

**From:** Lucy Proctor [mailto:]  
**Sent:** 23 December 2011 17:36  
**To:** Raza Kazim  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Mr Kazim,

I am not under any obligation to answer any questions.

The programme goes out on December 29 at 8pm on Radio 4.

We have worked hard to produce a fair programme. I hope you will agree.

Best regards,

Lucy Proctor

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**From:** Raza Kazim [mailto:...]  
**Sent:** 23 December 2011 17:03  
**To:** Lucy Proctor  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Ms. Proctor,

I have yet to receive your response to the questions we have asked in our previous emails.

I trust you will be responding soon.

Yours sincerely,

Raza Kazim

**From:** Raza Kazim  
**Sent:** 19 December 2011 17:52  
**To:** 'Lucy Proctor'  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Ms. Proctor,

Here are responses to the questions you have sent. The responses are from IHRC as an organisation rather than a named individual from the organisation.

All of these questions are answered in the context that we believe you have misrepresented yourself in the way you approached first Mr Shadjareh and then IHRC for participation, and that your line of questioning is based on ethnic stereotyping. We are still unclear as to what your focus in the programme is given your various changes of story and believe that despite having explained repeatedly that your questions are deeply problematic in that they reveal discriminatory tendencies.

We also note that the programme is listed (at 18 December 2011 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00jkr1q/episodes/upcoming>) on the The Report webpage

as 'Iran's Soft Power'. This is not a phrase you have used with us or even intimated was the focus of your programme. Yet more misrepresentation.

In answer to your question of 15 December:

Secondly, please could you explain what is going on in this clip?

<http://www.spittoon.org/archives/7838>

We trust that you have sourced this video and found that it comes from the youtube account 1plus2minus3. The context to the clip above is that Mr. Shadjareh was approached at the 2010 demonstration by someone coming across from the counterdemonstration who asked the questions you hear at the end of the clip. Mr. Shadjareh did not want to engage with someone approaching from a counter-rally engaged in racist chanting and abuse, and therefore dismissed the protestor with these answers.

We are sure you will have noted that the cameraman of this piece has 7 videos he has posted of that year's Al-Quds Day. We are sure you will have also noted that he has cast racist aspersions against the majority of demonstrators whom he deems to be Pakistanis not Iranians as not being able to understand the chants at the demonstration which are in English.

We trust that your research of the Al-Quds Day demonstration has revealed that for the last 3 – 4 years there has been a counterdemonstration to the Al-Quds day march and rally. This counterdemonstration is called by far right groups and is joined by supposedly Iranian opposition members and pro-Israel sympathisers. Photos of these counterdemonstrations are widely available on the net, showing the distressingly racist, Islamophobic and xenophobic nature of the counterdemonstrations.

There are also videos available catching the racist and Islamophobic chanting from the counterdemonstration.

Please confirm that you did research and source the video you cited, and that you are aware of the far-right counterdemonstrations that take place each year and the involvement of these groups in these counterdemonstrations.

Your other question in your email of 15 December is:

Massoud and yourself have answered my question about Fazel Harwamy's particular request to you - may I use what you have sent me on that in the script, or would you like to write a more formal response?

You have not actually posed a specific question from Mr. Harwamy and indeed your story as to what he has said has changed at various times so we cannot answer in a specific way. As a result our comment on this matter, taking into account your varying representations of what Mr. Harwamy has said to you, is to reiterate that we understand why a blogger or activist would be disappointed that we did not take on his / her case or cause, and indeed that is their right. Unfortunately we cannot take on every case and cause, and just as other human rights organisations we have to prioritise. We are concerned that in changing your story again, you are now implying that it is Mr. Harwamy who is suggesting that the ethnicity of two senior people associated with IHRC is the cause of this. We are concerned that you are now trying to pass the blame for this prejudiced line of questioning onto Mr. Harwamy.

Below are the responses to your other questions sent on 14 December.

[How does the IHRC choose which cases to campaign on?](#)

IHRC, as with all human rights organisations cannot take on each and every case and cause. We have to prioritise based on many factors including financial and physical resources, good quality sources of information etc. We also take into account whether a particular issue already has significant support from other civil society groups. If so, we try not to duplicate work.

[Does the IHRC avoid taking up cases of Iranian human rights?](#)

We have explained above how we are forced to choose which cases to take on. Nevertheless we have taken on some cases, though these are few and usually advocated through less public channels. There are many countries on which we have done less or indeed no work, yet they do not figure in your questions.

[Does the IHRC think human rights is a serious issue in the Islamic Republic of Iran?](#)

IHRC believes that all countries have human rights issues and that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not an exception to this, however we believe its human rights records is better than other countries in the region, and we have noted this publicly.

