



**CHALLENGING THE ZIONIST  
PREVENT AGENDA**

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**ISLAMOPHOBIA PROJECT  
MOVES TO CHICAGO**

**Islamic  
Human Rights  
Commission**



**ANNUAL  
NEWSLETTER**

Ramadan 1437 / June 2016

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE**

The aims of the Islamic Human Rights Commission

■ To champion the rights and duties revealed for human beings.

■ To promote a new social and international order, based on truth, justice, righteousness and generosity, rather than self-interest.

■ To demand virtue and oppose wrongdoing in the exercise of power (from whatever base that power derives - e.g. political, judicial, media, economic, military, personal, etc.).

■ To gather information about, and to publicise, atrocities, oppression, discrimination, and other abuses of divinely-granted rights.

■ To campaign for redress, and to support the victims of such crimes.

■ To campaign to bring the perpetrators and their accomplices to justice.

■ To cooperate with other groups and individuals where such cooperation is likely to further the achievement of these aims.

The Islamic Human Rights Commission is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

# Challenging the Zionist PREVENT agenda

## Draconian, discriminatory and destructive

IT'S NOT only Muslims who think the government's PREVENT strategy is a throw-back to the Stalinist Soviet Union.

In April, at the end of a three-day visit to the UK, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly blasted the policy for its Orwellian impact on free speech and its effect on Britain's Muslim minority.

"I heard reports of teachers being reported for innocuous comments in class, for example," said Maina Kiai. "The spectre of Big Brother is so large, in fact, that I was informed that some families are afraid of discussing the negative effects of terrorism in their own homes, fearing their children would talk about it at school and have their intentions misconstrued. By dividing, stigmatising and alienating segments of the population, Prevent could end up promoting extremism, rather than countering it," he said.

Draconian, divisive, discriminatory and destructive. These are the hallmarks of a policy

whose reach has become so pervasive that it now touches every aspect of public life.

In the last year PREVENT has been expanded so that now it is a duty of public officials including doctors and teachers to spy on individuals on behalf of the state. Although presented as a colour-blind policy aimed at countering extremism, PREVENT has far more sinister and pernicious aims vis a vis Britain's Muslim minority. It is predicated on the Zionist/neo-con trope that Islam is the primary cause of terrorism. In the words of PM David Cameron:

"It is an extreme doctrine..... And like any extreme doctrine, it is subversive. At its furthest end it seeks to destroy nation-states to invent its own barbaric realm. And it often backs violence to achieve this aim... But you don't have to support violence to subscribe to certain intolerant ideas which create a climate in which extremists can flourish. Ideas which are hostile to basic liberal values such as democracy, freedom and sexual equality."

This is the conveyor belt theory of terrorism where Islam is the first step of a journey along which extremist ideology is a staging post and acts of terror-



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ism the possible destination. It assumes that terrorism would not exist without a helpful environment such as that allegedly provided by Muslim communities holding conservative views.

IHRC has also viewed current anti-terrorism policy as Islamophobic since it rests on the assumption that by dint of their faith all Muslims are potential terrorists who must be steered off that course by the state.

We also believe that far from being driven by a desire to fight terrorism, anti-terrorism policy is the leading edge of a government strategy to control and shape Islam and Muslims in Britain. It is part of a social engineering exercise that has at its heart surveilling Muslims from cradle to grave and legislating what they can and can't believe or say.

## We prefer to call it soft fascism

Universities now screen speakers for 'radicalism', mosques are expected to control what their imams say on pain of being closed down, Muslim charities face unprecedented scrutiny for links to 'radical' groups abroad, and individuals have to self-censor what they download lest their reading material is deemed to constitute 'terrorist matter'.

PREVENT has created a category of thoughtcrime for Muslims by which certain ideas and practices such as wearing religiously inspired attire or opposing homosexuality are referable to the PREVENT police. In the political sphere, criticism of Zionism, espousal of the fundamental right to armed resistance against occupation or speaking out against government policy can all fall within the far reaching net cast by PREVENT.

More than that, PREVENT now includes a positive expectation to uphold what are described as British liberal values. So it is not enough for Muslims to divest them-

selves of their antiquated beliefs, they must now also subscribe to the prevailing social and political norms, whatever that means. The government calls this new assimilation policy 'muscular liberalism'. We prefer to call it soft fascism.

The Trojan Horse affair in which the Dept of Education, led by Zionist stalwart and Islamophobe Michael Gove, concocted a national security panic by fabricating an extremist plot to take over a handful of inner city Birmingham schools, signalled that even in areas where Muslims are in a majority, their religious values should play no part in the education of their children. Nor should

they be allowed to infect political discourse. In April 2015, the removal of Britain's first elected mayor Lutfur Rahman from his position in the London borough of Tower Hamlets was also designed to show Muslims that their views were unwelcome in the political arena.

Not even children are immune. In May 2015 children at the predominantly Muslim Buxton School in Leytonstone, East London, were issued with questionnaires soliciting their views on a range of issues and hypothetical cases designed to tease out any "extremist" tendencies. They asked a series of highly loaded questions

Organised by IHRC & CAMPACC






Supporting Organisations:  
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 NHS Black Starlets  
 Scotland Against Criminalizing Communities  
 The Institute Society of Socialist Lawyers  
 University & College Union

Free entry Lunch is served from 1pm.  
 Please RSVP your attendance in advance with  
 Ashlyja@ihrc.org for the purpose of catering.

Join in the discussion by sending your questions and comments via Twitter @ihrc

**PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM?**

**SATURDAY**  
**13th**  
**JUNE**  
**2015**  
**14.00-17.00**

**SPEAKERS:**  
**MARIE BREEN-SMYTH**  
**CERIE BULLIVANT**  
**ALEX KENNY**  
**ARUN KUNDNANI**  
**LEROY LOGAN**  
**PATRICIA McMANUS**  
**BASMAH SAHIB**  
**KATY SIAN**  
**UMIT YILDIZ**

**VENUE:**  
**Amanah Centre**  
**251 Commercial Road**  
**London**  
**E1 2BT**

**NEAREST STATIONS:**  
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 Shadwell Station & Whitechapel Station  
 Hammersmith and City Lines and District Lines  
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Watch live on 

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which seem to be based on a perception of extremism and radicalisation held by right-wing neo-cons.

## Muslim community further targeted

This relentless juggernaut of anti-Muslim policies has swept aside all opposition. This persistent ignoring of legitimate concerns forced IHRC to discontinue its long-standing policy of engaging in government anti-terrorism consultations at the beginning of 2015. We felt that our engagement was allowing the government to claim that it was considering the views of civil society organisations when in fact the final policies were always a foregone conclusion.

We have noticed a pattern of state behaviour develop in which every time there is a terrorist act committed by a Muslim the moment is cynically exploited by politicians to widen the powers of the security services, erode fundamental freedoms and further target and marginalise the Muslim community.

