

THE MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN

A step towards greater consultation, cooperation and coordination on Muslim Affairs in the UK.

Muslim Council of Britain Weekly E-Newsletter

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Reports and Events Update

September 11 Reflections

In a press release on the first anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the Muslim Council of Britain reaffirmed its sympathy for the relatives of the innocent people who were killed on that day. Those who planned and perpetrated those atrocities, regardless of their religious, ideological or political beliefs, stand outside the pale of civilised values.

"Islam commands us to be just and wrong no one. Terrorism is an evil and destructive phenomenon that inflicts pain and suffering on defenceless people. To eradicate terrorism it is imperative that we address the conditions that can give rise to it. To combat terrorism effectively we need a united front against terror. Building bridges between nations and peoples must be an integral part of that strategy. Sadly, the world is instead being pushed towards more violence and division. Instead of vengeance we need justice and instead of rhetoric we need reason," said Iqbal Sacranie, Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain.

For the full text see the press release section at <http://www.mcb.org.uk>

Muslim Community Represented at St Paul's Cathedral

The secretary general Iqbal Sacranie represented the Muslim Council of Britain at the national service held at St Paul's Cathedral on 11 September 2002. The service was attended by HRH Prince Charles, Prince Harry, The Prime Minister, Members of the Cabinet, opposition leaders and other faith leaders. Amongst the other members of the muslim community present were Dr Zaki Badawi, {rinciple of muslim college, Dr Fatma Amer, Dr Jalil Sajid and Sheikh Anees Abushady, Deputy Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre.

Commemorating 11 September

On 11 September 2002, The Islamic Society of Britain (ISB) and The Young Muslims UK (YMUK), affiliates of the Muslim Council of Britain, held an event at the Islamic Cultural Centre, to remember those who died in the attacks on America a year ago, including the many Muslims that lost their lives in the World Trade Centre.

Joe Ahmed-Dobson spoke of a "message ... of a balanced, tolerant and peaceful view of Islam. This is a very important day for us because we will remember for the rest of our lives those people, who for no crime of their own, lost their lives." He continued by stating that the Qur'an made clear that "whoever kills a human being shall be regarded as having killed all mankind".

Ajmal Masroor also spoke at the event saying "Throughout the ages men have falsely attributed violence and intolerant actions to their faith. The vast majority of Muslims and those of all religious faiths hold their beliefs dear and choose what in Islam we would describe as 'the straight path of good, peace and justice.'" Sarah Joseph spoke on behalf of the mother of Sarah Ali, who was among the estimated 70 Muslims killed in the Twin Towers.

The MCB Announces Publication

"The Quest for Sanity: Reflections on September 11 and the Aftermath", a publication by the Muslim Council of Britain, will be available on 18 September 2002. In the first major publication of its kind in the Muslim world, the Quest for Sanity" is a collection of over thirty papers by both Muslim and non-Muslim specialists about the wide-ranging impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks, with a

special focus on how it affected British Muslims.

The book examines Islamic teachings regarding dealing with non-Muslims and living in a multi-faith state, the historical roots of Islam in Britain, the role of the British media in fuelling Islamophobia: the irrational fear of Islam and Muslims, case studies and personal accounts of how September 11 affected British Muslims and implications of the 'war on terror' for future world order.

To order copies of The Quest For Sanity (£12.75 each, plus P&P) please contact the MCB on 0208 903 9650 or order online at www.mcb.org.uk/books.

GLA Reception

The GLA held a reception at City Hall on 10 September. The reception was attended by a strong contingent from the MCB including Iqbal Sacranie, Tanzeem Wasti, Chair of the London Task Group, Dr Abdul Raheem Khan, Mohibur Rahman and Ajmal Masrur. Other invitees included members from the Jewish and Muslim community. The evening began with an address by Trevor Phillips, Chair of the London Assembly, welcoming the guests. This was followed by two eloquent and timely speeches by sixth formers remembering the events of September 11 2001.

United Religions Initiative AGM

Yousuf Bhailok former Secretary General represented the Muslim Council of Britain on 11 September 2002 at the United Religions Initiative Annual General Meeting. The meeting, held in Birmingham, elected Mr Bhailok as the Patron of the organisation and served as a forum to remember the loss of lives from 11 September 2001 and other atrocities. One of the initiatives discussed included the aim to set up a Peace Centre.

