbelievers, and related connotations such as beating them, plundering their wealth, destroying their shrines, and smashing their idols. The *desired aim*,” he stated, “is to strive to the utmost to strengthen the faith [i.e. Islam] by such means as fighting the inhabitants of the Dar al-Harb [territory outside Islamic rule] and the tolerated Scripturaries [i.e. Christians and Jews] (if they rebel), as well as the apostates, who are the vilest of unbelievers ...” (Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, p.147, emphasis added). Demonstrating that *jihad* was not simply a defensive military doctrine, but also a proactive one in the service of expanding Islamic sovereignty, Al-Banna referred to *jihad* as a collective obligation, led by the ruler of the Islamic state, requiring the invitation of non-Muslims to Islam before either accepting their submission or waging military *jihad* upon them “for the purpose of exalting God Almighty’s Word [i.e. law]” (*ibid.*, p.148). Whilst Al-Banna described such *jihad* as defensive, it is clear that it refers to a proactive, offensive doctrine, which provides “the [divine] permission to wage war until the [message of] the precious Qur’anic verse is fulfilled”; what is “defended” in this case is “the mission [of spreading Islam]”, i.e. the ability to expand Islamic sovereignty (*ibid.*, p.151).

90 Mawdudi described *jihad* as a revolutionary struggle for Islam. For him, *jihad* was not merely defensive, “but [waged] in order that evil and contumacy should be wiped out and God’s Law should be enforced in the world”. He referred to “the power of [the] sword”, i.e. military force, as a form of *jihad* required to “alter the old tyrannical social system and establish a new just order of life”. Mawdudi in fact rejected the application of the terms “offensive” and “defensive” to *jihad*, but it is clear that for him, as for numerous Muslim exegetes and jurists, *jihad* was conceived as a proactive collective effort, including war, “to fulfil the Will of God”. See Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Jihad in Islam* (Beirut: Holy Koran Publishing House, 1980), pp.7, 10, 29.

saw *jihad* as a means to expand Islam through non-violent means, including physical or mental exertion, and the expenditure of one's wealth. Such an understanding of *jihad* can be seen to be consistent with its tri-partite formulation in classical Islamic scholarship: *jihad* of the sword (*jihad bi-l-saif*), *jihad* of the tongue (*jihad al-kalima*), and *jihad* of the heart (*jihad al-qalb*).⁹¹

The non-violent, cultural *jihad* in the West today, that most closely related to *jihad* of the tongue, has been advocated most clearly and vociferously by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. For Al-Qaradawi, although *jihad* may involve personal struggles with desire or sin, as *jihad* of the heart is understood, it cannot be restricted to this, since it cannot be separated from its most fundamental purpose, to universalise the *shari'a* on Earth:

*The most important form of jihad today is serious, purposive organized work to re-build the Islamic society and state and to implement the Islamic way of life in the political, cultural, and economic areas ... I believe that cultural, educational, and informational jihad in the way of God should be given priority today, as long as such jihad is a purely Islamic effort that aims at re-establishing the Islamic state.*⁹²

In a book distributed to Muslim schools in Britain, Ghulam Sarwar, the director of MET, similarly describes *jihad* as “the use of all our energies and resources to establish the Islamic system of life, in order to gain Allah's favour”.⁹³ Ibrahim Hewitt, his former colleague at MET and the long-time chairman of Interpal, echoes this, writing,

*Of all the precepts of Islam, it is perhaps Jihad that is most often misquoted, misused and misunderstood. The word itself means 'to strive or struggle in the way of Allah', not the more popular but incorrect usage, 'holy war' ... Of course, a 'struggle in the way of Allah' may mean warfare, but any personal or communal struggle to establish an Islamic lifestyle is Jihad.*⁹⁴

The “real meaning” of *jihad*, he adds, may also be expressed as a “counter-culture to that presented as the norm by the Western media (and frequently aped by the Muslim media)”.⁹⁵ Hewitt bemoans what he sees as an attack on “the cultural heritage of Islam and Muslims and its superiority over much of what today passes as culture in non-Muslim society”. Echoing Al-Qaradawi, Hewitt describes the necessary effort to promote and protect Islam as a way of life as “the cultural *Jihad*”. The concept of *jihad* as a religiously-mandated struggle against cultural values and ideas that obstruct or clash with Islam is shared by Zahid Parvez, director of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education. He states that *jihad* aims at “[i]ntellectually challenging ideologies, beliefs and ways of life that conflict with God's Way”. *Jihad*, he writes, aims at “[i]nfluencing positive social, economic and political change in society according to Islamic ideals”.⁹⁶

91 David Cook, “Islamism and Jihadism: The Transformation of Classical Notions of Jihad into an Ideology of Terrorism”, in *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, vol.10, no.2, June 2009, p.178.

92 Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase* (Swansea: Awakening Publications, 2002), pp.76, 70, emphasis added.

93 Sarwar, *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings*, p.76.

94 Hewitt, *What Does Islam Say?*, p.29, emphasis added.

95 *Ibid.*, p.30.

96 Parvez, *Building a New Society*, p.158.

Muhammad Abdul Bari, the former MCB secretary general and chairman of the East London Mosque, in his autobiography, entitled *A Long Jihad*, describes *jihad* as comprising “any individual effort to bring good to oneself, family and community”, including “a personal commitment of self-purification”. He adds:

*Jihad is also a collective effort to fight against inequality, injustice and oppression in a civil way and within the established laws of the land. On the other hand, large-scale jihad by a nation is to defend life, land and religion [i.e. Islam] in a legitimate war (a morally justifiable ‘just war’) with established rules and ethics of engagement such as using minimum necessary force, humane treatment towards non-combatants, bringing no harm even to trees, etc.*⁹⁷

This understanding of *jihad* – as extending from the personal to the political, from the individual level to that of state affairs – is typical of the Islamic Movement. It is shared by Anas Altikriti, who has stated, “The word ‘*jihad*’ is very central to Islam, extremely central to Islam. It’s a very noble, very humane notion. Ultimately, starting with you fighting your own desires to do wrong. That’s the very central piece of *jihad*”.⁹⁸ Asked where *jihad* ends, Altikriti echoes the words of Abdul Bari and others who note the combative nature of *jihad*, stating,

*Islam is not a pacifist religion. But Islam is never about instigating or initiating offence, never. But when you are attacked, you are called to defend yourself. You are called, and if someone attacks you by force, you are called – you are allowed – if you wish to sacrifice yourself peacefully, then that’s your prerogative. But you absolutely, absolutely, have the duty to defend others, to defend your land, to defend your home, simply because to give up your own life, that’s your choice, but to give up someone else’s life, that’s not yours.*⁹⁹

Altikriti possibly saw Muslim insurgents in Iraq as waging a defensive *jihad* against British and American forces after the toppling of Saddam Hussein’s regime in 2003. In 2004 and 2006, Altikriti expressed support for the “armed resistance” fighting British and American troops in Iraq.¹⁰⁰ He said that although he preferred that no blood was shed, the Iraqis have a right to free themselves from “occupation”. Similar sentiments were expressed by Ahmad Al-Rawi, the former president of the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe. In 2004, alongside five Hamas leaders, Al-Rawi, also a former MAB president, signed a declaration supporting Iraqi and Palestinian uprisings until “the *land of Islam* [is] cleansed from the filth of occupation”.¹⁰¹ Comparing the British and American coalition forces in Iraq with the Nazi invaders of France in 1940, he said: “If they (the British) attack, it’s the right of the civilians to resist the British. Any people who are occupied, they have the right to resist. I prefer it to be peaceful, but if they choose to resist by other means it’s their choice”.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Muhammad Abdul Bari, *A Long Jihad: My Quest for the Middle Way* (Markfield, UK: Kube Publishing, 2018), p.3.

⁹⁸ Author interview with Anas Altikriti, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.130.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ “UK Muslim Brotherhood Leader Meets Obama In White House; Anas Altikriti Supported Iraqi Insurgents”, Global Muslim Brotherhood Watch website, January 27, 2014, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/2014/01/27/featured-story-uk-muslim-brotherhood-leader-meets-obama-white-house-anas-altikriti-supported-iraqi-insurgents/>.

¹⁰¹ “U.K Muslim Brotherhood Charges “Witch Hunt” By Government”, Global Muslim Brotherhood Watch website, March 10, 2009, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/2009/03/10/uk-muslim-brotherhood-charges-witch-hunt-by-government/> emphasis added

¹⁰² Nicholas Rufford and Abul Taher, “British Muslim says troops are fair target”, *The Sunday Times*, October 31, 2004, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/british-muslim-says-troops-are-fair-target-rf0nk1965wc>.

The view that *jihad* should not involve initiating offence, but that it is a duty for Muslims to take up arms when Islam is under siege, is typical of the Muslim Brotherhood and consistent with classical Islamic law: All four schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence stipulate that it is the duty of every individual Muslim to engage in *jihad* when Islam is attacked.¹⁰³ Perhaps the most enduring legitimate defensive *jihad* in the eyes of the Islamic Movement has been, and continues to be, Palestine, which is conceived as a Muslim land in need of liberation. To Islamic Movement activists, as to other kinds of Islamists, Israel is viewed as an illegal occupying force. Palestinian “resistance” groups, such as Hamas, are seen to be fulfilling their religious and legal obligation to engage in defensive *jihad* to fight oppression and reclaim Muslim land.

The notion of Palestine as Islamic land, made explicit in the declaration signed by Al-Rawi mentioned above, has been expressed by Daud Abdullah, director of the Middle East Monitor and a former assistant secretary general of MCB. Although he says that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not one between Muslims and Jews, he admits that his understanding of it is framed by his faith:

As a Muslim, first of all, I understand it in a certain way. I understand that the importance of Palestine – Palestine is unique – Palestine was the land to which Abraham sought refuge, after he left his homeland in Iraq. And it is written about in the Qur’an. The city of Jerusalem and the mosque of, Al-Aqsa Mosque, is mentioned in the Qur’an. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, he made a miraculous journey, from Mecca to Jerusalem, and he was taken into the heavens. We believe this as Muslims, you see, and it all happened in Palestine. So, the issue of Palestine is inter-twined in Muslim belief. And for me, I understand it in this way: It belongs to the Muslims.¹⁰⁴

When asked if he is referring to Jerusalem or the whole land, he said, “the whole land, the whole land. The Palestinians are custodians. They lived there for centuries, thousands of years”.¹⁰⁵

The notion that Israel has usurped Muslim, not just Palestinian, land was voiced by Al-Qaradawi, with specific reference to Israel, who said,

We are fighting them in the name of Islam, because Islam commands us to fight whoever plunders our land, and occupies our country. All the school of Islamic jurisprudence – the Sunni, the Shi’ite, the Ibadhiya – and all the ancient and modern schools of jurisprudence – agree that any invader who occupies even an inch of land of the Muslims must face resistance ... They must not allow anyone to take a single piece of land away

¹⁰³ In classical Islamic law, proactive or expansionary military *jihad* is a collective duty (*fard kifaya*) rather than an individual duty (*fard ‘ayn*), and must be declared by the caliph, the head of the Islamic state. Non-Muslims must first be invited to Islam. Hostilities may commence after their refusal to convert or, in the case of Jews and Christians, submit to Islamic law as *dhimmis*, “protected” but second class citizens. The collective duty to wage *jihad* is met as long as some Muslims are carrying it out. The duty becomes incumbent on every individual, however, when Islam is attacked. This distinction of duties, between the collective and individual, correlate with offensive and defensive modes of *jihad*. They also assume, problematically for the *umma* today, the existence of an Islamic state and ruler. See Rudolph Peters, “Jihad, an introduction,” in Rudolph Peters (ed.), *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* (Princeton: Markus Weiner Publishers, 1996), pp.3-4. This conception of Muslims’ legal obligations to wage *jihad* have been expressed throughout the ages. See, for example, Ibn Qudama (d. 1223), in Andrew G. Bostom (ed.), *The Legacy of Jihad*, (New York: Prometheus Books, 2005), p.162. Hasan Al-Banna was also very aware of the legal conceptions of the communal and individual obligations to wage *jihad*. His own tract, *On Jihad*, provided numerous citations of the Qur’an, *hadith* literature and Muslim jurists, including Ibn Qudama (see Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, p.149).

¹⁰⁴ Author interview with Daud Abdullah, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.131.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

from Islam. That is what we are fighting the Jews for. We are fighting them ... Our religion commands us... We are fighting in the name of religion, in the name of Islam, which makes this jihad an individual duty, in which the entire nation takes part, and whoever is killed in this [jihad] is a martyr. This is why I ruled that martyrdom operations are permitted, because he commits martyrdom for the sake of Allah, and sacrifices his soul for the sake of Allah ... We do not disassociate Islam from the war. On the contrary, disassociating Islam from the war is the reason for our defeat. We are fighting in the name of Islam.¹⁰⁶

Al-Qaradawi is referring to the classical Islamic doctrine of irredentism, which stipulates that lands once under Islamic law cannot revert to non-Islamic rule. This doctrine was explicitly expressed by Hasan Al-Banna.¹⁰⁷ It is based upon perceived historic precedent, as articulated in the founding charter of Hamas, the Palestinian wing of the Muslim Brotherhood. The charter traces the origin of the doctrine of irredentism within Islamic law to the decisions of the second “rightly guided” caliph, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (r. 634–644).¹⁰⁸ It is understood as applying to all lands once conquered by *jihad*, but seems to apply most forcefully to Israel, perhaps because of its location in the heart of what was once the *dar al-Islam*, the “house of Islam” or Islamic empire. Article 11 of the charter expresses the understanding that the land that Israel “occupies” is primarily Muslim, rather than Palestinian. It states that such land legally constitutes “an Islamic *waqf* [endowment] for all generations of Muslims until the Day of Resurrection”. The specifically Islamic conception of the conflict over the land that Israel rests upon is clear from the charter’s description of Hamas as being locked into a “struggle against the Jews”, rather than Israelis. The charter invokes the antisemitic, apocalyptic *hadith*, which notes that if a Jew seeks refuge under stones or trees, these objects will be able to speak, informing a Muslim, “There is a Jew behind me, come and kill him!”¹⁰⁹

Islamic Movement activists in Britain typically distance themselves from militant jihadist groups, such as the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda, and condemn Islamist terrorism in the West. But they tend to view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the lens of pan-Islamic identity politics, see the entirety of Israel as illegitimate, and share a religiously-informed solidarity with Hamas and other Palestinian “resistance” groups. Even though such groups have conducted numerous terror attacks on Israeli civilians, Islamic Movement individuals and groups do not condemn such attacks, seeing them as a justifiable part of a defensive *jihad*.

A significant chunk of the Islamic Movement network in Britain is dedicated to support the Palestinian cause, as detailed elsewhere in this report. Although the groups in question, such as Interpal, may appear to have little in common with groups focused on British Muslim

106 Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Qatar TV, February 25, 2006, English translation at *Middle East Media Research Institute*, “Sheik Yousef Al-Qaradhawi: Our War with the Jews is in the Name of Islam”, TV Monitor Project, Clip Number 1052, www.memritv.org/clip/en/1052.htm.

107 Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna*, p.147. Here, Al-Banna quotes, approvingly, a fifteenth century Muslim jurist of the Hanafi school of Islamic law who stated the classical juridical position that if any part of Islamic territory was attacked, military *jihad* becomes an individual (as opposed to a communal) obligation.

108 Article 11, “Hamas Covenant 1988: The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement”, The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, Yale Law School, available at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp. See also, Joseph S. Spoerl, “Hamas, Islam, and Israel”, *Journal of Conflict Studies*, vol.26, no.1., 2006, p.9.

109 Article 7, “Hamas Covenant 1988”. The *hadith* is from a collection deemed authoritative: Sahih Muslim, Book 40, Number 6985. For a comprehensive collection of anti-Jewish motifs in Islam’s foundational texts – the Qur’an, the *hadiths* (authoritative collections of accounts of Muhammad’s words and deeds), and the *sira* (the early Muslim biographies of Muhammad), as well as in the writings of influential Muslim jurists, theologians and scholars – see Andrew G. Bostom (ed.), *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2008).

communities or political issues affecting Muslims in Britain, they are all bonded by a shared understanding of their work as *jihad* for the Muslim *umma*, either at home or abroad. The various aspects of the concept of *jihad* are connected by a singular purpose to further Islam as a way of life and communal identity, and this allows them to see all of their work – whether it is directed to combat allegedly incorrect understandings of Islam or illegal occupations of Islamic land – as part of a singular effort shouldered by a singular fraternity.

3. The Organisational Network of the Islamic Movement

The Islamic Movement is a network of interconnected organisations or, more precisely, individuals that have authoritative roles within organisations or influence upon them. In many instances, Islamic Movement activists have roles in multiple organisations. Mapping the network in Britain is possible, but not straightforward. Not only do key individuals change jobs, sometimes every three or four years if they are in an elected position. They don't always publicise their entry into or departure from positions. Start and end dates for roles are not always clear. Some individuals' names, particularly if they are from an Arabic, Urdu or Bengali speaking background, have multiple spellings, making it difficult to know sometimes if it is the same person. Many key figures in the network have roles in small, local organisations besides their higher profile positions, but these aren't always publicised. With this in mind, a fairly accurate picture can nonetheless be made of some of the interconnections between the personnel and organisations comprising the Islamic Movement in Britain. It is possible to observe the different kinds of connections between individuals and organisations, or between organisations. These include trusteeships, management positions, speaking invitations, one-off collaborations and longer-term partnerships, membership affiliations, coalition agreements, funding relationships, and simple endorsements.

It is clear that there are certain clusters of individuals and groups within the Islamic Movement in Britain. There is a cluster of groups, for example, most of which have their origins in the Muslim Brotherhood and which are concerned with Palestine. This cluster includes the Muslim Association of Britain, the British Muslim Initiative, Muslim Welfare House, the European Institute for the Human Sciences, the Cordoba Foundation, the Palestinian Return Centre, and the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (Interpal). But even community groups with origins in the Indian subcontinent, such as the UK Islamic Mission, are actively involved in supporting the Palestinian cause. Another cluster, which overlaps with this, includes Muslim charities, such as Muslim Aid, Muslim Hands, Human Appeal, Education Aid for Palestinians, and Islamic Relief. It is difficult to explore every connection in every cluster, but there are several key nodes in the network worth exploring that demonstrate the complex and intricate links that comprise it. The most significant of these, in terms of the number of interconnections between people and other organisations, is the Muslim Council of Britain. A smaller but equally interesting node is a semi-formal group called the Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations.

There are also interesting international connections between British based individuals and groups and those in Europe. This is perhaps unsurprising, since the growth of the Islamic Movement in Britain emerged at the same time as the network began to grow on the continent (and indeed in the United States). Organisations such as the Federation of European Islamic Organisations and the European

Council for Fatwa and Research are part of this bigger picture. British and European Islamic Movement groups are in turn connected to a new player in the global market for Islam, namely Qatar. Through Qatar Charity, Doha has spent vast sums of money on European Brotherhood-associated projects. A review of these projects allows a glimpse not just of the extent to which Qatar is funding Islam in Britain and the rest of Europe, but also of how British, European and Qatari organisations are interlinked through their partnerships and the multiple roles of some of their key staff. Another important player on the world stage for the Islamic Movement, an ally of Qatar, is Turkey. Since AKP's election victory in 2007, Turkey has supported the Islamic Movement and its Palestine campaign. Although Turkey has less direct connections to British based Islamic Movement groups and individuals, it helps form an important part of the enabling environment for the movement's aspirations beyond Britain and Europe, both for the "liberation" of Palestine and as the possible seat of a revived caliphate.

Key Nodes in the Network

The Muslim Council of Britain

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is arguably the key node in the network of the Islamic Movement in Britain. MCB is no longer the government's sole consultative partner regarding Muslim matters, and polls have revealed meagre support from British Muslims, undermining its image as the voice of "the Muslim community".¹¹⁰ However, it might be said – as has been suggested of its precursor organisation – that its primary function is "not to act as democratic representatives of Britain's Muslims, but to influence government policy".¹¹¹ Yet, this would be to overlook its important function as a web of communication and interaction through which numerous Islamic Movement individuals and organisations are informally connected.

Numerous observers have noted the Ikhwani and Jamaati origins of many of MCB's affiliate organisations. These include the Cordoba Foundation, Dawatul Islam UK and Ireland, the East London Mosque/ London Muslim Centre, the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS), the Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), the Islamic Foundation, the Islamic Sharia Council, Muslim Aid, the Muslim Association of Britain ((MAB), the Muslim Educational Trust (MET), Muslim Welfare House, the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (Interpal), the Palestine Return Centre, the UK Islamic Mission (UKIM), Young Muslim Organisation-UK (YMO-UK), and Young Muslims UK (YMUK). They also include some smaller organisations, such as the Association of Muslim Schools UK and the Association of Muslim Lawyers. However, more interesting than these organisational affiliations are the numerous overlapping roles that the key personnel of MCB share in these organisations as well as in other Islamic Movement groups.

110 Kenan Malik, "take me to your leader", April 23, 2009, <http://hurryupharry.org/2009/04/23/kenan-malik-from-fatwa-to-jihad-2/>. MCB has argued that it has never sought to represent all Muslims in Britain, but this is undermined by its insistence on referring to "the Muslim community" in the singular and advocating not a plurality of views on Muslim matters, such as education, which would reflect Britain's diverse Muslim population, but a particular and contested interpretation of the faith. See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.150-152, and Damon L. Perry, "Mainstream Islamism in Britain: Educating for the 'Islamic Revival'", Commission for Countering Extremism website, October 7, 2020, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836571/Mainstream-islamism-in-britain-education-for-the-islamic-revival.pdf, p.30.

111 Malik, *ibid.*

The current secretary general, Harun Khan, has not played a major role in many Islamic Movement groups, unlike some of his predecessors, such as Farooq Murad, the son of the late Jamaati leader, Khuram Murad. But his role on the management committee of the Redbridge Islamic Centre links him to other groups and figures in the mainstream Islamist network. These include Cage, which has been hosted by the centre, as well as Haitham Al-Haddad and Azad Ali, who number amongst the controversial speakers that have been invited there.¹¹² Ali is the community relations director for Cage, the former director of engagement for MEND, and a former official of both MCB and IFE. Al-Haddad is a former judge at the Islamic Sharia Council and the founder of Muslim Research and Development Foundation. Both Ali and Al-Haddad have invited controversy over their views on certain issues.

In 2008, Ali wrote an article on his blog praising the Al-Qaeda-linked cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki, describing him as one of his “favourite speakers and scholars”.¹¹³ He said, “I really do love him for the sake of Allah, he has an uncanny way of explaining things to people which is endearing”.¹¹⁴ In another article, Ali quoted, apparently approvingly, a statement advocating the killing of British troops in Iraq made by Huthaifa Azzam, the son of the architect of the global *jihād*, Abdullah Azzam, who he praised for his ‘balanced’ understanding of *jihād*.¹¹⁵ Huthaifa Azzam’s statement, cited by Ali, said, “If I saw an American or British man wearing a soldier’s uniform inside Iraq I would kill him because that is my obligation”.¹¹⁶ After writing this article, *The Mail on Sunday* reported that Ali was suspended from his job as a Treasury civil servant as a result of his comments, pending an investigation. Ali sued for libel, claiming that the newspaper imputed that he “is a hardline Islamic extremist who supports the killing of British and American soldiers in Iraq by fellow Muslims as justified”, but in January 2010, his claim was rejected.¹¹⁷ The judge, Mr Justice Eady, ruled against Ali, saying that Ali “was indeed ... taking the position that the killing of American and British troops in Iraq ... would be justified” by his interpretation of *jihād*, adding that the libel claim had about it an “absence of reality”.¹¹⁸

Al-Haddad has stated “equality between the two genders is a very evil thing”, and has described marital rape as “so-called rape against your wife”.¹¹⁹ Imprisoning a man who rapes his wife, suggests Al-Haddad, is an infringement upon his liberty.¹²⁰ In a lecture called “Why Marriages Fail”, he stated, “A man should not be questioned why he hit his wife because this is something between them. Leave them alone. They can

112 “Harun Khan of the Muslim Council of Britain – Political Fraudster”, Harry’s Place blog, June 6, 2018, <http://hurryupharry.org/2018/06/06/harun-khan-of-the-muslim-council-of-britain-political-fraudster/>.

113 Azad Ali, “Iman, the new President and you!”, Between the Lines blog, November 5, 2008, webpage inactive but available at <http://web.archive.org/web/20091105103201/http://blog.islamicforumeurope.com/?p=94>.

114 *Ibid.*

115 Azad Ali, “Defeating extremism by promoting balance”, Between the Lines blog, November 19, 2008. Webpage no longer active but available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20090106081755/http://blog.islamicforumeurope.com/?p=98>. See also habibi (pseud.), “Azad Ali: The Jihad Lover and the Civil Service”, Harry’s Place blog, November 20, 2008, <http://hurryupharry.org/2008/11/20/azad-ali-the-jihad-lover-and-the-civil-service/>; Andrew Gilligan, “Mayor gives £30,000 of taxpayers’ money to Muslim group led by ‘extremist’”, *The Evening Standard*, March 12, 2009, www.standard.co.uk/news/mayor-gives-30000-of-taxpayers-money-to-muslim-group-led-by-extremist-6938333.html; and Andrew Gilligan, “Sir Ian Blair’s deal with Islamic radical”, *The Telegraph*, March 1, 2010, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/7339604/Sir-Ian-Blairs-deal-with-Islamic-radical.html>.

116 Ali, “Defeating extremism by promoting balance”.

117 Andrew Gilligan “Islamist hardliners lose another libel action”, Andrew Gilligan’s blog, January 27, 2010, <https://andrewgilliganblog.wordpress.com/2010/01/27/islamist-hardliners-lose-another-libel-action/>.

118 “Ali vs Associated Newspapers Ltd”, Casemine website, January 2010, <https://www.casemine.com/judgement/uk/5a8ff72b60d03e7f57ea90f7>.

119 “Al-Haddad, cited from audio and video recordings available at “Haitham al-Haddad”, The Islamic Far Right in Britain blog, undated, <https://theislamicfarrightinbritain.wordpress.com/haitham-al-haddad/>.

120 *Ibid.*

sort out their matters among themselves”.¹²¹ Al-Haddad has argued that there is a “*sunna* [proper] way” to conduct “female circumcision”, in contrast to “pharaonic circumcision” (Type 3 Female Genital Mutilation as classified by the WHO), the latter of which he says is “against *shari’a*” since it “cuts extensively” and “causes harm for the female”.¹²² He argues that an acceptable form of female circumcision is supported by the *hadith* literature.¹²³ These views are all of concern given his popularity as a speaker and his former role as a *qadi* (*shari’a* judge) at the London-based Islamic Sharia Council. Al-Haddad has also described homosexuality as a “crime against humanity” and has asserted that in an Islamic state adulterers found guilty, both women and men, ought to be stoned to death.¹²⁴ Once an Islamic state is in place, he has said, it is obliged to wage “proactive” *jihad* to establish Islam as a global force.¹²⁵

MCB stopped publishing the full member list of its governance structure on its website in 2018. It currently only lists the names of its office bearers, including the secretary general. But recent staffing lists for MCB’s national council and various committees, including the most recent one for 2016-2018, demonstrate the involvement in its management of numerous individuals linked to other Islamic Movement groups. For the 2016-2018 period, MCB’s national council members included Muhammad Abdul Bari, a former MCB secretary general, the long-time chairman of the East London Mosque, and a former trustee of Muslim Aid. MCB’s council members in this period also included Farooq Murad, another MCB former secretary general and the current director of the Islamic Foundation; Zahid Parvez, a former president of UK Islamic Mission and the current director of the Islamic Foundation’s Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE); Omer El-Hamdoon, then MCB deputy secretary general and MAB president; and Mohammed Kozbar, then MAB vice-president and current chairman of both MAB’s *shura* council and the Finsbury Park Mosque.

Other MCB figures similarly have multiple roles within Islamic Movement organisations. For the same period, MCB’s executive committee included Iqbal Asaria, who has been a special adviser to the secretary general on business and economic affairs since 2005.¹²⁶ The credibility this role afforded Asaria helped him play a prominent role in the development of *shari’a* finance in Britain. He was member of the governor of Bank of England’s working group on facilitating the introduction of Islamic financial products into the British market. Asaria is also a lecturer at MIHE and a member of the Islamic Foundation’s advisory board.¹²⁷

In addition to Asaria, other former MCB figures have enjoyed overlapping roles in the Islamic Movement network, including Tahir Alam and Mohammed Abdul Aziz. Tahir Alam was assistant

121 Haitham Al-Haddad, “Why Marriages Fail? (WMF 1 of 7): The Scale of the Problem”, plum, YouTube, June 2, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z37H-NuyY1c&ab_channel=plum.

122 Haitham Al-Haddad, “Rulings for Newborn Babies – male/female circumcision, head-shaving, naming”, MRDF, YouTube, December 20, 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msOmkAaytYM>. On the different classifications of female genital mutilation, see, “Female genital mutilation”, World Health Organisation website, February 3, 2020, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/female-genital-mutilation>; and “What is FGM?”, End FGM European Network website, undated, <https://www.endfgm.eu/female-genital-mutilation/what-is-fgm/>.

123 Al-Haddad, “Rulings for Newborn Babies – male/female circumcision, head-shaving, naming”.

124 “Haitham al-Haddad”, The Islamic Far Right in Britain blog.

125 *Ibid.*

126 Aqbal Isara speaker profile, 2017 International Takaful Summit website, undated, www.takafulsummit.com/2017/speakers/m-iqbal-asaria/.

127 “Honorary Visiting Fellows”, MIHE website, undated, www.mihe.ac.uk/personnel/honorary-visiting-fellows/; “First meeting of the Islamic Foundation Advisory Board”, Islamic Foundation website, June 23, 2011, www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/user/NewsDetails.aspx?id=47.

secretary general in 2006–2008. For the same period he was the chair of MCB's education committee and a representative of Al-Hijrah School on MCB's central working committee. He was also a member of the Association of Muslim Schools UK's executive committee.¹²⁸ And until his resignation in July 2014, Alam was the director and chair of the Parkview Educational Trust, responsible for the management of three schools at the centre of the Trojan Horse affair.¹²⁹ Mohammed Abdul Aziz was MCB's representative on the Department of Trade's Equality and Diversity Forum in 2006 and the adviser to MCB secretary general Iqbal Sacranie. He has also been a researcher at the Islamic Foundation, an executive committee member of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists UK, an honorary trustee of the East London Mosque, and an executive committee member at Young Muslims Organisation UK. He is currently the director of the Aziz Foundation and a trustee of Muslim Aid.

The Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations

In an interview with the author in 2012, veteran Islamic Movement activist Abdullah Faliq described another important node within the Islamic Movement in Britain, the Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations.¹³⁰ This small, semi-formal committee has not received much attention in the media, think tank or academic literature. This is perhaps because there is not much evidence of its presence or effectiveness in terms of collective outputs. But the committee is further evidence of the trans-ethnic, *umma*-centric solidarity of the Islamic Movement. The key organisations comprising the committee include the Islamic Foundation, the Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), the UK Islamic Mission, and Dawatul Islam UK and Ireland. The committee members, Faliq explained, are from the *shuras* (management) of the committee organisations. They meet occasionally on camps and "residential" to discuss goals, strategies, and achievements.¹³¹ The representatives of these groups then included Dilwar Hussain Khan, along with Faliq, for IFE; Omer El-Hamdoon for MAB; and Maulana Muhammad Sarfraz Madni for UKIM. Two special committee members not representing any specific organisations, Faliq explained, are Muhammad Abdul Bari and one of the early pioneers of the Islamic Movement in Europe, Khurshid Ahmad.

The coordination committee, as with MCB, serves as a useful starting place to explore some of the inter-connections between individuals and groups of the Islamic Movement in Britain. The committee member organisations are linked to other Islamic Movement organisations by their representatives' current and former multiple roles in such organisations. El-Hamdoon stepped down from the MAB presidency in 2018, so it is unlikely that he still represents MAB on the committee, but he remains involved with MAB as the chairman of MAB's charitable trust.¹³² He is also a director of Muslim Welfare House, an organisation long associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. Founded by another

128 "Central Working Committee 2006–2008", MCB website, webpage captured on June 20, 2008, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080620031755/http://www.mcb.org.uk:80/committee/21.php>; "AMS-UK Annual Report", July 17, 2010, available at www.ams-uk.org/general/AMS%20UK%20Annual%20Report%202009-10.pdf.

129 "Trojan Horse: Park View Educational Trust board resigns", BBC News, July 15, 2014. www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-28317920.

130 Author interview with Abdullah Faliq, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.66–67.

131 *Ibid.*

132 "Muslim Association of Britain Charitable Trust Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 April 2020", Charity Commission website, http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends31/0001147031_AC_20190430_E_C.PDF, p.5.

Islamic Movement pioneer, Kemal El-Helbawy, Muslim Welfare House has been linked to various Islamic charities by the overlapping leadership roles of current and former directors, such as Fadi Itani, Toufik Kacimi, Belgacem Kahlalech, and Khadem Al-Rawi. These directors have held prominent positions in Islamic Relief, Human Relief Foundation, Qatar Charity UK, Muslim Aid.

El-Hamdoon's previous roles include deputy secretary general for MCB and vice chair of the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB), which was established in 2006 to establish a system of self-regulation for mosques.¹³³ Until 2019, he was also a trustee of the European Institute of Human Sciences, established in 1990 by the Brotherhood-associated Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE) "to train imams and Muslim elites".¹³⁴ This is a role shared by Ahmad Al-Rawi, the former chair of MAB's *shura* council and former president of FIOE.

The current president of MAB – the first woman to be elected to this role – is Raghad Altikriti. She is the sister of Anas Altikriti, who was MAB president from 2018 until January 2020. He is the founder and director of the Cordoba Foundation, where Faliq works as research director. The Altikriti family has a long history of connections with the Muslim Brotherhood. The father of Anas and Raghad Altikriti, Osama Altikriti, founded and led the Iraqi Islamic Party, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Iraq. After arriving in Britain in the 1970s, he became a leader of the Muslim Student Society, the first organisation in Britain established by Muslim Brotherhood activists in 1961. He was also a leader in the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS), formed the year after.¹³⁵

UKIM's representative on the coordination committee, Madni, was a trustee of UKIM until recently. He also formerly represented MCB on MINAB's board in the position of chairman. The committee's links to MCB are also evident in Faliq and Abdul Bari's long-time involvement in the umbrella group. Khan, formerly IFE's general secretary, has been the executive director of the East London Mosque for almost two decades. Abdul Bari was the mosque's chairman for many years. Khan and Abdul Bari's involvement in the committee thus clearly links it to the East London Mosque and the associated London Muslim Centre.¹³⁶ A final example of how the committee is linked to other Islamic Movement organisations is with Dawatul Islam's connection to Britain's *shari'a* council network: The current chairman and former president of Dawatul Islam, Maulana Abu Sayeed, is also the chairman of the Islamic Sharia Council and was involved in the creation of a national federation of *shari'a* councils, the UK Board of Sharia Councils.¹³⁷ The director of this organisation, Ahmad Al-Dubayan, is also the director of the London Central Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre, as well as a member of the Muslim World League based in Saudi Arabia.

133 "About Me", Omer El-Hamdoon's personal website, undated, <https://omerelhamdoon.com/>.

134 Johnson, "The Brotherhood's Westward Expansion", p.81.

135 Osama Altikriti, "Ramadan Reminder #10 | What if people fasted truly?", MAB website, May 26, 2018, <https://www.mabonline.net/ramadan-reminder-10/>.

136 "East London Mosque Trust, Data for financial year ending 31 March 2016", Charity Commission website, <http://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1122613&subid=0>; "East London Mosque & London Muslim Centre Annual Review 2016", East London Mosque website, www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ELM%20Annual%20Report%202016-2017%20web.pdf.