It goes without saying that the application of existing anti-terrorism laws is discriminatory and disproportionately used against the Muslim community. For example, according to the government's own statistics, since 2001 some 70% of all arrests under the Schedule 7 stop and search



## This anti-Muslim discourse is also increasingly encouraging hate crimes against Muslims

powers of the Terrorism Act 2000 have been of non-whites.

This anti-Muslim discourse is not only socially divisive but is also increasingly encouraging hate crimes against Muslims such as physical and verbal attacks and discrimination. Our latest hate crime report on the UK, published in November, showed that between 2010 and 2014 the number of people who reported seeing Islamophobia directed at someone else spiked from 50% to 82%. In the same period the number of people who had witnessed negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims jumped from 69% to 93.3% suggesting these experiences have become almost universal for Muslims.

IHRC ascribes the worsening conditions on a 'hate environment' that has been deliberately whipped up by the media, politicians and the commentariat, the purpose of which is to 'otherise' Muslims and legitimise discriminatory treatment of them through official policy.

PREVENT has been a key instrument in fabricating this hate environment.

IHRC has been working hard to challenge PREVENT. We were one of the first organisations to arrange a conference to discuss the dangers of PREVENT and create a platform for other organisations to network and share ideas. We have raised our concerns with various institutions, nationally and internationally including the UN. We have created and disseminated a 'know your rights' leaflet that explains peoples



Arun Kundnani speaks at IHRC's 2015 conference on PREVENT

rights if they are targeted by PREVENT. IHRC is also working with various community groups to help them challenge the implementation of PREVENT in their local communities.

The above represents just some of the things we are doing to challenge PREVENT and the creation of an environment of hate here in the UK. The PREVENT strategy presents the biggest ever challenge to Muslims and civil liberties in Britain, a challenge that can only be met with informed research and concerted action. We urge you to help us in our effort to better understand and confront that threat.

Faisal Bodi

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

**RAMADAN** is a time of great blessings, a time for recharging our spiritual batteries and a time for reflection. We should use this month to reflect upon our commitment to Allah and our spiritual progress as Muslims. But we should also reflect upon the situation the Ummah finds itself today.

Unfortunately this year we've seen a continuation of the demonisation and legitimisation of the environment of hate against Muslims and Islam in Britain as well as the rest of the Western world.

At the same time we are seeing an ever-increasing indifference towards the loss of life of Muslims around the world, almost to the extent that it is as if they are not part of the human race. One feels if these atrocities and abuses were carried out against animals, there would be a much bigger outcry by humanity and the Western public. It is a reality that only terror attacks in London, Paris and Brussels generate outcries and condemnation. But everyday victims of the same barbaric group in Beirut, Ankara, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Nigeria hardly receive a mention let alone mass condemnation and a minute's silence. This horrible face of exceptionalism has become so established and has become so normative that even Muslims and Muslim organisations only condemn and respond to loss of life in the West.

The other disease which is spreading is internalisation of Islamophobia and the promotion of otherness within Islam as an excuse for creating conflict. In December 2015 we saw the massacre of 1000 innocent men, women and children by the Nigerian government and appeasement of the war criminals from the international community through its silence.

We also see the continuation of injustice in Palestine, Kashmir and Myanmar and Zionist-style war crimes targeting civilians in Yemen by Saudi Arabia and indeed the continuation of barbaric acts by Daesh in Iraq and Syria. It is all keeping our minds and hearts occupied with the pain and suffering of the victims.



## We must stop hiding our heads and rise up with confidence and focus on combating the injustices that we face not just for our sake but for all of humanity

The climate of hate which we reported in our report 'Environment of Hate: The New Normal for Muslims in the UK' published in November 2015 – shows us we can no longer look at perpetrators as the only ones responsible. It is those who create the environment that are equally to blame. The politicians, media and system thrive on creating division and otherness as a means of distracting society from the real economic, social and environmental challenges that need to be addressed.

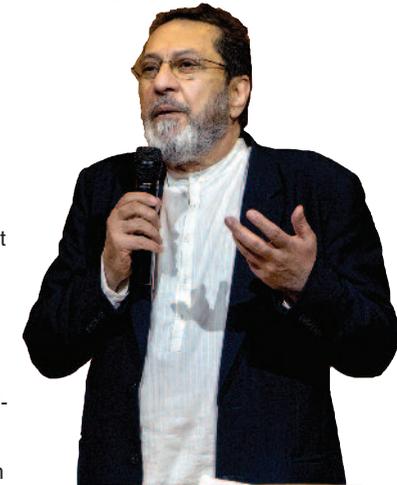
At a time like this we must stop hiding our heads and rise up with confidence and focus on combating the injustices that we face not just for our sake but for all of humanity. We can do it. And we must do it - relying on Allah SWT and the teachings of the Prophet PBUH as the tools for creating a better and more just society for all. Our confidence in Allah and Islam

is unshakeable and our responsibility to challenge these corrupt systems – rather than individuals – should be our mission.

We in the Islamic Human Rights Commission have been involved in this work for over 19 years and we need your support to continue this effort. We all spend huge amounts of our concern and resources in nurturing a better future for our children and if we are going to have a bright future for our children – and their children – we need to make sure we can rise to the challenge of confronting this environment of hate to help create a better and just society for all. Together we can do this. Please help us to make it a reality by supporting us.

**Massoud Shadjareh**

Chair, Islamic Human Rights Commission



Use coupon code 'ilovecandy' to get 25% off at [halalsweetco.com](http://halalsweetco.com)

## Bookshop is hub of IHRC activities

ANOTHER year has passed at the IHRC Bookshop and Gallery and once again it has been an eventful and memorable one. Over the last year the bookshop has successfully hosted author evenings and children's events, all the while adding to our unique products that make us stand out.

The gallery has played host to a unique exhibition by art collective Variant Space. Their exhibition 'Invisible Lines' showed artwork created by the various artists at Variant Space. Comprised mostly of female Muslim artists from an array of backgrounds, our gallery helped exhibit their art in a new place and in a more personal way. The art included was a multitude of mixed media including video, 3D-works and illustrations. The exhibition helped introduce a new and

diverse crowd to the bookshop.

It's this diversity that drives us to continue our aim of disseminating information that challenges existing socio-political structures and engages people to critically assess past narratives.

This aim has inspired our stellar author evenings. In May 2015 we hosted academic and Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, Muhammad Mojlum Khan, as he discussed his book; 'The Muslim Heritage of Bengal'. This focused on the often forgotten Muslim figures that have been crucial to the development of India and Bangladesh over the last 200 years.

Autumn 2015 saw two popular author evenings at the Bookshop. In September we hosted Saida Sherif, a seasoned aid-worker as she discussed her book

'Sparks of Fire'. She detailed the human stories behind the Bosnian genocide as she lived and worked amongst its victims in the 1990's.

In October we welcomed writer and historian Habeeb Akande. Habeeb gave a fascinating talk on his newest book; 'Illuminating the Blackness' that discusses the issue of Islam in Brazil, as well as his own travels there.