[What is the difference between the IHRC as an organisation and the IHRC as a company listed on Companies House?](#)

We asked you to clarify this question as follows:

What do you mean by the question:

[What is the difference between the IHRC as an organisation and the IHRC as a company listed on Companies House?](#)

Perhaps you can explain to us the meaning by explaining what difference you perceive between Amnesty International as an organisation and Amnesty International as a company listed at Companies House?

However you have declined to answer. We can try to answer if you will clarify the question for us, as contrary to your insistence, it is not clear what you mean.

Without clarification all we can say is that we are a well established civil society organisation registered in and operating in and from the UK.

[How would the IHRC describe its relationship with the Islamic Centre of England?](#)

IHRC has various types of relationships with many organisations in the UK and world-wide, and these are all documented in material available on our website. We are concerned that your questions to us show that either you have not researched our organisation's statements or have simply disregarded them in order to pursue an idea of ethnic conspiracy. We are a diverse organisation which was set up and has always been run by people of different ethnic backgrounds, and we work with an equally diverse range of organisations. We are concerned that you have picked up on the shared ethnicity of two senior people associated with IHRC and tried to single them out on the basis of their ethnicity.

In civil society many activists are involved in multiple organisations, as volunteers, workers or simply as members of a congregation. This applies to probably most people involved at IHRC of which there are many of different ethnic, cultural and sectarian backgrounds, yet you have chosen to focus on two who have Iranian heritage and this is at best poor journalism and worse prejudiced.

You have stated that you find it significant that we held an event at Islamic Centre of England last year i.e.our fundariser. Had you gone through the events section of our website you would have found that we have held many events there. Indeed we had to advise you that we have held several events at that venue. It is local to IHRC and a beautiful venue. We find it of great concern that you find this more significant than our holding our 10 Year Anniversary event at the London Muslim Centre, or that any number of our events have been held at the House of Lords or the United Nations in Geneva and all the other venues we have used.

What is the history of the IHRC's involvement in Al Quds day? What is the aim of Al Quds day? Is it fair to say it is an Iranian government event? Why does the IHRC think some people do see it as an Iranian government event?

There are hundreds of Al-Quds Day demonstrations and events in support of the Palestinian cause for liberation held around the world every year, of which one is held in London, UK in which IHRC participates and helps to organise. The event in the UK is a long standing one, and preceded the existence of IHRC and indeed many if not most of the organisations currently involved in organising and supporting it by over a decade. It is significant that you overlook the fact that the London event has the support of Muslim, Christian, Jewish and secular organisations and indeed participants hail from so many backgrounds.

Al-Quds Day has its genesis in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution and is a symbolic event in support of the people of Palestine and has been taken on board by activists world-wide. The genesis of the day is not a secret and is often expressed proudly at events around the world. However this does not make it an Iranian government event anymore than world-wide 4<sup>th</sup> July Independence Day events are US government events.

Sadly, the fact that such perceptions exist highlight the increasing level of racism, Islamophobia and xenophobia. It is the role of the fourth estate to expose such prejudices not perpetuate it.

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As you are aware we will be complaining about the way you misrepresented yourself to us and also about the discriminatory nature of your questioning. To that end we would like you to respond to the question we have already asked you and which you have not even acknowledged:

[on 15 December] ... please can you tell us whether until receipt of this email, you have read anything from our website and if so which documents and why you chose these pages.

Perhaps you can update us at to whether you have looked at our website since we asked this question.

Can you additionally explain why it is that you feel the ethnicity of Mr. Shadjareh and Professor Ameli is more important than the ethnicity of other senior people associated with IHRC in your mind.

**From:** Lucy Proctor [[mailto:...](#)]  
**Sent:** 19 December 2011 10:20  
**To:** Raza Kazim  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Mr Kazim,

That is exactly what I told Mr Massoud our show was about in our first programme - Iranian institutions in the UK, UK-Iran relations in the UK, what is going to happen with these institutions. Press TV is one of the main aspects of Iranian influence aka soft power in the UK, so its about Press TV and other organisations.

We would like your responses by this afternoon as we hope to record the programme tomorrow. We then edit the programme for two days. And we finish the show this Friday, due to Christmas holidays.

Best regards,

Lucy

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**From:** Raza Kazim [[mailto:...](#)]  
**Sent:** 19 December 2011 10:13  
**To:** Lucy Proctor  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Ms. Proctor,

I note that there appears to be a show entitled 'Iran's Soft Power' scheduled for broadcast on 29 December. Please advise if this is the programme you are working on. If so, please advise the following:

1. Why have you not stated at any time that your programme carried this title or this focus?
2. Why do you need our written responses by this afternoon?

Yours sincerely,

Raza Kazim

**From:** Lucy Proctor [[mailto:...](#)]  
**Sent:** 16 December 2011 10:36  
**To:** Raza Kazim  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Raza,

The questions are clear.