137 "Dawatul Islam UK And Eire, Data for financial year ending 30 June 2016", Charity Commission website, <http://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=289202&subid=0>; and interview with Maulana Abu Sayeed, February 15, 2012.

In addition to the MCB and the Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations, Faliq identified an informal network of friendships as the “third front” in which he and his associates collaborate.¹³⁸ His personal network, he said, includes Anas Altikriti, Dilwar Hussain Khan and Muhammad Abdul Bari from the coordination committee, as well as Daud Abdullah and Mohammad Kozbar. Faliq described this group as more informal and “advanced”, since it is more flexible and active. This network of friends meets more regularly and communication is frequent. It is noteworthy that all of the individuals in Faliq’s personal network named above are or have been involved in organisations associated with Jamaat-i-Islami or the Muslim Brotherhood, and all are actively involved in Islamic activism or advocacy today.

Altikriti was a founding member of MAB prior to establishing the Cordoba Foundation. He set up MAB alongside several other key Brotherhood-associated individuals. These include Kemal El-Helbawy, the former spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood in Britain; Azzam Tamimi, a former activist in the Brotherhood’s political party in Jordan; and Mohammed Sawalha, reported to be a member of the political bureau of Hamas, the Palestinian wing of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹³⁹ In 2006, after his first stint as MAB president, Altikriti left MAB, along with Tamimi and Sawalha to form the British Muslim Initiative (BMI), which was officially dissolved in 2014. Kozbar, as mentioned, is the chairman of the Finsbury Park Mosque. He is also a former vice-president of MAB and national council member of MCB.¹⁴⁰ Kozbar was also a project director for IslamExpo, an Islamic cultural festival and political conference established by Sawalha in 2004. Khan, as mentioned above, directs the East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre. Abdul Bari, in addition to his long tenure as chairman of the mosque and centre, was the founding president of IFE. He was also the secretary to the board of Muslim Aid between 2012-2016 and is still a trustee of the Islamic Foundation. Daud Abdullah directs the Middle Eastern Monitor, a pro-Palestinian media organisation.¹⁴¹ In addition to his former role as deputy secretary general for MCB, he was a senior researcher for the Palestinian Return Centre.

European and International Dimensions

The Islamic Movement in Britain is part of a broader movement or network that spans Europe as well as the United States. Although the first Islamic Movement organisations in Britain were set up in the 1960s, it wasn’t until the 1970s that the network began to gain momentum through a series of meetings involving Muslim Brotherhood émigrés dedicated to “forming a framework for Islamism in Europe”,¹⁴² The first of these was held in London in 1973. Present at this meeting, testifying to the trans-ethnic dimension of the nascent movement, was Khurshid Ahmad, a senior figure in Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan, who, in the same year, established the Islamic Foundation, one of Britain’s most prominent Islamic institutions. In 1977, a follow-up meeting was

138 Author interview with Abdullah Faliq, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.69.

139 David Brown, “Finsbury mosque leader Mohammed Sawalha part of Hamas politburo”, *The Times*, November 7, 2017, www.thetimes.co.uk/article/finsbury-mosque-leader-mohammed-sawalha-part-of-hamas-politburo-0cdn3gs80.

140 “PR – The Muslim Council of Britain elects its new leadership”, MAB website, July 20 2016, <https://www.mabonline.net/pr-the-muslim-council-of-britain-elects-its-new-leadership/>; “Governance”, MCB website, *ibid*.

141 Daud Abdullah, speaker profile, Islam and Democracy conference, Cordoba Foundation website, February 12, 2015, https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:LE-TFyINkKkUJ:https://www.thecordobafoundation.com/attach/Profiles_Final.pdf+&cd=16&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=in.

142 Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich*, p.41.

held in Lugano, Switzerland, to “set up a structure to guide the growth of political Islam in Europe and the United States”.¹⁴³ Amongst the 30 or so Islamist figures attending the meeting alongside Ahmad was Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, widely considered as the spiritual guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Ismail Faruqi, who went on to establish the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in the United States as a vehicle to “Islamise knowledge” globally.¹⁴⁴

One of the most important organisations established by the first generation of Islamic Movement activists in the West is the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE). This was established in 1989 by Muslim students as an institutional mechanism for Islamic Movement groups across Europe to coordinate their efforts to promote Islam as a distinct culture at home in European soil. Its objectives include introducing Islamic values into Europe by establishing and maintaining Islamic institutions, “such as mosques, schools and educational, cultural, social, leisure and vocational institutes and clubs”.¹⁴⁵ Its objectives also include encouraging Muslims’ active political participation within Europe, whilst representing and lobbying for Muslims’ interests within Europe’s political structures. Demonstrating the pan-Islamic, trans-ethnic character of the Islamic Movement, the initial FIOE office was located in Markfield on the premises of the Jamaati-associated Islamic Foundation. It is currently based in Brussels and led by Samir Falah. The most prominent British FIOE member is MAB.

FIOE has created a number of more specialised organisations dedicated to achieving its objectives. In 1992, it opened the first branch of the European Institute for Human Science (EIHS) near Château Chinon in Burgundy, France. EIHS was created to train imams in Arabic and Islamic studies, referred to by EIHS as “our ummah’s future scholars”.¹⁴⁶ Subsequent branches were opened across Europe. In 1997, EIHS opened a branch in Wales.¹⁴⁷ The head of this branch, until his death in 2011, was Khadem Al-Rawi, the brother of the long-time president of FIOE, Ahmad Al-Rawi. In 1999, a branch was opened in Paris, funded by the Islamic Development Bank, which provided \$260,000.¹⁴⁸

In 1994, FIOE established the European Trust, a financial institution dedicated to raising money for its various projects, including EIHS. In 1996, with assistance of the Saudi-run World Association of Muslim Youth and the Islamic Foundation, FIOE established the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations (FEMYSO). In typical Islamic Movement fashion, FEMYSO aims to act as an interlocutor for young European Muslims by becoming “the de facto voice of the Muslim youth of Europe”.¹⁴⁹ One of the founding organisations was Young Muslims UK, created in 1984 by the UK Islamic Mission and now, since 1990, the youth wing of the

143 Ian Johnson, “The Brotherhood’s Westward Expansion”, in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, Volume 6*, The Hudson Institute Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World, February 2008, p.77. See also Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich*, pp.195–196, and Vidino, *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West*, pp.34–35.

144 Johnson, “The Brotherhood’s Westward Expansion”, p.78.

145 FIOE website, “Objectives”, undated, page captured February 25, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190225181500/http://fioe.org/node/173>.

146 “About EIHS”, European Institute of Human Sciences Birmingham branch website, undated, http://www.eihsbirmingham.org.uk/wpen/?page_id=17.

147 “History”, European Institute of Human Sciences website, undated, <http://www.iesh.org/~adm/index.php/home/info-iesh/historique>.

148 “EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SCIENCE, PARIS, FRANCE”, Islamic Development Bank website, undated, <https://www.isdb.org/projects/data/uid-pj0028738>

149 “Our History”, FEMYSO website, undated, <https://femyso.org/history/>.

Islamic Society of Britain. Other British FEMYSO members are MAB's youth wing and FOSIS.

In 1997, FIOE created the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR). This was established to provide a unified and authoritative voice on matters of Islamic law as it relates to the perceived unique needs of Muslim communities within Europe. Its founding objectives include:

Issuing collective Fatwas [authoritative legal opinions] which meet the needs of Muslims in Europe, solve their problems and regulate their interaction with the European communities, all within the regulations and objectives of Shari'ah.¹⁵⁰

The *fatwas* ECFR members have deliberated upon and issued tackle issues and situations that concern Muslims as a minority, i.e., in a political and legal predicament unanticipated by the Muslim jurists during the articulation of *shari'a* as a legal and ethical code in the centuries after the prophet Muhammad's death. Such issues include those that relate to finance, dress, food, fasting, hygiene, prayer, education, and relationships with non-Muslims.

The chairman of ECFR, from its inception until 2018, was Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. His replacement was Abdullah Al-Judai, a resident scholar at the Leeds Grand Mosque.¹⁵¹ His selection demonstrates the close interconnections between key individuals and organisations of the Islamic Movement in Britain and its European structures, since this mosque is legally run by the Muslim Association of Britain Trust. The former chairman of the mosque is Zaher Birawi, also a former director of both MAB and the Palestine Return Centre. Another former chairman of the Leeds Grand Mosque was Khadem Al-Rawi.¹⁵² Al-Judai seems to have been stepped down as ECFR president, but the European organisation's links to Britain remain tight: ECFR's website lists as its acting president another founding member of the organisation, Suhaib Hasan, who is also the secretary of the London-based Islamic Sharia Council.¹⁵³ His colleague, the chair of the Islamic Sharia Council, Abu Sayeed, is also a member of ECFR, as well as a former member of MCB's national council and a former president of Dawatul Islam.¹⁵⁴ Both Hasan and Abu Sayeed are also members of the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), which was established by Al-Qaradawi in 2004. They were joined by Ismail Haniyeh, a senior political leader of Hamas, who became a IUMS member in 2012.¹⁵⁵ IUMS is headquartered in Doha, Qatar, long alleged to support the Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁰ *Fatwas of the European Council for Fatwa and Research*, p2.

¹⁵¹ Khaled Hanafy, "The European Council for Fatwa and Research: Renewed leadership, renewed hopes", ECFR website, <https://www.e-cfr.org/blog/2018/12/16/european-council-fatwa-research/>.

¹⁵² "GMBDW in the Media: Sermons Focus On The Injustices To Muslims Worldwide", Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch, July 14, 2015, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/2015/07/14/gmbdw-in-the-media-sermons-focus-on-the-injustices-to-muslims-worldwide/>.

¹⁵³ "الاعضاء [Members]", ECFR website (Arabic), undated, <https://www.e-cfr.org/blog/category/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a3%d8%b9%d8%b6%d8%a7%d8%a1/>.

¹⁵⁴ "Team", European Council for Fatwa and Research UK website, undated. <http://fatwacommitteek.com/team>. See also, author interviews with Suhaib Hasan and Maulana Abu Sayeed, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.74, 189.

¹⁵⁵ "Hamas Leader Haniyah Joins Emerging Network of Islamists", Anti-Defamation League blog, February 10, 2012, available at <http://archive.is/Z9yEq>.

¹⁵⁶ David H. Warren, "Qatari Support for the Muslim Brotherhood is More Than Just Realpolitik, it has a Long, Personal History", Maydan, July 12, 2017, <https://themaydan.com/2017/07/qatari-support-muslim-brotherhood-just-realpolitik-long-personal-history/>.

Qatari Connections

In the last decade, the European network of the Islamic Movement has received increasing attention and financial support from Qatar, a major new player in the global market for Islam. In 2019, two French journalists, Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, revealed that 138 projects across Europe, many related to Muslim Brotherhood-associated organisations, were being bankrolled by Qatar, through the NGO Qatar Charity (QC), to the tune of tens of millions of Euros. Based on documents provided to them by a source within QC, their book, *The Qatar Papers – How the Emirate Finances Islam in France and Europe*, revealed internal documents, including a table from 2014 that showed the charity's funding of European projects to the sum of almost €72 million.¹⁵⁷ "An entire system to help build mosques and Islamic centres," Chesnot and Malbrunot write, "has been set up based on the networks of the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe".¹⁵⁸ QC's mission statement refers to a system of values "that is centered around integration and inclusiveness".¹⁵⁹ But its goal in Europe, argue Chesnot and Malbrunot, is "to strengthen Islamic identity and help spread and entrench political Islam in Muslim communities throughout Europe".¹⁶⁰ The risk of this communitarian philanthropy, they have argued, is increasing social segregation and distrust.

QC was founded in Doha in 1992 to provide urgent assistance to children in conflicts and disasters. Since then it has expanded its areas of work. Today, the charity describes itself as a "humanitarian organisation".¹⁶¹ It operates globally, through 25 country offices and 14 other branch offices, in more than 80 countries throughout Africa, Asia and Europe. Its humanitarian projects, it says, have benefitted 29 million people over the past five years at a cost of USD \$1.2 billion. QC has implemented projects funded by international development organisations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).¹⁶² In 2019, the value of such projects amounted to USD \$4 million. Over the previous 22 years, QC has signed 77 cooperation agreements with UN and international organisations worth USD \$76 million. In 2014, QC cooperated with the American government's aid agency, USAID, during the floods in Malaysia; USAID distributed tents provided by QC.¹⁶³

However, QC has been suspected of supporting terrorist and extremist groups for some years. In a federal terrorism case in 2002, American prosecutors alleged that QC served as a major financial conduit for funding Al-Qaeda's attacks against the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.¹⁶⁴ A classified cable from the American embassy in Doha from 2009, later published by Wikileaks, described

¹⁵⁷ Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers – How the Emirate Finances Islam in France and Europe*, English edition (Paris: Global Watch Analysis), p.17.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.267.

¹⁵⁹ "About Qatar Charity", Qatar Charity website, undated, <https://www.qcharity.org/en/qa/about>.

¹⁶⁰ Chesnot and Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.259.

¹⁶¹ "About Qatar Charity".

¹⁶² "Qatar charity's 2019 international partnerships valued at over 16 million dollar", Relief Web website, February 4, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/qatar-charity-s-2019-international-partnerships-valued-over-16-million-dollar>.

¹⁶³ Ben Evansky, "Qatari charity on new terror list has ties to USAID, UN", Fox News website, June 20, 2017, <https://www.foxnews.com/world/qatari-charity-on-new-terror-list-has-ties-to-usaid-un>.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* See also John Rossomando, "Qatari Ambassador Plays Semantics With Definition of Terrorism", Investigative Project on Terrorism website, April 23, 2018, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/7416/qatari-ambassador-plays-semantics-with-definition>.

QC as “an entity of concern to the USG [US government] due to some of its suspect activities abroad and reported links with extremists”.¹⁶⁵ The cable referred to the charity’s listing, in March 2008, as a “priority III terrorism support entity (TSE) by the Interagency Intelligence Committee on Terrorism (IICT)”. In July of the same year, Israel banned QC and numerous other NGOs for their membership of the Union of Good (UG), a coalition of charities headed by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi and alleged to channel funds to Hamas.¹⁶⁶ Four months later, the US Treasury designated UG as a terrorist organisation created by the Hamas leadership “in order to facilitate the transfer of funds to Hamas”.¹⁶⁷

In December 2012, the logo of QC apparently appeared on boxes of aid in a video announcing the creation of the Syrian Islamic Front, described by two counterterrorism experts as “an umbrella group of six organizations that is considered one of the key jihadi elements within the Syrian opposition”.¹⁶⁸ And in 2013, French intelligence officials expressed concern that QC was funding an Al-Qaeda-linked group in Mali.¹⁶⁹ More recently, in June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt broke diplomatic ties with Qatar over its alleged support for terrorist and extremist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood. QC was included on the group’s list of terrorism-related organisations and individuals based in or supported by Qatar.¹⁷⁰ They referred to QC’s provision of aid to a local Yemeni council in Mukalla that was under the control of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).¹⁷¹ The government of Qatar vehemently rejected these allegations of supporting terrorism, saying that the statement of Saudi Arabia and its allies held “no foundation in fact”.¹⁷² Earlier, in September 2014, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, denied allegations of Qatar’s funding of terrorist groups.¹⁷³

In 2012, QC opened a representative office in London, Qatar Charity UK (QCUK). Demonstrating the importance of Britain to the broader network of the Islamic Movement, QCUK was established to manage QC’s portfolio of European projects. These projects included the

165 “QATAR COMMITS USD 40 MILLION FOR UN OPERATIONS IN GAZA”, classified cable from U.S. Embassy in Doha dated May 12, 2009, Wikileaks, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09DOHA314_a.html.

166 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Defense Minister signs order banning Hamas-affiliated charitable organizations”, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, July 7, 2008, <https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/pressroom/2008/pages/defense%20minister%20signs%20order%20banning%20hamas-affiliated%20charitable%20organizations%207-jul-2008.aspx>

167 U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury Designates the Union of Good”, Press Centre, U.S. Department of the Treasury website, November 12, 2008, <https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/hp1267.aspx>

168 Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Aaron Y. Zelin, “Uncharitable Organizations”, *Foreign Policy*, February 25, 2013, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/02/25/uncharitable-organizations/>.

169 John Rossomando, “Qatari Ambassador Plays Semantics With Definition of Terrorism”, Investigative Project on Terrorism, April 23, 2018, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/7416/qatari-ambassador-plays-semantics-with-definition>. For a dissenting view on Qatar’s role in supporting Al-Qaeda in Mali, see David Roberts, “Is Qatar Sponsoring Al-Qa’ida in Mali?”, RUSI website, February 7, 2013, <https://rusi.org/commentary/qatar-sponsoring-al-qaida-mali>.

170 “Saudi Arabia and allies release Qatar ‘terror list’”, DW, June 9, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/saudi-arabia-and-allies-release-qatar-terror-list/a-39172917>. In July 2017, it should be noted, Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding with the US to boost cooperation on countering terror finance. According to the US Department of State’s 2017 Country Report on Terrorism, in July of that year, “Qatari authorities took sweeping measures to monitor and restrict the overseas activities of Qatari charities, requiring all such activity to be conducted via one of the two approved charities”. The 2018 report noted that in 2018, Qatar continued to maintain these restrictions, “in an effort to better monitor charitable giving for terrorist financing abuse”. The two charities were not named, but it is reasonable to assume that one is QC. See “Country Reports on Terrorism 2017”, Bureau of Counterterrorism, United States Department of State, September 2018, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/crt_2017.pdf, p.154; and “Country Reports on Terrorism 2018”, Bureau of Counterterrorism, United States Department of State, October 2019, <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Country-Reports-on-Terrorism-2018-FINAL.pdf>, p.149.

171 “Qatar-linked people, groups on terror list”, Gulf News/Reuters, June 9, 2017, <https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/qatar/qatar-linked-people-groups-on-terror-list-1.2040686>.

172 “Qatar rejects Saudi-led bloc’s ‘terror’ list”, Al-Jazeera, June 9, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/qatar-rejects-saudi-led-bloc-terror-list-170609053901190.html>.

173 Mick Krever, “Qatar’s Emir: We don’t fund terrorists”, CNN, September 25, 2014, <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/25/world/meast/qatar-emir/>.

construction or rehabilitation of Islamic community centres and schools in Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. Most of these involve organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. Support has also been provided from the London office to projects in the United States, Canada, and Australia. To fund these projects, QC in Doha provided £37.8 million in grants to QCUK between April 2014 and March 2019.¹⁷⁴ The largest amount paid in one year to QCUK was £27.7 million in 2016/17.¹⁷⁵ It should be noted that the payments made by QCUK to the European projects listed below do not necessarily reflect the total of QC's financial support to them. As *Qatar Papers* show, other payments were made directly from Doha.

QCUK's financial report for 2018 identifies its largest project, in terms of the grant provided, as the An-Nour Centre in Mulhouse, France, managed by the Muslim Association of Alsace (AMAL).¹⁷⁶ AMAL is a local affiliate of the Union of Islamic Organisations of France (Union des organisations islamiques de France, UOIF), now called French Muslims (Musulmans de France, MF); UOIF, which has been called "the French branch of the Muslim Brotherhood",¹⁷⁷ is the French representative of the Brotherhood-linked Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe. Chesnot and Malbrunot describe the An-Nour Centre as "the largest of the 140 projects funded by Qatar Charity in Europe".¹⁷⁸ This extensive complex, situated on an area of 4.6 square kilometres, includes a multi-purpose hall, a school, sports and health facilities, and student accommodation. Together with a centre managed by the Muslim Association of Chablais near Geneva, the An-Nour Centre attracted a grant of £5.4 million in 2018/19. Along with the Al-Rahma Islamic Centre in Strasbourg and the Sesto San Giovanni Islamic Cultural Centre near Milan, the An-Nour Centre shared £12.25 million over two years, 2015/16 and 2016/17. The Al-Rahma Islamic Centre is managed by another affiliate of UOIF, the Social Reform Society in Haute-pierre and has reportedly also received funding from Turkey.¹⁷⁹ The Sesto San Giovanni Islamic Cultural Centre was halted after a new mayor in the municipality was elected in 2017. The project, QC's flagship project on the Italian peninsula based on 5.2 square kilometres of land, was deemed too large and undesirable for social integration.¹⁸⁰

QCUK also facilitated Doha's funding of "educational support in Europe". In 2018, it channelled £5.52 million under this heading to Muslim organisations in France, Germany and Italy for community centres, schools and student accommodation in Paris, Marseilles, Frankfurt, Verona, Rome, and Catania. Another beneficiary of this particular allocation of funds was the European Institute for Human Science (EIHS) in Château Chinon. Indicative of the Brotherhood-orientation of these projects, EIHS's founders appealed to Al-Qaradawi and other theologians to design the curriculum of this training centre for imams.¹⁸¹ EIHS also received £65,747 in

174 "Qatar Charity UK (QCUK) Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2015", http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends97/0001146597_AC_20150331_E_C.PDF, p.10; "Qatar Charity UK (QCUK) Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2016", http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends97/0001146597_AC_20160331_E_C.PDF, p.17; "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2017", http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends97/0001146597_AC_20170331_E_C.PDF, p.20; "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2018", http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends97/0001146597_AC_20180331_E_C.PDF, p.14.

175 "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2017", p.20.

176 "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2018", p.16.

177 Farhad Khosrokhavar, "The Muslim Brotherhood in France", in *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement*, Barry Rubin (ed.) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.137.

178 Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.19.

179 Joaquin Filiukus, "Secrets of Qatari funding for political Islam in France: Mosques, Institutions and Figures", June 24, 2018, <https://www.thereference-paris.com/709>.

180 Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.215.

181 *Ibid.*, p.119.

2014/15 from QCUK for new buildings and refurbishments, and an additional £86,196 in 2017/18. The total amount of Qatar's donations to EIHS, however, appears to be much more. Chesnot and Malbrunot's documents show that EIHS has received "at least four hundred and fifty thousand euros for student campus accommodation".¹⁸²

In November 2015, the Charity Commission in Britain inspected QCUK and in its follow-up compliance report expressed concern about the charity's independence from QC in Doha.¹⁸³ The charities regulator had observed that in 2014 QCUK received almost all its £451,605 funding from QC and that QCUK was funding projects identified by QC. Its report noted that all of QCUK's seven trustees were linked to QC, and that three of them were directors or employees of the Doha-based charity. It also expressed concern about QC's membership of UG and its proscription in Israel for its links to Hamas. Yet, QCUK continues to operate, albeit under a new name, and the proportion of QCUK's funding has continued to be almost entirely provided by QC in Doha.

In October 2017, QCUK officially renamed itself the Nectar Trust. This came several months after Saudi Arabia and its allies imposed a political and economic boycott on Qatar, amidst allegations that Doha was supporting terrorist groups. Coinciding with the change in name, the London office was relocated, and there was a change in senior personnel. The director general of QCUK, Ayyoub Abouliquin, who had been in the role since May 2013, left his position within the charity in 2017. Abouliquin, a French national, was a trustee of a French endowment company, Passarelles, which was used by QCUK to channel payments to the An-Nour Centre in Mulhouse and the Al-Rahma Islamic Centre in Strasbourg. Described by the French financial intelligence service as a "major league operator",¹⁸⁴ Abouliquin was also a trustee of AMAL, which manages the large An-Nour mosque in Mulhouse. Under Abouliquin's management, QCUK sought public credibility by signing a partnership with Mosaic, a student mentoring initiative founded by the Prince of Wales. In 2016/17, QCUK funded the initiative's flagship Enterprise Challenge, an annual schools business competition, to the sum of £133,333.

Personnel changes also occurred within the board of trustees. The founding chairman and chief executive of QCUK was a Qatari official, Yousuf Al-Kuwari. He was also the founder of Islamweb, a website that has published *fatwas* stating that it is "forbidden" to swear an oath to obtain British citizenship.¹⁸⁵ It has also published warnings to its Muslim readership against befriending Jews and Christians; one statement reads, "It is incumbent to hate them for the sake of Allah".¹⁸⁶ Al-Kuwari resigned as chief executive of the Nectar Trust in May 2018, but he retains his influence on QC's European strategy as the chief executive of QC. The Nectar Trust's current chairman is another Qatari national, Yousef Al-Hammadi. Apparently a key driving force behind QCUK's numerous mosque projects across Europe, including the Al-Noor centre in Mulhouse, France, and the Al-Emaan centre in Sheffield, he is the son of preacher Ahmad Al-Hammadi, who French

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p.128

¹⁸³ Edward Malnick, "Charity's links to Qatar raised fears", *The Telegraph*, August 17, 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/08/17/charitys-links-qatar-raised-fears/>. The original link now appears down, but the article may be viewed here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190818185131/https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/08/17/charitys-links-qatar-raised-fears/> or here: <https://www.arabobserver.com/charitys-links-to-qatar-raised-fears/>.

¹⁸⁴ Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.253.

¹⁸⁵ Edward Malnick, "Charity boss's links to online hate", *The Telegraph*, November 26, 2017, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/26/charity-bosss-links-online-hate/>.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

intelligence have described as a “patron affiliated with the Muslim Brothers, also operating in structures linked to Muslim extremism”.¹⁸⁷

The Nectar Trust/QCUK is not only linked to Muslim Brotherhood-associated organisations in Europe, such as EHS, through its funding of them. One of its staff, Belgacem Kahlalech, has connections to several such organisations based in Britain. Kahlalech was QCUK’s project manager just prior to its re-branding as the Nectar Trust. Kahlalech has held directorships in several key Islamic Movement organisations, including Muslim Welfare House (between 2000 and 2005); MAB (between 2005 and 2014); and WAMY’s UK office (between 2013 and 2015).¹⁸⁸ In 2016, Kahlalech hosted an *iftar* event on behalf of QCUK at Muslim Welfare House. A special guest was the then Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn.¹⁸⁹

The largest of QCUK/the Nectar Trust’s projects in Britain is the construction of the Emaan Islamic Centre in Sheffield, which is run by the Emaan Trust. This project is a multi-purpose Muslim community centre, located on 3.4 square kilometres of land, which was purchased in 2011. Construction began in 2012 and was due to be complete in 2019, but as yet, there have been no reports of its completion. The centre, the Emaan Trust’s website says, “provides a comprehensive set of facilities and activities for the whole of the Muslim community in the area”. These include sex-segregated prayer halls, a Quranic school, a children’s nursery, a multi-purpose hall for conferences and events, a restaurant, a sports hall, and a special space for “reverts” (Muslim converts). The Nectar Trust’s financial report claims that when the centre is complete, it will serve more than 20,000 people who live within a five mile radius of the centre.¹⁹⁰ But the charity’s description of the Emaan Islamic Centre as contributing to “community cohesion” is questionable as the local Muslim population’s use of their own separate facilities could mean they minimise their use of local public facilities and interact less with non-Muslims in their community.

Among the Emaan Trust’s recent trustees is also one of the most proactive figures in the Islamic Movement, whose involvement in organisations both in Britain and abroad demonstrates the difficulty of neatly delineating the network in Britain: Ahmed Al-Rawi. In 2010, journalist Ian Johnson described him as “a driving force behind the Brotherhood in Britain and Europe for thirty years.”¹⁹¹ Two years after arriving in Britain in 1975 as a structural engineering student, Al-Rawi headed the Muslim Student Association (MSA). This was around the same time that the father of Anas Altikriti – Osama Altikriti – was involved in MSA. Between 1992 and 2006, Al-Rawi was the president of the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE). In an interview with Johnson in 2005, he confirmed the connection between FIOE and the Muslim Brotherhood. He said,

*We are part of nobody outside of Europe, but we have good relations with the Brotherhood. We have our own ideas and mission and they know it. We are interlinked with them with a common point of view. We have a good, close relationship.*¹⁹²

¹⁸⁷ Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.29.

¹⁸⁸ “Belgacem KAHLALECH”, officer profile, Companies House website, undated, https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/officers/G9BivMrOLsa8gs3TAeLh_Rzkuxg/appointments.

¹⁸⁹ Denise Murray, “Qatar Charity joins forces with UK charities to spread message of peace”, *The Gulf Times*, June 18, 2016, <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/498530/Qatar-Charity-joins-forces-with-UK-charities-to-spread-message-of-peace>.

¹⁹⁰ “Nectar Trust Trustees’ Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2018”, p.4.

¹⁹¹ Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich*, p.198.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p.200.

Al-Rawi is a long-time member of the European Council of Fatwa and Research. Al-Rawi was MAB's president between 2007 and 2010, and a member of its *shura* council between 2009 and 2013. Al-Rawi is linked to at least two recipients of the Nectar Trust/QCUK's largesse: He was listed as a director of the Emaan Trust until July 2020, and he was a trustee of EIHS until 2017, alongside his former associate at MAB, Omer El-Hamdoon. Al-Rawi's brother, Khadem, was the head of the Welsh branch of EIHS until his death in 2011.

At least two other trustees of the Emaan Trust are linked to other Islamic Movement groups in Britain and abroad. Hameed Al-Asaly, its finance director, is also the emerging markets director of Human Appeal.¹⁹³ This charity was a member of UG.¹⁹⁴ In 2017, Human Appeal funded the Muslim Brotherhood-associated Finsbury Park Mosque £39,300.¹⁹⁵ In the same year, it funded the Islamic University of Gaza, £141,030.¹⁹⁶ According to *The Boston Globe*, the university "serves as an employment program and intellectual retreat for Hamas leaders, giving a perch to the prime minister, the foreign minister, and bureaucrats in charge of ministries".¹⁹⁷ Another trustee of the Emaan Trust, Abderazak Bougara, is also a trustee of MAB's charitable trust based in London.¹⁹⁸ Bougara keeps a very low public profile, but has been involved in MAB for some years. In 2013, he represented MAB on MCB's national council.

In addition to the Emaan Centre, another major recipient of QCUK in Britain is the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC) in Manchester. BMHC does not feature in discussions of the Islamic Movement in Britain, but it is clearly networked within it. One of BMHC's trustees is the chair of the UK Board of Sharia Councils, Ahmad Al-Dubayan.¹⁹⁹ In 2017, BMHC organised a community *iftar* (breaking the fast) event with Muslim Aid, "in solidarity with Syrian refugees and those affected by the recent terrorist attacks in Manchester and London".²⁰⁰ BMHC lists the Islamic Foundation one of its supporters.²⁰¹ According to the Nectar Trust/QCUK's financial reports, the funds it provided for the Emaan Centre and BMHC amounted to £1.4 million in 2018/19, and just over £1.02 million in 2017.²⁰² It is unclear from the reports how this money was divided between the two projects. Prior payments to the Emaan Trust for the Sheffield centre amounted to £1.87 million in 2015/16, and £57,001 in 2014/15. Funding for the Emaan Centre has also been obtained from Kuwait.

193 "The Emaan Trust of Sheffield Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 January 2016", http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends61/0001131861_AC_20160131_E_C.PDF; <https://www.humanappeal.org.uk/media/1513404/a4-annualreport-20153a16-web.pdf>, p.52.

194 Andrew Gilligan, "Human Appeal and Hamas: the evidence", *The Telegraph*, October 19, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11940489/Human-Appeal-and-Hamas-the-evidence.html>. See also "Human Appeal International"; Stand for Peace website, April 19, 2013, <http://standforpeace.org.uk/human-appeal-international/>; and Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Defense Minister signs order banning Hamas-affiliated charitable organizations".

195 Human Appeal, "Annual Report & Financial Statements 2017", <https://www.humanappeal.org.uk/media/2334098/annual-report-2017-a4.pdf>, p.76.

196 *Ibid.*, p.77.

197 Thanassis Cambanis, "Hamas U.", *The Boston Globe*, February 28, 2010, http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2010/02/28/hamas_u/?page=2.

198 "People", MAB Charitable Trust charity listing, Charity Commission website, <https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1147031&subid=0>.

199 "People", British Muslim Heritage Centre charity listing, Charity Commission website, <https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1110104&subid=0>.

200 "Community iftar (fast-breaking meal) 2017", BMHC website, May 31, 2017, <http://www.bmhc.org.uk/communityiftar2017/>.

201 "Partners & Supporters", BMHC website, undated, <http://www.bmhc.org.uk/about-us/partners-supporters/>.

202 "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2019", annual report 2018/19, Companies House website, pp.14, 15.

Qatar has also supported the British educational charity, the Nida Trust. In April 2017, QCUK sponsored the Nida Trust's National Teachers' Creativity Award.²⁰³ The Nida Trust has several other notable Islamic Movement connections. It has worked together with the International Board of Educational Research and Resources (IBERR) on events and educational training. IBERR was established to implement the aims of the 1977 World Conference on Islamic Education, which affirmed the "ultimate aim of Muslim Education" as the "complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large".²⁰⁴ Although it is based in South Africa, it is arguably part of the Islamic Movement in Britain. It was established by Yusuf Islam, the British former pop star best known as Cat Stevens. One of IBERR's trustees is the chair of Interpal and former MCB official, Ibrahim Hewitt. The chair of IBERR's executive committee, Mohammad Akram Khan-Cheema, co-founded the Association of Muslim Schools UK along with Hewitt, and has been a keynote speaker at the Nida Trust's events.²⁰⁵

The Nida Trust and IBERR have collaborated in the design and provision of teacher training for Muslim teachers in Britain.²⁰⁶ For a venue, they have regularly used the London Central Mosque, a founding organisation of the Islamic Sharia Council. The Nida Trust also has working relationships with MAB and the Islamic Foundation. The Nida Trust was invited to run MAB's annual leaders training camp in May 2012. It has also worked with the Islamic Foundation's Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE) for the provision of courses on "Qur'anic pedagogy" and Islamic education, with sponsorship provided by Muslim Aid.²⁰⁷ The former chair of the East London Mosque, and secretary general of MCB and trustee of Muslim Aid, Muhammad Abdul Bari, is a patron of the Nida Trust.²⁰⁸

Another important recipient of QC's largesse, Chesnot and Malbrunot reveal in *Qatar Papers*, has been Tariq Ramadan, the grandson of the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan Al-Banna, and son of a pioneering figure in the growth of the Brotherhood in Europe, Said Ramadan. Although his connection to Islamic Movement groups in Britain has been minimal over recent years, Tariq Ramadan has exerted some influence over key policy debates. During the coalition government's administration, he was a member of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's Advisory Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief.²⁰⁹ He was also an advisory member of a taskforce on extremism convened by the Blair government in the aftermath of the London bombings in July 2005.

203 "Nectar Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31, 2017", annual report 2016/17, http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends97/0001146597_AC_20170331_E_C.PDF, p.6. The amount of funding for this event was not disclosed, but it is likely to be a modest figure compared with the funding provided for QCUK's other contributions.

204 "What is IBERR?", IBERR website, <http://iberr.chat.ru/iberr1.htm>. Statement from The First World Conference on Muslim Education, 1977, Mecca, quoted in Sarwar, *Islamic Education*, p.29. Sarwar, *Islamic Education*.

205 "Nida News", Nida Trust newsletter, Summer 2012 issue, https://issuu.com/nidatrust/docs/newsletter_summer_2012.

206 'Teacher Education and Contingency', Islamic Shakhshiyah Foundation website, page captured on February 17, 2014, <http://web.archive.org/web/20140217063046/http://www.isfnet.org.uk/index.php/teacher-education-and-cpd.html>.

207 "Qur'anic Pedagogy" course outline, Nida Trust website, <http://nidatrust.org.uk/content/booking>; Conference programme for "Islamic Education in the Western Context: Challenges & Opportunities", Nida Trust website, http://nidatrust.org.uk/uploads/docs/conference_programme3.pdf.

208 Muhammad Abdul Bari, "Meet the challenge, make the change: A call to action for Muslim civil society in Britain", in *Cordoba Papers*, vol.2, no.1. (London: Cordoba Foundation, 2013), https://www.thecordobafoundation.com/attach/A5_TCF_CS_BARI_FINAL.pdf.

209 "Foreign Office Advisory Group on freedom of religion or belief", press release, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, March 25, 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-office-advisory-group-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief>.