At the IHRC the local community means a lot to us, which is why we gear events to foster good community relations. In particular we always strive to have enlightening events for children. We can proudly say during every school holiday last year there was at least one event on at IHRC that both parents and children could come to enjoy.

These included an 'Eid Special Storytelling' during September. In recent months we were lucky enough to have two great children's authors

in Elizabeth Lymer and Aisha Mohammad host their own events, complete with poetry and activities.

The past year has also seen an increase in international clients for the bookshop. We now have exclusive titles from the likes of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and institutions such as ICIT in Malaysia. These additions, coupled with our matchless artwork and ornaments from locales such as Iran, Indonesia, Granada and the US, differentiate us and help us be truly global.

As ever we have more exhibitions and events planned, as well as continuing our mobile bookstalls at conferences and events around the country.

**If you would like to organise an event at our bookshop or have us bring a stall to your event anywhere in the UK please email [shop@ihrc.org](mailto:shop@ihrc.org) or call 020 8904 4222.**

**Kamal Khan**

Buy all our products on-line at <http://shop.ihrc.org>

## Islamophobia and our dignity

JUNE 2015 saw IHRC's 'Preventing Violent Extremism?' conference at the Amanah Centre in East London which analysed the government's Prevent programme and discussed how we can collectively respond to its pressures, resist its

attacks and find ways to undermine the state's efforts to enforce the programme. The keynote speaker was Arun Kundnani, a renowned expert on race, Islamophobia, political violence and surveillance. His latest book, 'The Muslims are Coming!

Islamophobia, extremism, and the domestic War on Terror, published in 2014, is available at the IHRC Bookshop.

Other speakers included Leroy Logan, Basmah Sahib, Cerie Bullivant, Marie Breen-Smyth, Robert Ferguson, Patricia McManus, and Umit Yildiz. Supporting organisations included Bandung2, CAGE UK, Free Talha, Lewisham Islamic Centre, NUS Black

Students, Scotland Against Criminalising Communities (SACC), The Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers and University & College Union.

The event included audience discussions involving a variety of academics, grassroots activists, lawyers, press and students. Discussion points included the eradication of free debate in the

**Continued on page 23**

# HATE CRIME PROJECTS

IN NOVEMBER 2015, IHRC published the book 'Environment of Hate: The New Normal for Muslims in the UK' which draws on meticulous survey findings and academic studies to express the candid realities of Muslims in Britain and procedures to address the issues. The rigorous fieldwork for the book began in early 2014 with the distribution and collection of qualitative and quantitative questionnaires all over the UK from which we received almost 1,800 completed questionnaires. The survey covered large demographics including age, gender, areas in the UK with high levels of Muslim population, as well as areas with significantly low Muslim population, ethnic backgrounds, marital statuses, work statuses, levels of education, countries of birth and citizenship, self-deemed levels of religious practice and visibility of 'Muslimness'.

The quantitative surveys measured experiences through categorisation of five sections: Being a Member of a Hated Society, Ideology, Discrimination and Double Discrimination, Cross Cultural Schemata and Intercultural Sensitivity and Policy. On the other hand, the qualitative survey questions sought to elicit the respondents' views as well as lived experiences on societal / government-

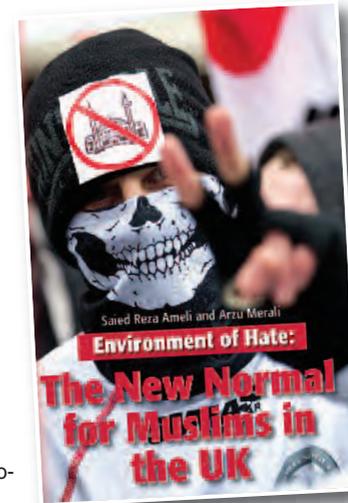
perception of Muslims, feelings on whether religious acts of hate are dealt with adequately, causes of racist / Islamophobic culture, if institutions such as the media contribute to such cultures, the role and effects on the behaviour of Muslims etc.

### Some findings include:

- Experience of those 'always' seeing negative stereotypes of Muslim people in the media rose from 10% in 2010 to 39.4% in 2014.
- In 2010, 30% of respondents said they 'never' saw negative stereotypes of Muslims in the media, in 2014 however, 94% of respondents said they saw negative stereotypes.
- In 2010 fewer than 60% of respondents said they encountered politicians using Islamophobic rhetoric and that figure has risen to almost 85% in 2014.
- The survey also reveals unsettling statistics on discrimination faced by Muslims in both the workplace and in an education setting.
- 66% of those surveyed have experienced verbal abuse at some point – a definite increase from the 39.8% in 2010.

• In 2010, 50% of respondents had seen or heard Islamophobia against another person. In 2014, this figure rose to 80%.

The launch of the book was timely as everyday life for Muslims in Britain is undoubtedly permeated by rising levels of abuse, discrimination and violence. We received wide media coverage, from articles in the Guardian, Huffington Post and The Times and televi-



sion and radio coverage by many broadcasters from the BBC to ITV.

Held at the P21 Gallery in London on Tuesday 17 November, we had a panel of speakers including co-author of the report and Head of Research at IHRC, Arzu Merali, Head of Advocacy

at IHRC Abed Choudhury, journalist Peter Osborne and academics Nisha Kapoor and David Miller. It was chaired by IHRC's Raza Kazim. We were joined by a number of academics, community activists and journalists as well as press including Al Jazeera Arabic, Al Jazeera English, Press TV and IRNA London, to name a few.

The normalisation of Islamophobia in Europe is disturbingly, yet expectedly, on the rise. Thus we are in the midst of undertaking the Muslim Experiences of Hostility and Discrimination projects in Germany and France. We have collected around a total of 150 surveys from France and 180 from Germany, both online, whilst pursuing the distribution and collection of hard copies as well. Questionnaires have been somewhat modified to reflect the situations in Germany and France better and

have been translated into not only German and French but also Arabic and Turkish. To get involved in these projects, please email [ashiya@ihrc.org](mailto:ashiya@ihrc.org) as we are continuously recruiting people to assist with research support.

**Ashiya Mendheria**

# DEFENDING YOUR RIGHTS

**IHRC Legal is now a fully established advice service specialising in UK Immigration law (OISC Level 3) and Employment and Discrimination Law.**

IHRC legal has taken on cases involving issues relating to discrimination, unfair dismissal, breach of contract and wrongful dismissal claims, unlawful deduction of wages, grievances, support during disciplinary and investigatory proceedings and representation at the Employment Tribunal.

In fact, recently, IHRC Legal represented a Muslim waitress in a successful case of religious discrimination against her employer. The employee had been told she could not bring

halal meat to work and to eat non-halal meat including pork instead. IHRC Legal was able to challenge the unlawful behaviour of the employer and secure a substantial five figure settlement.