Best regards,

Lucy Proctor

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**From:** Raza Kazim [<mailto:...>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 15, 2011 10:23 PM  
**To:** Lucy Proctor  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Ms. Proctor,

I will be responding to the questions you have set out in your two previous emails in due course.

In order to do so, please can you clarify the following:

What do you mean by the question:

[What is the difference between the IHRC as an organisation and the IHRC as a company listed on Companies House?](#)

Perhaps you can explain to us the meaning by explaining what difference you perceive between Amnesty International as an organisation and Amnesty International as a company listed at Companies House?

Also, please can you tell us whether until receipt of this email, you have read anything from our website and if so which documents and why you chose these pages.

Yours sincerely,

Raza Kazim

**From:** Lucy Proctor [<mailto:...>]  
**Sent:** 15 December 2011 14:54  
**To:** Raza Kazim  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Mr Kazim,

A couple of extra questions;

Massoud and yourself have answered my question about Fazel Harwamy's particular request to you - may I use what you have sent me on that in the script, or would you like to write a more formal response?

Secondly, please could you explain what is going on in this clip?

<http://www.spittoon.org/archives/7838>

Best regards,

Lucy Proctor

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**From:** Raza Kazim [mailto:...]  
**Sent:** 14 December 2011 20:42  
**To:** Lucy Proctor  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Ms Proctor,

I have looked at your correspondence with Mr Shadjareh and it seems clear that you have an issue about ethnicity and ethnic stereotyping. Your original focus appeared to be Mr. Shadjareh's ethnicity and now it is Mr. Ameli's.

I am also confused when you state that both Islamic Centre of England and IHRC have had Mr. Ameli as director. Mr. Ameli has never been the director of IHRC. He is one of the directors of the registered company IHRC. He is also a well respected academic whose academic oversight of and input into some of IHRC's research projects has been invaluable and noted by us publically.

We have held several events at ICEL not just one. We have also regularly held events at the House of Lords, London Muslim Centre (indeed our 10 year anniversary event was held there), SOAS and the Foreign Press Association to name a few. We also regularly hold events at the United Nations in Geneva. We have also regularly participated in events at and organised by these venues and many, many more. Are you suggesting that IHRC has ties and links to all these venues based on the shared ethnicity of some of the directors or senior figures at IHRC and equivalent figures at these institutions?

Your line of questioning is frankly absurd.

We have directors of various ethnicities, and they may have personal, religious, voluntary, cultural and / or professional affiliations with other organisations. This is typical of civil society activists and workers. I appreciate that a blogger may not understand that context, and s/he may also feel disappointed if their case or cause was not taken on by us. However, I would expect a journalist to understand or at least research if s/he is unaware of a certain field or area. Sadly this does not seem to be the case here and at best is very unprofessional.

If IHRC is to be mentioned in the programme, please send me a list of questions and I will endeavour to get some written responses sent to you. Otherwise, as Mr. Shadjareh has already stated we do not feel that you have approached the organisation in a professional manner, or been candid about the context of your programme and we will not participate.

Yours sincerely,

Raza Kazim

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**From:** Lucy Proctor [...]  
**Sent:** 14 December 2011 10:02  
**To:** Raza Kazim  
**Subject:** BBC Radio 4 - The Report - UK-Iran relations

Dear Mr Kazim,

I am working on a BBC Radio 4 programme about UK-Iran relations in the UK for a series called The Report.

I have spoken to Mr Massoud about conducting an interview but he is leaving the country today and feels unhappy about the questions I would like to ask, but suggested I get in touch with you.

I spoke to Mr Massoud on Monday. I then emailed him a couple of times and tried to call yesterday. As I have done further research and emails in between these conversations and emails, it has

become clear to me that the IHRC has ties with the Islamic Centre of England - both organisations have had Mr Saied Reza Ameli as director and the IHRC held its 2010 fundraiser at the ICEL. I have also interviewed a blogger, Fazel Harwamy, who suggests that the IHRC is reluctant to talk about human rights in Iran because of this link.

This is not an expose of any kind - the Islamic Centre of England is clear that it is a cultural and religious centre and its links with the Iranian government are open and public. The programme simply aims to map the various relationships in the UK and ask what they mean for UK-Iranian relations.

I would like to interview someone at the IHRC. I am making a half-hour documentary and am keen to explore the subject of UK-Iran relations accurately. I would like to hear about the IHRC's focus, its history, its campaigns on human rights and Al Quds day. I do not intend to suggest that the IHRC is an Iranian institution itself and I am not suggesting that to have links with Iranian institutions is a negative thing in itself.

I am recording this week.

Best regards,

Lucy Proctor

Lucy Proctor

BBC Radio Current Affairs

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BBC White City

201 Wood Lane

London W12 7TS

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