In 2017, he took leave of his role as a professor of Islamic studies at Oxford University, which is sponsored by Qatar, where he is also a visiting professor at the Faculty of Islamic Studies. He took leave to face criminal indictments, which he denies, unrelated to QC. According to the French journalists, the French government's financial intelligence agency, Tracfin, observed in 2017, that Ramadan was in receipt of a monthly consultant's salary of €35,000 from the Qatar Foundation, a body set up by Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the mother of Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.²¹⁰

Islamic Movement figures in Britain have other connections to QC, via their campaign supporting the Palestinians. In September 2014, QC supported the launch of a USD\$1 billion campaign for the rebuilding of the Gaza strip, led by a new organization, the Popular International Committee to Support the Gaza Strip.²¹¹ Two leading figures in this campaign were prominent activists in British Islamic Movement organisations. The director of the new organisation was named as Essam Yusuf, the long-time head of Interpal. He is also the head of the "Miles of Smiles" convoys to Hamas-governed Gaza.²¹² A member of the launch event's panel, Zaher Birawi, is a trustee of the London-based Education Aid for Palestinians, alongside Abdullah Faliq, the research director of Anas Altikriti's Cordoba Foundation.²¹³ Birawi is also a former director of the Palestine Return Centre, and a former director of the Muslim Association of Britain.²¹⁴ In 2013, he was personally designated by Israel as a member of a terrorist organisation for his alleged association with Hamas.²¹⁵ The launch of the Popular International Committee to Support the Gaza Strip was held in Istanbul, Turkey, which has long hosted meetings for the global Islamic Movement.

Turkish Connections

Turkey's connections to the Islamic Movement in Britain lie within the broader international network that supports Hamas in Gaza. British-based Islamic Movement organisations and individuals are linked to Turkish organisations and individuals, including Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, now president, through their shared efforts providing assistance to Hamas, campaigning for the Palestinians' "right to return", and demonising Israel. Their connections are both collaborative and ideological, sharing both resources and aspirations for Israel's demise and the revival of Islam throughout the whole of the former dar al-Islam. Erdoğan's desire to revive the greatness of the Ottoman Empire – the last Islamic caliphate – dovetails with the broader Islamic Movement's desire for a reinstatement of Islamic religious and political dominion.

²¹⁰ Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, *The Qatar Papers*, p.87.

²¹¹ "Global Muslim Brotherhood Launches \$1 Billion Campaign For Gaza", Global Muslim Brotherhood Watch, September 1, 2014, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/2014/09/01/global-muslim-brotherhood-launches-1-billion-campaign-gaza/>.

²¹² Nour Abu Eisha and Mohamed Majid, "Aid convoy slams attack on Anadolu Agency's Gaza office", Anadolu Agency, May 7, 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/aid-convoy-slams-attack-on-anadolu-agency-s-gaza-office/1472688>.

²¹³ "People", Education Aid For Palestinians charity listing, Charity Commission website, <https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regId=1030807&subld=0>.

²¹⁴ "People", The Palestinian Return Centre Ltd company listing, Companies House website, <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/03219238/officers>.

²¹⁵ Raf Sanchez, "Israeli MP targeted by Hamas' Istanbul cell calls for sanctions on Turkey", *The Telegraph*, December 18, 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/12/18/israeli-mp-targeted-hamas-istanbul-cell-calls-sanctions-turkey/>. See also State of Israel: Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, "Terrorists in Suits: The Ties Between NGOs promoting BDS and Terrorist Organizations", February 2019, https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/terrorists_in_suits/en/De-Legitimization%20Brochure.pdf, p.73.

Steven Merley, editor of *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Watch*, observes, “Since 2006, Turkey has become a new center for the Global Muslim Brotherhood, while the Hamas regime in the Gaza Strip acted as the main axis for this activity”.²¹⁶ He notes that between January 2006, when Hamas won the elections in Gaza, and the dispatch of the Gaza flotilla in May 2010, “Istanbul hosted at least ten international conferences of the Global Muslim Brotherhood”.²¹⁷ During this time, he adds, the spiritual guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Yusuf Al-Qaradawi began to visit Turkey frequently.

One of the most important of these conferences was the International Conference for the Victory of Gaza held in February 2009, organised by the Global Anti-Aggression Campaign (GAAC). The BBC reported that religious scholars and clerics in attendance “met senior Hamas officials to plot a new *jihād* centred on Gaza” and that “speaker after speaker called for *jihād* against Israel in support of Hamas”.²¹⁸ The conference statement asserted that the Muslim *umma* was obliged to “carry on with the *jihād* and Resistance against the occupier until the liberation of all Palestine”.²¹⁹ It also stated that obstruction of the entry of weapons into Palestine “should be regarded as high treason in the Islamic Nation, and clear support for the Zionist enemy”.²²⁰ This statement came to be known as the Istanbul Declaration. Its signatories included Daud Abdullah, then deputy secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), and Mohammed Sawalha, the president of the British Muslim Initiative (BMI) and a member of Hamas’ political bureau.²²¹ Abdullah’s signing of the statement resulted in the British government’s suspension of ties with MCB.

In the same month, a number of British Islamic Movement groups sent representatives to the Turkish ambassador in London to thank Erdoğan for lambasting Israel for its military action in Gaza after Operation Cast Lead. These representatives included Abdullah and Sawalha, as well as Said Ferjani, then head of policy and public relations for the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), Dilwar Hussain Khan, then secretary general of the Islamic Forum of Europe; Faisal Hanjra, then president of FOSIS, and Mohamed Ali Harrath, the CEO of the Islam Channel. Other groups represented included Dawatul Islam, the Palestinian Return Centre, and the Palestinian Forum in Britain.²²²

In September 2013, Turkey hosted a conference, “The World Amid a Coup Against The Will and Free Choices of the People”. One of the objectives of this gathering was, reportedly, to obtain legal assistance against the Egyptian government of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, and support for countering the anti-Islamist and anti-Muslim Brotherhood

216 Steven G. Merley, “Turkey, the Global Muslim Brotherhood, and the Gaza Flotilla”, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2011, https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Turkey_Muslim_Brotherhood.pdf, p.8.

217 *Ibid.*, p.17.

218 BBC, “Clerics urge new jihad over Gaza”, BBC website, February 17, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7895485.stm.

219 “A statement by the religious scholars and proselytisers (du’a) of the Islamic Nation (ummah) to all rulers and peoples concerning events in Gaza”, available at <http://hurryupharry.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/istpdf.pdf>.

220 *Ibid.*

221 David Brown, “Finsbury mosque leader Mohammed Sawalha part of Hamas politburo”, *The Times*, November 7, 2017, www.thetimes.co.uk/article/finsbury-mosque-leader-mohammed-sawalha-part-of-hamas-politburo-0cdn3gs80.

222 “British Muslims to deliver letter of thanks to Turkish Government”, MCB website, February 6, 2009, https://web.archive.org/web/20090217023540/http://www.mcb.org.uk/article_detail.php?article=announcement-774.

orientation of the Egyptian media.²²³ The main participant organisations included GAAC, Al-Qaradawi's International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), and two groups established by Anas Altikriti, namely, the Cordoba Foundation and the International Coalition for Freedom and Rights.²²⁴ From this conference, a new coalition emerged called the Global Coordinator to Support Rights and Freedoms. The priorities of this coalition, as a statement in June 2014 described it, was to "support rights and democracy and to be against the reversal on the peoples will".²²⁵ The statement also indicated that the new coalition would be registered in Istanbul.

More recently, in November 2017, Istanbul hosted the 5th meeting of IUMS's board of trustees. IUMS trustees, including its chair, Al-Qaradawi, reviewed the organisation's strategic progress, and appealed to governments in "Arab and Muslim countries" for justice "based on Islamic principles", referring to "imprisoned scholars, thinkers, preachers, [and] media workers".²²⁶ They also summoned "the entire Ummah to exert its utmost physical and emotional efforts in supporting their just causes and priorities, especially relating to occupied Palestine, [and] the Judaization of Jerusalem". Al-Qaradawi expressed his vision of a restored global caliphate, stating, "Islam has spread from the Arabian Peninsula to China, from the Samarkand to the Indian peninsula, Asia and Europe", adding, "it is our duty to restore the glory of the nation of Islam (Ummah) back to the level of those days, back to the days where the Muslims were rulers of the world. This is our promise to the Ummah".²²⁷ The board concluded by thanking Qatar, where it is headquartered, and expressing "its gratitude to the Turkish people and their wise leadership".

Earlier, in April 2016, Al-Qaradawi organised a three day festival in Istanbul to thank the Turkish government, and in particular President Erdoğan, "for the defense of Islam".²²⁸ This came after Erdoğan criticised an Interpol notice calling for Al-Qaradawi's arrest.²²⁹ Al-Qaradawi lauded the Turkish leader again in November 2018, at a three day meeting in Istanbul. This conference of various Islamist groups met "to cultivate and promote the idea of an Islamic union to be spearheaded by the Turkish president as early as 2023".²³⁰ Just after this conference, Al-Qaradawi praised Erdoğan as the leader of the Muslim *umma* and his "ambitions to claim the leadership of the Islamic world".²³¹

In addition to providing a meeting platform for the global Islamic Movement and its pro-Palestinian campaign, Turkish support also assisted with the organisation of the Gaza flotilla in May 2010. This was a highly publicised attempt to break Israel's blockade

223 Steven Merley, "The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign 2003-2016: A Global Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi and Jihadist Alliance Against The West", Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, February 2017, https://www.globalmbrresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Global_Anti-Aggression_Campaign_2003-2016.pdf, p.41.

224 *Ibid.*

225 "The international coordinating to support rights & liberties [sic]", التنسيقية العالمية لدعم الحقوق و الحريات, Facebook post, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1468671113375293&id=1468422450066826.

226 "FINAL STATEMENT OF THE 5TH MEETING FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE IUMS, AT ITS FOURTH TERM (2014 - 2018), ISTANBUL -THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY", International Union for Muslim Scholars website, November 9, 2017, <http://iumsonline.org/en/ContentDetails.aspx?ID=8134>.

227 "Al-Qaradawi calls for Islamic awakening", Aljazeera, November 7, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/al-qaradawi-calls-islamic-awakening-171107094013049.html>.

228 "Qaradawi: Thanks to Turkey and to the President Erdogan", International Union for Muslim Scholars website, April 23, 2016, <http://www.iumsonline.org/en/ContentDetails.aspx?ID=6176>.

229 Aykan Erdemir, Brothers in Arms: The Consolidation of the Turkey-Qatar Axis (Washington D.C: Foundation for Defense of Democracies, 2019), p.18. Report available at <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2019/12/11/brothers-in-arms/>.

230 Abdullah Bozkurt, "Erdoğan's caliphate dream put in motion in Turkey", Turkish Minute, November 27, 2018, <https://www.turkishminute.com/2018/11/27/opinion-erdogans-caliphate-dream-put-in-motion-in-turkey/>.

231 *Ibid.*

of Hamas-controlled Gaza by sending boats with supplies and activists from numerous countries to the strip. The Turkish government did not officially provide support for the flotilla, but according to Merley, officials from Turkey's ruling AK party attended many important Islamic Movement events in support of it. And the participation in the flotilla of the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (İnsan Hak ve Hürriyetleri ve İnsani Yardım Vakfı, IHH), a charity closely connected to the Turkish ruling AK party, indicated some degree of governmental involvement or, at least, condonation.²³²

On May 12, 2010, Erdoğan himself met with British and French Islamic Movement leaders in Istanbul, including representatives of one of the flotilla organisers, the European Campaign to End the Siege of Gaza (ECESG), and told them that it was Turkey's intention to end the Gaza blockade.²³³ British members of the delegation included Arafat Shoukri of ECESG; Daud Abdullah, then deputy secretary general of MCB; Said Ferjani then head of policy and public relations for MAB; Majed Al-Zeer of the Palestinian Return Centre; and Massoud Shadjareh and Seyfeddin Kara of the Islamic Human Rights Commission. The purpose of the visit was reportedly to urge Turkey to play a more active role in the Palestinian issue. Erdoğan reportedly "promised that Turkey would do all that it could to see the inhumane siege on Gaza lifted and would help the Palestinian people in any other way that it could".²³⁴

British Islamic Movement activists worked together with IHH to organise the flotilla. IHH owned and provided the leading vessel, the Mavi Marmara, which became involved in a violent confrontation with Israeli naval forces as the flotilla approached Gaza. These British activists included, most importantly, Sawalha, who was also a founder of MAB and a former director of Muslim Welfare House. Sawalha, who also played a role in Viva Palestina's land convoys, apparently attended the Mavi Marmara's launching ceremony, but did not board the ship.²³⁵ But one of his associates from BMI, Ismail Patel, did participate in the flotilla.²³⁶ Patel, the founder of the pro-Palestinian Friends of Al-Aqsa, also took part in the Miles of Smiles 3 land convoy in June 2011, which was received by Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.²³⁷

A Trans-ethnic Network

The Islamic Movement in Britain is not simply the country's Muslim Brotherhood network, since it is impossible to neatly separate Muslim Brotherhood-associated individuals and groups from those associated with Jamaat-i-Islami and from others who have no obvious roots in the Arab world or Indian subcontinent. The Islamic Movement in Britain is not a reducible to a single lineage of Muslim activism. It is, rather, a network of elements of different origins

232 Dan Bilefsky and Sebnem Arsu, "Sponsor of Flotilla Tied to Elite of Turkey", *The New York Times*, July 15, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/16/world/middleeast/16turkey.html>.

233 Merley, "Turkey, the Global Muslim Brotherhood, and the Gaza Flotilla", p.20.

234 "Muslim delegation meets Prime Minister Erdogan to discuss Palestine", *Middle East Monitor*, January 31, 2014, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20140131-muslim-delegation-meets-prime-minister-erdogan-to-discuss-palestine/>.

235 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, "Conspicuous among the passengers and organizations aboard the Mavi Marmara", Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, October 5, 2010, pp.18, 84. Report available at https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_10_157_2.pdf.

236 "Br Ismail Patel video blog 29th May", Friends of Al-Aqsa, YouTube, May 29, 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YD7SNG8uS9o&ab_channel=FriendsofAl-Aqsa.

237 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Friends of Al-Aqsa profile, Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, August 31, 2011, p.3. Report available at https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_11_178_2.pdf.

bonded, as outlined in the previous chapter of this report, by an ideologically-framed vision of an ideal society and a methodological approach to this end. These elements are also connected organisationally by their collaborative work on events and campaigns, and by the overlapping leadership roles of individuals in multiple organisations, as described in this chapter of the report.

Predominantly Arab organisations, such as the Muslim Association of Britain, collaborate with predominantly Pakistani or Bangladeshi organisations, such as the East London Mosque/London Muslim Centre. This has been evident in their collaborations on various campaigns, as described in the next chapter of this report, and is clear from the composition of both the Muslim Council of Britain and the Coordination Committee of Islamic Organisations. Additionally, some Islamic Movement organisations are staffed by Muslims from diverse ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. Anas Alkitriki and Abdullah Faliq's leadership of the Cordoba Foundation is a good example. Even in the Arab-dominated cluster of pro-Palestinian organisations, there are non-Arab key figures, such as converts Ibrahim Hewitt and Daud Abdullah. Hewitt is the chair of Interpal and a senior editor for the Middle East Monitor (MEMO); Abdullah is the director of MEMO, and was a senior researcher for the Palestine Return Centre. Ashan Manazir, the former director general of the Islamic Foundation, captured the trans-ethnic, pan-Islamic solidarity of this network in his statement, "We belong to the international Islamic movement, neither to Jamaat nor to Ikhwan nor to the Refah Party in Turkey – but all of them are our friends".²³⁸

²³⁸ Gilles Kepel, *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1997), p.133, emphasis added.

4. Major Campaigns

The Islamic Movement in Britain is actively involved in initiating and leading a number of inter-related campaigns in the service of Islam as a complete system of life and of the Muslim *umma* in Britain and abroad. The most enduring, well-funded and controversial of these focus on Palestine, the British government's counter-radicalisation and counter-extremism strategies, and Islamophobia, as well as education and political participation.

Palestine

Islamic Movement organisations in Britain have been actively involved in supporting the Palestinian cause since the late 1980s. This support has involved the organisation of fund-raising campaigns and events for charitable work in the Palestinian Territories; the public lobbying to boycott, divest and sanction Israel; and, allegedly, the funding of organisations linked to Palestinian militant groups, including Hamas. The most active organisations within the Movement wholly or partly dedicated to this issue are a cluster of charities. These include, most importantly, the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund, also known as Interpal; Education Aid for Palestinians; and Muslim Aid. Other groups whose work has included a dedicated focus on the Palestinian issue for many years include the Palestine Return Centre, the Islamic Human Rights Commission, and the Middle East Monitor.

Interpal and Hamas

Interpal lies at the centre of the network of organisations nested within the broader Islamic Movement that provides support to the Palestinians. The organisation was established in 1994, although its origins lie with the Palestine and Lebanon Relief Fund that that was created in 1981.²³⁹ Interpal divides its work into five sectors, namely, education aid, medical aid, community development, humanitarian aid, and advocacy and development.²⁴⁰ Its annual report for 2017 states that the majority of its £5.9m income was spent on humanitarian projects "related to helping Palestinians achieve an adequate quality of life and alleviate poverty".²⁴¹ Almost £4.5m was spent on Gaza and the West Bank.²⁴²

For some years, Interpal has faced and consistently denied allegations that it supports Hamas, a proscribed terrorist organisation in the US, the EU, Australia, Canada, and Israel. In 2003, the US Treasury classified Interpal as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist

239 Steve Merley, "The Union of Good: INTERPAL and the U.K. Member Organizations", NEFA Foundation, March 23, 2009, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/27722268-The-Union-of-Good-Interpal-and-the-UK-Member-Organizations-NEFA-Foundation.pdf>, p.4.

240 "About Interpal", Interpal website, undated, <https://www.interpal.org/about-us/>.

241 "Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2017", Charity Commission website, http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends94/0001040094_AC_20181231_E_C.PDF, p.11.

242 *Ibid.*, p.33.

organisation due to allegations of funding Hamas in the Gaza Strip.²⁴³ Canada and Australia followed suit, but the charity is not designated as a terrorist organisation in the UK. In 2006, the BBC's *Panorama* claimed that Interpal was providing funds to charities in the Palestinian territories run by senior Hamas officials.²⁴⁴ Interpal vigorously denied these allegations, and claimed that it has not been shown any evidence for them.

The *Panorama* programme prompted an inquiry by the Charity Commission for England and Wales into Interpal's alleged connections to Palestinian terrorist groups and the Union of Good (UG), an umbrella group of charities set up by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, designated by the US Treasury in 2008,²⁴⁵ and alleged to have funded Hamas.²⁴⁶ The Commission's inquiry ran from December 2006 to February 2009. It concluded by stating, "The Inquiry could not verify the material suggesting that certain local partners funded by the Charity may be promoting terrorist ideology or activities, so the material was of insufficient evidential value to support these allegations".²⁴⁷ The Commission acknowledged that the material

*seemed to indicate that certain local partners funded by the charity promoted terrorist ideology or activities among their beneficiaries. However, the inquiry could not verify to its satisfaction each of these item's [sic] provenance or accuracy. In order for the inquiry to draw firm conclusions from the material, it would need proof that the material was found at particular identifiable local partners, and/or showed activities which could be proved to have been carried out at a particular identifiable partner, during a particular period of time.*²⁴⁸

The Commission considered that the evidence provided to it of Interpal's alleged links to Hamas was insufficient to draw a firm conclusion. Nonetheless, it criticised Interpal for not having conducted a proper risk assessment upon becoming a member of UG.²⁴⁹ It ordered Interpal to break contact with UG, which the charity claims to have done.²⁵⁰ Two prior investigations, in 1996 and 2003, also cleared Interpal of funding Hamas.²⁵¹ The Charity Commission's investigations of Interpal, were criticised by Steven Merley, the founder and editor of *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Watch*, for discounting or failing to examine any external evidence of Interpal's alleged links to Hamas, and for relying only on Interpal's documentation.²⁵² John Ware, the producer of the *Panorama* programme that prompted the Commission's 2006 inquiry, criticised the inquiry along similar lines. The Commission, he wrote, "did not actually investigate *Panorama's* material because the Commission had not seen its role as being to 'prove or disprove' *Panorama's* allegations"; its role, a spokesperson from the Commission told him, had been to "identify specific regulatory issues".²⁵³

243 "U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities", U.S. Department of the Treasury website, August 22, 2003, www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js672.aspx.

244 *Panorama*, "Faith, hate and charity", BBC, broadcast July 30, 2006, programme website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/5234586.stm>.

245 U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates the Union of Good".

246 Merley, "The Union of Good: INTERPAL and the U.K. Member Organizations".

247 "Inquiry Report: Palestinians Relief and Development Fund (Interpal)", Charity Commission website, <http://offlinehbpl.hbpl.co.uk/NewsAttachments/NST/interpal09.pdf>, p.14.

248 *Ibid.*, p.12.

249 *Ibid.*, p.18.

250 *Ibid.*, p.20.

251 *Ibid.*, pp.4-5.

252 Merley, "The Union of Good: INTERPAL and the U.K. Member Organizations", pp.12, 16-17.

253 John Ware, "Response to Interpal inquiry by Charity Commission", BBC News, March 2, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/panorama/hi/front_page/newsid_7915000/7915916.stm.

Allegations against Interpal have occasionally prompted the charity to commence libel lawsuits to protect its reputation from harm. In 2019, Interpal successfully sued *The Jewish Chronicle* for publishing an article that referred to the American government's 2003 designation of the group.²⁵⁴ The article also described Interpal founder Ibrahim Hewitt as having "been widely described as an Islamic extremist who believes that adulterers should be stoned to death and has compared gay people with paedophiles".²⁵⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle* paid £50,000 in damages and published a full apology to the trustees of Interpal. It also paid for Interpal's legal costs and offered to publish an article by Hewitt, which described the charity's 25 year history of providing humanitarian aid. The newspaper's apology stated,

We wish to make clear that Interpal and its Trustees have always strongly contested the US designation, and Interpal continues to operate fully lawfully under the aegis of the Charity Commission. We accept that neither Interpal, nor its Trustees, have ever been involved with or provided support for terrorist activity of any kind. We apologise unreservedly to the Trustees for any distress caused and have agreed to pay them damages for libel.

It added,

*Our article also suggested that Ibrahim Hewitt, one of the Trustees and the Chairman of Interpal, has expressed extremist views concerning punishments for adulterers and gay people. In fact, the views attributed to Mr Hewitt arise out of a book he wrote some 25 years ago regarding the interpretation of the Koran. Mr Hewitt has asked us to make clear that he does not condone discrimination in any form, including against gay people or adulterers, and we are happy to do so.*²⁵⁶

This is not the first occasion that Interpal has successfully sued a media organisation for libel in relation to its alleged connections to terrorist groups or to the extremism of its officials. Earlier in 2019, Interpal successfully sued Associated Newspapers for several articles that appeared in *The Daily Mail* and *MailOnline*, which similarly referred to its 2003 designation without due context, i.e., without mentioning Interpal's consistent denials of terrorist links and the Charity

254 "INTERPAL TRUSTEES SECURE FULL APOLOGY AND £50,000 IN LIBEL DAMAGES FROM JEWISH CHRONICLE", Carter Ruck website, undated, <https://www.carter-ruck.com/news/read/interpal-trustees-secure-apology-and-libel-damages-from-jewish-chronicle>. See also Sam Westrop, "British Jewish Newspaper Buckles to Hamas", Jewish News Syndicate, September 4, 2019, <https://www.jns.org/opinion/british-jewish-newspaper-buckles-to-hamas/>.

255 Orlando Radice, "Corbyn spoke at conference calling for release of terrorists, attended by 'blood libel' cleric Salah", *The Jewish Chronicle*, March 21, 2019. The article has since been removed from the Web, but can be viewed at <http://web.archive.org/web/20190331220843/https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/corbyn-spoke-at-conference-calling-for-release-of-terrorists-attended-by-blood-libel-cleric-salah-1.481927>.

256 "The Trustees of Interpal – Apology", *The Jewish Chronicle*, August 23, 2019, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/the-trustees-of-interpal-apology-1.487792>. Hewitt has stated that what people get up to in the privacy of their own homes is none of his business (see, for example, "Interpal is not a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, so why is it in the government's review?"). Nonetheless, he has not publicly rescinded the views expressed in his book, *What Does Islam Say?*, which include the endorsement of corporeal punishments for adultery and homosexuality under *shari'a* law. The book was re-issued in 2004. It was also listed as a "useful resource" in the MCB's national guidance for schools on the alleged special needs of Muslim students, published in 2007 (MCB, *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools*, p.65.) In 2014, in an interview on *Newsnight*, Hewitt refused to condemn the *hudud* punishments of *shari'a*, such as the stoning of adulterers to death, saying it was "a complex issue" (see "What should be taught in Muslim schools? – Newsnight", YouTube, June 5, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JUMY8I6bE>). And in an interview with the *Gay Star News* in the same year, he refused to answer the question "whether he supported the homophobic laws in some Islamic countries, where some do include death by stoning" (see Joe Morgan, "Oxfam cancels London event after speaker called gays 'evil'", *Gay Star News*, January 22, 2014, <https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/oxfam-cancels-london-event-after-speaker-called-gays-evil220114/>.)

Commission's clearances of the charity for such alleged links.²⁵⁷ In 2010, Interpal successfully sued the Express Group for an article alleging "that Interpal supported Hamas" and thereby suggesting "that Interpal and its Trustees aid terrorism".²⁵⁸ And in 2005, Interpal secured a successful out-of-court settlement of libel proceedings brought against the Board of Deputies of British Jews over an article on its website in September 2003 that referred to the charity as a "terrorist organisation".²⁵⁹

Not all of Interpal's libel claims have been successful. In August 2019, Interpal and its trustees threatened libel proceedings against UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI), an organisation that supports Israel, Israeli organisations and Israelis with legal and advocacy work "against BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions] and other attempts to undermine, attack or delegitimise them".²⁶⁰ Interpal's solicitors demanded that UKLFI remove two articles that appeared on its website and Facebook page in February and March 2019. These articles mentioned Interpal's US terrorist designation. One of the articles stated that an Interpal trustee, Essam Yusuf, was identified by the US Treasury in 2008 as a Hamas executive committee member.²⁶¹ Interpal's solicitors also demanded that UKLFI pay compensation and legal costs, publish a full apology, agree to a statement in open court, and commit not to repeat the allegations. UKLFI's solicitors denied libel, but agreed to publish a statement provided by Interpal on its website, which ran as follows:

The Trustees of the charity Interpal, and including its Trustee Dr Essam Mustafa, wish to correct a number of defamatory statements made about them on the UK Lawyers for Israel website and Facebook page. On 25 February 2019 UKLFI published the following statement: "Interpal has been designated as a terror group in the US, Australia and elsewhere." [And on] 20 March 2019, UKLFI published the following statements: "In August 2003 the US Treasury described Interpal as a Hamas related charity and designated it as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT), freezing its assets in the US and prohibiting transactions with US nationals ...The Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") of the US Department of the Treasury, designated Interpal as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT)."

Interpal and its Trustees wish to make it clear that they vigorously deny, and have always vigorously denied, any involvement whatsoever in or support for terrorism, including the funding of terrorism. Interpal and its Trustees do not engage in that activity. The allegations are simply false. Despite various requests from Interpal and the Charity Commission, the United States authorities have failed to provide any evidence or proper reasons whatsoever to justify the designations. Interpal continues to operate, wholly lawfully, under the aegis and supervision of the

257 "Mail and MailOnline apologise and pay £120,000 in damages to Interpal Trustees over false terror and extremism allegations", Carter Ruck press release, June 13, 2019, https://www.carter-ruck.com/images/uploads/documents/INTERPAL_TRUSTEES_PRESS_RELEASE-13062019.pdf.

258 "Express Newspapers apologises and pays £60,000 to the Trustees of Interpal over untrue allegations of support for Hamas and terrorism", Carter Ruck press release, July 22, 2010, https://www.carter-ruck.com/images/uploads/documents/Interpal_Press_Release.pdf

259 "Interpal Wins Libel Case Against Board of Deputies of British Jews", Carter Ruck press release, December 22, 2005, <https://www.carter-ruck.com/news/read/palestinian-relief-and-development-fund>.

260 "About UKLFI", UK Lawyers for Israel website, undated, <http://www.uklfi.com/about-us-2>.

261 "Credit cards and Just Giving ditch Education Aid for Palestinians", UK Lawyers for Israel website, February 25, 2019, <http://www.uklfi.com/credit-cards-and-just-giving-ditch-education-aid-for-palestinians>; and "Facebook blocks Interpal donations", UK Lawyers for Israel website, March 20, 2019, <http://www.uklfi.com/facebook-blocks-interpal-donations>.

Charity Commission of England and Wales. Since 1994 Interpal has provided humanitarian and development aid to very many Palestinians in need. Its Trustees are committed to that mission and, through the generosity of Interpal's donors, to continue to implement projects which have a long standing positive impact for individual beneficiaries and the wider community.

Also on 25 February 2019 UKLFI published the following statement regarding Dr Mustafa: "Essam Yusuf (aka Essam Mustafa) was one of the founding trustees of EAP. He was also a founding trustee of Interpal, and Secretary General of the Union of Good. He was identified by the U.S. Treasury as serving on the Hamas executive committee under Hamas leader Khaled Misha'al, from mid-2007."

Dr Mustafa wishes to make clear that he has never been named by the United States as serving on the Hamas Executive Committee, whether from mid-2007, or at all. There is no truth whatsoever to the allegation that he has ever served on the Executive Committee of Hamas, or held any other role in that organisation.²⁶²

Following this publication, four of the five Interpal trustees did not pursue their claims any further, but the remaining trustee – Essam Yusuf – persisted with his claim. On February 25, 2020 – the last possible day of the one-year limitation period for commencing a claim for defamation in respect of the first article – a Claim Form on behalf of Yusuf was issued in the High Court against UKLFI. Yusuf's solicitors had four months to serve the Claim Form and commence the case – until June 25, 2020 – but they did not do so. He cannot now bring legal proceedings against UKLFI.

Subsequently, UKLFI reported that Interpal appeared not able to receive donations by bank transfer, standing order, cheque or text message (SMS).²⁶³ This followed its representations to banks and the four mobile network operators in the UK, which pointed out "that although Interpal is a Charity operating under the auspices of the English Charity Commission, it is listed as a designated terrorist organisation in several other countries including the USA".²⁶⁴ In March 2019, UKLFI reported that it had written a letter to Facebook, pointing out that the social media platform was in breach of US terrorism sanctions by allowing the charity to fund raise through its site.²⁶⁵ Facebook immobilised Interpal's donation buttons. Throughout 2018 and 2019, UKLFI caused some of Interpal's other donation methods to be removed, including "credit card donations,²⁶⁶ BT MyDonate,²⁶⁷ Just Giving,²⁶⁸ and Give as You Live".²⁶⁹

²⁶² "Statement by Interpal and its Trustees", UK Lawyers for Israel website, February 21, 2020, <http://www.uklfi.com/statement-by-interpal-and-its-trustees>.

²⁶³ "Interpal loses Bank Transfer, Standing Order, Cheques and SMS donations", UK Lawyers for Israel website, June 29, 2020, <http://www.uklfi.com/interpal-loses-bank-transfer-standing-order-cheques-and-sms-donations>.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ "Facebook blocks Interpal donations", UK Lawyers for Israel website, March 20, 2019, <https://www.uklfi.com/facebook-blocks-interpal-donations>.

²⁶⁶ "Credit Card facilities removed from Interpal", UK Lawyers for Israel website, October 3, 2018, <http://www.uklfi.com/credit-card-facilities-removed-from-interpal>.

²⁶⁷ "Interpal suffers donations blow as BT's MyDonate withdraws facilities", UK Lawyers for Israel website, August 13, 2018, <http://www.uklfi.com/interpal-suffers-donations-blow-as-credit-cards-and-mydonate-withdraw-facilities>.

²⁶⁸ "JustGiving removes Interpal fundraising pages", UK Lawyers for Israel website, February 18, 2019, <http://www.uklfi.com/justgiving-removes-interpal-fundraising-pages>.

²⁶⁹ "Give As You Live and Everyclick drop INTERPAL", UK Lawyers for Israel website, February 25, 2019, <http://www.uklfi.com/give-as-you-live-and-everyclick-drop-interpal>.

Education Aid for Palestinians and Muslim Aid

Another key Islamic Movement charity supporting the Palestinians is Education Aid for Palestinians (EAP). Established in 1993 by Yusuf Islam – the founder of Interpal and Muslim Aid – EAP is based in London’s Crown House, where the offices are located for several other Islamic Movement groups, including the Palestine Return Centre (PRC), the Middle East Monitor, and the Islamic Education and Research Academy.²⁷⁰ According to its 2018 annual report, EAP is focused on providing clean water for schools, vocational training to school students, and educational provision to orphans and disabled children.²⁷¹ In 2018, EAP attracted donations of £762k.

The charity has also attracted controversy due to the alleged connections some of its key personnel have with Hamas. These include trustee Zaher Birawi. In 2019, *The Telegraph* reported that “Israel designated Mr Birawi as a member of a terrorist organisation in 2013 for allegedly being part of Hamas’ European office”.²⁷² A 2019 report by the Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy stated, “In our estimation Birawi is still affiliated with Hamas today”.²⁷³ Birawi is a former director of PRC, which was designated by the Israeli government in 2010.²⁷⁴ He is the head of programming for Al-Hiwar TV, which Israeli intelligence has described as a Hamas propaganda outlet “affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood”.²⁷⁵ He is also a former director of the Muslim Association of Britain.²⁷⁶ EAP’s chief executive officer, Muin Shabib, was described in 2001 by the US Office of Foreign Assets Control as a senior Hamas operative.²⁷⁷ He reportedly confessed to the FBI in 1994 to supporting Hamas both “financially and politically”.²⁷⁸ And EAP’s former chair of trustees, Munir Ashi, was part of an EAP delegation to Gaza in 2009 that donated money to the Hamas-controlled University of Gaza.²⁷⁹ Ashi has been recorded calling for the liberation of Palestine and the disappearance of Israel.²⁸⁰

Muslim Aid has been delivering emergency and development assistance in the Palestinian Territories through various partner organisations since 1989, two years after the beginning of the

270 Andrew Gilligan, “How the Muslim Brotherhood fits into a network of extremism”, *The Telegraph*, February 8, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/11398538/How-the-Muslim-Brotherhood-fits-into-a-network-of-extremism.html>.

271 “Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2018 For Education Aid For Palestinians”, Charity Commission website, http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends07/0001030807_AC_20181231_E_C.PDF.

272 Sanchez, “Israeli MP targeted by Hamas’ Istanbul cell calls for sanctions on Turkey”, *The Telegraph*, December 18, 2019.

273 See Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, *Terrorists in Suits*, p.73.

274 *Ibid.* A detailed, 80-page report by the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center also described the connections between PRC and Hamas, noting, “On December 27, 2010, the Israel Security Agency said in a statement that on December 5 Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak had signed an order outlawing the PRC as an “unlawful association because it is part of the Hamas movement”.” See Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “The Palestinian Return Centre”, Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, March 30, 2011, p.2. Report available at https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_11_339_2.pdf. PRC has denied being affiliated to Hamas, stating that the allegation of its affiliation derives from Israeli sources and is not credible. See “Palestinian Return Centre (PRC) response to the dangerous, unfounded Israeli claims at UN”, Palestinian Return Centre website, June 2, 2015, <https://prc.org.uk/en/post/3416/palestinian-return-centre-prc-response-to-the-dangerous-unfounded-israeli-claims-at-un>.

275 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “The Palestinian Return Centre”, p.33.