What was unique and groundbreaking about the case was that it was funded entirely by IHRC's Legal Defence Fund. The fund is the first of its kind to be set up by a Muslim charity in the UK and will be used to support IHRC Legal clients in paying for some of the costs incurred when pursuing employment and discrimination

cases.

In relation to its immigration law work, IHRC Legal successfully helped a woman who was denied access to public funds and left destitute while having to raise her children. Although, granted 'leave to remain' by the Home Office, as part of their strategy to make the UK a 'hostile' place for migrants, she was denied access to public funds.

IHRC Legal applied to have this condition removed by providing detailed representations and extensive proof of the family's destitution as well as the ill health of one of the children; IHRC Legal managed to secure the removal of the Home Office's condition.

IHRC Legal continues to advise on the full range of immigration applications to the Home Office, including but not limited to:

- Entry Clearance Applications
- Leave to Remain Applications
- Indefinite Leave to Remain / EEA permanent residency
- EEA Registration Certificates / Residence cards
- Human Rights applications
- Citizenship Applications – Naturalisation & Registration
- Applications for Immigration Bail
- Applications for replacement status documents or biometric residence permits / removal of conditions on leave to remain
- Preparation of and representation at Appeal hearings

**If you or someone you know would like to discuss any employment or immigration matter please contact us on 020 8904 4222.**

**Mushtak Ahmed**

# MEDIA DEPARTMENT PRODUCES MORE HARD-HITTING DOCUMENTARIES

OVER the years IHRC has organised a variety of events at the local and international level. These events have showcased a number of diverse speakers who have delivered many captivating talks. These include our annual events such as the Islamophobia Conference, the moving Genocide Memorial Day and our most important social event of the year, the Islamophobia Awards, in addition to our countless author evenings and documentary screenings. These events can be found on IHRCTV, our official YouTube channel.

Last year one of our biggest events was the long-awaited screening of our very own IHRC produced documentary 'Forgotten Genocide' about the Bosnian genocide which was directed by Channel 4 reporter Assed Baig. The documentary used personal accounts from survivors, the testimonies of prisoners and interviews with the likes of Murat Tahirovic, President of the Association of Witness and Victims of Genocide, as well as archival footage to prove the entirety of the war constituted genocide. The war gravely impacted 100,000 Bosnian civilians while the international community turned a blind eye to this massacre. IHRC is proud to be able to say it has tried to bring to light an issue that has otherwise been largely ignored by the international community.

The premiere was held in the highly esteemed London art centre Rich Mix. Over 100 guests attended and performances took place from a number of spoken word artists, most notably Talha Ahsan. Since the premiere we have screened 'Forgotten Genocide' throughout the UK with

producer Arzu Merali and director Assed Baig being available for question and answer sessions.

Alongside 'Forgotten Genocide' another IHRC produced documentary is the 'Zaria Massacre' which highlights the ongoing sectarian conflict in Nigeria that IHRC is tirelessly campaigning against. The documentary follows the events of Al-Quds Day 2014 when a pro-Palestinian demonstration was attacked by the Nigerian army killing 40 people including the teenage sons of the leader of the Nigerian Islamic Movement, Sheikh Ibraheem El-Zakzaky.

IHRC aims to focus on sufferings that are overlooked by the mainstream media and the international community by creating content that is easily accessible to the general public to make them

more aware of the issues.

Our documentaries have been screened in a number of locations ranging from art venues to universities. We are very much interested in cooperating with external organisations and individuals, so if you are interested in screening one of our documentaries please contact: [research@ihrc.org](mailto:research@ihrc.org) for more information.

The majority of our events are live streamed and can be viewed directly on our website. We aim to ensure that our events are easily accessible to those who were not able to make it on the day and therefore upload all events to our Youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/IHRCTV>) and Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com/user2933030>) accounts.

**Thania Uddin**

## Close to a continent away from her family

So she contacted IHRC for advice and support

Aminah moved from Algeria to the UK where she studied English, married a British citizen in 2010 and had three children. Unfortunately she was unable to make any applications to the Home Office upon the expiration of her visa in 2012 because of financial difficulties. This left her on the verge of being deported.

IHRC helped this wife and mother secure her immigration status despite having to prove "insurmountable obstacles". With IHRC Legal's assistance, she was granted leave to remain and will no longer worry about being torn apart from her family.

**Contact us if you need immigration advice.**

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## Told to eat pork and called a terrorist

So she contacted IHRC for advice and support

Nabila worked as a waitress at a restaurant where her employer referred to her as a terrorist, called her a member of ISIS/ISIL, didn't allow her to eat halal meat and told her to eat pork instead. Her protests were dismissed on a number of occasions

IHRC Legal was able to challenge the unlawful behavior of the employer and secure a substantial five figure in a religious/racial discrimination claim.

**Contact us if you think you have been a victim of discrimination at work**

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# ISLAMOPHOBIA AWARDS 2016

## Votes from across the globe

IHRC's Islamophobia Awards on 5 March was a glamorous event well-attended by politicians, religious figures and notable members of the Muslim community. Intended to mock Islamophobic personalities and institutions, the event provides the Muslim community with an opportunity to laugh and engage in some humour while still appreciating the seriousness of the issue.

The four categories voted for by the public this year were: UK, International, Book/Movie/TV and News Media. The months preceding the event saw votes come in from across the globe as people scurried to name and shame their chosen Islamophobes.

This year guests were treated to goodie bags with items provided by our generous sponsors: cards from Muslim By Design; toiletries from Tamese&Jackson, sweets from Halal Sweet Co and crystals from Scents of Paradise. The spoof ceremony was held in the same vein as the Oscars (except we're mocking the racists and not applauding them in our case) and the four nominees in each

category were revealed accompanied by short clips showcasing their bad demeanour. In UK winner David Cameron's case – he was memori-



Nabil Abdulrashid

alised discussing Muslim women (who he has also termed "traditionally submissive.") He was announced the winner and it was promised that a 'Moonpig' card would be sent to him. The

Book/Movie/TV category saw the American television series 'Homeland' take the Islamophobia crown. Their win was also recognised by graffiti artists Heba Amin, Caram Kapp and Don Karl. The three artists had previously worked on the set of Homeland where they were hired to make the landscape look more authentic. But instead - as they were all severe critics of the show – Heba, Caram and Don painted slogans like 'Homeland is racist' that would later make it on to the screens of millions of viewers across the world. We were thankful to have them involved.

### Genuine winners

The News Media category featured the likes of The Daily Mail and Cathy Newman but it was Sky News' Kay Burley who came up trumps after dismissing a claim that she was being Islamophobic as "nonsense." The International category saw a shortlist of nominees that spanned the globe from the Netherlands to Tajikistan. Charlie Hebdo took home this award for a second consecutive year after publishing a despicable cartoon featuring a deceased refugee baby.