Muslim Delegation Meet New Minister at the Home Office

A delegation from the Muslim community met Lord Filkin, the new Minister at the Home Office responsible for race relations on Thursday 12 September 2002. The delegation comprised Iqbal Sacranie; Prof Dawud Noibi, Nigerian Muslim Federation; Sher Khan, Islamic Society of Britain; Mohammad Sawalha, Muslim Association of Britain and Ibrahim Mogra, Chair of the MCB Mosques & Community Affairs Committee.

The meeting was called by the Home Office to introduce the new Minister and was an opportunity to hear issues and matters concerning British Muslims. A number of items were raised at the meeting including:

- the need to extend existing legislation concerning religious discrimination beyond employment
- the community's concern at the heavy and disproportionate sentencing of young people involved in the Bradford rioting
- the fears in the Muslim community that despite reminders that the war on terror is not aimed at Islam or Muslims, the rhetoric that is coming from the United States Government has served to reinforce that impression. Muslims are anxious that an attack on Iraq is imminent and are concerned at the support given by the British Government. The minister was informed that the Muslim community opposes any attack on Iraq that does not have the support of the international community and the United Nations and more specifically where the objectives are not clear. The main victims of an attack on Iraq will be the civilian population.

It was agreed that regular meetings should take place between the Muslim community leadership and the Home Office Minister.

Committees Update

Media Committee

Media Committee Meeting

The MCB Media Committee met on 4 September at the Muslim World League. Those present included Abdul Majid Katme, Sher Khan, Ahmed Versi, Muhammad Abdul Bari, Ayaz Zuberi, Shenaz Bunglawala, Saad Saraf, Daud Abdullah, Irfan Mustafa, Inayat Bunglawala, Iqbal Sacranie and Basma Shayyal. Among items discussed were the media committee's activities, the launch of the Quest for Sanity, the next edition of the Common Good newsletter, the Weatherill Committee and interviews for September 11. The media committee will meet again on Thursday 10 October.

Letter to Archbishop of Canterbury Designate

The Secretary General of the MCB wrote to Rt Rev Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury Designate commending his article published in the Guardian on 12 September. It stated that the MCB welcomed his comments, drawing attention to the impersonal nature of modern warfare and the prospects of war with Iraq. The letter iterated that "Islam teaches us that all human life is sacred and it cannot be taken away from someone without the due process of law. The horrific numbers of civilian deaths caused by modern warfare should give us all immediate pause for thought."

September 11 Interviews

On 11 September 2002, a number of representatives from the Muslim Council of Britain, including Secretary General Iqbal Sacranie, Media Secretary Inayat Bunglawala, Sarah Joseph, Prof Dawud Noibi, Ibrahim Mogra and Imam Jalil Sajid amongst others gave interviews to various media organisations to present the Muslim perspective. See above "MCB In The Press" links for further information.

Weatherill Committee

Invitations for the Weatherill Committee Working Group on Media Consultation (WGMC) have been sent to the editors of print and broadcast media. The meeting is to take place on 24 October 2002.

Social Affairs Committee

Police & Muslim Community Meeting

Shiban Akbar, Chair of the Social Affairs Committee attended a Police and Muslim Community meeting with Assistant Commissioner David Veness at the New Scotland Yard on 5 September, 2002. Others present were Dr Raheem Khan, Chief Superintendent Javid Aktar, (West Yorkshire Police, Chief Superintendent Adrian Leppard, Surrey Police, Mohammed Mahroof, Metropolitan Police, Dr Alastair Niven, Principal, Cumberland Lodge, Great Park, Windsor, Sandra Willson, Senior Fellow, Cumberland Lodge, Shabbir Lakha, Barrister and Detective Sergeant Dorothy Crossan, New Scotland Yard.

The items discussed included the conclusions drawn from the June 2002 Cumberland Lodge Residential Conference and suggestions were made for possible remedies for major concerns. The

meeting provided a number of case study perspectives and decided upon the measures and structures required to build bridges between communities. The meeting also served to highlight the channels of communication which currently do not exist and provide terms of reference for the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF). A programme was established for police and community work over the next twelve months. Additionally, a date was set for the next one-day Cumberland Lodge seminar: 24 June 2003, 11am - 6pm.

Child Protection Review

On 10 September 2002, Shibana Akbar attended a Child Protection Review pre-meeting at the Children and Families Team, London Borough of Hillingdon Civic Centre, Uxbridge. She helped to clarify some Muslim customs regarding bringing up children.

Health & Medical Committee

The Department of Health is launching a flu immunisation campaign and it has requested MCB support in its publicity. Dr Shuja Shafi shall be attending the campaign launch on 2 October. The Health and Medical Committee have provided advice on the influenza vaccine for the coming winter and has sent information letters to all affiliates and mosques.