276 “People”, Palestinian Return Centre company listing, Companies House website, <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/03219238/officers>

277 Dale L. Watson, assistant director for counterterrorism, Federal Bureau of Investigation, memorandum to R. Richard Newcomb, director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, US Department of the Treasury, “Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, International Emergency Economic Powers Act, Action Memorandum”, November 5, 2001. Available at http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/466.pdf. See also “Education aid for Palestinians”, Stand for Peace website, September 6, 2013, <http://standforpeace.org.uk/education-aid-for-palestinians/>. For more on Shabib, described as a “Hamas operative”, see Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, p.81.

278 *Ibid.*, p.11.

279 “Munir Ashi, Cardiff and Hamas”, Harry’s Place blog, June10, 2011, <http://hurrypharry.org/2011/06/10/munir-ashi-cardiff-and-hamas/>.

280 *Ibid.*

First Intifada and the formation of Hamas.²⁸¹ In 2009, the charity launched a £5m emergency appeal for Palestinians in Gaza, whilst providing food and medical assistance. As part of its appeal, it organised an event, “An Evening for the Children of Gaza”, which featured speakers Daud Abdullah and Anas Altikriti and raised £300,000.²⁸² In 2012, Muslim Aid supported 15 hospitals and clinics in Gaza. Additionally, it provided support for “water and sanitation facilities, economic empowerment, solar energy, education, child sponsorship, religious dues and rehabilitation projects”.²⁸³ It’s Palestine Emergency Fund raised close to £5m in 2014, although by the year’s end, the charity accounted for a huge underspend of over £3.5m.²⁸⁴ In that year, Muslim Aid partnered with UNRWA, contributing funds for the distribution of medicine and food to Palestinians in Gaza.²⁸⁵ In 2016, the group helped fund the operating costs of four schools in Beach refugee camp in Gaza.²⁸⁶ As of January 2020, Muslim Aid’s website continues its appeal for the Palestinians in Gaza, describing the Hamas-run territory as “under attack and in conflict”.²⁸⁷

In December 2010, the Charity Commission published a report of an investigation into Muslim Aid “following allegations that the charity had made payments to partner organisations that were allegedly linked to terrorist groups ... The Commission found no evidence that the charity had illegally funded any proscribed or designated entities. However, the investigation found that the charity were unable to demonstrate conclusively that it had followed its own due diligence and monitoring procedures consistently”.²⁸⁸ Andrew Gilligan, writing in *The Telegraph*, criticised the Commission for concluding that allegations of the charity’s links with proscribed groups were unsubstantiated and for “whitewashing” Muslim Aid.²⁸⁹ Gilligan alleged that the charity had channelled funds to seven organisations linked to Hamas and one linked to Palestinian Islamic Jihad, namely, Al-Ihsan Charitable Society. The sources he referred to, which he claimed the Commission had discounted, included “official statements by the US Government, the Israeli government and the suspect organisations and their personnel themselves”.²⁹⁰ Gilligan noted that Muslim Aid had admitted to funding Al-Ihsan and refused to deny funding the seven organisations alleged to be linked to Hamas.²⁹¹ Gilligan acknowledged Muslim Aid’s explanation for funding Al-Ihsan, writing, “Muslim Aid states that it did not pay money to al-Ihsan after it was designated, in its own right, as a terrorist organisation in May/ June 2005. This claim is the slender thread on which the Charity

281 “Performers Unite For Children of Gaza”, Muslim Aid website, February 2009, <https://www.muslimaid.org/media-centre/news/performers-unite-for-children-of-gaza/>

282 *Ibid.*

283 “Report of the Trustees’ and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2012”, Muslim Aid website, https://muslimaid.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.muslimaid.org/about-us/1-05-14_20-12-30_financial_summary_2012%20%28copy%203%29.pdf, p.4.

284 “Trustees’ report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014”, Muslim Aid website, https://muslimaid.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.muslimaid.org/about-us/27-10-15_13-51-00_2014_accounts%20%28copy%203%29.pdf, p.23.

285 “Muslim Aid”, UNRWA website, undated, <https://www.unrwa.org/our-partners/private-partners/partnerships/muslim-aid>.

286 *Ibid.*

287 “Gaza Emergency”, Muslim Aid website, undated, <https://www.muslimaid.org/appeals/gaza-emergency/>.

288 Charity Commission, “Decision, MA 1985”, UK Government website, December 6, 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-inquiry-ma-1985/ma-1985>.

289 Andrew Gilligan, “Muslim Aid: Hopeless Charity Commission whitewashes yet another Islamist group”, *The Telegraph*, December 17, 2010. Originally appeared at <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/andrewgilligan/100068829/muslim-aid-hopeless-charity-commission-whitewashes-yet-another-islamist-group/>, but after *The Telegraph* redesigned its website and removed all of its journalists’ blogs, it was republished at <https://andrewgilliganblog.wordpress.com/2010/12/17/muslim-aid-hopeless-charity-commission-whitewashes-yet-another-islamist-group/>.

290 *Ibid.*

291 The charities that Gilligan claimed Muslim Aid did not deny funding are the Islamic Society of Nuseirat, the Islamic Society of Khan Younis, the Islamic Centre of Gaza, the Islamic al-Salah, Gaza, the National Association of Moderation and Development, and the Khan Younis Zakat Committee. *Ibid.*

Commission felt able to give MA the all-clear on the al-Ihsan issue”.²⁹² He continued, “However, by its own admission, Muslim Aid did pay money to al-Ihsan in 2002 and 2003. At that time, al-Ihsan was already well known as having formal links to Palestinian Islamic Jihad, then as now a designated terrorist organisation”.²⁹³

The Charity Commission opened another inquiry into Muslim Aid in 2013 due to concerns about the charity’s financial management. When the inquiry finally closed in December 2018, the Commission concluded that because of a lack of due diligence, the charity was unable to assure the Commission “that all of its funds had been properly applied” or to “demonstrate that all of its funds had been used legitimately and properly in all instances and in furtherance of the charity’s purposes”.²⁹⁴ During the course of the inquiry, in 2016, an interim manager was appointed. The interim manager’s investigations found “systemic failings in [the charity’s] governance, leadership and management structures and personnel, including financial controls, monitoring of project outcomes and expenditure, dysfunctional relationships with country offices, staff distrust of the management structure, conflicts among the trustees”.²⁹⁵ Subsequently, Muslim Aid’s entire senior management team and board of trustees were removed or resigned. Many of those individuals were prominent figures in the Islamic Movement.²⁹⁶

The Charity Commission’s concluding report in December 2018 stated that from regarding “a sample of records” it “found no evidence that the charity had illegally funded any proscribed or designated entities”.²⁹⁷ But it noted that the charity had failed to conduct due diligence “to determine whether any potential partner organisation was a proscribed organisation”. The Commission’s concluding report also noted that in January 2018, Muslim Aid’s assets and liabilities were transferred to a new legal entity. The name “Muslim Aid” was transferred to this new charity and the charity formerly known as Muslim Aid ceased operations, was renamed “MA 1985”, and removed from the Register of Charities. The new Muslim Aid took on a new trustee board from January 31, 2018. Following the employment of new senior management, the Commission reported, “significant progress has been made to address the governance and improve oversight and control by the new trustees”.²⁹⁸

Foreign Connections: the Union of Good

A small number of Islamic Movement charities have connections with overseas Muslim Brotherhood-associated organisations and coalitions dedicated to the Palestinian cause. The latter include, most notably, the aforementioned Union of Good (UG) and the Global Anti-Aggression Campaign.

UG was created in late 2000, after the Second Intifada as a coalition of charities from Europe, Africa and the Middle East dedicated to

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ Charity Commission, “Decision, MA 1985”.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁶ See Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.63, 71-6.

²⁹⁷ Charity Commission, “Decision, MA 1985”.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

provide emergency and development assistance to the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Originally called the 101 Days Campaign, UG was designated by Israel in 2002 as a terrorist entity for funding Hamas, and in 2008 the US followed suit, describing the coalition as an “organization created by [the] Hamas leadership to transfer funds to the terrorist organization”.²⁹⁹ According to UG’s early websites, the list of UG’s leadership and trustees included Essam Yusuf, Ahmad Al-Rawi, and Sir Iqbal Sacranie – though Sacranie has always denied any involvement (see below).³⁰⁰

Yusuf was UG’s director of operations and referred to in a Charity Commission report as UG’s general secretary.³⁰¹ He is an Interpal trustee, previously having served as its vice-chair.³⁰² Al-Rawi, listed on UG’s original Arabic website as a trustee, was and continues to be a prominent figure in several Islamic Movement organisations. He was the president of the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe between 1992 and 2006. During this time, in 2004, Al-Rawi likened the coalition forces in Iraq to the Nazi invaders of France in 1940.³⁰³ He also expressed support for Iraqis to resist British troops, by arms if necessary:

If they [the British] attack, it’s the right of the civilians to resist the British. Any people who are occupied, they have the right to resist. I prefer it to be peaceful, but if they choose to resist by other means it’s their choice”.³⁰⁴

Al-Rawi was also the president of MAB between 2007 and 2010, as well as a member of its *shura* council, and the director of Islamic Relief. He is a long-time member of the European Council of Fatwa and Research. He is also a trustee of the Emaan Trust, which was given more than £2 million in the last few years by the Nectar Trust for a new large mosque project in Sheffield.³⁰⁵ The Nectar Trust is the UK arm of Qatar Charity, which has been designated in Israel and the Gulf States as a terrorist supporting entity.³⁰⁶

Sir Iqbal Sacranie was the founding secretary general of MCB, leading it between 1997 and 2000, and again between 2002 and 2006. He was also the chair of Muslim Aid between 1998 and 2002, and again between 2008 and 2012. In 2011, Sacranie received an out-of-court settlement from the blog *ConservativeHome* for

299 U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury Designates the Union of Good”.

300 Yusuf, Al-Rawi and Sacranie’s names appeared on UG’s Arabic website; Yusuf’s also on the English version. See “Special Information Bulletin”, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S), February 2005, available at https://web.archive.org/web/20070927032908/https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/html/final/eng/sib/2_05/funds.htm; and Steve Merley, “The Union of Good: A Global Muslim Brotherhood Hamas Fundraising Network”, NEFA Foundation, January 19, 2009, <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/27722114-The-Union-of-Good-A-Global-Muslim-Brotherhood-Hamas-Fundraising-Network-NEFA-Foundation.pdf>.

301 Yusuf, in fact, told the Commission that he was the “originator” of the 101 Days Campaign. See “Palestinians Relief and Development Fund (Interpal) inquiry report”, Charity Commission website, February 27, 2009, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20090417183542/http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/inquiryreports/interpal09.asp>.

302 “Faith, hate and charity: Transcript”, Panorama, BBC website, July 30, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/5234586.stm>.

303 Nicholas Rufford and Abul Taher, “British Muslim says troops are fair target”, *The Sunday Times*, October 31, 2004, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20081008002813/http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article501166.ece>

304 *Ibid.*

305 Nicky Harley, “Qatari charity head gives millions to European Muslim Brotherhood-linked bodies”, *The National* (UAE), June 29, 2019, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/qatari-charity-head-gives-millions-to-european-muslim-brotherhood-linked-bodies-1.880660>

306 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Defense Minister signs order banning Hamas-affiliated charitable organizations”. See also “Charity funding concerns again raise issue of Qatar terror financing”, *The National*, August 18, 2019, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/gcc/charity-funding-concerns-again-raise-issue-of-qatar-terror-financing-1.899797>.

describing him as a UG trustee.³⁰⁷ The blog posted an apology, stating, “we repeated in good faith a statement wrongly reported elsewhere that Sir Iqbal is a trustee of Union of Good, an organisation which has been listed by the US Treasury as a Special Designated Global Terrorist group ... We now understand that in fact Sir Iqbal is not, and never has been, a trustee of Union of Good”.³⁰⁸ It is unclear what source *ConservativeHome* was referring to as wrong. A possible source could have been a 41-page report on UG published in 2009 by Steven Merley, which provided the list of UG trustees as they had appeared on UG’s websites.³⁰⁹ Merley noted that Sacranie’s name had appeared in the list of trustees on UG’s original Arabic website between 2001 and 2005, although his name did not appear on the English language version of the site.³¹⁰

Interpal has been described as “probably the single most important UG member”.³¹¹ But UG’s listed members included other British charities too, including EAP and Muslim Aid mentioned above, as well as Islamic Relief, Muslim Hands, Human Appeal International, and the Human Relief Foundation.³¹² These latter four charities were all proscribed by Israel in 2008.³¹³ All are members of the umbrella group, the Muslim Charities Forum (MCF).

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- 307 The blog claimed that Sacranie has been overlooked as a possible candidate for membership of the Muslim Leadership Council by the UK government because of his connection with UG. See “CONSERVATIVEHOME APOLOGISES TO SIR IQBAL SACRANIE”, Carter Ruck website, undated, <https://www.carter-ruck.com/news/read/conservativehome-apologises-to-sir-iqbal-sacranie>. According to Carter Ruck, “As well as apologising, ConservativeHome has made a payment to Sir Iqbal, all of which he has donated to Muslim Aid. ConservativeHome has also paid Sir Iqbal’s legal costs.”
- 308 “Sir Iqbal Sacranie”, *ConservativeHome* blog, December 16, 2011, <http://www.conservativehome.com/thetorydiary/2011/12/sir-iqbal-sacranie.html>.
- 309 Steven Merley, “The Union of Good: A Global Muslim Brotherhood Hamas Fundraising Network”, January 19, 2009, The NEFA Foundation, pp.2, 3. Available at <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/27722114-The-Union-of-Good-A-Global-Muslim-Brotherhood-Hamas-Fundraising-Network-NEFA-Foundation.pdf>.
- 310 Sacranie’s name appeared on the campaign’s Arabic site in June 2001 (see <http://web.archive.org/web/20010618090940/http://101days.org/arabic/majles.htm>). It remained on the site until at least February 2005 (see <https://web.archive.org/web/20050206070358/http://www.101days.org/arabic/majless.htm>). It did not, however, appear on the English language site (see <http://web.archive.org/web/20011107155746/http://www.interpal.org/web/supervisory.htm>).
- 311 Merley, “The Union of Good: INTERPAL and the U.K. Member Organizations”, p.1.
- 312 Interpal, Muslim Aid, Islamic Relief, Muslim Hands, Human Appeal International, and the Human Relief Foundation were all listed as UG members on the campaign’s website hosted by Interpal between August 11, 2001 and February 28, 2003 (see “Implementing Organisations”, “Organisations participating in the 101 Days Campaign to date”, 101 Days Campaign website, captured at August 11, 2001, <http://web.archive.org/web/20010811052333/http://www.interpal.org:80/web/organisations.htm>; and “Implementing Organisations”, “Organisations participating in the 101 Days Campaign to date”, 101 Days Campaign website, captured at February 28, 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20030228025858/http://www.interpal.org/web/organisations.htm>). The actual length of time of their listing on this website is unclear, however, due to the unavailability of the site at earlier and later dates as stored on the Internet Archive, but these charities were also listed on the Interpal hosted site for donations as late as April 29, 2003 (see “International Donations”, 101 Days Campaign website, captured at April 29, 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20030429154542/http://www.interpal.org:80/web/european.htm>).
- 313 See Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Defense Minister signs order banning Hamas-affiliated charitable organizations”. This site, it should be noted, lists the “Humanitarian Relief Foundation (Britain)”, not the “Human Relief Foundation”. However, the Arabic name of this organisation on this site is the same as that on the Arabic language website for the 101 Days Campaign, which lists the UG members (see “المؤسسات المساهمة في ائتلاف الخير” (“Institutions contributing to the Union of Good”), Arabic 101 Days Campaign website, undated but captured at February 27, 2007, <http://web.archive.org/web/20070227160725/http://www.101days.org/arabic/modules.php?name=moassat>). A minor difference is the inclusion of the Arabic word for “London” in the organisation’s name on the Israeli government site, but the name of the actual organisation – مؤسسة الإغاثة الإنسانية – is exactly the same and can be translated as “Human Relief Foundation” (see the Wiki page: https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/مؤسسة_الإغاثة_الإنسانية). It is therefore likely that the slight difference in the English names for the organisation is the result of the Israeli government translating UG members’ names from Arabic to English. In 2017, the Human Relief Foundation denied it was a member of UG, stating that it had been mixed up with another charity of the same name (see Alex Delmar-Morgan and Peter Osborne, “A very British witch hunt: The truth behind the Muslim charities extremism scandal”, *Middle East Eye*, May 4, 2017, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/big-story/very-british-witch-hunt-truth-behind-muslim-charities-extremism-scandal>). Earlier, in 2008, however, its director said it had been named wrongly, i.e., misspelt, and that he was unclear why it had been proscribed, thus admitting that it (not a similarly named organisation) had in fact been proscribed (see Richard Kerbaj, “British Aid Workers Risk Arrest in Gaza”, *The Times*, September 5, 2008, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article4678132.ece>). Supporting the view that Human Relief Foundation (and not another similarly named charity) had been proscribed on the basis of its alleged UG membership, an Israeli governmental report from 2005 included the name “Human Relief Foundation” in a list of UG members (see Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Center for Special Studies, “Special Information Bulletin: The Union of Good”, February 2005, p.83, available at <https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/testimony/398.pdf>).

In 2014, MCF received funding from the British government for a project, Faith Minorities in Action, designed to encourage integration through inter-faith work. The government was subsequently criticised for funding these groups due to their membership of UG and UG's alleged links to Hamas.³¹⁴ In response, MCF denied that the charities are UG members, adding, "All MCF members are registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales, and by default abide by charity law. They also abide by international humanitarian standards and principles".³¹⁵ Nonetheless, the Department for Communities and Local Government withdrew all remaining funding for the project.³¹⁶ According to *The Guardian's* coverage of the decision, "in 2009 the Charity Commission had spoken to all the charities accused, except Islamic Relief, about their alleged involvement with the Union of Good, had confirmed they weren't members and had closed the matter".³¹⁷ It wasn't clear if the Commission conducted any investigations in addition to speaking to representatives of the charities.

An article in *Middle East Eye* in 2017 criticised the description of these charities as UG members, as published in *The Telegraph*. The article reported that Islamic Relief, Muslim Hands, Muslim Aid, Human Relief Foundation and Human Appeal all denied being members of UG.³¹⁸ The article acknowledged that some of these charities had participated in some meetings of the 101 Days Campaign – another term for UG.³¹⁹ But, it added, these charities claim they had not agreed to their names and logos being used on UG marketing material. This raises the question as to why the names of all of these organisations were listed as "implementing organisations" or "participating charities" on the campaign's English language web pages – hosted on Interpal's website – between at August 11, 2001 (and possibly earlier) and April 29, 2003 (and possibly later).

In any case, independently from their membership of UG, some of these charities – in addition to Interpal, EAP and Muslim Aid – have been alleged to have connections to proscribed or extremist organisations. Islamic Relief, for example, has been described as a Muslim Brotherhood institution that has directly funded organisations closely linked to Hamas, including the Gaza-based Al-Falah Benevolent Society.³²⁰ In February 2015, Islamic Relief supported an Al-Falah project aiding "displaced families" in Gaza.³²¹ The Israeli Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Centre has described Al-Falah as one of the "most prominent" of Hamas' charitable societies.³²²

314 Camilla Turner, "Government donation to Muslim Charities Forum denounced as 'madness'", *The Telegraph*, September 23, 2014, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/11114599/Government-donation-to-Muslim-Charities-Forum-denounced-as-madness.html>.

315 *Ibid.*

316 "Muslim charities lose government help over 'extremism'", BBC News, December 18, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-30537237>.

317 Alex Delmar-Morgan, "Islamic charities in UK fear they are being unfairly targeted over extremism", *The Guardian*, July 22, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/22/muslim-charities-uk-targeted-extremism-fears>.

318 Delmar-Morgan and Osborne, "A very British witch hunt: The truth behind the Muslim charities extremism scandal".

319 U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates the Union of Good".

320 Middle East Forum, "Islamic Relief: Charity / Extremism / Terror", Middle East Forum website, June 2018, <https://www.meforum.org/MiddleEastForum/media/MEFLibrary/pdf/Islamic-Relief-Dossier-v3.pdf>.

321 "بتمويل من الإغاثة الإسلامية – مكتب بريطانيا وتنفيذ مكتب فلسطين بالتعاون مع جمعية الفلاح الخيرية تواصل تقديم المساعدات" "العاجلة للأسر النازحة في قطاع غزة" ("Funded by Islamic Relief UK and implemented by Al-Falah and Islamic Relief Palestine – Emergency aid to displaced families in the Gaza Strip"), Al-Falah Benevolent Society website (Arabic), February 16, 2015, <http://alfalahpal.com/%D8%A8%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%AB%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A8-%D8%A8%D8%B1/>.

322 Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, "Society and politics in the Gaza Strip", Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, November 4, 2008, p.1. Available at https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_08_265_2.pdf.

The director of Al-Falah, Ramadan Tamboura, has been described by the left-leaning Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* as a “well-known Hamas figure”.³²³ Another partner for Islamic Relief’s branches in Gaza is the Gaza Zakat Committee. According to Islamic Relief founder Hany El-Banna – who was interviewed by the Hamas radio station Al-Aqsa Voice in 2016 – Islamic Relief has collaborated with the Gaza Zakat Committee since 1997.³²⁴ The Gaza Zakat Committee is also known as the Islamic Zakat Society, which, alleges NGO Monitor, “works closely with the Hamas government and is managed by Hamas preacher Hazem Al-Sirraj”.³²⁵ In 2010, Al-Sirraj was the keynote speaker at a Hamas conference in Gaza for the “sons of Hamas”.³²⁶ The 200 attendees included Hamas “founders, scientists, politicians and academics”. Islamic Relief, however, has stated that “its board members and senior staff have no known affiliation with Hamas”.³²⁷

Concerns have been raised about Islamic Relief beyond the Palestinian Territories. In 2017, Bangladesh banned Islamic Relief – along with Muslim Aid and another charity – from working in the Rohingya refugee camps as a “preventative measure against potential radicalization in the camps”.³²⁸ No specific accusations were made. Islamic Relief responded that concerns about its intentions are “baseless and misguided”.³²⁹ In 2019, new allegations arose regarding the charity’s use of funds in Tunisia. A leaked report by the Tunisian Commission for Financial Analysis (CTAF) – a body established in 2015 to combat money laundering and terror financing – reportedly revealed concerns regarding the use of funds channelled to Islamic Relief’s branch in that country by the British parent branch. CTAF suspected that some \$50,000 of these funds were used to fund “logistical support” for jihadists on the Tunisian-Libyan border preparing to enter Libya.³³⁰ A local newspaper reported that, rather than seeing the construction of clinics and hospitals, CTAF was alarmed at the extent to which the charity’s money was being used for “unexplained and suspicious expenses”, including hotels, mobile phones and cars.³³¹

With an income of almost £130 million, Islamic Relief is arguably the most important British Muslim charity. But HSBC, UBS and Credit Suisse have all closed the charity’s accounts, and UBS has even blocked donations from its customers, allegedly due to concerns

323 Avi Issacharoff, “Hamas may not be moderate, but it’s cracking down on extremism”, *Ha'aretz*, December 3, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/hamas-may-not-be-moderate-but-it-s-cracking-down-on-extremism-1.2836>.

324 “لقاء الراديو إذاعة صوت الأقصى مع د هاني البنا عن العمل الإغاثي في فلسطين وتجربة الغاثة السالمية”, YouTube, November 15, 2016, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88RLL_qZiuM, 14:40-15:48.

325 “Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)”, NGO Monitor website, August 25, 2020, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/islamic_relief_worldwide_irw/.

326 “حماس في جبالها البلد تنظم مخيمها التربوي الأول”, *Maan News*, October 9, 2010, <https://www.maannews.net/news/322383.html>.

327 In July 2018, Islamic Relief USA wrote a rebuttal, which included this statement, to a series of allegations prepared in a report by the Middle East Forum and cited in testimony before the House Oversight Committee’s National Security Subcommittee in a hearing on “The Muslim Brotherhood’s Global Threat”. See Islamic Relief USA, Congressional Response to MEF, July 19, 2018, <http://irusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018.7.19-IRUSA-Congressional-Response-to-MEF-Cover-Letter-FINAL.docx.pdf>. For MEF’s report, see “Islamic Relief: Charity / Extremism / Terror”, Middle East Forum. For MEF’s response to Islamic Relief USA’s statement, see, “Islamic Relief Fails to Disprove Terror Links”, Middle East Forum website, July 30, 2018, <https://www.meforum.org/7291/islamic-relief-fails-to-disprove-terror-links>.

328 “As Rohingya Flee Myanmar, Bangladesh Bans Three Muslim Aid Groups”, Religious Literacy Project, Harvard Divinity School website, October 20, 2017, <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/news/rohingya-flee-myanmar-bangladesh-bans-three-muslim-aid-groups>.

329 *Ibid.*

330 Sam Westrop, “Islamic Relief and Qatar Implicated in Tunisian Terror Finance Investigation”, *The Rabwah Times* (Pakistan), February 9, 2019, <https://www.rabwah.net/islamic-relief-and-qatar-implicated-in-tunisian-terror-finance-investigation/>.

331 Nizar Bahloul, “Les frères Daïmi face à la suspicion de blanchiment d’argent” (The Daïmi brothers face suspicions of money laundering), *Business News* (Tunisia), January 20, 2019, <https://www.businessnews.com.tn/les-freres-daimi-face-a-la-suspicion-de-blanchiment-dargent,519,85190,3>.

over terrorist financing.³³² The charity denies any terrorist links. In July 2020, it was reported that it plans to contest its designation in Israel as a terrorist supporting organisation by lodging a petition in a Tel Aviv court.³³³

Aside from terrorist funding allegations, Islamic Relief has organised speaking events for numerous prominent Islamists, some of whom have been reported to espouse hateful or intolerant views on Jews, homosexuals and/or apostates.³³⁴ These controversial speakers include Yasir Qadhi,³³⁵ Haitham Al-Haddad,³³⁶ and Abdullah Hakim Quick.³³⁷ But it is not only the views of external speakers hosted by Islamic Relief that has attracted criticism of the charity. In August 2020, *The Times* reported that the entire board of trustees of Islamic Relief Worldwide was to resign, following the revelation that Almoutaz Tayara – who was appointed as the charity’s chairman a month prior – had described Hamas as “heroes” and Israel as the “Zionist enemy”.³³⁸ Referring to Hamas’ military wing, Tayara had written on Arabic social media some five years before, “The al-Qassem heroes did not graduate from the military academies of the UK and the US, unlike the rulers and royals of the Arab world who, there, were nurtured on cowardice and allegiance to the foreigners - the UK and the US”.³³⁹ He had also posted a caricature of former US president Barack Obama wearing an outfit branded with the Star of David. Tayara told *The Times*, “I do not support any terrorist movement. I do not support the Muslim Brotherhood or the Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades.

332 See Niki May Young, “Banking sector nerves blocking international relief, says Islamic Relief FD”, Civil Society website, November 8, 2012, <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/banking-sector-nerves-blocking-international-relief--says-islamic-relief-fd.html>; and Dipesh Gadhur, “Terror fear makes HSBC cut ties to Muslim charity”, *The Times*, January 3, 2016, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/terror-fear-makes-hsbc-cut-ties-to-muslim-charity-fgm5d796mlr>.

333 Oliver Holmes, “Islamic Relief to contest Israeli ‘terrorism’ allegations in court”, *The Guardian*, July 27, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/27/islamic-relief-to-contest-israeli-terrorism-allegations-in-court>. See also Shafiq Mandhai, “HSBC bank cuts off services to Muslim charity”, Al Jazeera, January 4, 2016, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/01/hdbc-bank-cuts-services-islamic-relief-charity-160104152429151.html>.

334 See Middle East Forum, “Islamic Relief: Charity / Extremism / Terror”. Islamic Relief USA issued a “rebuttal” to this claim, stating that the speakers mentioned in this report “are neither Islamic Relief USA officials nor employees, and do not represent the organization. Statements made in their personal capacities (over which the organization has no control) do not reflect the views or beliefs of Islamic Relief USA or its partners, who unequivocally condemn all forms of discrimination and intolerance”. See Islamic Relief USA, Congressional Response to MEF, p.3.

335 Yasir Qadhi is an American Salafi scholar, who has been invited to speak at events for Islamic Relief and other Islamic movement organisations. In 2017, Qadhi was hosted by Islamic Relief on an eight-city speaking tour (see “21st Century Muslim: A Balance Between Hope and Fear”, event listing, Islamic Relief UK, Facebook, April 24, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1681120611905862/>). Qadhi has argued that under an Islamic state, homosexuals should be killed, *haddud* punishments enforced, and *jihad* declared against non-Muslims if, after being invited to Islam, they refuse to convert or pay the *jizya*, a protection tax. See “Yasir Qadhi”, The Islamic Far Right in Britain blog, undated, <https://theislamicfarrightinbritain.wordpress.com/yasir-qadhi/>.

336 Haitham Al-Haddad was a guest speaker alongside Yasir Qadhi at a fundraising event for Pakistan in 2010 (see “Fundraising Dinner for Pakistan”, event listing, Islamic Relief UK, Facebook September 24, 2010, <http://standforpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/haddad-islamic-relief.jpg>). Al-Haddad has been recorded as describing Jews as in a “civilizational” conflict with Muslims. In a sermon delivered at the Al-Muntada Al-Islami Mosque in London, he described Jews as “the enemies of God, and the descendants of apes and pigs” and as “one of the armies of the Devil”. See Lucy Lips (pseud.), “More Wisdom of Haitham Al Haddad”, Harry’s Place blog, February 4, 2012, <http://hurryupharry.org/2012/02/04/more-wisdom-of-haitham-al-haddad/>; and “Haitham al-Haddad”, The Islamic Far Right in Britain blog. Al-Haddad has also expressed the view that under Islamic law, apostasy incurs the capital punishment of death. This is because apostasy is not just leaving a religion but a “way of life” and the apostate is a threat to Islam as a “way of life” and as a “political system”. See habibi (pseud.), “Haitham Haddad – No apostates will escape death”, Harry’s Place blog, February 25, 2015, <http://hurryupharry.org/2015/02/25/haitham-haddad-%E2%80%93-no-apostates-will-escape-death/>; and “Haitham al-Haddad”, The Islamic Far Right in Britain blog.

337 Abdullah Hakim Quick was a guest speaker at a 2009 fundraising event held by Islamic Relief USA (see “Feed the Needy Fundraiser”, event poster, Islamic Relief USA, September 2009, https://web.archive.org/web/20100613153815/https://seekersguidance.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/sg_ir_fundraiser_flier-1.jpg). In 2003, New Zealand’s Broadcasting Standards Authority found that a programme that included a lecture by Quick, in which he expressed his views on homosexuality, breached the country’s broadcasting standards for “hate speech”. In this lecture, Quick claimed AIDS was caused by the “filthy practices” of homosexuals, who he said “want to take us all down with them”, and asserted that the Islamic punishment for homosexuality is death (see New Zealand Broadcasting Standards Authority, “Clayton and Triangle Television Ltd”, Decision No: 2004-001, BSA website, February 26, 2004, <https://www.bsa.govt.nz/decisions/all-decisions/clayton-and-triangle-television-ltd-2004-001/>). Quick has been invited to speak at other Islamic Relief events, including a webinar held by Islamic Relief US, “Opening Our Hearts for Syrian Refugees”, held in 2012 (see “Opening Our Hearts for Syrian Refugees Webinar”, event listing, Islamic Relief US webpage, April 1, 2012, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20170305131804/http://irusa.org/opening-our-hearts-for-syrian-refugees-webinar/>).

338 Andrew Norfolk, “Entire board resigns at Islamic Relief Worldwide”, *The Times*, August 22, 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/entire-board-resigns-at-muslim-charity-tkntpgb2g>.

339 *Ibid.*

I am not an anti-Semite”.³⁴⁰ He added that he was “deeply ashamed” by his old remarks.

This scandal followed quickly on the heels of the resignation of Islamic Relief’s board member Heshmat Khalifa, who *The Times* had found to have remarked in 2014 and 2015, also on Arabic social media, that Jews were “grandchildren of monkeys and pigs” and that Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sissi is a “Zionist Pimp” for his support of Israel.³⁴¹ Islamic Relief released a statement apologising for Khalifa’s remarks, which it said were made in a private capacity, and added, “We reject and condemn terrorism and believe that all forms of discrimination – including anti-Semitism – are unacceptable. These values are fundamental to our organisation, our donors and the people we serve”.³⁴² Lorenzo Vidino, who revealed Tayara’s controversial remarks, said that his research “showed a pattern in which prominent trustees and upper-level management embrace material that is strongly anti-Semitic, and supports Hamas and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood”.³⁴³ He added, “While that doesn’t necessarily mean Islamic Relief is operationally tied to the Muslim Brotherhood, statements by the new chairman and others are very much in line with support for it”.

In addition to UG, another notable international coalition in support of the Palestinians include the Global Anti-Aggression Campaign (GAAC). This is an umbrella group established in 2003 and re-launched in 2005 to combat what it described as a “vicious aggression by Zionists and the American administration” directed at the Muslim *umma*.³⁴⁴ It is comprised of numerous Islamist leaders, intellectuals and activists. Its main activities include the organisation of international conferences, focusing on events in Palestine, Egypt, Iraq and Syria. Notable participants include Yusuf Al-Qaradawi; the London-based Hamas officer, Mohammed Sawalha; and his fellow co-founder of MAB, Anas Altikriti.³⁴⁵ GAAC has been described as exemplifying the problematic nature of distinguishing jihadist militant Islamism from the “moderate” Islamism sometimes associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, since designated terrorists and supporters of jihadist groups have worked together with Brotherhood figures through GAAC towards common goals.³⁴⁶

Marches and Media

In addition to this network of charities and coalitions, other Islamic Movement groups in Britain have played a supporting role in this overarching campaign, for example, as organisers, hosts, or sponsors of events. These groups include the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), the East London Mosque/London Muslim Centre (ELM/LMC), the Islamic Forum of

340 *Ibid.*

341 Andrew Norfolk and Ryan Watts, “Islamic Relief leader quits as Times discovers antisemitic posts”, *The Times*, July 24 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/islamic-relief-leader-quits-as-times-discovers-antisemitic-posts-5dplrw9vv>.

342 “Statement From Islamic Relief Worldwide”, Islamic Relief website, July 22, 2020, <https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/statement-from-islamic-relief-worldwide/>.

343 Damien McElroy and Nicky Harley, “New Islamic Relief Worldwide chairman celebrated Muslim Brotherhood on social media”, *The National*, August 27, 2020, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/new-islamic-relief-worldwide-chairman-celebrated-muslim-brotherhood-on-social-media-1.1069197>.

344 Steven Merley, “The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign 2003-2016: A Global Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi and Jihadi Alliance Against The West”, Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, February 2017, https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Global_Anti-Aggression_Campaign_2003-2016.pdf, p.13.

345 *Ibid.*, pp.9, 12, 13, 15-16, 22, 24.

346 *Ibid.*, pp.7, 11.

Europe (IFE), the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB),³⁴⁷ the Cordoba Foundation, and the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS). MAB, for example, has organised numerous protests against Israeli military action in the Palestinian Territories. In 2002 it organised the first national pro-Palestinian, anti-Israeli street march in London.³⁴⁸ More recently, in May 2019, the group organised a “national demonstration for Palestine”, again in London, along with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC), the Palestinian Forum in Britain, Friends of Al-Aqsa, and the Stop the War Coalition.³⁴⁹ The event was to protest not Israeli military action, but the 71st anniversary of the “Palestinian Nakba”, or “catastrophe” of Israel’s creation.