While also enjoying the spoof awards, the audience was pleased with the added remembrance of those individuals and organisations who have helped in the fight against Islamophobia. Malia Bouattia was in attendance from NUS Black Students to accept their award on stage – she said a



Massoud Shadjareh and guests enjoy the evening's entertainment

few words about working to eradicate harmful UK counter-terror policies like the PREVENT strategy. Others who were honoured for their efforts in combating Islamophobia included Dr Larycia Hawkins, the German group 'Women In Exile'



**Though the Islamophobia Awards present a chance for a night of laughter and escapism, it is also IHRC's main annual fundraising event.**

and journalist Jon Snow.

Comedian Nabil Abdulrashid was also a big feature on the night and the audience thoroughly enjoyed his humour which referenced politics, racism and religion. Singer and spoken word artist Melissa Melodee also performed a selection of thoughtful pieces that moved the audience.

Though the Islamophobia Awards present a chance for a night of laughter and escapism, it is also IHRC's main annual fundraising event. Numerous videos were screened to the audience which showcased the organisation's work – this included highlights of IHRC Legal, Genocide Memorial Day, IHRC's Hate Crime Project and more. Many guests on the night were happy to donate towards IHRC's cause and the research that IHRC continues to do on a

daily basis. The organisation is at the forefront in the production of research on anti-Muslim hate crime and has done work on the UK, Canada, France and the USA. We were also happy with the outcome of the silent auction that was held featuring artwork from Mohammed Hamza and Siddiq Juma.

It was important at the end of the evening to recognise the importance of working together to fight for justice. The overall winner on the night was US presidential candidate Donald Trump. The scary reality is just how real the possibility of him becoming president is – despite his very public announcement and ensuing campaign to stop Muslims from entering the US. The reminder of the execution-style murders of three Sudanese men in the USA - Mohamedtaha Omar, Adam Mekki, Muhammad Tairab – was a sobering end to a successful evening.

You can view the videos of the evening at: [www.youtube.com/user/IHRCtv/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/IHRCtv/videos)

### Nadia Rasheed



Melissa Melodee



Douglas Murray gets a badge for 'trying and never succeeding'



Hosts announce Donald Trump as the Overall Islamophobe of the Year

# Challenging the pernicious PREVENT strategy

Advocacy department defends those affected by the ever-expanding counter-terrorism strategy

IHRC's Advocacy department has spent much of the last year working on ways to understand how the government's counter-extremism policy Prevent is negatively impacting Muslim communities and what we can do to challenge it. We have learned that areas with Muslim populations greater than the national average (4.8 percent) are more likely to be identified by the government as 'at risk' of harbouring 'extremists'.

In real terms we know that this has resulted in large numbers of people – young Muslims in particular – being falsely accused of harbouring extremist ideas. The anti-Muslim environment that has been fostered over the years has allowed prejudice to flourish. This, along with the Prevent duty for public service providers to spy on members of the public has meant that there have been numerous false accusations.

These accusations take a huge toll on the individuals, their families, and wider community. Given the stigma around being associated with such things we know Muslims have been reluctant to come forward with their stories and challenge those in authority for inflicting this on them. However, due to increased media attention and our communities being equipped with more knowledge about their rights we are seeing more people approach us for help. IHRC has also contributed to this raised awareness with the produc-

tion of a Know Your Rights leaflet as well as conducting workshops around the country on Prevent. We are able to assist those affected by Prevent by challenging their public body targeting them (eg the school, doctor, etc), and also

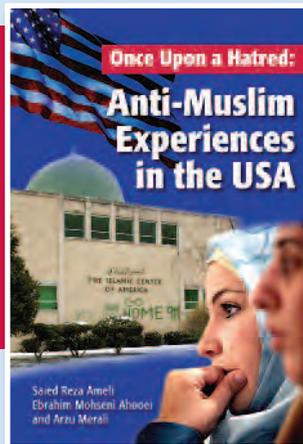


**the Prevent duty for public service providers to spy on members of the public has meant that there have been numerous false accusations.**

working with them to understand the detrimental effects of Prevent. If necessary we are also able to assist in taking their case to court. While our main aim is to have the Prevent legislation repealed entirely, in the interim we believe it necessary to alleviate as much as possible the distress experienced by those subjected to it.

**If you or anyone you know has been affected by Prevent, please contact IHRC on 020 8904 4222 to speak to one of our advocates.**

**Lena Mohamed**



## US city next in line for IHRC's hate crime project

IHRC is currently researching Islamophobia in the USA as part of our project assessing the levels of hatred and discrimination towards Muslims in western countries. In 2011 we used California as a case study and this time the focus is Chicago, a major city in the mid-west that is notorious for its high levels of police violence and stark segregation, while also being President Obama's home town.

This is a particularly interesting time to be doing this research given the current climate of this electoral season, with the likes of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton on opposite sides of the same racist coin running for the presidency.

Chicago is also home to one of the largest Palestinian populations outside of Palestine, and is a community well-versed in resisting Islamophobia from the public and harassment from the state. Rasmea Odeh, who was tortured in an Israeli prison and subsequently arrested in the US and threatened with extradition, is a

# ISLAMOPHOBIA PROJECT MOVES TO CHICAGO

local hero amongst Palestinians and other activists in the city.

Laquan McDonald is another name etched in the memories of many in Chicago. He was shot dead by police in 2016. No fewer than 16 bullets entered his body. Protests and demonstrations erupted across the city as a result of the killing and wider anger over police terror. This, as well as the successful campaign to remove the State's Attorney Anita Alvarez who was responsible for the subsequent cover up, are testament to the determination of the city's African American communities in fighting for their right to live without fear.

It is in this environment of violent repression of minorities that Muslims experience the racism that is Islamophobia. Trump's threats of prohibiting the entry of Muslims into the US and Ted Cruz's demand that Muslim neighbourhoods be heavily policed are in fact things that have been happening for years only to be stepped up in more vicious ways following terrorist attacks in the west. There have been numerous cases of young, often vulnerable Muslim men tricked and coerced by undercover FBI agents into expressing and attempting to support terrorism, and then imprisoned for this. In addition, Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) – the US version of Prevent – is currently being piloted in three cities with the intention of being rolled out across the country soon.

Unsurprisingly those materially impacted by this repression are poorer Muslim communities who are often marginalised through



Lena Mohamed at a CAIR event in Chicago



**Islamophobia in all its manifestations is rife in the US.**

restrictive immigration laws, discriminatory housing practices and limited access to healthcare and education. Speaking with these communities highlights the daily injustices experienced by its members, further compounded by the regular verbal abuse and hostility they experience, much of which they are unwilling to talk about due to the fear of reprisals and the knowledge that nothing will be done about it anyway.

Islamophobia in all its manifestations is rife in the US. Structural oppression continues to create an

environment in which Muslims are incarcerated at an exponential rate and there is fear and anxiety about the future of their communities. This is deeply connected to the oppression of other minority groups

Our research in the USA is part of our ongoing Hate Crimes project that has so far produced reports on levels of Islamophobia in the UK, Canada, France and in California. This project is necessary to show policy makers the problems Muslims face, identify causes and propose solutions. We can only bring about change if we as a community fight for it. Our Hate crimes project is only possible because of the generous support of our donors.