Public Affairs Committee

Sher Khan, Chair of the Public Affairs Committee, has written a letter to Bill Spears, General Secretary of the Scottish TUC thanking him for his brave stance in criticising a match between Israel and Scotland.

Events

Event: Mosque & Community Affairs Committee Meeting

Date: 19th September 2002

Time: 4.00 pm

Held By: The Muslim Council of Britain

Venue: Islamic Cultural Centre

Contact: For further information contact MCB Head Office

Event: Youth Committee Meeting

Date: 15th September 2002

Time: 3.00 pm

Held By: The Muslim Council of Britain

Venue: Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre

Contact: For further information contact r_nasreen@hotmail.com

Event: Education Training & Employment Committee Meeting

Date: 15th September 2002

Held By: The Muslim Council of Britain

Venue: Islamic Cultural Centre

Contact: For further information contact MCB Head Office.

Event: From Sabra and Shatila to Jenin: the humanitarian and legal consequences

Date: 17th September 2002

Time: 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm

Held By: The Palestinian Return Centre (PRC)

Venue: School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Lecture Theatre, Main Building,
Thornhaugh Street,
Russell Square, London, WC1 0XG

Contact: PRC Head Office: Tel: 0208 453 0919; e-mail: info@prc.org.uk;

Website: www.prc.org.uk

Information: This public seminar marks the 20th anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacre and will be

chaired by Mr John Austin MP

Event: **Ramadan, Health and Tobacco Initiative's**

Date: 18th September 2002

Held By: Health and Medical Committee, The Muslim Council of Britain

Venue: Manchester Town Hall.

Contact: MCB Head Office

Information: The conference aims to bring together local Muslim religious and community leaders, to inform and educate them about the dangers of tobacco use. We hope that a united declaration about

Islam and tobacco, followed up by dissemination of this information to their communities and

congregations will result. Co-organisers include Islamic Society of Britain, British Heart Foundation,

Rochdale NHS Dental Access Centre and local smoking cessation services.

Event: **Muslim Demographics - the way ahead**

Date: Thursday 26th September 2002

Contact: Chair of ReDoc, Dr Aziz Sheikh, c/o MCB office

Information: Topics for discussion include the census output on the religion question

Event: **Million's March For Palestine**

Date: 28th September 2002

Time: 1.00 pm

Held By: The Muslim Association of Britain

Venue: Congregating on Embankment and ending up in Hyde Park

Contact: MAB Head Office: 020 7272 2888 Mobile: 07958 329 879

Information: Play your part in the biggest mobilisation for Palestine in this country ever, insha'Allah.

It is a demonstration in support of all the Palestinian people. It is now no longer a concern only for

Muslims; but for anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, who realises and is aware that every human on Earth

has a right to live and be treated fairly.

Event: **Muslim Education in Europe Conference**

Date: 27th - 29th September 2002

Held By: The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK), The Association of Muslim Social Scientists

(Germany) & The Islamic Centre of Ireland

Venue: Bonn, Germany

Contact: AMSS (UK) PO Box 126, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2UD, UK, Fax: 44 (20) 8940 4014
email: amss@amssuk.com

Information: This conference sets out to coordinate and exchange expertise in monitoring, analysing and

assessing the development of education as it affects European Muslims. In doing so, it seeks to develop

an educational rationale which is capable of meeting the needs of the Muslim presence in the West.

Vacancies

Fund Raising Officer at the Muslim Council of Britain

Salary: up to £25,000 per annum gross.

The MCB is an umbrella body of Muslims in Britain which has been in existence for five years. The organisation has a vacancy for a staff member to join its office team based in North West London with responsibilities for

- developing a comprehensive fundraising strategy to raise funds from UK and overseas sources to meet MCB revenue expenditure requirements
- developing and manage action / delivery plans to implement the fundraising strategy
- developing and manage a core of volunteers to assist in fundraising
- reporting to the MCB Treasurer on regular basis and advise him/her on funding situation

Applications should possess

- good English language skills – telephone manner, letter drafting, proposal preparation
- IT literacy – email, Internet usage, Microsoft Office products experience
- experience in developing and implementing strategic business plans
- a track record in revenue fundraising for significant sums
- experience of liaising with a wide range of local, national and international funders
- experience of working with Muslim and non-Muslim organisations from the voluntary, statutory and private sectors

Letter of application with CV and two references should be sent to: The Chair, MCB Finance & General Purpose Committee, the Muslim Council of Britain, PO Box 52, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 0XW. The closing date for applications is 27th September 2002.