IHRC, a pro-Iranian Khomeinist group, has also been very active in organising rallies in support of the Palestinians. For many years, it has organised the Al-Quds Parade in London to protest against Zionism and what it has described as “the fake, political entity called Israel”.³⁵⁰ The event has attracted the support of other Islamic Movement groups, such as MCB and MAB.³⁵¹ But it has been criticised for the antisemitic language of its guest speakers, the presence of Hezbollah and Hamas flags, and slogans chanted by some of its participants in favour of Israel’s destruction.³⁵² In the words of the Community Security Trust,

*The purpose of this demonstration in London, as elsewhere throughout the world, is to agitate for violent ‘resistance’ and the destruction of the State of Israel under the euphemism of ‘liberating Al-Quds’ (Jerusalem). The context is militaristic, not political’.*³⁵³

A regular speaker at this event, including the 2019 parade, is the Iranian-born Mohammad Saeed Bahmanpour, who has openly called for the elimination of Israel, which he blames as the source of global Islamic terrorism.³⁵⁴ The chair of IHRC, Massoud Shadjareh, has explicitly indicated that the “message” of the Al-Quds Parade is “resistance”.³⁵⁵ In 2018, on Press TV UK, he said that the peace process and two-state solution are both “dead”, and that “resistance seems to be the only way forward”.³⁵⁶ In the exchange with the host, “resistance” was clearly spoken of in contrast to “peaceful protest”.³⁵⁷ At one of the parades, Shadjareh expressed desire for violent *jihād* in Palestine. He called to the crowd, “You know people are rushing in large numbers from Britain, from Europe, from all around the world, from Arab countries to go and do *jihād* in Syria. What about *jihād* in

347 MCB, British Muslims Urge Prime Minister to Act on Gaza, MCB website, August 1, 2014, <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/british-muslims-urge-prime-minister-to-act-on-gaza/>.

348 “Protesters stage anti-war rally”, BBC News, September 28, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_politics/2285861.stm; see also <https://www.mabonline.net/about/our-history/>.

349 MAB, Join the National Demonstration for Palestine, MAB website, May 10, 2019, <https://www.mabonline.net/join-national-demo-for-palestine/>.

350 IHRC, Event Report: Al Quds Day 2019, IHRC website, June 6, 2019, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/news/22777-event-report-al-quds-day-2019/>.

351 IHRC, Al Quds Day 2013, IHRC website, July 22, 2013, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/events/10581-event-alert-al-quds-day-2013/>.

352 See Emma Fox, *Islamic Human Rights Commission: Advocating for the Ayatollahs* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2019). Report available at <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/HJS-IHRC-Report-WEB.pdf>.

353 Community Secretary Trust, *THE CASE AGAINST HIZBOLLAH one party, one flag, one ideology*, Research Briefing (London: Community Secretary Trust, January 2018), p.4. Report available at <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/e/a/CST%20Hizbollah%20briefing%202018%20-%20for%20web%20.1516354907.pdf>.

354 Bahmanpour has called on Israel’s destruction for many years. As recently as 2018 and as far back as 2004. See “Al Quds Day in London – Hatred Takes Wing”, Harry’s Place blog, June 11, 2018, <https://hurrypharry.org/2018/06/11/al-quds-day-in-london-%E2%80%93-hatred-takes-wing/>; and “QUDS DAY 1424/2003”, Innovative Minds website, webpage captured November 13, 2004, <https://web.archive.org/web/20041113091524/http://www.inminds.co.uk/qudsday2003.html>.

355 “Massoud Shadjareh on Al Quds Day”, habibi, *YouTube*, June 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iODKJ5cWQOg>.

356 *Ibid.*

357 *Ibid.*

Palestine? Why not even a single one of them have gone to fight for Palestine for over 65 years?”³⁵⁸ Seemingly echoing Bahmanpour’s call for the elimination of Israel, he added, “Let’s get rid of the greatest oppressors in the region, the Zionists. Then all our other problems will be resolved, one by one”.³⁵⁹ In 2010, he expressed the view that the *intifadas* – which have included rock throwing, suicide bombings in Israeli shopping malls, and the firing of small rockets into Israeli towns – “showed everybody around the world that the masses could rise up against a seemingly all-powerful oppressor”.³⁶⁰ He urged for an “expanded Palestinian resistance”.³⁶¹

The campaign for Palestine is sometimes organised through fundraising and awareness-raising events. An important host of such events is ELM/LMC. In May 2013, for example, it hosted one for PSC entitled “An Evening for Palestinian Solidarity”, which was supported by IFE, MAB, the Cordoba Foundation and FOSIS.³⁶² In July 2015, ELM/LMC hosted another fundraising event for PSC with the same name, which was publicised by MCB and supported by IFE, FOSIS, the British Muslim Initiative (BMI).³⁶³ Some years earlier, in February 2009, a number of British Islamic Movement groups sent representatives to the Turkish ambassador in London to thank prime minister Erdoğan for his remarks lambasting Israeli actions in Gaza. Representatives were sent from MCB, IFE, the Islam Channel, BMI, Dawatul Islam, the Palestinian Return Centre, and the Palestinian Forum in Britain.³⁶⁴

Advocacy for the Palestinian cause amongst Islamic Movement groups is also expressed through publishing and broadcasting. The most prominent dedicated publishing outlet is the Middle East Monitor (MEMO), which, in its own words provides “focused and comprehensive coverage of Palestine, and its regional neighbours”.³⁶⁵ MEMO is directed by Daud Abdullah, who has said that although the Palestinian struggle is not a conflict between Muslims and Jews, the whole of Palestine “belongs to the Muslims”, since “the issue of Palestine is inter-twined in Muslim belief”.³⁶⁶ Other organisations regularly or occasionally publish articles, features and reports on the Palestinian issue. These include the Cordoba Foundation, which, in 2014, for example, published a report by Friends of Al-Aqsa founder, Ismail Adam Patel, on the Islamic juridical basis for the independence of a singular, “united” Palestinian state including the territory on which Israel sits.³⁶⁷

358 “Head of IHRC calls for Jihad in Palestine like in Syria”, Christians United for Israel – UK, Facebook, February 15, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=298722834174571>.

359 *Ibid.*

360 “Zionist-apartheid bullying fails at Intifada event at Venezuelan Embassy, London”, IHRC website, November 8, 2010, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/news/articles/9489-zionist-apartheid-bullying-fails-at-intifada-event-at-venezuelanembassy-london/>.

361 *Ibid.*

362 “An Evening for Palestine Solidarity”, event promotional poster, IFE website, March 2013, https://web.archive.org/web/20131121073551/http://islamicforumeurope.com/images_uploaded/2013/03/img3542.jpg.

363 “EVENT: An Evening For Palestine Solidarity”, MCB website, undated, www.mcb.org.uk/an-evening-for-palestine-solidarity-event/.

364 “British Muslims to deliver letter of thanks to Turkish Government”, MCB website, February 6, 2009, https://web.archive.org/web/20090217023540/http://www.mcb.org.uk/article_detail.php?article=announcement-774.

365 “About Us”, Middle East Monitor website, undated, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/about/>.

366 Interview with Daud Abdullah, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.131.

367 See, Ismail Adam Patel, *The Question of Palestinian Independence in Light of the Islamic Law of Nations*, Cordoba Papers, Volume 3, Issue 1, July 2014, https://www.thecordobafoundation.com/attach/A5_TCF_PAL_MAIN_FINAL.pdf. This report calls for a single state, Palestine, to replace Israel and the Palestinian Territories, and claims, somewhat misleadingly, that the Palestinians currently live on 22% of “historical Palestine”, implying that Israel occupies 78% of a previous state called Palestine. This refers more realistically to the British Mandate of Palestine, whose borders do not reflect a historical political or territorial entity. The figure of 22%, in fact, refers to the land the Palestinian Territories takes up within the Mandate, which includes modern day Jordan. For an insightful corrective to Patel’s claim, see <https://honestreporting.com/historic-palestine-misleading-anachronism/>.

The Islam Channel is another vehicle for Islamic Movement perspectives, including those on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It has reportedly assisted the fundraising efforts of some of the Islamic Movement charities mentioned above, including Islamic Relief.³⁶⁸ In 2011, the broadcasting watchdog, Ofcom, concluded, after an appeal, that two of the channel's political programmes, presented by IFE leader Azad Ali and the former MAB president Anas Altikriti, had breached impartiality codes.³⁶⁹ The ruling was described by *The Jewish Chronicle* as demonstrating "an anti-Israel, pro-Hamas bias".³⁷⁰ More recently, in 2019, the channel was rebuked for a programme, the content of which Ofcom deemed to amount to "antisemitic hate speech".³⁷¹

Complementing the English language Islam Channel, the Arabic TV channel, Al-Hiwar, was established in London in 2006 by members of BMI, including Azzam Tamimi, a self-confessed "sympathiser and supporter" of Hamas,³⁷² who has given the group advice on "media strategy".³⁷³ Tamimi is Al-Hiwar's chairman and editor-in-chief.³⁷⁴ In addition to programmes that focus on Muslim daily life in Europe, it regularly interviews Hamas and other Muslim Brotherhood figures, and runs a programme called *Palestinian Panorama*. As mentioned, its head of programming is Zaher Birawi. In 2018, in response to the US moving its embassy to Jerusalem, Tamimi remarked, "it does not mean a lot to us, because we want Palestine in its entirety".³⁷⁵ In 2009, Ofcom found the channel breached its Broadcasting Code for causing offence when, in an interview, Rachid al-Ghannouchi, a Tunisian Muslim Brotherhood figure, expressed admiration of the Qassam rockets fired into Israel.³⁷⁶ The channel breached the same code in 2018 since, in Ofcom's view, presenters of the programme *Free Speech* failed to challenge the views of several callers who expressed a desire for violent *jihad* after Israel introduced heightened security measures at the Al-Aqsa Mosque.³⁷⁷

368 Emma Webb, *Extremism on the Airwaves: Islamist Broadcasting in the UK* (London: Henry Jackson Society, November 2018), pp.31-4. Report available at <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/HJS-Extremism-on-the-Airwaves-Report-web.pdf>.

369 Ofcom Broadcast Bulletin, Issue number 196, December 19, 2011, pp.5-17, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20120117205856/http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/enforcement/broadcast-bulletins/obb196/obb196.pdf>; Simon Rucker, "Ofcom rejects Islam TV appeal over bias ruling", *The Jewish Chronicle*, December 29, 2011, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/ofcom-rejects-islam-tv-appeal-over-bias-ruling-1.30824?highlight=islam+channel>.

370 Robyn Rosen, "Ofcom rule against pro-Hamas Islam Channel", *The Jewish Chronicle*, November 8, 2010, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/ofcom-rule-against-pro-hamas-islam-channel-1.19249>.

371 Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, Issue number 388, October 7, 2019, p.27, available at https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/170882/issue-388-broadcast-and-on-demand-bulletin.pdf.

372 Jeevan Vasagar, "Palestinian radical was guest of US ambassador", *The Guardian*, December 21, 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/dec/21/israel>.

373 Azzam Tamimi, "End the siege of Gaza", *The Guardian*, November 21, 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/nov/21/israel-palestine-gaza>. On Tamimi, see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/dec/21/israel>.

374 "Dr Azzam Tamimi", MEMO Publishers website, undated, <https://www.memopublishers.com/authors/item/dr-azzam-tamimi>.

375 "U.K.-Based Palestinian Academic and Muslim Brotherhood Activist Azzam Al-Tamimi: Embassy Move to Jerusalem No Big Deal, Since Tel Aviv Is Also Part of Palestine", MEMRI TV website (original source, Hiwar TV), May 15, 2018, <https://www.memri.org/tv/hiwartv-chairman-azzam-tamimi-we-want-all-of-palestine>, emphasis added.

376 Al-Ghannouchi's comments expressed approval for Qassam rockets "in order to create intimidation and balance in power" and avoid excess killing, since, according to his view of his faith, Islam is a religion of peace. See Ofcom Broadcast Bulletin, Issue 143, October 12, 2009, https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/45811/issue143.pdf, pp.4-6.

377 Israel had introduced electronic security gates at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem following an "armed altercation that had taken place on 14 July 2017 between Israeli police and Israeli Arab gunmen near the Mosque, which had resulted in the death of two Israeli policemen". See Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, Issue 353, May 8, 2018, https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/113772/issue-353-broadcast-on-demand-bulletin.pdf, pp.6-14.

Transethnic Muslim Support for Hamas

In addition to the organisational support for Hamas described above, support expressed for Hamas by Islamic Movement individuals in Britain demonstrate further solidarity with the proscribed group. The former involvement of Muin Shabib in Hamas has been noted above. Mohammed Sawalha, a founder of MAB and former director of both BMI and Muslim Welfare House, was revealed in November 2017 to be a member of the political bureau of the group.³⁷⁸ He is also the deputy director of the International Committee to Break the Siege on Gaza, and has played a key role organising aid convoys to Gaza in collaboration with Viva Palestina. Anas Altikriti, Sawalha's fellow founder of MAB and BMI, has written in Britain's mainstream media in support of Hamas, distinguishing the group from violent jihadists such as Al-Qaeda and urging the British government to engage in dialogue with it.³⁷⁹ Tamimi, mentioned above, is another founding member of MAB, has explicitly stated his support for the group, and has sometimes been described as a spokesman for it in the West.³⁸⁰

But it is not just Arab revivalists in Britain that appear to endorse support for the Palestinian resistance to Israel or for Hamas. True to the *umma*-centricity of the Islamic Movement, this support is transethnic. Ismail Patel, the founder of Friends of Al-Aqsa and a former spokesman for BMI, for example, has publicly voiced the view that "Hamas is no terrorist organisation".³⁸¹ He has also taken part in the Miles of Smiles convoys to the Gaza Strip that aid the proscribed group, and has met with its leaders.³⁸² Daud Abdullah, mentioned above, a Muslim convert born in Grenada and a former deputy secretary general of MCB, says he has dedicated his life to the Palestinian cause.³⁸³ This is evident in his work as director of MEMO and long-time work for the Palestine Return Centre, where he is an advisor to the board.³⁸⁴ His support for Hamas was evidently expressed in his signing, in February 2009, of the pro-Hamas Istanbul Declaration, which triggered public criticism of MCB and official rebuke. This document, also signed by Sawalha,³⁸⁵ urged the Muslim *umma* to wage *jihad* against Israel "until the liberation of *all* of Palestine".³⁸⁶ It defined any country's support for Israel or deployment of forces in the "Muslim waters" facing Gaza as a "declaration of war", since the prevention of contraband

378 David Brown, "Finsbury mosque leader Mohammed Sawalha part of Hamas politburo", *The Times*, November 7, 2017, www.thetimes.co.uk/article/finsbury-mosque-leader-mohammed-sawalha-part-of-hamas-politburo-0cdn3gs80. See also, Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Muhammad Sawalha profile, Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, July 25, 2019, https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/app/uploads/2019/07/E_172_19.pdf.

379 Anas Altikriti, "Hamas is not al-Qaida", *The Guardian*, September 21, 2009, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/sep/21/hamas-al-qaida.

380 Martin Kramer, "Ask Professor Esposito", *Sandbox*, September 26, 2002, <http://martinkramer.org/sandbox/tag/azzam-tamimi/>; "Dr' Azzam Tamimi Declares Support For Terrorism", YouTube, July 10, 2006, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zh6q02J6dJk>.

381 "Friends of Al Aqsa and Ismail Patel", Stand for Peace website, March 12, 2014, <http://standforpeace.org.uk/friends-of-al-aqsa/>. More recently, Patel has defended his use of words by claiming that he was referring not to the military wing of Hamas, but its political wing. See Harry Yorke and Edward Malnick, "Exclusive: Islamist preacher who cited a Nazi comparison of Jews to 'fleas' to speak at Palestine Expo event in government building", *The Telegraph*, July 7, 2017, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/07/07/islamist-preacher-who-cited-nazi-comparison-of-jews-to-fleas-speaking-palestine-expo-event-in-government-building/>.

382 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Friends of Al-Aqsa profile; "Raed Salah, Hamas and Interpal", Harry's Place blog, June 22, 2011, <http://hurryupharry.org/2011/06/22/raed-salah-hamas-and-interpal/>.

383 Interview with Daud Abdullah, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, p.130.

384 "Dr Daud Abdullah", Middle East Monitor website, undated, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/6-author/dr-daud-abdullah/>; "Advisory Board", Palestine Return Centre website, undated, <https://prc.org.uk/en/page/3743/advisory-board>.

385 Jonathan Figchel, "The Jihad 'Istanbul declaration' and the Gaza Flotilla", Investigative Project on Terrorism, June 27, 2010, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/2032/the-jihad-istanbul-declaration-and-the-gaza>.

386 For the text of the Istanbul Declaration, see "A statement by the religious scholars and proselytisers (du'a) of the Islamic Nation (ummah) to all rulers and peoples concerning events in Gaza", published online at <http://hurryupharry.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/istpdf.pdf>.

arms and supplies was deemed as hostile to the Palestinian cause. In response, the British government, which was considering deploying naval forces to the Gaza coastline, suspended ties with the umbrella group. This decision was reversed in January 2010, but the damage done to MCB's relationship with the government was to prove enduring.³⁸⁷

Other non-Arab figures in the Islamic Movement have appeared to endorse support for Hamas or its leaders. Abdullah's associate at MEMO, the long-time chair of Interpal, Ibrahim Hewitt, along with his Interpal colleague Essam Yusuf, played an active role in the Miles of Smiles aid convoys to Gaza.³⁸⁸ These convoys were greeted by Hamas leaders, including prime minister Ismail Haniyeh³⁸⁹ and Deir al-Balah mayor Ahmad Al-Kurd.³⁹⁰ On a visit in 2011, Hewitt – along with Yusuf, Ismail Patel, and the CEO of the Islam Channel, Mohamed Ali Harrath – met with senior Hamas leaders.³⁹¹ Hewitt also paid his respects to the late Hamas founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, while visiting his grave in Gaza City.³⁹²

Additional examples of support expressed for Hamas amongst the staff of Islamic Movement groups include that of Junaid Ahmed, a trustee of the Islamic Forum Trust, a youth coordinator for IFE, and the representative for the East London Mosque/London Muslim Centre on the board of London Citizens. In 2011, Ahmed praised Hamas for its "steadfastness" against Israel, stating that, "every single [Palestinian] resistance fighter is an example for all of us to follow".³⁹³ Ahmed also allegedly described Sheikh Yassin as a "hero".³⁹⁴ Other IFE personnel, Muhammad Amin and Abu Umar, have likewise publicly expressed support for Hamas.³⁹⁵ Sir Iqbal Sacranie, the founding secretary general of MCB, attended a memorial service for Yassin at the Central Mosque in London just after his death, and referred to Hamas as "freedom fighters".³⁹⁶ In 2005, in an interview with the BBC, Sacranie compared Yassin to Gandhi. He said,

*Those who fight oppression, those who fight occupation, cannot be termed as terrorist, they are freedom fighters, in the same way as Nelson Mandela fought against apartheid, in the say [sic] way as Ghandi [sic] and many others fought the British rule in India.*³⁹⁷

387 See Alan Travis, "Hazel Blears' standoff with Muslim Council overshadows new anti-terror launch", *The Guardian*, March 25, 2000, www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/mar/25/muslim-council-britain-hazel-blears; and Nicholas Watt, "Government restores links with biggest Muslim group", *The Guardian*, January 15, 2010, www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/jan/15/government-relations-muslim-council-britain-mcb.

388 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, "Seniors in Interpal, a British fund that supports Hamas, play a major role in sending aid convoys to Gaza", The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center website, August 3, 2011, www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_11_172_2.pdf.

389 "Gaza officials stress commitment to reconciliation", Ma'an News Agency, June 11, 2012, <https://web.archive.org/web/20130704033130/http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=494483>.

390 "UK Group Sends Convoys to Gaza to Support Hamas", Investigative Project on Terrorism website, August 15, 2011, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/3104/uk-group-sends-convoys-to-gaza-to-support-hamas>.

391 "Raed Salah, Hamas and Interpal", Harry's Place blog.

392 habibi (pseud.), "Jeremy Corbyn's 'very good friend' Ibrahim Hewitt", Harry's Place blog, August 24, 2015, <https://hurryupharry.org/2015/08/24/jeremy-corbyns-very-good-friend-ibrahim-hewitt/>.

393 "Junaid Ahmed, Hamas Heroes, and London Citizens", Harry's Place blog, May 26, 2011, <http://hurryupharry.org/2011/05/26/junaid-ahmed-hamas-heroes-and-london-citizens/>. See also Martin Bright, "London Citizens stand by Islamist hardliner", *The Jewish Chronicle*, May 26, 2011, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/london-citizens-stand-by-islamist-hardliner-1.23338>.

394 *Ibid.*

395 Gilligan, "Muslim Aid: Hopeless Charity Commission whitewashes yet another Islamist group".

396 "Sacranie, Yassin and Gandhi", MCB Watch, October 17, 2005, <https://web.archive.org/web/20171010134150/http://mcbwatch.blogspot.in/2005/10/sacranie-yassin-and-gandhi.html>.

397 "A question of Leadership", programme transcript, September 16, 2005 (programme broadcast August 21, 2005 on BBC One), BBC website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/4171950.stm>.

This is not the same picture of the late Hamas founder as portrayed by Matthew Levitt, who observed that until his death, “Yassin remained committed to the group’s terrorist agenda as articulated in the Hamas charter, which declares, ‘There is no solution to the Palestinian question except through Jihad’”.³⁹⁸ More recently, Azad Ali, MEND’s former director of engagement and the former community affairs coordinator for IFE, expressed admiration for senior Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, describing Haniyeh as a suitable candidate to lead a prospective Muslim caliphate.³⁹⁹ He also “expressed disapproval of the Foreign Secretary for describing Hamas as a terrorist organisation” and “referred to Israel as ‘the Zionist terrorist state of Israel’”.⁴⁰⁰

A Campaign of De-legitimisation

The pro-Palestinian campaign work of British Islamic Movement organisations is typically presented by these groups in Western media outlets in the language of human rights and social justice. But a more strident ideological worldview seems to underlie this liberal discourse, a worldview that sees the liberation of the Palestinian people as inseparable from the elimination of Israel as a Jewish state. This is most evident in the support of so many Islamic Movement individuals and groups expressed for or given to Hamas, whose *raison d’être* is Israel’s destruction in order for Islam to return and reign supreme in the entire region. Even without expressing or endorsing terrorist acts in Israel, the rejection of a two-state solution or proposals for a single-state solution centred on a “united Palestine”, contains the assumption of Israel’s non-existence. The desire for Israel’s demise and for the revival of Islam in a “free Palestine” may also be detected in the Islamic Movement’s emphasis on “the right to return”, which, as Israeli author Amoz Oz and others have observed, would effectively end the state of Israel through a mass influx of Arab Muslim immigrants.⁴⁰¹ The inseparability of Palestinian freedom with Israel’s demise in the pro-Palestinian campaign of the Islamic Movement is also evident in the Khomeinist IHRC’s Al-Quds Day march held in London, as noted above, where chants, “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free”, consistently resound.⁴⁰² Given the importance of these tropes and themes in the work of the Islamic Movement, the case may be made that the collective efforts to support the Palestinians through Hamas and other anti-Zionist groups, and to fundraise and advocate for their rights through protests, publishing and broadcasting, amount to a decentralised but comprehensive de-legitimisation campaign ultimately aimed at Israel’s elimination.

398 Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, p.38.

399 Azad Ali, “Amir al-Mu’mineen”, *Between the Lines* blog, September 25, 2008, <http://web.archive.org/web/20120430044855/http://blog.islamicforumeurope.com/2008/09/25/amir-al-mu%E2%80%99minun/>.

400 Tom Wilson, *MEND: “Islamists Masquerading as Civil Libertarians”* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2017), p.13. Report available at <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/HJS-Mend-Report.pdf>.

401 Efraim Karsh, “The Palestinians and the ‘Right of Return’”, *Commentary*, May 1, 2001, pp.25-31, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258996793_The_Palestinians_and_the_Right_of_Return; Gilead Ini, “TIME FORGETS ‘RETURN MARCH’ IS ABOUT ‘RETURN’”, CAMERA website, April 10, 2018, <https://www.camera.org/article/time-forgets-return-march-is-about-return/>.

402 Josh Dell, “Hezbollah flags fly once again at London’s Quds Day march”, *The Jerusalem Post*, June 10, 2018, <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Hezbollah-flags-fly-once-again-at-Londons-Quds-Day-march-559650>.

‘Preventing Prevent’ and Counter-extremism

Another key campaign area involving numerous Islamic Movement groups is dedicated to criticising and undermining the British government’s counter-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, and its more recent counter-extremism strategy. This is driven by a perception that these strategies amount to a systematic effort to stigmatise Muslims as a “suspect community” and, more fundamentally, an attack on Islam as a “way of life”. Fundamentally, this is a conflict not just concerning human rights and social justice but the authority to determine, propagate and protect normative social values.

MCB and Prevent

In 2005, responding to the government’s consultation paper, “Preventing Extremism Together - Places of Worship”, MCB, assuming to speak for what it referred to as “*the* Muslim community”, expressed concern “with the government’s [counterterrorism] strategy as well as solutions for addressing terrorism, particularly since terrorism is now being equated to ‘Extremism’ and ‘Radicalisation’”.⁴⁰³

With the revision and re-launch of Prevent in 2011, MCB described the updated strategy as “flawed” and “counterproductive” for allegedly stigmatising Muslims.⁴⁰⁴ MCB’s secretary general, Farooq Murad, claimed that the government “engages in state-sponsored sectarianism by setting arbitrary measures on who is, and who isn’t an extremist”, and alleged that the government’s concept of extremism is driven by “neoconservative think tanks”.⁴⁰⁵ In 2015, in response to the government’s announcement that it was developing a counter-extremism strategy, Murad’s successor, Shuja Shafi, voiced its over-riding concern regarding the possibility of all Muslims being labelled “extremist” and of the perpetuation of “a deep misunderstanding of Islam”.⁴⁰⁶ Upon the launch of the counter-extremism strategy, Shafi that it was “based on [a] flawed analysis” and “fuzzy conceptions of British values”. It was reported that MCB would be launching its own alternative mosque-centred programme: “Instead of trying to liberalise British Islam,” *The Guardian* reported, “the new scheme will focus solely on a message that violence can never be used”.⁴⁰⁷ MCB subsequently denied it was planning an alternative to Prevent.⁴⁰⁸

MCB produced a special briefing note on Prevent for the Labour Party in 2016. In this 65-page report, it alleged that the counter-extremism strategy includes provisions that openly discriminate against Muslim communities, challenge Muslims’ participation in public life, and

403 MCB, “RESPONSE TO PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION ‘PREVENTING EXTREMISM TOGETHER’”, MCB website, undated, <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/response-Places-of-Worship-FINAL1.pdf>, p.3, emphasis added.

404 “Stigmatising Muslim civil society won’t avert terrorism – Prevent strategy still flawed”, MCB website, June 7, 2011, <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/stigmatising-muslim-civil-society-wont-avert-terrorism-prevent-strategy-still-flawed/>.

405 *Ibid.*

406 MCB, “Prime Minister’s Speech on Extremism: Muslim Council of Britain Makes Initial Response”, MCB website, July 20, 2015, www.mcb.org.uk/prime-ministers-speech-on-extremism-muslim-council-of-britain-makes-initial-response/.

407 Vikram Dodd, “Muslim Council of Britain to set up alternative counter-terror scheme”, *The Guardian*, October 19, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/oct/19/muslim-council-britain-set-up-alternative-counter-terror-scheme>.

408 5 Pillars, “MCB denies proposing an alternative to Prevent”, 5Pillars website, October 23, 2016, <https://5pillarsuk.com/2016/10/23/mcb-denies-proposing-an-alternative-to-prevent/>.

encourage spying on each other. It also accused the government of wrongly involving itself “in theological discussions, setting itself on a concerning trajectory”.⁴⁰⁹ It had levelled this accusation before, when the government published a report by Peter Clarke, the former head of counterterrorism for the Metropolitan Police, on the Trojan Horse affair in Birmingham. Clarke had found “compelling evidence of a determined effort by people with a shared ideology to gain control of the governing bodies of a small number of schools in Birmingham” and introduce within them “the segregationist attitudes and practices of a hardline and politicised strand of Sunni Islam”.⁴¹⁰ His reference to Islam made MCB uncomfortable, and the group lambasted the report and the government, stating,

*It is not for the state to define the theological boundaries of the Islamic faith and to create an “approved version of Islam” ... We are troubled that Mr Clarke delves into intricacies of Muslim theological debate raising serious allegations against a number of national Muslim organisations including the MCB.*⁴¹¹

In 2017, in partnership with the Association of Muslim Lawyers and other groups, MCB hosted an event entitled, “Prevent: Safeguarding or Spying?”. Echoing the ideas of other, more assertive Islamic Movement groups, as outlined below, MCB alleged in the publicity for the event the existence of “growing voices that it is leading to ‘spying’ on Muslim and other communities rather than safeguarding”.⁴¹²

By issuing such statements regarding the government’s counter-radicalisation and counter-extremism strategies, MCB has attracted criticism from other Muslim voices. High profile lawyer Nazir Afzal, for example, slammed MCB for being part of an “industry” of Muslim groups seeking to undermine these strategies by spreading misinformation and myths, including those that portray Muslims as victims of state-led discrimination.⁴¹³ In the last few years, however, MCB’s public stance on Prevent has been less overtly polemical, instead calling for a review of the policy and referring to the views of high profile non-Muslim public figures who support such a review.⁴¹⁴ In January 2019, when the government announced that an independent review of Prevent will take place, MCB welcomed the move. Twelve months earlier, when the Home Office announced the appointment of Sara Khan – a progressive-minded Muslim woman with a track record of campaigning for women’s rights – as the director of the newly formed Commission for Countering

409 MCB, *The Impact of Prevent on Muslim Communities: A Briefing to the Labour Party on how British Muslim Communities are Affected by Counter-Extremism Policies*, MCB website, February 2016, <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/MCB-CT-Briefing2.pdf>, pp.4, 5.

410 “Oral statement by Nicky Morgan on the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter”, July 22, 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/oral-statement-by-nicky-morgan-on-the-trojan-horse-letter>; and Peter Clarke, “Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter”, HC 576 (London: House of Commons, July 2014), www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340526/HC_576_accessible_-_pdf, p.48.

411 MCB, “The Muslim Council of Britain Responds to Peter Clarke’s ‘Trojan Horse’ Letter Report”, MCB website, July 23, 2014, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/the-muslim-council-of-britain-responds-to-peter-clarke-s-trojan-horse-letter-report/>. It should be noted that Clarke’s report was not in any way representative of the government’s view and offered no judgement regarding what constitutes “true” Islam. It merely noted that an understanding of Islam informed much of the thinking behind the actions and attitudes he observed.

412 “Prevent: Safeguarding or Spying – Event”, MCB website, April 7, 2017, <https://mcb.org.uk/mcb-updates/prevent-safeguarding-or-spying/>.

413 Andrew Norfolk, “‘Myths’ by Muslims hit Prevent campaign to fight terror”, *The Times*, June 3, 2017, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/myths-by-muslims-hit-anti-terror-campaign-0lqf9j5s>.

414 “Muslim Council of Britain Parliamentary Briefing – Amendment calling for an Independent Review of Prevent Counter-Terrorism & Border Security Bill”, MCB website, November 5, 2018, <https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Independent-Review-of-Prevent-CTSB-05112018.pdf>.

Extremism, MCB expressed its “grave concerns”.⁴¹⁵ It joined other Islamic Movement groups who viewed Khan’s support for the government’s counter-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, as a sell-out.⁴¹⁶

Cage: an Alternative Policy “Framework”

Several Islamic Movement groups – including Cage, MEND, FOSIS and the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) – have taken a more antagonistic stance than MCB on Prevent and the government’s counter-extremism approach.

Cage has voiced critical concerns regarding Prevent since 2008 and has consistently argued that the strategy should be abolished. It has published numerous reports and organised numerous talks on university campuses arguing against the strategy. These talks have included instructions for students to “sabotage” it.⁴¹⁷ The scrapping of Prevent was the first and most prominent of eight recommendations Cage proposed in August 2019 as part of an alternative policy “framework” for countering terrorism and extremism.⁴¹⁸ In 2018, a Cage staff member, Alim Islam, described Prevent as “a flawed programme which alienates the Muslim community and it is also an affront to due process and therefore is a long term a threat to society itself”.⁴¹⁹ He claimed that Prevent and similar programmes abroad are manufacturing “a faulty narrative in order to build a sector to deform Islam”. Prevent and similar initiatives, he claimed, “essentially seek to remould Islamic beliefs”. He even insinuated that “ramping up fear around Islam” was being done by those working in counter-radicalisation and related initiatives for their financial benefit.⁴²⁰

In a glossy report published in January 2019, Cage described the government’s counter-extremism strategy as an “oppressive project” based on an “elastic” definition of “extremism” that “can be adapted as per the state’s shifting agendas”.⁴²¹ The report attacked the newly formed Commission for Countering Extremism (CCE), seeking to discredit individuals working for the commission, including its expert group. The composition of this group, alleged the report, reflected the “undercurrent” of CCE’s Islamophobia, despite the fact that some of CCE’s expert group have been critical of Prevent.⁴²² The report also claimed “the very existence of the CCE is tied to the

415 “COMMISSION FOR COUNTERING EXTREMISM: MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN URGES CAUTION”, MCB website, January 25, 2018, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/commission-for-countering-extremism-muslim-council-of-britain-urges-caution/>.

416 FOSIS and MEND, for example, criticised Khan’s appointment or called for her removal from this role. See “FOSIS expresses deep concern over the government’s counter-extremism strategy following its announcement of Sara Khan as the new head of the Commission for Countering Extremism”, FOSIS press release, Facebook, January 27, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/fosischannel/posts/1568596023177632>; and “Remove Sara Khan as head of ‘Commission for Countering Extremism’”, MEND website, January 29, 2018, <https://www.mend.org.uk/whats-new/action-alerts/remove-sara-khan-as-head-of-commission-for-countering-extremism/>.

417 Gordon Rayner and Tom Whitehead, “Six universities face inquiry over Cage campus talks”, *The Telegraph*, January 6, 2016, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/12085765/Six-universities-face-inquiry-over-Cage-campus-talks.html>.

418 “CAGE’s 8 point plan towards a healthy, safe society beyond PREVENT”, Cage website, August 2019, <https://www.cage.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CAGE%E2%80%99s-8-point-plan-towards-a-healthy-safe-society-beyond-PREVENT.pdf>. Strictly speaking, the so-called plan Cage presents is not an alternative to Prevent since it does not aim to counter radicalisation, the goal of Prevent. It seeks to achieve an even more vaguely articulated goal, that of a safe and healthy society without violence.

419 Alim Islam, “CAGE is having a huge impact on the PREVENT and CVE lobbies who seek to silence us – here’s why”, Cage website, October 25, 2018, <https://www.cage.ngo/cage-is-having-a-huge-impact-on-the-prevent-and-cve-lobbies-who-seek-to-silence-us-heres-why>.

420 *Ibid.*

421 Cage, *CCE Exposed: The Islamophobia Industry Policing Thoughts & Beliefs* (London: CAGE Advocacy UK, 2019), p.15, available from <https://www.cage.ngo/product/cce-exposed-report-pdf>.

422 *Ibid.*, p.26. The report acknowledges that one of CCE’s expert group, Jamie Bartlett, has voiced critical concern’s about Prevent’s “mission creep”. Nonetheless, it criticises him for failing to understand the “fundamental nature of Prevent”, as a political project intentionally designed to create a securitised, closed society. See pp.39-41.

greater project of manufacturing a state compliant and fundamentally compromised version of Islam".⁴²³ It suggested that the government's counter-terrorism and counter-extremism strategies' "real purpose" is the "co-option or subjugation of Islam".⁴²⁴

More recently, in January 2020, Cage's aforementioned "8 point plan" was re-invigorated and elaborated upon in a 50-page report by the group.⁴²⁵ Coinciding with this report, Cage organised and published through MEMO a supporting letter signed by over 100 academics and activists. Signatories included several notable Islamic Movement figures, such as Anas Altikriti and Ismail Patel, but only a fraction of those who might have been enlisted. The report argues for the scrapping not just of Prevent, but also of "fundamental British values", the government's yardstick with which to measure "extremism".⁴²⁶ The report reveals what is arguably Cage's main concern with Prevent and the government's counter-extremism strategy, namely, the risk they allegedly pose of "criminalising a wide range of perfectly *un-violent* beliefs and political activity".⁴²⁷ Cage sees the abolition of Prevent as a necessary step to "a transformation of the wider political culture and of society".⁴²⁸ The importance of Prevent for Cage, it seems, is that it obstructs the re-engineering of social and political values in line with Islam.