**Please visit our donations page: <http://ihrc.org.uk/about-ihrc/donations> if you want to help support this project, or send a donation using the form on pages 14-15.**

**Lena Mohamed**

# ARE YOU A UK TAXPAYER?

# If so please help ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST

The Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust is a charity registered in the UK (number 1106120) that raises money to fund purely charitable work. This includes e.g. work to raise awareness about human rights or to ensure that existing human rights laws are being properly enforced. It could also provide relief to victims of human rights abuses and

their families.

If you wish to donate money that will be used for purely charitable purposes as defined by the Charities Commission you can send donations to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust. Please make cheques payable to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust or pay by credit or debit card by

filling in your details below and send it with the completed form below. UK tax payers are able to utilise Gift Aid when donating to Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust, by ticking the relevant box(es) below. This means that every £10 given using gift aid is worth £12.50 to IHRC. You can also call the

office and donate with your credit or debit card on 020 8904 4222 (if you are outside the UK please call +44 20 8904 4222. Please make sure you state that you want it to be a GIFT AID donation.

**May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts. Ameen.**

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to the credit of **Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust**, account number: 00477881, sort code: 30-93-88 at Lloyds TSB Bank PLC, 58 High Street, Harlesden, London, NW10 4LP upon receipt of this order and subsequently the same amount on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of each month until further notice.

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Please return this form to us at:

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I want the charity to treat the enclosed donation of £

all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donations.

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NOTES: You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the charity. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity claims, you can cancel your declaration. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment tax return. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 65. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address. Please note the charity cannot fund any political work or lobbying for a change in existing law (please see page 16 if you are interested in donating to all of IHRC's work including its noncharitable work).

# SUPPORT JUSTICE, HELP IHRC

**Islamic Human Rights Commission**



IHRC has grown and developed through the generous donations of its supporters without whom, we could not have survived. Please remember us this year with your du'a and your financial assistance.

Please help us in whatever way you can – a small monthly contribution is as valuable as a generous one-off donation.

If you wish to donate solely to IHRC's charitable work, please complete the IHRC Trust form

(green form). Otherwise please fill in this form (red form).

There are many worthy causes, and we request that you remember IHRC's work when donating, in the best way that you can.

**May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts in this world and the next. Ameen.**

Supporters of IHRC get free copies of IHRC reports (those paying concessionary rates get a selection) and reduced rates on other items. Concessionary supporters are encouraged to donate £5 a month. Without this type of regular support – however small, IHRC would not be able to operate.

Title:

First Name:

Address:

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Telephone:

Fax:

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Contacting you by e-mail or fax may save IHRC money. If you would prefer not to be contacted this way please tick here

### STANDING ORDER BANKERS FORM

Name(s) of the account holder(s)

Account number:

Address:

To: The Manager (name and address of your bank)

Sort Code:

Please pay (tick choice):

£8 / month (students/ unwaged)

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Other (please specify) £

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To the credit of **Islamic Human Rights Commission Ltd.** a/c no: 06759807, Sort Code [12-24-81] at: Bank of Scotland, 600 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, EH11 3XP,

Upon receipt of this order and subsequently the same amount on this first day of each month until further notice, debit my / our account.

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**Islamic Human Rights Commission is a not for profit company. IHRC is a company limited by guarantee.**  
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Zakat  Sadaqah

I would like a receipt

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

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Please make all cheques payable to Islamic Human Rights Commission





# UNITED FOR PALESTINE

**The annual demonstration again attracted thousands of people to support Palestinian rights**

**THE US** Embassy in London was once again the venue for the annual Al-Quds Day demonstration. There was an excellent array of speakers who brought the issue of the Zionist state oppression of the Palestinians and their resistance to light at the rally. Mike Cushman from Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods (J-BIG) stated the need to redouble our efforts to boycott, divest and sanction everything that the Zionist state produces.

Sandra Wafta from the Palestinian Prisoners Campaign and InMinds made an eloquent and impassioned plea in support of the struggle of Palestinian prisoners. Wafta relayed some shocking statistics in relation to Palestinian children: in only a one-year period 1,266 children were abducted by the Zionist occupation forces.

Sheikh Gulam Hurr Shabbiri from Luton's Masjid Ali reminded

everyone that support for Palestine is not faith based but one which unites all justice-loving people no matter what faith and community they may come from.

Mick Napier from the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign gave a thunderous speech. He said that some of the ordinance used by the Zionist state to massacre Palestinians in Gaza one year ago was made in Scotland, and that those who campaign against and take successful direct actions against these arms manufacturers must inspire many more to do likewise so that our own countries are not used for delivering oppression, injury and death to our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

Martin Lejeune from the Freedom Flotilla to Palestine conveyed the voices of those who have taken to the seas to try and break the blockade on Gaza. The

young Rabbi in training, Shimon Keyes from Neturei Karta, gave an eloquent address stating that it is wrong of the Zionist state to misuse its Jewish heritage to attempt to justify its immoral oppression of the Palestinian people.

John Rees from Stop the War Coalition mentioned that while the West is increasing its criticism of the Zionist state, grassroots activists must not rely on them and need to keep the pressure up to ensure that this issue is given more attention and is addressed positively.

The event was closed with an uplifting address by IHRC Chair Massoud Shadjareh who stated that those stood together in the demonstration were very proud to have united on the most important global day of mobilisation and support for Palestine. Al-Quds Day in London proved yet again in 2015 to be, perhaps, the most important mobilisation in the country for Palestine and one of the few mobilisations for Palestine.

**Sukant Chandan**

**The Islamic Human Rights Commission**

**Sunday 3rd July 2016**

**ANNUAL DEMONSTRATION & RALLY IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINE**

# AL QUDS DAY

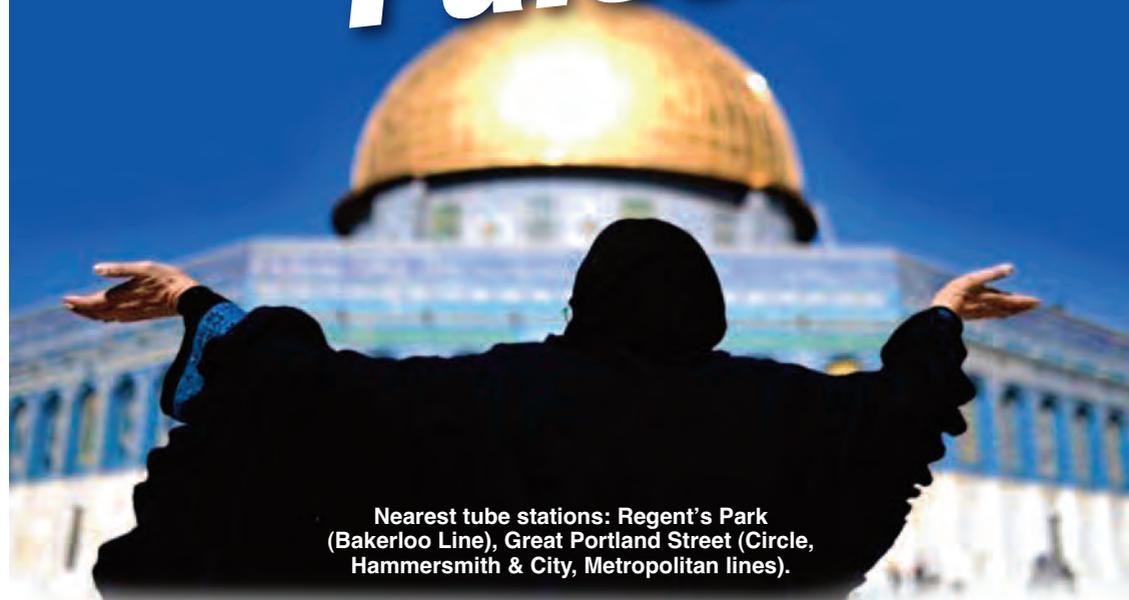
Assemble at Duchess Street W1 (near BBC Radio) at 3pm,  
Marching to the USA Embassy Grosvenor Square

*"Our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians"*

**NELSON MANDELA**



# United for Palestine



**Nearest tube stations: Regent's Park (Bakerloo Line), Great Portland Street (Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan lines).**

**For more information please contact [ashiya@ihrc.org](mailto:ashiya@ihrc.org) or 020 8904 4222**

Organised by Justice for Palestine committee

# Genocide Memorial Day Commemorated in London, Birmingham, Paris

## This year focused on 'Genocidal Weapons of Mass Destruction'

IN JANUARY this year, Genocide Memorial Day or GMD was successfully commemorated in three cities. All three focused on the common theme of 'Genocidal Weapons of Mass Destruction', with a particular emphasis on the ethical and moral case against nuclear weapons. The annual Poetry Competition was also launched in November 2015 for 11-18 year olds, inviting entries on the theme of Genocidal Weapons.

GMD in Birmingham took place on 16th January 2016 and was attended by a packed room of local community members. Speakers for the event were former mayor of Hiroshima Dr Tadatoshi Akiba,

oncologist and researcher Dr Enver Tohti, and senior academic and lecturer Dr Sibtain Panjwani. Dr Panjwani spoke on the value of human life from an Islamic ethics perspective; his contribution was unique to the Birmingham event while the remaining two speakers also spoke at GMD in London the following day.

On 17th January 2016, IHRC's annual flagship GMD event was held at the P21 Gallery in central London. The programme featured talks and Q&A with the speakers as well as a moving performance by spoken word artist Mizan the Poet, who conveyed the horrors of modern warfare via his poetry.

Along with Dr Tadatoshi Akiba and Dr Enver Tohti, speakers also included decolonial scholar Professor Ramon Grosfoguel and Islamic Studies scholar Dr Amina Inloes.

Dr Akiba spoke on his work with the Hibakusha or the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, delivering the message that lessons from the 1945 nuclear attacks in Japan have not yet been learned, especially by world leaders today. Dr Tohti shared his research on the effects of nuclear weapons testing on the Uighur community in rural China, making the point that even before the weapons were built, the effects of radiation caused 20-30 million deaths. Speaking about the use of blankets to spread smallpox among Native Americans, Professor Grosfoguel addressed the historic use of weapons of mass destruction by Western



Ramon Grosfoguel, Rabbi Beck, Massoud Shadjareh, Dr Tadatoshi Akiba, Dr Enver Tohti and Raza Kazim

colonisers, describing the arrogance and dehumanisation that informs the colonisers' use of WMD, and Dr Inloes presented the Islamic case against nuclear warfare, in terms of damage to life as well as to the environment. Speeches were followed by lively, in-depth Q&A and discussion with the audience, addressing issues ranging from the possibility of another nuclear attack to the inclusion of women in order to make peacekeeping efforts more effective. The event ended with a one-minute silence to commemorate victims of genocides all over



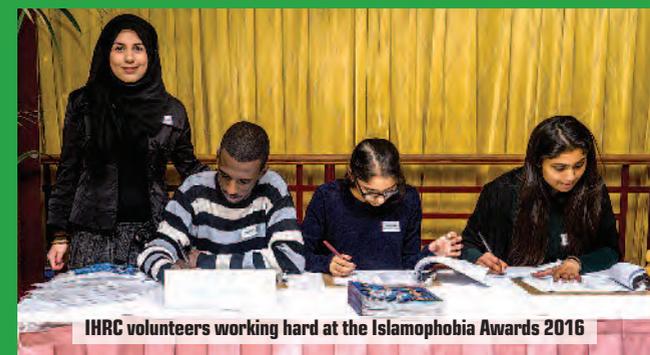
## The event commemorated victims of genocides all over the world and throughout history

the world and throughout history.

GMD in Paris took place on 24th January with an exclusive group of local community members and activists; it was deliberately kept to a small scale due to tensions still rife as a result of the Paris attacks in November 2015 and ongoing security risks faced by the French Muslim community.

These discussions on nuclear warfare and disarmament come at a time when the UK has been discussing the possibility of renewing funding for its Trident nuclear weapons programme. The message from speakers as well as audience members at all GMD 2016 events was clear: the damage to human life caused by nuclear weapons is too high and to indiscriminate for any nation state to consider them viable, especially if these nations claim to value basic human rights.

# My experience as a volunteer



**VOLUNTEERING** for IHRC has been great. It has meant that I have attended every event that has been organised over the past year. Ranging from Al-Quds day to the Islamophobia awards, each has taught me a wide range of skills and has increased my overall knowledge of the political, religious and social issues facing us today.

It has been a great opportunity for me to learn about the various methods and tools IHRC has been using to make change within our community as a whole, whether it be on an individual basis through defending people's rights when treated unjustly or the research projects raising awareness about Islamophobia and its rapid escalation in recent times. It has equipped me with a different perspective on certain policies which have been put in place by our government e.g. the Prevent Strategy, and how to combat them.

What inspired me to volunteer for IHRC was its continuous and immense support for the oppressed all over the globe, in spite of colour or creed. IHRC has stood with the Palestinian cause from the very beginning of its existence, instilling the revolutionary spirit within us here in the West.

More recently it has shed a lot of light on the plight of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria through its protest, writings and pressure-specifically on the Nigerian Embassy and the Commonwealth.

I would like to thank the IHRC staff who have offered me a great deal of guidance, support and look forward to getting more involved in future events inshallah.

**Batool Subeiti**

## VOLUNTEERING

**THERE** are many ways you can offer your help at IHRC. You could help in admin (if you are based near the IHRC offices), research, demonstrations, campaigning, distributing IHRC materials, manning stalls and helping out at events. Volunteering is helpful to us but also helps you to develop your own personal skills and broadens your mind. It is an excellent way to become familiar with what practical action you can take to pursue justice and preserve human rights.