Cage's view that Prevent and the government's broader counter-extremism efforts are part of a state-led programme of social control was evident in its response to Ofsted's criticism of and legal action against a Muslim secondary school that it found to have illegally segregated male and female students. In October 2017, the court of appeal ruled in Ofsted's favour that the sex-segregation of boys and girls in Al-Hijrah School, a member of the Association of Muslim Schools, breached the 2010 Equalities Act.⁴²⁹ Ofsted had inspected the school and found that it "failed to keep pupils safe from extreme views that undermine fundamental British values".⁴³⁰ Ofsted also found Islamic books in the school library that "included derogatory comments about, and the incitement of violence towards, women".⁴³¹ It is noteworthy that controversial views on women, including their obligation not to refuse their husbands' demands for sex without "good reasons", may be found in other books written or endorsed by Islamic Movement individuals or groups.⁴³²

The Al-Hijrah case is arguably a good example of non-violent Islamist extremism.⁴³³ But Cage – which often voices the importance of due process – slammed the verdict. It asserted that the government was "imposing a way of thinking on children with methods reminiscent of a dictatorship".⁴³⁴ Disregarding Ofsted's concern with ensuring all

423 *Ibid.*, p.25.

424 *Ibid.*, p.26.

425 Cage, *Beyond PREVENT: A Real Alternative To Securitised Policies* (London: CAGE Advocacy UK, 2020), available from <https://www.cage.ngo/product/beyond-prevent-a-real-alternative-to-securitised-policies>.

426 *Ibid.*, p.37.

427 *Ibid.*, p.36.

428 *Ibid.*

429 Richard Adams, "Islamic school's gender segregation is unlawful, court of appeal rules", *The Guardian*, October 13, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/13/islamic-school-gender-segregation-unlawful-court-of-appeal>.

430 Al-Hijrah School Ofsted report, October 20, 2017, <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2731875>, p.1.

431 *Ibid.*, pp.1, 3.

432 See, for example, Sarwar, *Sex Education*, p.23, and Abdul Wahid Hamid, *Islam: The Natural Way* (London: Muslim Educational and Literary Services, 1989), pp.86-87. Sarwar's thinking has been endorsed by MCB, which included his book, *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings*, in a resource pack for schools that was launched nationwide in 2004. See Perry, "Mainstream Islamism in Britain", pp.17-18.

433 See Perry, "Mainstream Islamism in Britain", pp.21-22.

434 "Outlawing gender segregation: How PREVENT and Ofsted are about conditioning our children, neo-con style", Cage website, October 29, 2017, <https://www.cage.ngo/outlawing-gender-segregation-how-prevent-and-ofsted-are-about-conditioning-our-children-neo-con-style>.

students were given equal opportunities and an education preparing them for 21st century Britain, and ignoring the misogynistic and inciteful views found in the books in the library of Al-Hijrah and other schools, Cage accused the government of imposing normative values through its security policy. It stated, “Through the use of PREVENT to police ‘British values’ and a compliant neo-conservative dominated Ofsted, the government is embarking on a programme of social conditioning that tramples upon religious freedom”.⁴³⁵

FOSIS and “Preventing Prevent” on Campuses

Universities have unsurprisingly become the most active environment where Islamic Movement groups and individuals have campaigned most vigorously for the scrapping of Prevent and the counter-extremism strategy. The most active of these groups is the Federation of Student Islamic Groups (FOSIS), which has played a key role in the “Preventing Prevent” campaign alongside Cage on university campuses. Echoing Cage’s corporate view, FOSIS has called for the “complete abolition” of Prevent, describing it as a “failed strategy” that is “divisive, toxic and discriminatory”.⁴³⁶ In 2015, its vice president of student affairs, Ibrahim Ali, whilst lauding the work of Cage, declared that “Prevent in itself is a racist agenda; it’s an Islamophobic agenda”.⁴³⁷

The description of Prevent as inherently Islamophobic has been similarly expressed by FOSIS’s allies in its campaign to scrap Prevent, the National Union of Students (NUS), and a group called Students Not Suspects. In 2015, the NUS, with the help of FOSIS, produced the *Preventing Prevent Handbook*, the revised version of which states, “Islamophobia is built in to Prevent”.⁴³⁸ This manual provides explanations of how Prevent operates, arguments against its legitimacy, and guidelines and resources for engaging in the “battle” against the strategy on university campuses and nationally. The goal of this campaign, the manual states, is the repeal of Prevent’s legal underpinnings. Belying the sympathies of its authors with four key Islamic Movement groups, the manual lists FOSIS, as well as Cage, MEND, and the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) as key contacts in the Preventing Prevent campaign.⁴³⁹ The manual recommends IHRC and Cage as organisations that students can “turn to” if they have been affected by Prevent.⁴⁴⁰ And it lists multiple reports by Cage and a report by IHRC as recommended reading.⁴⁴¹

In November 2017, during Islamophobia Awareness Month, FOSIS assisted with the organisation of a speaking tour of universities.⁴⁴² The main themes of the tour were “PREVENT, Islamophobia and the erosion of civil liberties” and the main organiser and speaker for the tour was Ilyas Nagdee, then the NUS black students’ officer. Nagdee played a key role in the production of the *Muslim Students’ Survey*, also launched during Islamophobia Awareness Month in 2017.⁴⁴³

435 *Ibid.*

436 “Independent Review of the Prevent Policy”, FOSIS website, January 22, 2019, <https://www.fosis.org.uk/press-releases/independent-review-prevent-policy/>.

437 Hannah Stuart, *Understanding Cage: A Public Information Dossier* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2015), p.22.

438 “Preventing Prevent: an updated handbook”, NUS Connect website, November 15, 2017, <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/preventing-prevent-an-updated-handbook>, p.80.

439 *Ibid.*, p.93.

440 *Ibid.*, p.95.

441 *Ibid.*, pp.96-97.

442 “Students Not Suspects tour: Prevent & Civil Liberties”, NUS Black Students’ Campaign, Facebook, November 28, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/events/523275914694032/>.

443 “The Experience of Muslim Students in 2017-18”, National Union of Students, March 18, 2018, p.7. Report available from <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/the-experience-of-muslim-students-in-2017-18>.

Ostensibly to answer the question, “What does it mean to be Muslim in Britain today?”, the survey sought to provide evidence of the “chilling effect” of Prevent and the prevalence of “gendered Islamophobia” on campuses. The findings of the survey, which included a third of Muslim students feeling “negatively affected by Prevent”, were written up in a report entitled, *The Experiences of Muslim Students in 2017–18*.⁴⁴⁴ This report provided the basis for a chapter in a book on Islamophobia published by Routledge.⁴⁴⁵

More recently, in January 2019, assuming a representative voice for Britain’s diverse Muslim communities, FOSIS’s website stated, “The Prevent policy is Islamophobic, simplistic and is not credible within the Muslim community”.⁴⁴⁶ In the same month, FOSIS’s current vice president of student affairs, Akiqul Hoque, described Prevent as “divisive, toxic and discriminatory on campuses, particularly for Islamic societies”.⁴⁴⁷ He also claimed that the strategy “has led to the development of irrational fear among Muslim students, preventing them from engaging in political activism on a student and community level”. This echoes the view of numerous Islamic Movement organisations and activists, as well as their mainstream allies, that Prevent is having a “chilling effect” on the freedom of speech at British university campuses.

Anecdotal evidence supporting this view was collected by the government’s Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR), which consulted nationally on the matter of free speech in universities.⁴⁴⁸ The committee, in acknowledging concerns regarding Muslim students’ self-censorship, noted the existence of “fear and confusion over the Prevent strategy” arising due to a lack of clarity on the Prevent duty and what might constitute extremism.⁴⁴⁹ As such, it recommended a review of Prevent, which the government has committed to, including an assessment of its effectiveness and impact on the freedom of speech and association. A similar, reasoned response to the issue was expressed by Index on Censorship, which also recommended a review of Prevent, rather than its abolition.⁴⁵⁰ The JCHR has been very critical of the government’s counter-extremism approach, particularly its proposed Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill.⁴⁵¹ But whilst recognising some anecdotal evidence of a “chilling effect” on some students’ political activism, it urged for greater transparency over Prevent reporting to help “dispel myths about Prevent,” and stated that it “strongly endorses the need for Prevent as a strategy for preventing the development of terrorism”.⁴⁵²

444 The report states, “One-third of our survey respondents felt negatively affected by the Prevent strategy. This included participating less in political activity or debate; having events they have organised being restricted or cancelled; or being reported through Prevent”. No information is provided, however, regarding the alleged events cancelled. No disaggregated data was published with this report, which makes it difficult to accept or reject the conclusions drawn from it. *Ibid.*, p.12.

445 Hareem Ghani and Ilyas Nagdee, “Islamophobia in UK universities”, in *The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia*, Irene Zempi and Imran Awan, eds. (London: Routledge, 2019), <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351135559-16>.

446 “We at FOSIS completely reject the findings of the Henry Jackson Society and Student Rights 17/18 report on extremist speakers on UK campuses”, FOSIS press release, Facebook, January 21, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/fosischannel/posts/2020977841272779>.

447 “We at FOSIS are encouraged to hear that there will be an independent review of the government’s Prevent duty”, FOSIS press release, Facebook, January 22, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/fosischannel/posts/2022374467799783/>.

448 House of Commons and House of Lords, “Freedom of Speech in Universities”, Fourth Report of Session 2017-19, HC 589, HL PAPER 111, March 27, 2018, p.5. Report available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201719/jtselect/jtrights/589/589.pdf>.

449 *Ibid.*, pp.3, 6, 9, 21.

450 Index on Censorship, *Uncomfortable, but educational: Freedom of expression in UK universities*, 2018, <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Index-on-Censorship-Free-Speech-on-Campus-Report-Design-WebA.pdf>, p.13.

451 House of Lords and House of Commons, “Counter-Extremism”, Second Report of Session 2016-17, HL Paper 39, HC 105, July 20, 2016, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201617/jtselect/jtrights/105/105.pdf>.

452 House of Commons and House of Lords, “Freedom of Speech in Universities”, pp.33, 45.

This has not deterred FOSIS and other Islamic Movement groups from campaigning against any version of the strategy and expressing their concerns in alarmist terms. In October 2018, a FOSIS editorial stated, “the Prevent duty means that speakers who are overtly critical of failed policy or those who scrutinise British foreign policy of recent years will be censored”.⁴⁵³ This claim does not appear supported by the evidence. As noted by one academic providing evidence to the JCHR, “There is no evidence that any event has ever been cancelled in exercising the Prevent duty”.⁴⁵⁴ This claim also, deliberately or not, blurs the distinction between speakers who are merely critical of government policy and those who are not just critical of government policy but also advocate extremist views that present the risk of drawing others into terrorism. Even supremacist, inciteful, hateful, conspiratorial or bigoted views are not the concern of the Prevent duty unless they are deemed to present such a risk.

This was clarified in the first legal case brought against the Prevent duty by Salman Butt in 2017. Butt alleged that the Prevent duty was having a “chilling effect” on free speech in universities. The judge rejected this charge, since the requirement to have “due regard” to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism, he said, “does not override” the requirement on higher education institutions to exercise “particular regard” of the duty to ensure freedom of speech and academic freedom.⁴⁵⁵ Butt won a Court of Appeal challenge in March 2019, with the appeal court holding that the guidance for the duty was not sufficiently worded to inform universities of their competing obligations both to ensure free speech and to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.⁴⁵⁶ So it required the government to re-draft the wording of the guidance. What the court of appeal found objectionable was not the duty itself but the guidance for it. However, this nuance – the difference between the wording of the guidance for the duty and its interpretation by university decision makers, on one hand, and, on the other hand, the duty itself – is obfuscated by FOSIS and its like-minded allies, who call for the complete abandonment of Prevent.

The FOSIS/NUS-produced Preventing Prevent manual states, “Institutions will likely become a lot more risk averse when dealing with external speakers on campus”.⁴⁵⁷ But the Prevent duty does not seem to have negatively affected the number of extremist speakers at British universities since its introduction in 2015. The platforms given to such speakers, if anything, appear to have risen. A study by Student Rights argued that in the three years from 2015/16 to 2017/18 the number of extremist speakers at universities actually rose.⁴⁵⁸

453 Akiqul Hoque, “The UK’s counterterrorism guidance should be scrapped”, *Times Higher Education*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/30848>.

454 Joint Committee on Human Rights, “Oral evidence: Freedom of Speech in Universities”, HC 589, January 17, 2018, <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/human-rights-committee/freedom-of-speech-in-universities/oral/77341.pdf>, Q.55, p.14. See also House of Commons and House of Lords, “Freedom of Speech in Universities”, para.70, p.31.

455 [2017] EWHC 1930 (Admin), https://www.bndmans.com/uploads/files/documents/CO-6361-2015_-_Butt_v_Secretary_of_State_for_the_Home_Department_-_Final...pdf, para. 62.

456 [2019] EWCA Civ 256, <http://www.baillii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2019/256.pdf>.

457 “Preventing Prevent: an updated handbook”, p.61.

458 See Emma Fox, *Extreme Speakers and Events in the 2017/18 Academic Year* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2019), p.99. Report available at <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/HJS-Extreme-Speakers-and-Events-Report-.pdf>. This report utilised the government’s definition of extremism, which, as defined in the 2011 iteration of the government’s counter-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, is the “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”, as well as “calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas” (see Home Office, Prevent Strategy, Cm 8092, 2011, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf). Fox’s report catalogued events promoted to students “that featured speakers with a history of extreme or intolerant views, or representatives of organisations that have a history of promoting such speakers”. The events in this report included those that “were sponsored by, or raised funds for, an organisation linked to ‘extremism’”, as well those “that featured or endorsed extremist views”. Events off campus that were organised by students or a student organisation were also included (see p.13).

FOSIS has also sought to undermine Prevent by downplaying the importance of the social environment of campuses for radicalisation and by overemphasising the role of the Internet in this regard. Hoque has stated, “The problem of radicalisation tends to exist online ... Looking at past perpetrators of terrorism, most tend not to have had anything to do with universities and education”.⁴⁵⁹ But, as one researcher warns, there is a danger in overstating the role of the Internet as a radicalising factor, “cases of radicalisation which can be proven to have been induced exclusively by the consumption of online propaganda are few and far between.”⁴⁶⁰ Moreover, numerous convicted terrorists have attended British universities.⁴⁶¹

MEND, Prevent, and Pre-holocaust Comparisons

Echoing Cage and FOSIS’s call for the abolition of Prevent, MEND has similarly called on policy makers to commit to scrap the strategy. In its *Muslim Manifesto*, published for the 2017 general election, the group called on politicians to commit to “repealing the current statutory Prevent duty, and replacing this with a more effective, evidence based and non-discriminatory counter-terrorism strategy by engaging with Muslim communities”.⁴⁶² Its more recent 2019 manifesto stated, “MEND is of the firm belief that the PREVENT duty should be repealed”.⁴⁶³ As with Cage and FOSIS, MEND has described Prevent and the counter-extremism strategy as state-sponsored Islamophobia. Some staff and literature produced by the group have portrayed these strategies as a form of institutionalised anti-Muslim bigotry deliberately targeting aspects of Islamic ideas and practices and curtailing Muslims’ civil liberties.⁴⁶⁴

Perhaps most concerning about MEND’s campaign work in this area are the crude and unjustified comparisons it has made juxtaposing the alleged experience of British Muslims vis-à-vis Prevent with the “pre-conditions” of the Nazi Holocaust. Such comparisons invite the alarming but unsupported view that Muslims are being deliberately persecuted by an oppressive state, facing the longer-term risk of mass incarceration and extermination. In January 2018, at an event commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day, the group’s head of policy and research, Isobel Ingham-Barrow asserted, regarding the situation faced by Muslims in Britain, that we may be close to the conditions that allowed the Holocaust to happen.⁴⁶⁵ This echoes the words of Cage’s outreach director, Mozzam Begg, who at a “Preventing Prevent” talk at SOAS in 2015, “compared the plight of Muslims in Britain to Jews in Eastern Europe before the rise of the Nazis”.⁴⁶⁶ It also amplifies similar comparisons between the plight of Muslims in modern Britain and Jews in Nazi Germany made in 2007

459 Akiqul Hoque, “The UK’s counterterrorism guidance should be scrapped”.

460 Linda Schlegel, “Online-Radicalisation: Myth or Reality?”, *Facts & Findings* no. 314, September 2018, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. 7, p.2. Available at https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=baca4877-ac6c-4df4-ae77-28b4ba2aafac&groupId=252038.

461 James Brandon, “British Universities Continue to Breed Extremists”, *CTC Sentinel*, vol.4, no.1, January 2011, <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/CTCSentinel-Vol4Iss12.pdf>, pp.6-8.

462 “mend Muslim Manifesto 2017”, MEND website, May 2017, https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/MEND-Muslim-Manifesto-2017_FINAL_lowres-1.pdf, pp.7, 39.

463 “mend Policy Pledges 2019”, MEND website, November 11, 2019, https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/MEND-Policy-Pledges-2019_Final_11.11.19.pdf, p.30

464 Wilson, *MEND: ‘Islamists Masquerading as Civil Libertarians’*.

465 “MEND Head of Policy speech in commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day”, MEND website, January 24, 2018, <https://www.mend.org.uk/news/mend-head-policy-speech-commemoration-holocaust-memorial-day/>.

466 Rayner and Whitehead, “Six universities face inquiry over Cage campus talks”.

by Muhammad Abdul Bari, then the secretary general of MCB,⁴⁶⁷ and in 2011 by Ibrahim Mogra, then an MCB central working committee member.⁴⁶⁸

Demonstrating a similar understanding of Prevent as the other Islamic Movement organisations mentioned above, MEND has articulated a view of the strategy as purposely demonising Muslims. In response to the government's call for evidence for an independent review of Prevent, MEND's CEO, Shazad Amin, wrote, "Since its inception, PREVENT has served to marginalise Muslim communities and place them within a pre-criminalised space as a suspect community".⁴⁶⁹ Amin expressed MEND's desire for the review to be a stepping stone to the scrapping of Prevent.

MEND's evidence also argued that Prevent was having a detrimental effect in schools. It claimed:

*The concerns surrounding PREVENT have a high potential to severely impact the way in which children perceive and interact with their education; whether that be through asking questions and participating in debates, engaging in extra-curricular activities and responsibilities, involving themselves in activism and critical thinking, having the confidence to engage in public speaking, or having the motivation to achieve their potential.*⁴⁷⁰

However, contrasting with this view, a study conducted by academics from several universities on the implementation of the Prevent duty in further education – the first of its kind – concluded that although there was some "some criticism of, and scepticism about the efficacy of the Prevent duty" amongst school leaders, there was also widespread support for a strategy like Prevent.⁴⁷¹ Its authors acknowledged concerns about the stigmatisation of Muslim students in the context of the Prevent duty, but were also informed about a variety of efforts to address such concerns. Extremism, they noted, was being treated in schools not exclusively as an Islamist issue. Furthermore, its authors wrote, "We found relatively little support among respondents for the idea that the duty has led to a 'chilling effect' on conversations with students in the classroom and beyond".⁴⁷² This may have been, they wrote, because "staff who were concerned about this possible side-effect of the duty took pre-emptive action to minimise the risk of such effects emerging", such as "reinvigorating debating clubs, or promoting more discussion of Prevent-related issues in the classroom". Some of those interviewed stated that "students not only continued to engage in discussions in the classroom and in other learning

467 Tom Harper, "Ministers compared to Nazis over Islam stigma", *The Daily Telegraph*, December 18, 2006, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1537129/Ministers-compared-to-Nazis-over-Islam-stigma.html>; Rachel Sylvester and Alice Thomson, "Dr Bari: Government stoking Muslim tension", *The Daily Telegraph*, November 10, 2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1568881/Dr-Bari-Government-stoking-Muslim-tension.html>

468 Robert Booth, "Muslim leaders back Lady Warsi's comments on Islamophobia", *The Guardian*, January 20, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/20/muslim-leaders-lady-warsi-islamophobia>. See also Trevor Phillips, John Jenkins and Martyn Frampton, *On Islamophobia: The Problem of Definition* (London: Policy Exchange, 2019), <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/On-Islamophobia.pdf>, p.81.

469 MEND, "Evidence Submitted to the Independent Review of PREVENT: A Submission from Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND)", MEND website, December 2019, <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/PREVENT-Submission-MEND.pdf>, p.5.

470 *Ibid.*, p.26

471 Joel Busher, Tufyal Choudhury, Paul Thomas, and Gareth Harris, *What the Prevent duty means for schools and colleges in England: An analysis of educationalists' experiences*, (London: Aziz Foundation, 2017), p.7. Report available at https://pure.coventry.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/11090509/Busher_Choudhury_Thomas_Harris_What_the_Prevent_duty_means_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf.

472 *Ibid.*, p.6.

environments as they had done prior to the introduction of the duty”, but had been involved in “more open discussions on issues around extremism”.⁴⁷³

IHRC and “Together Against Prevent”

The Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) has also played an active role in the campaign against Prevent since at least 2009,⁴⁷⁴ employing a similar alarmist narrative as MEND and FOSIS. The group has said of the government’s definition of extremism that it “stretches the scope of extremist activity to draconian proportions, making it so wide that it is capable of ensnaring people who oppose government policies or hold conservative views such as disapproval of abortion, music or same-sex marriage”.⁴⁷⁵ In 2015, IHRC co-launched a campaign against Prevent and the counter-extremism strategy, called “Together Against Prevent”.⁴⁷⁶ The initiative claimed that Prevent uses “draconian surveillance methods”, whilst “stigmatising and criminalising entire Muslim communities”. It also described fundamental British values as merely “subjective”, dismissing as “flawed” the notion that “extremist” ideology is an important causal factor of terrorism in Britain. IHRC produced a webpage of resources for the initiative aimed at empowering people who have been approached by Prevent officers to “fight back” and “challenge” them.⁴⁷⁷

In 2017, IHRC informed the UN’s Human Rights Council (UNHRC), “Prevent has become an aggressive social engineering and spying exercise to transform attitudes in the community and gather intelligence on its members”.⁴⁷⁸ It added the unsubstantiated assertion that Prevent requires “Muslims to promote ‘core British values’ which include foreign policy objectives”.⁴⁷⁹ This was misleading, as Prevent does not require Muslims or anyone else to promote, or even agree with, its foreign policy objectives, but the group’s opportunity to share its views at such a high level international forum may be considered as a success.

IHRC claims that Muslim organisations are operating in a “shrinking civic space” and link this to the broader issue of “state-sponsored Islamophobia”, a trope central to Cage, FOSIS, MEND and other Islamic Movement groups, as well as their allies. IHRC approvingly cites the work of sympathetic university lecturer Fahid Qurashi.⁴⁸⁰ Writing in the mainstream media in 2016, Qurashi wrote, “Prevent is an exercise in Islamophobia that continues to undermine democracy, equality, and justice”.⁴⁸¹ The alleged basis of this claim is that Prevent mainly “targets”

473 *Ibid.*, p.50

474 “Preventing Violent Extremism; Response by the Islamic Human Rights Commission To UK Government Consultation”, IHRC website, October 19, 2009, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/publications/briefings/9108-preventing-violent-extremism-response-by-the-islamic-human-rights-commission-to-uk-government-consultation-september-2009/>.

475 “Muslims must resist calls to expand Prevent programme”, IHRC website, June 7, 2017, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/news/comment/11896-muslims-must-resist-calls-to-expand-prevent-programme/>.

476 “Campaigners launch “Together Against Prevent””, Network for Police Monitoring website, September 30, 2015, <https://netpol.org/2015/09/30/campaigners-launch-together-against-prevent/>.

477 “The PREVENT Strategy: Campaign Resources”, IHRC website, June 21, 2015, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/projects/11472-the-prevent-strategy-campaign-resources/>.

478 “IHRC draws attention to United Kingdom and Northern Ireland’s PREVENT Programme”, IHRC website, October 11, 2017, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/ihr-at-un/11963-ihr-draws-attention-to-united-kingdom-and-northern-irelands-prevent-programme/>.

479 Under the Prevent duty, public institutions, such as schools, have a statutory obligation to promote “British values”. These include “democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”. See Home Office, *Prevent Strategy*, Cm 8092, June 2011, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf, pp.34, 107-108.

480 See IHRC, “IHRC Briefing: The Shrinking Political Space for CSOs in the UK”, IHRC website, January 2019, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BR18jan08ShrinkingPoliticalSpace.pdf>, p.10.

481 Fahid Qurashi, “Prevent gives people permission to hate Muslims – it has no place in schools”, *The Guardian*, April 4, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/04/prevent-hate-muslims-schools-terrorism-teachers-reject?CMP=fb_gu.

Muslims, when Muslims only number 5% of Britain's population. This line of argument has also been voiced by Cage director Asim Qureshi.⁴⁸² The disproportionate focus on Muslims, they both assert, demonstrates Islamophobia. Fahid Qurashi made the same argument in a journal article in 2018.⁴⁸³ Drawing on official data, he noted that "between April 2012 and April 2015 at least 69% of the [Prevent] referrals involved Muslims", despite the Muslim population being only 5%.⁴⁸⁴

The unquestioned assumption underlying this bold assertion is that the percentage of Muslims referred to Prevent must be the same percentage of Muslims that make up the general population in Britain, and that any greater deviation must be explained by prejudice. This assumption, however, is incorrect. There is no reason why Muslim referrals should be proportionately equivalent to the Muslim population. This is the wrong benchmark. The correct comparison for the proportion of Muslim referrals to Prevent is with the proportion of terror attacks, arrests and convictions involving Islamists, all of whom are Muslim. These significantly outnumber those from any other population group. The extent of the involvement of Muslims in terrorist cases explains and provides the justification for Prevent's predominant focus on Islamist-inspired terrorism and the potential radicalisation of Muslims. If there is a significant disproportionality that requires explanation, it is not Prevent's allegedly Islamophobic focus on Muslims. It is, rather, the extent of involvement in terrorism of a religious minority.

According to Home Office figures, between September 1, 2001 and August 31, 2012, Muslims, who make up 5% of the population,⁴⁸⁵ accounted for 46% of terrorist arrests.⁴⁸⁶ The official figures also show that on March 31, 2017, Muslims comprised 90% of terrorist prisoners (88% of terrorist and extremist prisoners).⁴⁸⁷ On December 31, 2018, 79% of people in custody for terrorism-related offences were recorded as having "Islamist-extremist" views.⁴⁸⁸ On March 31, 2019, this figure remained the same.⁴⁸⁹ On December 31, 2019, those in custody on terrorism-related offences categorised as having "Islamist-extremist" views dropped slightly to 77%.⁴⁹⁰ According to the Metropolitan Police, from April 2017 to October 2019, the number of thwarted Islamist terrorist plots (16) doubled those of all other terrorist plots.⁴⁹¹ In October 2018, the Assistant Commissioner, who is the National Lead for Counter-terrorism, informed the Home Affairs Committee that the number of counter-terrorism investigations in the country,

482 Asim Qureshi, "Prevent's work on far right extremism does not make it worth saving", *Middle East Eye*, February 18, 2019, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/prevents-work-far-right-extremism-does-not-make-it-worth-saving>.

483 Fahid Qurashi, "The Prevent strategy and the UK 'war on terror': embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities", in *Palgrave Communications*, Volume 4, Number 17, February 13, 2018.

484 *Ibid.*, p.4.

485 "Muslim population in the UK", Office for National Statistics website, August 2, 2018, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/muslimpopulationintheuk/>.

486 41% (436) of those arrested (1,066) were charged and 67% (290) of those charged were charged with a terrorism offence. See Grahame Allen and Noel Dempsey, "Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics", House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, Number CBP7613, June 7, 2018, p.19.

487 Grahame Allen and Noel Dempsey, "Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics", House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, Number CBP7613, June 7, 2018, p.24.

488 Home Office, "Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search, Great Britain, quarterly update to December 2018", UK government website, March 7, 2019, p.19. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/783893/police-powers-terrorism-dec2018-hosb0519.pdf.

489 Grahame Allen and Esme Kirk-Wade, "Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics", House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, Number CBP7613, March 26, 2020, p.22. Available at <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7613/CBP-7613.pdf>.

490 Home Office, "Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search Great Britain, year ending December 2019", March 5, 2020, p.17. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869780/police-powers-terrorism-dec2019-hosb0720.pdf.

491 Ed Riley, "British police have foiled 24 terror plots since ISIS-inspired Westminster attack in March 2017, Scotland Yard chief Cressida Dick says", *Mail Online*, October 22, 2019, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7599943/British-police-foiled-24-terror-plots-April-2017.html>.

including those led by the police and MI5, was at a record high of 700; 80% of these were connected to the “Islamist Jihadist threat”.⁴⁹²

It is these facts, not Islamophobia, that help explain the government's prioritisation of Islamist terrorism, and its concern with Muslim radicalisation, as well as Prevent's Muslim referral rate (57% between 2012 and 2013). But the narrative of Islamophobic discrimination and persecution persists – with the seemingly sophisticated use of statistics – not only amongst Islamic Movement groups, but also amongst their supporters and sympathisers within the mainstream media and academia. Similar sensationalism with statistics has been peddled by MEND regarding religiously motivated hate crimes against Muslims.⁴⁹³

Prevent: a State-led “Attack” on Islam

As indicated above, Islamic Movement groups tend to view Prevent and the counter-extremism strategy as a state-led attack on Islam, as an attempt to wrongly wrest the authority to determine Islam as something that it is not. Such a view was most clearly expressed by Ibrahim Hewitt, the chair of Interpal and a prominent figure within the Islamic Movement. Hewitt stated that the government's targeting of non-violent extremism in its counter-extremism strategy amounts to a war on Islam as “a way of life”:

*Claims that the government is pursuing an “anti-extremism” agenda are wearing thin; it is anti-Islam, period. It's fine for Muslims to have their faith as long as they keep it to themselves and out of the public domain. In other words, the neo-conservatives want Islam to be shorn of its “complete way of life” guidelines. This is dangerous territory.*⁴⁹⁴

A similar sentiment was voiced by Cage's research director, Qureshi, who declared of Prevent, “It's always been a social engineering programme to legitimise the government sponsored version of Islam only”.⁴⁹⁵ In 2019, Cage lambasted a report published by the Tony Blair Institute, which criticised Cage for advancing an alarmist “victim” narrative, by describing the report as “an academically flawed attempt to remould Islamic belief and silence Muslim voices that challenge repressive state policies”.⁴⁹⁶

IHRC has played a key role in this choir of alarmist dissent and has made clear that the key issue at stake in its campaign against Prevent is the protection of Islam and Muslim identity. In 2014, IHRC published a report accusing the government of “scapegoating” British Muslims and attempting to re-define Islam to divert attention from its own responsibility for terrorism in Britain conducted by Muslims.⁴⁹⁷ Remarkably, IHRC also

⁴⁹² “Home Affairs Committee Oral evidence: Counter-terrorism”, HC 750, House of Commons website, October 24, 2018, Q.54-55, <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/counterterrorism/oral/92097.pdf>.

⁴⁹³ Phillips, Jenkins and Frampton, *On Islamophobia*, p.74.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibrahim Hewitt, “Crusade against British Muslims in education”, Aljazeera, May 12, 2014, www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/05/crusade-against-british-muslims-201451018411814899.html/.

⁴⁹⁵ See Karen Jayes, “The PREVENT Policy: a politically motivated programme”, Cage website, August 5, 2014, <https://www.cage.ngo/prevent-policy-politically-motivated-programme/>.

⁴⁹⁶ Cage, “Tony Blair's new report is a poor attempt at censoring Muslim voices and dictating Islamic belief”, Cage website, January 18, 2019, <https://www.cage.ngo/tony-blairs-new-report-is-a-poor-attempt-at-censoring-muslim-voices-and-dictating-islamic-belief/>.

⁴⁹⁷ Faisal Bodi, “A briefing by the Islamic Human Rights Commission on Tackling Extremism in the UK, a report of the Prime Minister's Taskforce on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism”, January 2014, IHRC website, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/TEUK%20Report-FV-FB.pdf>, p.16.

explained such terrorism as payback for its foreign policy. In the same report, the group described Prevent as “a social engineering exercise, aimed at creating a politically deferent type of believer following an officially acceptable brand of Islam, with disturbing echoes of the state surveillance of communities and control of religion that is characteristic of authoritarian regimes”.⁴⁹⁸ IHRC stated Prevent is “designed to eradicate beliefs amongst British Muslims that run counter to British foreign policy objectives in Muslim-majority countries”.

Islamic Movement groups view Prevent not just as an attack on Islam, but as an attack on their authority to determine normative values. This is because they view Islam as providing the source of such values, rather than Christian-Judaeo culture, the Enlightenment, or atheistic progressive liberalism. Any attempt on the part of the government to institutionalise, inculcate or educate normative values that are not aligned with what they understand as Islam – whether they are called British, Islamic or otherwise – is contested. The government has repeatedly and carefully distinguished Islam from Islamism, and has even insisted that jihadists have hijacked the faith. But it has also described as “extremist” views that Islamic Movement groups deem normative or orthodox. These groups’ denunciations of the government’s pronouncements on Islam, including that Islam is a religion of peace, demonstrate that what they contest is not merely a certain understanding of Islam – one which they worry will be defined in Western liberal terms – but the authority to pronounce on Islam *per se*. Thus, at the heart of their conflict with the government over the role of ideology in terrorism and extremism is the power to command the narrative of values. Prevent is seen as Islamophobic, for its alleged prejudicial targeting of Muslims, but so is the state in contesting the authority to determine what is normative and what is extremist.

Islamophobia

A campaign against ‘Islamophobia’ has been a core cause for Islamic Movement groups since the Rushdie Affair in 1989. Although the term did not enter public discourse until 1997 with the publication of the Runnymede Trust’s report, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, the anti-Islamophobia campaign has its origins in the protests against the perceived blasphemy of *The Satanic Verses*.⁴⁹⁹ This event triggered the creation of the National Interim Council of Muslim Unity, the forerunner of the MCB. Thus, the first transethnic, *umma*-centric body in Britain has its roots in this campaign to protect Islam, yet this issue has remained central to MCB’s work and *raison d’être*. As the most enduring issue that permeates every policy area for Muslims in Britain, anti-Islamophobia in a sense provides the greatest justification for MCB and other Islamic Movement groups to speak for all Muslims and advocate on behalf of an assumed singular community defined in terms of religious identity. It also provides them with the conceptual weaponry to attack critics of certain Muslim beliefs and practices that contravene liberal values or equality legislation.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁹ For the report, see “Islamophobia is a challenge for us all”, Runnymede Trust, 1997, <https://mcislamofobia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Islamophobia-a-challenge-for-us-all-without-cartoons-1.pdf>.

MCB, Blasphemy and Islamophobia

In the early phase of the campaign against Islamophobia, Islamic Movement groups including MCB, IHRC, and the Association of Muslim Lawyers (AML) sought the protection of, in the words of Ahmad Thomson, co-founder of AML, “not just the people that follow the religion [i.e. Islam], *but the religion itself*”.⁵⁰⁰ These groups campaigned for changes in the now repealed blasphemy law to include a sentence of up to seven years for the “vilification” of religions in addition to Christianity and their prophets, “doctrines and beliefs”.⁵⁰¹ Quoting Lord Scarman, MCB sought to criminalise the “scurrility, vilification, ridicule and contempt” of religion.⁵⁰² The campaign ended with the passing into law of the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, which created new offences “involving stirring up hatred against persons on racial or religious grounds”.⁵⁰³ The final draft of the Act removed clauses criminalising the “insulting” and “abuse” of religion. It also included a clause stating that religious hatred has to be shown to be intentionally stirred up.⁵⁰⁴ The final wording was a victory for the freedom of speech, but a blow to the MCB-led campaign.

During the time that MCB and its partners’ sought the criminalisation of blaspheming Islam, these groups began to connect Islamophobia with the government’s counter-terrorism programme. The introduction of Prevent, particularly the focus on challenging Islamist ideology in the 2011 iteration of the strategy, provided another entry point for Islamic Movement groups to protect Islam from criticism and claim to speak on behalf of Muslims as a separate community. In 2004, MCB described the introduction of the Anti-Terror, Crime and Security Act 2001 as a violation of human rights and claimed that the government’s counter-terrorism approach was unjustly targeting Muslims.⁵⁰⁵ Large sections of mainstream media, it alleged, had contributed to the notion “that there is a broader security threat posed by Muslims in the UK”.⁵⁰⁶ This, it claimed, has resulted in “an unprecedented boost to Islamophobia which members of the public now recognise as a legitimate and acceptable form of discrimination”.⁵⁰⁷ It demanded the government launch “an awareness campaign about Islam to all major policy making departments within government as well as to the general public”, in partner with the major representatives of the Muslim community, no doubt meaning itself.

Since 2011, MCB has decried the government’s efforts to address Islamist ideology as Islamophobic and stigmatising Muslims. In 2015, with the introduction of the first counter-extremism strategy – which highlights the problems of discrimination in *shari’a* councils, entryism in schools, and extremist cultural practices, such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage – MCB claimed it risked alienating

500 This campaign failed to ensure the criticism or satire of religion became punishable Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 provided the protection against intentional incitement to hatred on religious grounds, but in the interests of free expression, clauses criminalising the insulting and abuse of religion were dropped from the final draft of the act.

501 See “Memorandum from The Muslim Council of Britain (404)”, Minutes of Evidence, Select Committee on Religious Offences in England and Wales, House of Lords, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelol/95/2101707.htm>, n.2.2-2.3.

502 *Ibid.*

503 *The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006*, p.3. Available at House of Commons Library website, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn03768/>.

504 Caroline Cox and John Marks (2006), *The West, Islam and Islamism: Is Ideological Islam Compatible with Liberal Democracy?* London: Civitas, p.132–133; and Dominic Raab (2009), *The Assault on Liberty: What Went Wrong with Rights*, London: Fourth Estate, p.59.

505 “GOVERNMENT DISCUSSION PAPER: COUNTER-TERRORISM POWERS: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society”, MCB, August 2004, <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ATCSA.pdf>.

506 *Ibid.*

507 *Ibid.*

Muslims.⁵⁰⁸ MCB decried the strategy's allegedly "McCarthyite undertones" for its consideration of banning extremist speakers. In November 2012, MCB co-founded the now-annual Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM), along with MEND (then known as Engage), and the Enough Coalition Against Islamophobia. IAM was launched at the London Muslim Centre, housed in the East London Mosque, another key Islamic Movement organisation.⁵⁰⁹ The Enough Coalition was formed a year earlier by a number of other Islamic Movement groups and sympathetic non-Muslim allies. These groups included FOSIS, the British Muslim Initiative (BMI), the Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), and the Islam Channel.⁵¹⁰ The speakers at the inaugural IAM event also came from Islamic Movement groups, including the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), IFE and FOSIS.

More recently, MCB's attention has been focused on the alleged Islamophobia in the mainstream media and in the Conservative party. The MCB has made numerous calls for an independent inquiry into the latter, and in May 2019, secretary general Harun Khan filed a complaint regarding these allegations with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).⁵¹¹ In March 2020, he wrote to the EHRC again with what he described as an updated dossier of evidence detailing Islamophobia in relation to 300 individuals.⁵¹² Several months later, in May 2020, EHRC ruled out an inquiry into allegations of Islamophobia within the Conservative party – for the time being – after the party set out its own plans to hold an independent investigation.⁵¹³ Khan's dossier included, as an alleged example of Islamophobia, prime minister Boris Johnson's praise for the late conservative philosopher Roger Scruton, since Scruton described Islamophobia as a "propaganda" word invented by the Muslim Brotherhood to deflect criticism of the Brotherhood's Islamist programme. That the government sacked Scruton from an advisory position because of these and other comments is not mentioned in Khan's letter. But neither is the basis for Scruton's claim about the purposeful creation of the term Islamophobia by the Brotherhood.

There are grounds to take this claim seriously: A former member of the Brotherhood think tank, the International Institute for Islamic Thought, Abdur-Rahman Muhammad, has stated, "This loathsome term [Islamophobia] is nothing more than a thought-terminating cliché conceived in the bowels of Muslim think tanks for the purpose of beating down critics".⁵¹⁴ This claim was echoed by the French scholar of Islam, Gilles Kepel, who claimed that the Muslim Brotherhood "publicized the term Islamophobia in the 1990s in an attempt to

508 "'ONE NATION COUNTER-EXTREMISM STRATEGY' RISKS FURTHER UNDERMINING FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM", MCB website, October 19, 2015, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/one-nation-counter-extremism-strategy-risks-fight-against-terrorism-191015/>.

509 "Islamophobia Awareness Month", Facebook group page, undated, www.facebook.com/pg/IAMonth/about/?ref=page_internal.

510 See "UK Islamophobia Awareness Month Controlled By UK Muslim Brotherhood", *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch*, November 18, 2013, www.globalmbwatch.com/2013/11/18/uk-islamophobia-awareness-month-controlled-by-uk-muslim-brotherhood/; and "Confronting Anti-Muslim Hatred in Britain and Europe", event poster, Cordoba Foundation website, undated, www.thecordobafoundation.com/attach/enough%20event.PDF.

511 "MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN SUBMITS FORMAL COMPLAINT TO EHRC OVER CONSERVATIVE PARTY ISLAMOPHOBIA", MCB website, May 28, 2019, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/muslim-council-of-britain-submits-formal-complaint-to-ehrc-over-conservative-party-islamophobia/>.

512 "MCB SUBMITS NEW DOSSIER OF CONSERVATIVE ISLAMOPHOBIA TO EHRC, WITH EVIDENCE OF OVER 300 INDIVIDUALS", MCB website, March 5, 2020, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/mcb-submits-new-dossier-of-conservative-islamophobia-to-ehrc-with-evidence-of-over-300-individuals/>.

513 Harry Yorke, "Human rights watchdog will not launch Islamophobia inquiry into Conservative Party 'at this stage'", *The Telegraph*, May 12, 2020, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/05/12/human-rights-watchdog-will-not-launch-islamophobia-inquiry-conservative/>.

514 Claire Berlinski, "How the Term 'Islamophobia' Got Shoved Down Your Throat", *Ricochet*, November 24, 2010, <http://ricochet.com/main-feed/Moderate-Muslim-Watch-How-the-Term-Islamophobia-Got-Shoved-Down-Your-Throat/>.

criminalize any criticism of the religious dogma they championed”.⁵¹⁵ The Syrian-German scholar of Islam, Bassam Tibi, has similarly written, “The accusation of Islamophobia serves as a weapon against all who do not embrace Islamist propaganda, including liberal Muslims”.⁵¹⁶ Whether or not the term was deliberately devised by Islamic Movement activists, the weaponisation of the term Islamophobia may be seen to be exemplified in alleging as *Islamophobic* the expression of the idea that Islamophobia may be used as a way to deflect criticism of extremist beliefs or practices. It may also be seen to be exemplified in alleging as *Islamophobic* the claim that Islamophobia has been exaggerated or invented.⁵¹⁷

MEND and Mainstreaming the Concept of Islamophobia

MEND is arguably the most active and organised Islamic Movement organisation in the campaign against Islamophobia. Since 2012, MEND has taken an active lead in organising the Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM). This initiative involves speaking tours of universities and schools; the production and dissemination of glossy brochures, reports and other materials; and an exhibition available for hire.⁵¹⁸ One of its most recent reports, produced in November 2019, echoes MCB’s concerns with Islamophobia in the Conservative Party, and provides over 100 alleged examples of Islamophobia in the party.⁵¹⁹ Launched in the same month, IAM 2019 demonstrated the organisational links between MEND and two other key Islamic Movement groups. Guest speakers included MCB’s assistant secretary general, Zara Mohammed; and Cage’s community relations director, Azad Ali.⁵²⁰

Ali is a familiar figure at MEND, having been the group’s director of community development and engagement for many years until his relocation to Cage in 2017. He was and remains a key player in the Islamic Movement network. Whilst working for MEND, Ali was also a member of the MCB’s Central Working Committee and the chair of its Membership Committee. He was also the community affairs coordinator for IFE, a member of the East London Mosque, a presenter on the Islam Channel, and the founding chairman of the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF). Demonstrating the importance of inter-organisational networking within the Islamic Movement, MSF was composed of numerous other Islamic Movement organisations, including the MCB, FOSIS, IFE, and the East London Mosque. Until 2012, it was the main advisory body for the Police Service in relation to Muslim arrests. It was reportedly side-lined for being “anti-establishment” and unrepresentative of Britain’s diverse Muslim communities. Sympathisers lamented the loss of a forum for discussion and debate between Muslim representatives and the police.⁵²¹ But a key concern pushing

515 Gilles Kepel, *Terror in France: The Rise of Jihad in the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), p.17.

516 Bassam Tibi, *Islam and Islamism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p.12.

517 According to a recent report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, Islamophobia is exemplified in claims that Islamophobia is exaggerated or invented. See All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, *Islamophobia Defined: The inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia* (London: APPG, 2018), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a6170cee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>, p.56.

518 “Islamophobia Awareness Month”, MEND website, undated, <https://www.mend.org.uk/islamophobiaawarenessmonth/>.

519 MEND, “From ‘Letterboxes’ to ‘Ragheads’ – over 100 examples of Islamophobia in the Conservative Party, time for the EHRC to act?”, November 2019, <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Islamophobia-in-the-Conservative-Party-MEND.pdf>.

520 “MEND: Islamophobia Awareness Month Launch 2019”, Islam21C website, November 11, 2019, <https://www.islam21c.com/news-views/mend-islamophobia-awareness-month-launch-2019/>.

521 Robert Lambert, “The Muslim Safety Forum: Senior Police and Muslim Community Engagement during the War on Terror”, in P. Daniel Silk, Basia Spalek, and Mary O’ Rawe (eds.), *Preventing Ideological Violence: Communities, Police and Case Studies of “Success”* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2013), pp.67-88.

for a change was Ali's publicly expressed "extremist" statements, which included support for the killing of British and American troops in Iraq, and his privately expressed remarks caught on video camera by an undercover reporter for a Channel 4 documentary, which appeared to valorise *shari'a* over democratic values.⁵²²

Under Ali's leadership, MSF worked with the National Association of Muslim Police (NAMP), launched by MCB in 2007, to tackle Islamophobia.⁵²³ He also initiated a collaborative relationship between MEND and NAMP on this issue. In November 2014, the two organisations held a joint conference entitled, "Challenging Islamophobia: Building Communities", at which NAMP's president, Asif Sadiq, was a keynote speaker.⁵²⁴ In 2015, the new head of NAMP, Mustafa Muhammad, spoke at a MEND event in Manchester on Islamophobia chaired by Ali.⁵²⁵ The latter event, entitled "Let's end Islamophobia in Manchester", was organised in conjunction with IAM.

IAM has reportedly provided MEND with "an uncontested platform for extremism across the UK's public and charity sector".⁵²⁶ An investigation into MEND's IAM campaign during November 2017, which analysed 85 speaking events, concluded:

*While hosting events with senior officials and academics, Mend gave its affiliated partners linked to extremism an uncontested space to promote their views and organisations. This includes individuals who have incited violence, expressed sympathy with terrorists and voiced contempt for Jews, homosexuals and 'disbelieving' Muslims.*⁵²⁷

One of the numerous speakers invited by MEND was Shakeel Begg, a London-based imam, who was declared "an extremist Islamic speaker who espouses extremist Islamic positions" by the High Court in 2016.⁵²⁸ Begg had sued the BBC for libel after presenter Andrew Neil alleged on the *Sunday Politics* programme that he had described *jihad* as the greatest of deeds. The High Court rejected Begg's claim, concluding that the BBC was correct in describing him as an "extremist" and in asserting that he "recently promoted and encouraged religious violence by telling Muslims that violence in support of Islam would constitute a man's greatest deed".⁵²⁹

IAM's website approvingly directs its readers to the Islamic Education and Research Academy (iERA) to learn more about Islam.⁵³⁰ iERA is a salafist *da'wa* organisation established by Muslim convert Abdur Raheem Green, who has expressed support for *hudud* punishments,

522 "Police Muslim forum headed by Islamic extremist", *The Telegraph*, 24 July 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/andrew-gilligan/7908273/Police-Muslim-forum-headed-by-Islamic-extremist.html>. For the full transcript of the Channel 4 documentary, see "'Britain's Islamic republic': full transcript of Channel 4 Dispatches programme on Lutfur Rahman, the IFE and Tower Hamlets", Andrew Gilligan's blog, October 22, 2010, <https://andrewgilliganblog.wordpress.com/2010/10/22/britains-islamic-republic-full-transcript-of-channel-4-dispatches-programme-on-lutfur-rahman-the-ife-and-tower-hamlets-the-full-transcript/comment-page-1/>.

523 "Islamophobia", National Association of Muslim Police website, undated, http://www.namp.org.uk/?page_id=1701.

524 MEND, "Activity report 2014", MEND website, December 2014, http://mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/MEND_Activity_Report_2014_Low_Res.pdf, p.12.

525 "Let's End Islamophobia in Manchester", *The Nubian Times*, November 26, 2015, <http://thenubiantimes.com/i-am2015-lets-end-islamophobia-in-manchester/>

526 Emma Fox, *PROFITING FROM PREJUDICE: How Mend's 'IAM' campaign Legitimised Extremism* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2018), p.1. Report available at <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/HJS-Profiting-from-Prejudice-Report.pdf>.

527 *Ibid.*, p.58.

528 Begg v British Broadcasting Corporation, [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB) October 28, 2016, n.366, p.88. Available at <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/shakeel-begg-v-bbc-judgment-final-20161028.pdf>.

529 *Ibid.*

530 "What is Islam?", Islamophobia Awareness Month 2019 website, undated, <http://islamophobia-awareness.org/what-is-islam/>

such as the amputation of hands for theft and stoning for adultery. Qualifying the punishment by stating that it needs to be seen by four reliable witnesses, he has written, “Adultery is punishable by death, and a slow and painful death by stoning. It is indicative of just how harmful this crime is to society”.⁵³¹ In 2016, it was reported that iERA had been warned by the Charities Commission to distance itself from individuals who condone “violent extremism and acts of terrorism”.⁵³² The Commission criticised iERA for its partnership with Islamic University Online, an organisation founded by Bilal Philips, a preacher who was banned from entering the UK in 2010 for his “extremist” views.⁵³³ iERA has also been criticised for hosting other speakers deemed “extremist”, including Zakir Naik, who has also been banned from the UK.⁵³⁴

IHRC, and the Islamophobia Awards

Established in 1997, IHRC is one of the oldest Islamic Movement organisations at the forefront of the campaign against Islamophobia. Despite its founders’ desire for “a new social and international order”⁵³⁵ and their disdain for the institutions of the nation state and the international system, the organisation has special consultative status at the UN and an EU Office in Brussels that coordinates advocacy activities with EU Institutions.⁵³⁶ In 2018, IHRC was funded £140,000 by the EU to contribute towards the production of a “Counter-Islamophobia Kit”.⁵³⁷ Written by three academics and published by the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies at the University of Leeds, this kit heavily references IHRC’s work.⁵³⁸ One of its authors, Salman Sayyid, is a long-time associate of IHRC. He has written and spoken in favour of a “restored caliphate” as a means of providing “greater representation for Muslim sentiment and Muslim voices”.⁵³⁹

IHRC’s kit was launched across Europe. In France and Belgium, the launch events were attended and publicised by the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO).⁵⁴⁰ This group, which claims to be the “de facto voice of Muslim Youth in Europe”, was established in 1996 by the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE), the Muslim Brotherhood’s European umbrella organisation. Two of Britain’s most important Islamic Movement groups are members of FEMYSO, namely, FOSIS and the Muslim Association of Britain’s youth wing.⁵⁴¹

531 Abdurraheem Green, “Terrible and brutal Islamic punishments or wise and just guidance from Allah?”, Abdurraheem Green’s blog, February 14, 2006, https://www.islamsgreen.org/islams_green/2006/02/terrible_and_br.html.

532 Camilla Turner, “Leading Islamic charity told by watchdog to distance itself from extremism”, *The Telegraph*, November 12, 2016, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/12/leading-islamic-charity-told-by-watchdog-to-distance-itself-from>.

533 *Ibid.*

534 “Islamic Research and Education Academy (iERA)”, Stand for Peace website, March 2013, <http://standforpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/iERA.pdf>.

535 “Aims and Objectives”, IHRC website, undated, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/about/aims-and-objectives/>.

536 “EU Advocacy”, IHRC website, September 7, 2017, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/projects/11943-eu-advocacy/>.

537 Edward Malnick, “European Commission gave £140k grant to organisation accused of anti-Semitism, it emerges”, *The Telegraph*, December 15, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2018/12/15/european-commission-gave-140k-grant-organisation-accused-anti/>. See also, “Islamic Human Rights Commission Team”, University of Leeds website, undated, <https://cik.leeds.ac.uk/partners/islamic-human-rights-commission-team/>.

538 Ian Law, Amina Easat-Daas and Salman Sayyid, *Counter-Islamophobia Kit Briefing Paper and Toolkit of Counter-Narratives to Islamophobia* (Leeds: Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies, September 2018), <https://cik.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2018/09/2018.09.17-Job-44240.01-CIK-Final-Booklet.pdf>.

539 David Rutledge, “Global Islam and the caliphate”, ABC, October 10, 2014, <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/archived/encounter/global-islam-and-the-nation-state/5805134>.

540 “ENAR and IHRC: Counter-Islamophobia toolkit on France launch”, FEMYSO website, November 3, 2018, <https://femyso.org/enar-and-ihr-c-counter-islamophobia-toolkit-on-france-launch/#>.

541 “Member organisations”, FEMYSO website, undated, <https://femyso.org/member-organisations/>.

IHRC has organised and hosted numerous events campaigning against Islamophobia. One of the most controversial is the annual Islamophobia Awards. Although ostensibly a satirical effort to draw public attention to anti-Muslim bigotry and hatred, this event demonstrates a hostile attitude to individuals and institutions who have been critical to Islamist ideas and practices. In 2015, after the Islamist massacre at the offices of the Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris, IHRC awarded the magazine the title of “Islamophobe of the Year”, a gesture seen by some observers as condoning the terrorist act.⁵⁴² Nominees for these awards typically include any public figure that has criticised Islamic ideas or practices, particularly those that clash with liberal values or equalities legislation. These have included Muslims, such as Maajid Nawaz, the co-founder of the counter-extremism think tank Quilliam, and non-Muslims, such as Ofsted chief Amanda Spielman.

IHRC has also organised numerous other events focused on the theme of Islamophobia. In 2014, it launched its annual Islamophobia Conference.⁵⁴³ The inaugural event, entitled “Institutional Islamophobia: A conference to examine state racism and social engineering of the Muslim community”, was officially supported by MCB, the Muslim Association of Britain, NUS Black Students (FOSIS), MEND, and Cage.⁵⁴⁴ The most recent of these conferences was held in December 2019 in London and Glasgow. Entitled “Islamophobia and Shrinking Civil Society Spaces”, the event was officially supported by Cage, the Muslim Council of Scotland (a splinter group from and regional affiliate of MCB), and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (Scotland).⁵⁴⁵ The focus of the event was what IHRC called “the delegitimisation of Muslim civil society operators motivated by Islamophobia”.⁵⁴⁶

This theme was the subject of a report published by IHRC earlier in 2019, entitled, “The Shrinking Political Space for CSOs in the UK”.⁵⁴⁷ In the foreword of the report, IHRC co-founder and chair, Massoud Shadjareh, states that attacks on Muslim civil society organisations “*must* be understood” as part of “an environment of hate against Muslims”, which “is part of the deeper crisis of the political and social culture we live in”.⁵⁴⁸ In other words, any criticism of Muslim groups, including Islamist ones, appears to be dismissed as irrational and unjustified. Groups such as “IHRC, MEND and Cage,” the report asserts, “have been subjected to targeted vilification campaigns by sections of the media designed to discredit them and frustrate their work”.⁵⁴⁹ Failing to distinguish what constitutes a legitimate criticism from “vilification”, the report states that IHRC is a victim of “racist intimidation and harassment”.⁵⁵⁰

542 See, for example, Brendan O'Neill, “Stop Smearing Critics of Islam as Islamophobes”, *Reason*, March 17, 2015, <https://reason.com/2015/03/17/stop-smearing-critics-of-islam-as-islamo/>, and Douglas Murray, “A new low: Charlie Hebdo’s murdered staff receive an ‘Islamophobe of the Year’ award”, *The Spectator*, March 10, 2015, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/a-new-low-charlie-hebdo-s-murdered-staff-receive-an-islamophobe-of-the-year-award>.

543 “Annual Islamophobia Conferences 2014 onwards”, IHRC website, February 19, 2019, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/multimedia/video-multimedia/21050-annual-islamophobia-conferences-2014-onwards/>.

544 “Institutional Islamophobia: A conference to examine state racism and social engineering of the Muslim community”, IHRC website, December 8, 2014, www.ihr.org.uk/events/11207-institutional-islamophobia-a-conference-to-examine-state-racism-and-social-engineering-of-the-muslim-community.

545 “Islamophobia Conference 2019: Islamophobia and Shrinking Civil Society Spaces”, IHRC website, December 9, 2019, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/events/23297-islamophobia-conference-2019-islamophobia-and-shrinking-civil-society-spaces/>.

546 *Ibid.*

547 “Briefing: The shrinking political space for CSOs in the UK”, IHRC website, January 7, 2019, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/publications/briefings/20386-briefing-the-shrinking-political-space-for-csos-in-the-uk/>.

548 IHRC, “The Shrinking Political Space for CSOs in the UK”, IHRC website, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BR18jan08ShrinkingPoliticalSpace.pdf>, p.6, emphasis added.

549 *Ibid.*, p.9.

550 *Ibid.*

However, there are legitimate grounds for the criticism of IHRC, which cannot simply be dismissed as “Islamophobia”. IHRC has attracted criticism for its support of Hezbollah,⁵⁵¹ for its links to the Iranian regime,⁵⁵² and for expressing support for numerous Islamists, including several convicted of terror-related offences.⁵⁵³

In July 2020, IHRC wrote to President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, urging him to free Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, the leader of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN),⁵⁵⁴ El-Zakzaky – described by *Al-Arabiya* newspaper as “an Islamist under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood” who had been co-opted by Iran⁵⁵⁵ – has been detained since December 2015 after clashes between IMN and government forces. According to the International Crisis Group, IMN’s goals are “to ensure more stringent application of Islamic legal and administrative systems ... then ultimately to create an Islamic state in Nigeria”.⁵⁵⁶

In June 2020, it was reported that IHRC chair, Shadjareh, was being investigated by the police after he publicly praised the Iranian general Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in January 2020 by an American drone strike.⁵⁵⁷ Shadjareh had reportedly told a crowd in London that had gathered to mourn the general that “we aspire to be like him”.⁵⁵⁸ IHRC also wrote to the UN “demanding that it holds Washington accountable for its extra-judicial execution” of Soleimani.⁵⁵⁹ The Qods Force commander was instrumental in Iran’s growing power in Iraq and responsible for “some of the most egregious attacks and plots against the U.S., Israel, Iraq, and a host of other western and Middle Eastern countries over the past three decades”.⁵⁶⁰ He had been sanctioned by the UN in connection with Iran’s nuclear programme in 2007; sanctioned by the EU in 2011 for supporting the Syrian regime’s suppression of protests in Syria; and designated as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in connection with a plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the U.S. and plans to attack other countries’ interests inside the U.S.⁵⁶¹

In 2017, upon the death of Omar Abdul Rahman, the “blind sheikh” who was convicted of conspiracy in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and planning a “war of urban terrorism” in the US, IHRC

551 See, for example, Fox, *Islamic Human Rights Commission: Advocating for the Ayatollahs*, pp.50, 54.

552 See, for example, “TSB disappears from IHRC website donations page”, UK Lawyers for Israel webpage, June 2, 2019, <http://www.ukfi.com/tsb-disappears-from-ihrc-website-donations-page>; and Fox, *Islamic Human Rights Commission: Advocating for the Ayatollahs*, pp.14, 17. See, also, Andrew Norfolk, “Iran ‘propaganda’ group IHRC gets £1.2m from taxpayer-backed charity”, *The Times*, October 10 2019, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/iran-propaganda-group-ihrc-gets-1-2m-from-taxpayer-backed-charity-r2h7jkc9>; and IHRC’s response to this article, “On The Times, Andrew Norfolk and the Paucity of Power”, IHRC website, October 10, 2019, <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/news/comment/24364-on-the-times-andrew-norfolk-and-the-paucity-of-power/>.

553 See Fox, *Islamic Human Rights Commission: Advocating for the Ayatollahs*, pp.27-29, and the examples that follow.

554 “IHRC urges Buhari to free Zakzakys on eve of trial”, IHRC website, July 28, 2020, <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/activities/press-releases/26434-ihrc-urges-buhari-to-free-zakzakys-on-eve-of-trial/>.

555 Daniel Brett, “Zakzaky: Face of Iran’s dangerous plan in Africa”, *Al-Arabiya*, October 11, 2016, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/2016/10/11/Sheikh-Zakzaky-the-face-of-a-dangerous-Iranian-design-in-Africa>.

556 Conor Gaffey, “Who is Sheikh Zakzaky, Nigeria’s Most Powerful Shiite Muslim?”, *Newsweek*, December 16, 2015, <https://www.newsweek.com/who-sheikh-zakzaky-nigerias-most-powerful-shiite-muslim-405297>.

557 David Brown, “Inquiry into charity Islamic Centre of England that called Iran’s Soleimani a martyr”, *The Times*, January 7 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/inquiry-into-charity-islamic-centre-of-england-that-called-irans-soleimani-a-martyr-zp2513lpc>. See also Paul Peachey, “UK campaigner investigated over praise for dead Iranian commander Suleimani”, *The National*, June 28, 2020, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/uk-campaigner-investigated-over-praise-for-dead-iranian-commander-suleimani-1.1040649>.

558 *Ibid.*

559 “UN must hold US accountable for Soleimani execution”, IHRC website, January 15, 2020, <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/activities/press-releases/24900-un-must-hold-us-accountable-for-soleimani-execution/>.

560 Bill Roggio and Caleb Weiss, “U.S. kills Iran’s Qods Force commander and Iraq’s deputy PMF leader in strike in Baghdad”, *Long War Journal*, January 2, 2020, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2020/01/u-s-kills-irans-qods-force-commander-and-iraqis-deputy-pmf-leader-in-strike-in-baghdad.php>.

561 “Qasem Soleimani”, Counter Extremism Project website, undated, <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/qasem-soleimani>.

described him a “martyr” and a “man of principle and unshakeable faith”.⁵⁶² Terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman described him as “at the vortex of some of the bloodiest and most consequential terrorist incidents of the 1990s - incidents that would establish the patterns of global terrorism that continue to bedevil us today”.⁵⁶³ Earlier, in 2011, IHRC had participated in a campaign to release Omar Abdul Rahman, describing him as “great Muslim scholar”.⁵⁶⁴

In 2014, IHRC criticised the British government’s treatment of Abu Qatada, a Jordanian cleric designated by the US government and the UN as a propagandist for Al-Qaeda,⁵⁶⁵ who was deported from the UK to Jordan after a lengthy legal battle. IHRC’s press release claimed that the cleric had been “demonised in Whitehall”.⁵⁶⁶ Although he was never charged with any offences in the UK, and was found innocent of terrorism charges in Jordan after his extradition there, the British Security Service and police stated that his preaching gave religious legitimacy to those “who wish to further the aims of extreme Islamism and to engage in terrorist attacks, including suicide bombings”.⁵⁶⁷

In 2006, when Abu Hamza Al-Masri was convicted of inciting murder and racial hatred, Shadjareh wrote that IHRC was “saddened” at the verdict.⁵⁶⁸ He also claimed Al-Masri had been “demonised”.⁵⁶⁹ In the same year, IHRC campaigned for the release of the influential Yemeni-American cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki, who was detained by the Yemeni authorities for his alleged involvement in an Al-Qaeda plot.⁵⁷⁰ IHRC described the preacher as a “prominent Muslim scholar”,⁵⁷¹ but if he wasn’t already recognised as one of Al-Qaeda’s leading ideologues he was soon to be widely acknowledged as such. He published his treatise *44 Ways of Supporting Jihad*, which advocated support for the *mujahideen* and “hatred of *kuffar*” (unbelievers, “deniers” of Islam), in January 2009. But prior to this, his views were scarcely a secret.⁵⁷² As *The Telegraph* has observed, “he produced a lecture series on jihad in 2003 called ‘The Story of Ibn al-Akwa,’ which was based on the Book of Jihad written by a 14th century scholar, Ibn Nuhaas”.⁵⁷³

562 “PRESS RELEASE – USA/Sheikh Omar Abdul Rehman: World has lost a man of principle and unshakeable faith”, IHRC website, February 20, 2017, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/press-releases/11857-press-release-usa-sheikh-omar-abdul-rehman-world-has-lost-a-man-of-principle-and-unshakeable-faith/>.

563 Bill Trott, “Blind sheikh’ convicted in 1993 World Trade bombing dies in U.S. prison”, Reuters, February 18, 2017, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-usa-trade-center-rahman/blind-sheikh-convicted-in-1993-world-trade-bombing-dies-in-u-s-prison-idUKKBN15X0NU>.

564 “Forwarded Alert: UK – Protest for the immediate release of imprisoned Sheikh Omar Abdulrahman”, IHRC website, May 4, 2011, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/alerts/9667-forwarded-alert-uk-protest-for-the-immediate-release-of-imprisoned-sheikh-omar-abdulrahman/>.

565 “Abu Qatada”, Counter Extremism Project website, undated, <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/abu-qatada>.

566 “Press release: Abu Qatada acquittal exposes British abandonment of due process”, IHRC website, September 24, 2014, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/press-releases/11203-press-release-abu-qatada-acquittal-exposes-british-abandonment-of-due-process/>.

567 Dominic Casciani, “Profile: Abu Qatada”, BBC News, June 26, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-16584923>. For an insightful critique of Abu Qatada’s views and the questionable claim made by his supporters, including Cage, that they offer an antidote to the Islamic State, see “Abu Qatada: No Longer in Britain, but still preaching jihad and antisemitism”, Community Security Trust website, February 29, 2016, <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2016/02/29/abu-qatada-no-longer-in-britain-but-still-preaching-jihad-and-antisemitism>.

568 “PRESS RELEASE: Reaction to Abu Hamza Verdict – Free Speech for Some but not All”, IHRC website, February 7, 2006, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/press-releases/6401-press-release-reaction-to-abu-hamza-verdict-free-speech-for-some-but-not-all/>.

569 “Muslims react to Hamza conviction”, BBC News, February 7, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4690132.stm>.

570 “Alert: Prominent Muslim Scholar Imam Anwar al-Awlaki Detained in Yemen”, IHRC website, November 28, 2006, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/alerts-archive/8583-alert-prominent-muslim-scholar-imam-anwar-al-awlakidetained-in-yemen/>.

571 *Ibid.*

572 See Shiraz Maher, “The ELM, Dispatches and Awlaki”, *Standpoint*, March 18, 2010, <https://standpointmag.co.uk/the-elm-dispatches-and-awlaki/>; and Shiraz Maher, “New audio message from Anwar al-Awlaki”, *Standpoint*, March 23, 2010, <https://standpointmag.co.uk/new-audio-message-from-anwar-al-awlaki/>; and “East London Mosque: When in Trouble, Throw Chaff”, Harry’s Place blog, November 9, 2010, <http://hurryupharry.org/2010/11/09/east-london-mosque-when-in-trouble-throw-chaff/>.

573 Duncan Gardham, “Al-Qaeda leader’s tour of Britain revealed”, *The Telegraph*, November 5, 2010, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8113977/Al-Qaeda-leaders-tour-of-Britain-revealed.html>.

Here and elsewhere, Al-Awlaki made plain his endorsement for a martial concept of *jihad*. Al-Awlaki was killed in Yemen by a US drone strike in 2011.⁵⁷⁴

IHRC, as with other Islamic Movement organisations, has also supported Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, the founder of the Hamas-supporting Union of Good and the European Council for Fatwa and Research. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, Al-Qaradawi has called for the Muslim conquest of Europe through non-violent *jihad*. He has also issued *fatwas*, religious edicts, endorsing suicide bombings in Israel, which have been taken up by Hamas leaders.⁵⁷⁵ At the time of Al-Qaradawi's visit to Britain in 2004, a dossier of his sermons was passed by the metropolitan police commissioner to the Crown Prosecution Service with a view to prosecution. In protest against this action, Raza Kazim, an IHRC spokesman and trustee of its charitable trust, walked out of a meeting with the police, with which it used to meet regularly regarding the police treatment of Muslims, saying it was an "insult".⁵⁷⁶

The APPG: Islamophobia as a "Type of Racism"

Since MCB's early unsuccessful efforts to criminalise blasphemy against Islam, Islamic Movement groups have persisted in trying to introduce the concept of "Islamophobia" into official thinking and define it in a way that effectively shields criticism of Islamist extremism. In November 2018, this effort culminated in the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims adopting the first working definition of "Islamophobia" as "a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness".⁵⁷⁷ Individuals closely connected to MEND and IHRC were heavily involved in the drafting of the APPG's report on the matter.⁵⁷⁸

A key contributor to the APPG's definition was Salman Sayyid, the aforementioned academic at Leeds University and a long-time associate of IHRC. Sayyid asserts that Islamophobia is "state-sponsored" in Britain.⁵⁷⁹ He apparently proposed the term "Muslimness" to feature centrally within the definition of Islamophobia.⁵⁸⁰ "Muslimness", according to Sayyid, is not reducible to any number of individual Muslims, but to what it means to be a Muslim, that is, a member of a global community that questions the legitimacy of the Western, "liberal" world order.⁵⁸¹ Islamophobia, Sayyid has said, is not reducible to hate crimes and does not depend on the presence of Muslims. It depends

574 For more on Al-Awlaki, see Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, *Incitement: Anwar al-Awlaki's Western Jihad* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2020).

575 "A portrait of Muslim Brotherhood's supreme authority", *Jerusalem Post*, March 2, 2011, <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/A-portrait-of-Muslim-Brotherhoods-supreme-authority>.

576 See "Islamic Human Rights Commission 2007: A Decade of Fighting Injustice", Innovative Minds website, undated, <http://www.inminds.com/ihrct10years.php>; and Rosie Cowan, "Met file on controversial cleric sent to CPS", *The Guardian*, July 9, 2004, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2004/jul/09/religion-immigrationpolicy1>.

577 APPG on British Muslims, *Islamophobia Defined*, p.11.

578 See John Jenkins, *Defining Islamophobia: A Policy Exchange Research Note* (London: Policy Exchange, 2018), <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Defining-Islamophobia.pdf>, pp.17-18.

579 "Islamophobia Conference 2017: Salman Sayyid on the contradictions of Islamophobia", YouTube, January 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeP3u094ln4>.

580 Jenkins, *Defining Islamophobia*, p.17.

581 "Islamophobia Conference 2017: Salman Sayyid on the contradictions of Islamophobia". His associate and the co-founder of IHRC, Arzu Merali, defines the term, consistently with this, as "the ability of Muslims to be themselves in whatever form, and to project themselves into the future". See Arzu Merali, "Countering Islamophobia in the UK", in *Countering Islamophobia in Europe*, Ian Law, Amina Easat-Daas, Arzu Merali, and Salman Sayyid (eds.) (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), p.67.

on what he abstrusely calls “the figure of the Muslim”.⁵⁸² This is a symbolic representation of an alternative world system to “Western supremacy”. Thus, from this point of view, Islamophobia is not merely anti-Muslim prejudice, i.e. prejudice against Muslim individuals, but an attitudinal response to, and defence mechanism against, the possibility of a radically different form of political organisation. This alternative world order is one based on Islam – however that is understood – and is supported by Islamic Movement groups, such as IHRC. The group’s co-founder, Arzu Merali, who rejects the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as “Eurocentric”,⁵⁸³ has even gone as far as describing the West as the “enemy”.⁵⁸⁴

Controversially, but unsurprisingly given the influence of MEND and IHRC, examples of Islamophobia provided in the APPG report included alleging “conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or social institutions”, accusing Muslims of being more loyal to the Muslim *umma* than to Britain, and accusing Muslims of “exaggerating Islamophobia”.⁵⁸⁵ The possibility that such allegations could arise out of genuine concerns is automatically ruled out. As John Jenkins observed,

*The APPG fails to offer any example of the type of criticism of Islam, or Muslims, or especially, Islamists, that might fall outside the definition of ‘Islamophobia’ that they urge the Government and others to accept. Instead, the report makes clear that a new definition could be the prelude to new kinds of ‘civil offences’, pursued through the courts.*⁵⁸⁶

Similar concerns were voiced in a letter to the then-Home Secretary Sajid Javid, signed by a group of critics including academics, writers and other public figures.⁵⁸⁷ The letter warned that the definition could serve as a “backdoor blasphemy law”.⁵⁸⁸ Richard Walton, the former head of Counter-Terrorism Command at the Metropolitan Police, said it risked jeopardising a range of government policies, as well as the operation of a free media.⁵⁸⁹ Martin Hewitt, chairman of the National Police Chiefs’ Council, said “We are concerned that the definition is too broad as currently drafted, could cause confusion for officers enforcing it and could be used to challenge legitimate free speech on the historical or theological actions of Islamic states. There is also a risk it could also undermine counterterrorism powers, which seek to tackle extremism or prevent terrorism”.⁵⁹⁰

582 “Islamophobia Conference 2017: Salman Sayyid on the contradictions of Islamophobia”, YouTube, January 11, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeP3u094In4>.

583 Arzu Merali, “To Liberate or not to liberate? Universalism, Islam and Human Rights (Part 1)”, in *Crescent International*, vol.32, no.13, October 1, 2003, <https://www.icit-digital.org/articles/to-liberate-or-not-to-liberate-universalism-islam-and-human-rights-part-1>

584 “Strike The Empire Back Ft Arzu Merali”, YouTube, September 28, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nR93XpMWp44>.

585 APPG on British Muslims, *Islamophobia Defined*, p.56.

586 See Jenkins, *Defining Islamophobia*, p.13, emphasis added.

587 “Open Letter: APPG Islamophobia Definition Threatens Civil Liberties”, Civitas website, undated, <http://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/islamophobiaopenletter.pdf>

588 Emma Webb (ed.), *Islamophobia: An Anthology of Concerns* (London: Civitas, August 2019), available at <https://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/islamophobiaan anthologyofconcerns.pdf>.

589 See “Islamophobia definition ‘unfit for purpose’, say campaigners”, National Secular Society website, May 15, 2019, <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2019/05/islamophobia-definition-unfit-for-purpose-say-campaigners>;

590 Phillips, Jenkins and Frampton, *On Islamophobia*, p.6

Assistant commissioner Neil Basu, the head of UK counterterrorism policing, echoed this, stating,

The definition of Islamophobia proposed by the APPG on British Muslims is simply too broad to be effective and it risks creating confusion, representing what some might see as legitimate criticism of the tenets of Islam – a religion – as a racist hate crime, which cannot be right for a liberal democracy in which free speech is also a core value ... As it stands, this definition risks shutting down debate about any interpretation of the tenets of Islam which are at odds with our laws and customs, which in turn would place our police officers and members of the judicial system in an untenable position..⁵⁹¹

Jenkins and others' criticisms offer a valuable insight, since they get to the heart of the problem with this initiative: the blurring of anti-Muslim hate crime and the criticism of Islam as an alternative worldview and world order. But what Jenkins, Basu and others have not fully grasped or voiced is how or why these two things are inextricably linked within the concept of Islamophobia as promoted by Islamic Movement groups and their sympathisers. "Islamophobia", from the Islamic Movement perspective as articulated by Sayyid, is what defines the West's response to a worldview and world order that threatens Western, liberal "hegemony" or "supremacy". Thus, for the Islamic Movement, combatting Islamophobia is necessary for, and tantamount to, combatting the West's self-defence mechanism. Paradoxically, it seeks to legitimise this effort within the liberal legal culture of Britain and the West by emphasising the need to combat hate crimes and bigotry against Muslim individuals, a secondary dimension of Islamophobia, according to Sayyid.⁵⁹²

The paradoxical strategy of working within the system – in this case, leveraging liberal conceptions of human rights – to change or overthrow the system has been acknowledged by Merali as undesirable but necessary for the greater cause. In 2014, to a group of fellow activists, she warned of being "sucked into the mainstream" that they are striving to transform: "We still end up replicating the system, even though we don't want to ... We're working with entities that are part of a structure that we simply can't accept".⁵⁹³

There is an interesting asymmetry here. On the one hand, liberal voices in Britain wish to focus solely on the rights of the individual, protecting Muslims – as individuals – from hate crimes and prejudice, whilst allowing for the criticism of Islam as one of many systems of belief or set of ideas. The Islamic Movement, on the other hand, wishes to protect, first and foremost, Islam as a "civilization alternative",⁵⁹⁴ including a political order. Muslim individuals – *as individuals* – appear to be of secondary concern. This was made clear by the co-founder of the Association of Muslim Lawyers, Ahmad Thomson,

591 Lizzie Dearden, "Proposed Islamophobia definition 'would undermine counterterrorism operations and threaten free speech', police tell prime minister", *The Independent*, May 15, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/islamophobia-meaning-definition-terror-operations-theresa-may-appg-british-muslims-a8914686.html>.

592 "Islamophobia Conference 2017: Salman Sayyid on the contradictions of Islamophobia", YouTube, January 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeP3u094ln4>.

593 "Strike The Empire Back Ft Arzu Merali".

594 This phrase was used in a document written by a Muslim Brotherhood operative in the U.S. that was revealed in the largest terrorism financing trial in the U.S. This document outlined a plan for the creation of an Islamic Movement network in the U.S. with a view to establishing a global Islamic state. See Mohammed Akram (a.k.a. Mohammed Adlouni), "An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Brotherhood in North America – May 22, 1991," Government Exhibit Elbarasse Search—3 3:04-CR-2. 40-G U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation et. al, p.7. Document available at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/20.pdf>.

during the early phase of the Islamic Movement's campaign against Islamophobia. In 2002, he made written and oral representations to the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences, urging for the criminalisation of behaviour that is "likely to shock and outrage the feelings of the *general* body of believers [the *umma*]"⁵⁹⁵ He added, "it is not just the people who follow the religion [i.e., Islam], but it is *the religion itself* which has to be protected"⁵⁹⁶ The protection of Muslim individuals is important in this campaign *insofar* as they are part of the global *umma* and the collective effort to revive Islam. The protection of Muslims with reference to individual rights is also important, since this provides a hook into the liberal legal culture of Britain that Islamists seek to transform.

The Chilling Effect of Islamophobia

The campaign to normalise the concept of Islamophobia in public and policy discourse is arguably one of the biggest successes of Islamic Movement groups in Britain. As mentioned, this concept of Islamophobia risks blurring, on one hand, the distinction between genuine anti-Muslim bigotry and, on the other hand, the legitimate criticism of Islamism and associated, anachronistic *shari'a* precepts that justify illiberal social practices. The Islamic Movement's playing on fears of Islamophobia, racism and bigotry to minimise or silence the criticism of Islamist extremism and harmful religious practices seems to have met with some success.

In her government-commissioned review into integration and opportunity, Louise Casey reported in 2016, "Too many public institutions, national and local, state and non-state, have gone so far to accommodate diversity and freedom of expression that they have ignored or even condoned regressive, divisive and harmful cultural and religious practices, for fear of being branded racist or Islamophobic".⁵⁹⁷ In 2017, asked by the Communities and Local Government Committee if a fear of being labelled "racist" is preventing head teachers and decision-makers in schools to standing up to community leaders pushing a religious agenda, Casey answered affirmatively. She said that many people, not just head teachers, are afraid to speak up on matters of extremism in schools due to such fears. She acknowledged right-wing extremism as a real issue, but said it is one that people feel freer to talk about than Islamist extremism. The fear of being able to talk about Islamist extremism, she emphasised, was a "disservice to thousands of people that are caught up in actually being on the receiving end of not having the start in life that they should have living in the United Kingdom".⁵⁹⁸ Unsurprisingly, Casey was identified as a candidate for IHRC's Islamophobia Awards in 2017.⁵⁹⁹

595 "Memorandum by the Association of Muslim Lawyers", Minutes of Evidence, Select Committee on Religious Offences in England and Wales, House of Lords, October 17, 2002, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelof/95/2101711.htm>, n.18.1.1.

596 *Ibid.*, n.23, emphasis added.

597 Louise Casey, *The Casey Review: A Review into Opportunity and Integration*, Department for Communities and Local Government, December 2016, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf, p.16, n.1.67.

598 "The Communities and Local Government Committee questions Dame Louise Casey about her report on social integration", January 9, 2017, www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/news-parliament-2015/integration-review-evidence-16-17/.

599 "PRESS RELEASE – UK: Islamophobia Awards 2017 – 26 November", IHRC website, November 15, 2017, <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/activities/press-releases/11991-press-release-uk-islamophobia-awards-2017-26-november/>.

Casey is not alone in expressing the dangers that fears of being branded racist or Islamophobic may have on tackling genuine problems of social integration. Writing in 2016, Trevor Phillips, the former chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, urged for an honest conversation about numerous taboos in British public discourse relating to race, religion, and culture. There is a dark side to “superdiversity”, he wrote, that is not discussed due to a fear of the accusation of bigotry. It has become “a dangerous trend”, he argued, to silence “almost anyone who disagrees with liberal orthodoxy on matters of racial and religious difference”.⁶⁰⁰ The danger this silence poses, he recognised, is the facilitation, through omission, of religiously- or culturally-driven extremist and criminal acts.⁶⁰¹

These remarks earned Phillips’ nomination for IHRC’s “Islamophobe of the Year” award in 2017.⁶⁰² These words, plus his rejection of Islamophobia as defined by the APPG as “a type of racism”, also appear to have played a role in his suspension from the Labour Party in March 2020.⁶⁰³ Along with Phillips and Casey, numerous others have been accused of Islamophobia by Islamic Movement groups, including liberal, pro-human rights Muslim activists, such as Sara Khan, the chief of the Commission for Countering Extremism.⁶⁰⁴ Accusations of Islamophobia are not only feared by public bodies which may suppress the open discussion of Islamic extremism and fail to take active steps to address it. As Phillips has warned, they also offer a licence to do harm to those accused.⁶⁰⁵

Islamophobia, Prevent and Mainstreaming Dissent

A key tactic of Islamic Movement groups in their campaign against Prevent and Islamophobia is the formation of alliances with mainstream advocacy, student, academic and media organisations to legitimise their concerns, reach a larger audience with the goal of effecting greater social and political change. They have sought and sometimes successfully formed alliances with such organisations, as well as some government bodies. This is consistent with the value they place on what they view as their duty to conduct *da’wa*, as described earlier in this report. Thus, the importance of bringing Islam as a system of values into the mainstream is belied not just by their antagonistic attitude towards the government’s challenge to Islamic beliefs and practices that conflict with “British values” and equality legislation. It is also reflected in their willingness to partner with non-Muslim groups and individuals who espouse perspectives and values that are at least compatible with their own. Their collaboration with mainstream organisations is both practical, in terms of helping combat perceived threats to Muslims as

600 Trevor Phillips, *Race and Faith: The Deafening Silence* (London: Civitas, 2016), available at <http://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/Race-and-Faith.pdf>, p.51.

601 For the most comprehensive treatment of this phenomenon, including numerous appendices see Peter McLoughlin, *Easy Meat* (New English Review: London, 2016). For a critique of the conceptualisation of this phenomenon in terms of “Asian grooming gangs”, see Ella Cockbain and Waqas Tufail, “Failing victims, fuelling hate: challenging the harms of the ‘Muslim grooming gangs’ narrative”, in *Race and Class*, vol.61, no.3, pp.3-32, January 6, 2020. For a sensible but brief rejoinder to this article, see Ben Sixsmith, “Grooming Gangs and Indifferent Police: What Have We Learned After Rotherham?”, Quillette, February 4, 2020, <https://quillette.com/2020/02/04/grooming-gangs-and-indifferent-police-what-have-we-learned-from-the-sex-abuse-scandals/>.

602 “PRESS RELEASE – UK: Islamophobia Awards 2017 – 26 November”, IHRC.

603 Trevor Phillips, “How I fell victim to Labour’s inquisition” *The Times*, March 9 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/trevor-phillips-how-i-fell-victim-to-labours-inquisition-9gg9qjk8f>. See also John Ware, “Cancelling Trevor Phillips”, *The Critic*, March, 13, 2020, <https://thecritic.co.uk/cancelling-trevor-phillips/>.

604 See Liam Duffy, *The ‘No True Muslim’ Fallacy: How Muslims are intimidated and marginalised for supporting counter-extremism initiative* (London: Civitas, 2019), available at <http://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/thenotrueislamfallacy.pdf>.

605 Nicholas Hellen, “Islamophobia award ‘puts target on back’ of former equalities chief Trevor Phillips”, *The Times*, November 26 2017, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/islamophobia-award-puts-target-on-back-of-former-equalities-chief-5j3swc7dg>.

a singular community and Islam as a “way of life”. It is also principled, in terms of being a form of *da’wa*, engaging with non-Muslims and sharing the values of Islam through cooperation and collaboration.

Some recent examples are worth providing, although such alliances have a long history and there are too many to note here. As mentioned earlier, IHRC has made in-roads within the UN system as an NGO with special consultative status. FOSIS’s alliance with the NUS black students group, through a handful of key individuals, has provided its campaign against Prevent with the appearance of being a more mainstream, rather than exclusively Muslim, concern. MEND, under its former name of iEngage, held the secretariat for the first All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Islamophobia in 2010. The following year, however, MEND was asked to step down from its position after a vote of MPs followed revelations about its links to “extremists”. This setback did not prevent the group from continuing its efforts to lobby within parliament and cultivate relationships with policymakers. Demonstrating the high profile it has attained within policy-making circles, MEND launched IAM in 2017 in the House of Commons. The event was attended by numerous members of parliament including the then Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn.⁶⁰⁶ For some years, Cage worked with Amnesty International UK, campaigning against the illegal detention and torture of Muslim prisoners at Guantánamo. Amnesty came under scrutiny in 2010, when the head of its gender unit, Gita Sahgal, was fired over her public criticism of the organisation’s decision to work with Cage.⁶⁰⁷ Amnesty was criticised again in 2014, when Cage research director, Asim Qureshi, described Mohammed Emwazi, the Islamic State executioner, as a “beautiful man”.⁶⁰⁸ Emwazi’s harassment by the British authorities, alleged Qureshi, was the key factor in Emwazi’s radicalisation. But it wasn’t until 2017 that Amnesty finally abandoned its partnership with Cage.⁶⁰⁹

Since falling from government favour in 2009 over MCB deputy secretary general Daud Abdullah’s signing of the pro-Hamas Istanbul Declaration, MCB has never quite regained the interlocutory credibility it once had. But in February 2020, MCB’s less antagonistic stance on Prevent seemed to have won it some dividends. Rebecca Long-Bailey, whilst campaigning for Labour leadership, announced that if successful she would scrap Prevent and give MCB a key role in an alternative approach to counter-radicalisation.⁶¹⁰ Long-Bailey lost in her bid to lead the party, and MCB remains just one voice of many vying to influence government policy. Nonetheless, it regularly put forwards its concerns to the government on numerous matters. In 2019, it provided oral and written evidence to the Home Office, the Home Affairs Select Committee, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and the Work and Pensions Committee.⁶¹¹

606 “Jeremy Corbyn launches Islamophobia Awareness Month 2017 in Parliament with MEND”, MEND website, November 3, 2017, <https://www.mend.org.uk/jeremy-corbyn-launches-islamophobia-awareness-month-2017-parliament-mend/>

607 Richard Kerbaj, “Amnesty International is ‘damaged’ by Taliban link”, *The Sunday Times*, February 7, 2010, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20100603031425/http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/afghanistan/article7017810.ece>. See also Sahgal’s statement on Amnesty’s termination of her employment contract at <http://www.womensgrid.org.uk/archive/2010/02/07/statement-by-gita-sahgal-head-of-amnesty-internationals-gender-unit/>.

608 Rahliia Gupta, “Amnesty International: some alliances are more impartial than others”, Open Democracy website, March 13, 2015, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/amnesty-international-some-alliances-are-more-impartial-than-others/>.

609 “Amnesty International responds to questions about Cage”, Amnesty International UK website, May 18, 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-international-responds-questions-about-cage>.

610 “Labour leadership candidate Rebecca Long-Bailey vows to scrap Prevent”, 5Pillars website, February 25, 2020, <https://5pillarsuk.com/2020/02/25/labour-leadership-candidate-rebecca-long-bailey-vows-to-scrap-prevent/>.

611 “CONSULTATION SUBMISSIONS AND REPORTS”, MCB website, undated, <https://mcb.org.uk/consultations-and-submissions/>.

Political Engagement and Education

This report has explored the campaign issues of Palestine, Prevent and Islamophobia in some depth, but there are two other noteworthy campaign issues that Islamic Movement groups have been actively engaged in for many years. These are Muslim political participation and Islamic education, particularly for Muslim schoolchildren.

Political Participation and Voting

True to their description as ‘participationist’ Islamists, Islamic Movement groups have actively campaigned to encourage Muslims to vote and engage in politics. The most active groups have been MCB, MEND, the Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), and the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB).

MCB produced a guide for Muslim voters in the 2019 election, showing where the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats stood on “ten key pledges to best support Muslim communities”.⁶¹² Tackling racism and Islamophobia was the first of these ten pledges.⁶¹³ It also organised a “National Muslim Voter Registration Day” to encourage Muslims to vote. This builds on years of previous work to persuade Muslims to vote in British elections. Although not endorsing a particular political party, MCB has attempted to guide the voting habits of Muslims by highlighting certain issues it deems important from an Islamic point of view. In 2017, MCB produced a guide for Muslims that compared the three main parties’ manifesto positions on these issues, including security, education and the recognition of Palestine as an independent state.⁶¹⁴ Prior to this, ahead of the 2015 general election, MCB launched a platform, “Muslim Vote”, “to engage Muslims to participate in politics”. It also published a report, *Fairness, Not Favours*, that identified a number of issues that it considered as important for Muslims in Britain.⁶¹⁵ Before the 2010 general election, it launched a campaign with the publication of a statement signed by numerous imams and Islamic scholars encouraging Muslim political participation.⁶¹⁶ Even before this, in the run-up to the 2005 general election, it launched an initiative aimed at urging British Muslims “to participate more actively in mainstream politics”.⁶¹⁷ It published a brochure, “Electing to Deliver”, and a “Voter Card” that highlighted “the ten key questions that Muslims had to ask of all prospective parliamentary candidates”. It promoted this campaign on the Islam Channel and through other media outlets.

According to Abdullah Faliq, a veteran Islamic Movement activist, the encouragement of Muslims to become involved in politics and to vote was a collaborative project involving IFE, MAB and the UK Islamic Mission around two decades ago. This arose to combat the rhetoric of Hizb-ut Tahir, which had labelled participation in the democratic system as *haram*, Islamically forbidden:

612 MCB, “General Election 2019 and Muslims”, MCB website, undated, <https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/MCB-2019-General-Election-and-Muslims3-1-page-001.jpg>

613 MCB, “Muslims Vote”, MCB website, undated, <https://mcb.org.uk/project/muslimsvote/>.

614 MCB, “General Election 2017 and Muslims: Comparing Manifesto Commitments” flyer, MCB website, undated, www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/manifestocomparison-mcb-a3.pdf/.

615 MCB, “Fairness, Not Favours, Muslim Council of Britain: British Muslim Perspectives at the 2015 General Election”, MCB website, March 2015, www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/fairnessnotfavours-MCB.pdf.

616 “Vote 2010 Ulama Statement”, Muslim Vote website, undated, https://web.archive.org/web/20100816062831/http://www.muslimvote.org.uk:80/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=128&Itemid=158.

617 MCB, “Secretary General’s Report”, report from MCB Eighth Annual General Meeting, available at http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SG_MCB_AGM_Speech_2005.pdf, pp.8-9.

*We brought in a lot of literature supporting participation published by IFE. I produced that. Scholars included Al-Qaradawi, al-Ghannushi, Khurshid Ahmad, as well as Salafis and Tablighis. ISB produced similar literature. This provided Muslims with the argument as to why they ought to be politically engaged.*⁶¹⁸

In 2010, IFE, for which Faliq has worked as a senior official for many years, distributed the second edition of a booklet to Muslims, which outlined the case for voting.⁶¹⁹ The booklet drew upon the arguments and credibility of Islamic scholars, such as Al-Qaradawi, as well as controversial figures in the Islamic Movement in Britain, namely Azzam Tamimi and Haitham Al-Haddad. It also referred to fatwas from the European Council for Fatwa and Research. The key argument provided was that voting is not forbidden in Islam, that it is actually an obligation to meet the most important requirement of *shari'a*, namely, “the deterrence of harm and the attainment of good”.⁶²⁰ It stated, “Muslims are required by their faith to be active participants in the political process. This obligation is firmly rooted in the undisputed sources of Islamic *Shari'a* (ie the Qur'an and Sunnah), as derived by the *ulama* (scholars) from all *Madhahib* (Schools of Thought).”⁶²¹

In recent years, alongside MCB, MEND has become the most proactive and public advocate for the Muslim vote in Britain. The Electoral Commission made MEND an “official partner” for registering Muslim voters for the 2015 general election. At least ten Labour and Conservative MPs joined the launch of MEND’s first “Muslim manifesto” in the House of Commons in March of that year. This wasn’t the first time the organisation had been embraced by the government. As mentioned, in its former incarnation as iEngage, it was invited to be the secretariat of a new All-Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia in November 2010. MEND launched a second “Muslim Manifesto” for the 2017 general election.⁶²² And more recently, for the 2019 election, an updated version of the document included 22 “policy pledges”, which MEND described as reflecting “the key principles, values, and beliefs on which is MEND is founded”.⁶²³ These policy positions, in effect, build upon, re-organise and expand those put forward by MCB. Similarly with MCB’s pledges, the first focuses on Islamophobia, seeking a commitment to adopt the APPG definition. MEND has taken a more partisan stance than MCB on elections in Britain. Whereas MCB has refrained from identifying an particular party for Muslim endorsement, MEND clearly identified Labour as the best party to represent Muslims in 2019.⁶²⁴ Representing a newer wave of activists, it has also sought to actively influence electoral outcomes, identifying marginal constituencies where it may have sway.⁶²⁵

618 Author interview with Abdullah Faliq, in Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.59-60.

619 ‘Voting in Islam: Guidance to Muslims in Britain from the Scholars of Islam’, leaflet on IFE website, April 2010, captured at https://web.archive.org/web/20131108062513/http://www.islamicforumeurope.com/images_uploaded/2010/04/img3205.pdf.

620 *Ibid.*, p.4.

621 *Ibid.*, p.2.

622 “mend Muslim Manifesto 2017”.

623 “mend Policy Pledges Muslim Manifesto”, MEND website, November 15, 2019, https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/MEND-Muslim-Manifesto-2019_15.11.19.pdf.

624 “MEND says Labour best meets Muslim priorities in General Election”, 5Pillars website, December 3, 2019, <https://5pillarsuk.com/2019/12/03/mend-says-labour-best-meets-muslim-priorities-in-general-election/>.

625 Andrew Gilligan, “Muslim group with links to extremists boasts of influencing election”, *The Telegraph*, April 4, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/general-election-2015/11515630/Muslim-group-with-links-to-extremists-boasts-of-influencing-election.html>. See also “MEND: Islamophobia Awareness Month Launch 2019”, Islam21C website, November 11, 2019, <https://www.islam21c.com/news-views/mend-islamophobia-awareness-month-launch-2019/>.

Education

One of the earliest campaigns waged by Islamic Movement groups was the attempt to influence the teaching of Islam in British schools. Since the creation of the Muslim Educational Trust (MET) in 1962, the Islamic Movement in Britain has sought to influence educational policy for the teaching of a particular understanding of Islam in schools. In the 1990s, MET was granted government approval to produce an Islamic studies syllabus in secondary schools, for which it provided teachers and teaching materials. In recent years, building on MET's advocacy work, the Association of Muslim Schools UK (AMS-UK) has become the Islamic Movement's primary interlocutor in education. It has developed relationships with and come to represent 133 Muslim schools throughout Britain, whilst supporting "a wider group of Muslim schools, both independent and maintained, as well as academy trusts".⁶²⁶ AMS-UK is formally recognised by the Department for Education as the national representative body for Muslim faith schools in the country, and has received state funding. Some of its leaders have advised the government on educational issues.⁶²⁷

AMS-UK was co-founded by a former assistant director at MET, Ibrahim Hewitt. A former MCB official and the chair of Interpal, Hewitt is also a trustee of IBERR, the International Board of Educational Research and Resources. IBERR was established to implement the aims of the First World Conference on Islamic Education held in Mecca in 1977.⁶²⁸ The conference statement asserted that the "ultimate aim of Muslim Education" is the "complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large".⁶²⁹ This echoes MET founder and director Ghulam Sarwar's conviction that, "The introduction of an Islamic education system should be an integral part of the efforts worldwide to establish Islam as an all-encompassing way of life".⁶³⁰ Muslim schools for Islamic Movement activists are not just for educational purposes, but for safeguarding the future of the Muslim *umma* and Islam as a way of life.⁶³¹

In 2008, AMS-UK established the Bridge Schools Inspectorate (BSI) with the Christian Schools Trust (CST). Through this mechanism, AMS-UK and CST inspectors inspected each other's schools until BSI was closed down in 2015. BSI explained the closure in terms of "unforeseen staffing pressures".⁶³² But concerns had been raised about its impartiality and the allegedly "extremist" views of some of its inspectors and trustees.⁶³³ Just prior to its closure, the head of Ofsted, Michael Wilshaw, wrote to BSI, noting that it "has not ensured that inspectors are able to identify warning

626 Court of Appeal judgment ([2017] EWCA Civ 1787), <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/interim-executive-board-of-al-hijrah-school-for-joinder-20171107.pdf>, para 7.

627 AMS-UK brochure, December 2013, <http://ams-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/AMS-Brochure.pdf>.

628 "What is IBERR?", IBERR website, undated, <http://iberr.chat.ru/iberr1.htm>.

629 Statement from The First World Conference on Muslim Education, 1977, Mecca, quoted in Sarwar, *Islamic Education*, p.29.

630 Sarwar, *Islamic Education*, p.30.

631 See, for example, Ibrahim Hewitt, "The Case for Muslim Schools", in Ghulam Sarwar (ed.), *Issues in Islamic Education* (London: Muslim Educational Trust, 1996), available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20040217000839/http://www.metrust.demon.co.uk/issues1211/issues72-78.pdf>, pp.72-78.

632 Andrew Gilligan, "Schools watchdog with links to extremists shut down", *The Telegraph*, June 14, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11673313/Schools-watchdog-with-links-to-extremists-shut-down.html>.

633 See "Concerns over religious hardliners inspecting independent 'faith schools'", National Secular Society website, May 11, 2014, <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2014/05/concerns-raised-over-religious-hardliners-inspecting-independent-faith-schools/>; and "Controversial schools inspectorate reportedly forced to close following successful BHA campaigning", Humanists UK website, June 16, 2015, <https://humanism.org.uk/2015/06/16/controversial-schools-inspectorate-reportedly-forced-to-close-following-successful-bha-campaigning/>.

signs of extremism and radicalisation in school settings with enough rigour”.⁶³⁴

In 2016, Ofsted inspectors found that an AMS-UK school, Al-Hijrah, had “failed to keep pupils safe from extreme views that undermine fundamental British values”.⁶³⁵ The inspectors claimed that the mixed-sex, state school had undermined the students’ equality of opportunities by unlawfully segregating boys and girls. AMS-UK’s chair, Ashfaque Ali Chowdhury, said candidly that the appeal verdict could create a conflict between the organisation’s duty to ensure its schools obey the law and its duty to ensure they “act in a way which is consistent with Islamic teachings and practices”.⁶³⁶ This conflict of duties suggests a conflict of values between the Islamic Movement’s mainstream Islamism and the liberal culture of Britain and the West. In January 2019, the school was still operating an unlawful segregationist policy.⁶³⁷

The Al-Hijrah Ofsted report also noted books found in the school library that “included derogatory comments about, and the incitement of violence towards, women”.⁶³⁸ One book – *The Muslim Women’s Handbook* by Huda Khattab – states, “The wife is not allowed to refuse sex to her husband”.⁶³⁹ It also states that women are commanded to obey their husbands and fulfil their domestic duties.⁶⁴⁰ Khattab’s book is recommended for Muslim schoolchildren in a book by Sarwar published by MET, entitled, *Sex Education: The Muslim Perspective*.⁶⁴¹ Sarwar’s book itself states, “A wife should not refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband without a reasonable excuse”.⁶⁴² Sarwar’s book, in turn, is recommended guidance produced for MCB for schools on the needs of Muslim children.⁶⁴³ This misogynistic message is echoed in a book by MCB founding member and former general secretary of FOSIS, Abdul Wahid Hamid, who wrote, “There is one thing in particular in which a wife should strive not to disobey her husband, and that is when he invites her to come to bed”.⁶⁴⁴

MCB has played an occasional role in education. In 2004, it launched an educational resource pack, “Books for Schools”, across the country, which MCB claimed was being used in hundreds of British schools.⁶⁴⁵ This was publicly supported by the education secretary,

634 “Annual report on the quality of the inspection work carried out by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate 2013/14”, Ofsted, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/476668/201314_BSI_AnnualReport.pdf.

635 Al-Hijrah School Ofsted report, October 20, 2017, <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2731875>, p.1.

636 Sally Weale, “Some Islamic schools in England still segregating children”, *The Guardian*, November 7, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/07/some-islamic-schools-in-england-still-segregating-children>.

637 Camilla Turner, “Muslim school will not allow girls to eat lunch until after boys have finished”, Ofsted chief says”, *The Telegraph*, January 30, 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2019/01/30/muslim-school-will-not-allow-girls-eat-lunch-boys-have-finished/>. In August 2019, the school closed and was succeeded by the Olive School, Small Heath, an Islamic primary school.

638 Al-Hijrah School Ofsted report, p.3.

639 Huda Khattab, *The Muslim Women’s Handbook* (London: Ta-Ha, 1993), p.42.

640 See [2017] EWCA Civ 142, para 140.

641 See Sarwar, *Sex Education*. Khattab’s book appears in the bibliography of Sarwar’s book. Sarwar describes his bibliography as a list of “good sources” regarding sex education (p.45). In a section of the book entitled “Advice to Muslim pupils”, Sarwar encourages Muslim schoolchildren to read books in the bibliography marked with an asterisk (p.48). Khattab’s book is one of seven books out of 37 marked with an asterisk (pp.59-61).

642 *Ibid.*, p.23.

643 MCB, *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools*, p.65.

644 Hamid, *Islam: The Natural Way*, pp.86-87.

645 “Books 4 schools”, MCB website, March 24, 2004, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/books-4-schools/>; “MCB launches educational resources for British schools”, MCB website, October 11, 2004, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/mcb-launches-educational-resources-for-british-schools/>. To see the list of books and other materials chosen to comprise MCB’s “self-contained resource pack”, see MCB, *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools*, p.62-3; and “London Borough of Merton launches Islamic resources packs for schools”, MCB website, December 7, 2006, <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/london-borough-of-merton-launches-islamic-resources-packs-for-schools/>.

Charles Clarke.⁶⁴⁶ One of the books – another one by the director of MET, Sarwar – laments the lack of an authentic Islamic state whilst lauding the work of the Muslim Brotherhood and Jamaat-i-Islami in their goal of “Islamising society”.⁶⁴⁷ MCB’s aforementioned guidance for schools - *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools* – was produced in 2007 by a senior MCB and AMS-UK official, Tahir Alam. A controversial figure, Alam was at the heart of the Trojan Horse affair in Birmingham in 2014. He was banned from managing independent schools or governing maintained schools in 2015 on the basis that he had been involved in activities aimed at “undermining fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs”.⁶⁴⁸

MCB and others have claimed that mere governance malpractice should not be confused with “extremism”. A similar view was expressed by the Education Committee’s report on the issue.⁶⁴⁹ This has been taken up by the narrative of Islamic Movement groups, which claim there has been an Islamophobic witch hunt.⁶⁵⁰ However, although there may not have been any evidence of *violent* “extremism”, Peter Clarke, who investigated the matter on behalf of the Department of Education, noted there was “compelling evidence of a determined effort by people with a shared ideology to gain control of the governing bodies of a small number of schools in Birmingham”⁶⁵¹ and introduce within them “the segregationist attitudes and practices of a hardline and politicised strand of Sunni Islam”.⁶⁵²

In January 2017, Louise Casey, author of the government’s review into opportunity and integration, informed the House of Commons Communities Committee that Trojan Horse was happening elsewhere in Britain. “In terms of some of the things that were seen in what’s called the Trojan Horse,” she said, “we did not find it very difficult to find things like the segregation of girls – what I would describe as *anti-equal opportunities* or *anti-liberal values*”.⁶⁵³ Her observations chimed with Clarke’s statement that his report was merely “the tip of the iceberg”.⁶⁵⁴

646 “Muslims launch school books drive”, BBC News, October 12, 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/3736428.stm.

647 Sarwar, *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings*, p.171.

648 See “Direction: Tahir Alam barred from managing independent schools”, Government website, September 9, 2015, www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-tahir-alam-barred-from-managing-independent-schools. In November 2016, Alam was reportedly teaching in informal classes. Alam’s ban was upheld in a tribunal in December 2017. See Andrew Gilligan and Sian Griffiths, “Trojan Horse’ plotters dodge teaching ban”, *The Sunday Times*, November 27, 2016, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/trojan-horse-plotters-dodge-teaching-ban-lwkrqc3bd>; and “Trojan Horse’ school ruling hush”, BBC, January 2, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-42540543>.

649 Education Committee, “Extremism in schools: the Trojan Horse affair”, Seventh Report of Session 2014–15. HC 473, House of Commons, 2015, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmeduc/473/473.pdf>, p.6.

650 See, for example, Yusuf Patel, “Gove’s Trojan Horse Hoax finally exposed by Education Select Committee”, *Islam21c*, March 18, 2015, <http://www.islam21c.com/politics/goves-trojan-horse-hoax-finally-exposed-by-education-select-committee/>.

651 “Oral statement by Nicky Morgan on the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter”.

652 Clarke, “Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter”, para. 5.1, p.48. For more on the Trojan Horse affair, see Perry, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain*, pp.177-185, and Perry, “Mainstream Islamism in Britain”, pp.23-25.

653 “The Communities and Local Government Committee questions Dame Louise Casey about her report on social integration”, January 9, 2017, <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/news-parliament-2015/integration-review-evidence-16-17/>.

654 Andrew Gilligan, “Trojan Horse ‘just the tip of the iceberg’”, *The Telegraph*, 12 October 2014. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11157116/Trojan-Horse-just-the-tip-of-the-iceberg.html>.



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