**If you want to volunteer in this way please email [nadia@ihrc.org](mailto:nadia@ihrc.org) for more information.**

# IHRC RESPONDS TO NIGERIA ARMY MASSACRE

## The assault left a trail of bloodshed and destruction

WHEN the Nigerian army gunned down 34 members of Nigeria's Islamic Movement (IMN) in July 2014 during a peaceful procession in Zaria marking the occupation of Palestine few would have believed that it would be a dress rehearsal for a much bigger massacre to come.

Yet that is precisely what it turned out to be. With the scars of that atrocity still haunting local residents the Nigerian army carried out what can only be described as an organised mass slaughter of IMN supporters and members last December.

The assault over two days in the northern Nigerian city left a trail of bloodshed and destruction with at least 1000 fatalities, all of them civilians including women and children.

The majority of deaths were caused by gunshots fired by soldiers. Cases of people being burnt alive have also emerged along with evidence of injuries caused by machetes or other knife wounds thought to be the work of the criminal groups that perpetrated acts of looting and mutilation alongside the military. Signs of torture and electrocution have been evidenced on the bodies of victims including the IMN leader Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky.

Eye-witnesses have also reported sexual violence, including cases of rape against women affiliates of the IMN. A 14-year old

female witness told IHRC that the military shot her in her private parts when she resisted attempts by soldiers to rape her. Some women reportedly had their breasts cut off and others were deliberately shot in the pelvic region damaging their uteri.

“

**the destruction of places of worship, graves and other buildings associated with the IMN, appears to support the contention that the attack was aimed at fatally damaging or eliminating the IMN.**

Photographic evidence has been obtained along with testimonies of mass graves where the army is reported to have buried fatalities from the killing spree. Some corpses were allegedly incinerated, apparently in order to conceal any evidence. The Kaduna state government has recently admitted that it presided over the burials of 374 victims in a mass grave shortly after the attack.

While the army has accused the

IMN of instigating the violence by trying to assassinate the Chief of Army Staff, General Tukur Buratai, as he passed through Zaria, the facts suggest the military assault was pre-planned and organised. During their orgy of violence soldiers targeted the symbols and leadership of the IMN including its leader Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky and his wife Zeenat. Troops destroyed the Hussainiyyah Baqiyatullah which served as the movement's headquarters, demolished the premises housing the tomb of Sheikh Zakzaky's mother and smashed up graves belonging to the victims of the July 2014 massacre.

### Army soldiers celebrated

Three of Sheikh Zakzaky's children were killed in front of him when troops set fire to his residence in Zaria and invaded it. Both the Sheikh and his wife Zeenat have been detained without charge since the events of December 12-14 and undergone several operations to address injuries caused by bullet wounds. Sheikh Zakzaky is also battling to save his right eye, having lost sight in the left one as a result of the attack.

According to eyewitnesses who have spoken with IHRC, the army attack was too well organised and too big to be a response to any alleged threat to the general. Evidence suggests the army was deploying around Zaria well before the general passed by. Photographs from the scene show



People seeking shelter during shooting

25.07.2014

soldiers kneeling down in a field and firing at protestors in postures that suggest they were not under any threat.

Eye-witnesses have reported that during the violence soldiers were seen celebrating and chanting slogans against the IMN, such as 'we have finished with the Shia and Zakzaky' and 'no more Shias in Nigeria'. Although the IMN has support among Nigeria's Sunnis and Shias it is often portrayed by its detractors as a Shia organisation.

### Submission to International Criminal Court

During the violence soldiers used automatic weapons, explosives and armoured vehicles against unarmed civilians. This, along with the destruction of places of worship, graves and other buildings associated with the IMN, appears to support the contention that the attack was aimed at fatally damaging or eliminating the IMN.

Unsurprisingly the international media paid little attention to the massacre in Zaria, presumably because its victims were all Muslims and members of what critics denounce as a radical movement. However IHRC took up the baton just as it had done with the July 2014 killings, raising the profile of the massacre and starting a political and legal campaign to seek justice for the victims and their families.

In addition to organising demonstrations outside the Nigerian embassy in London, IHRC wrote to the European Union, the United Nations and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group seeking action over the treatment of Sheikh Zakzaky and raising with them the abuses that have been perpetrated by the Nigerian military.

We also submitted a formal complaint to the International Criminal Court urging it to investigate the most recent massacre. IHRC called on the international tribunal which has a mandate to prosecute people for war crimes, crimes against humanity and

genocide, to open a preliminary enquiry into the events in Zaria.

In the submission IHRC wrote: "The crimes committed between the 12th and 14th December 2015 in Zaria, Kaduna State, by the Nigerian army amount to crimes against humanity. The crimes committed by the Nigerian army meet all the necessary legal requirements to warrant a preliminary investigation by the ICC prosecutor."

Although the state government in Kaduna has set up a Judicial Commission of Inquiry IHRC believes it is insufficiently independent and impartial to be able to hold those responsible to account, nor is there any reasonable prospect of any prosecutions. In his speech announcing the inquiry state governor Malam Nasir el-Rufai listed a range of grievances against the IMN, which is indicative of bias against the IMN from the start. He was also responsible for demolishing IMN properties before setting up the commission of inquiry.

Faisal Bodi

# IHRC has produced reports on countries across the globe

IHRC's consultative status at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has allowed it to attend as observer and lobby during conferences such as the Human Rights Council session, special sessions of the Human Rights Council and regular sessions of the various committees that deal with issues like discrimination, torture, social and political rights and counter-terrorism. There is also the (UPR), which examines the human rights situation of the UN Member States.

IHRC's recent submissions to the UN OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) since 2015 have been on Bangladesh, UK, Belgium, France, Bahrain and Canada. The submissions can be viewed here: <http://ihrc.org.uk/activities/ihrc-at-un?layout=default>. The Bangladesh UPR (Universal Periodic Review) report submitted in December 2015 looked at the deteriorating human rights situation since 2008 with the set up of the International Crimes Tribunal which has targeted opposition groups like the Jamaat-e-Islami, the Bangladesh National Party and the oppression of Rohingya refugees from Burma. The UK report was submitted in August 2015 to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). It focused on the intensifying climate of Islamophobia in the country and the effects of the PREVENT counter terrorism policy.

The UPR report on Belgium was submitted in June 2015. It drew particular attention to the growing climate of Islamophobia, racism and xenophobia since the last UPR report on Belgium in 2011.

A report on Canada was

submitted to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). It looked at the history of discrimination of the First Nations Peoples and the repeating of this discrimination against Muslims and other minorities, exposing as a fallacy the notion that Canada is a model multicultural society.



**IHRC will be continuing to advocate for better human rights in the corridors of the UN, not just Muslim causes but those of all communities**

There were two reports dealing with France. IHRC submitted one report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). The second report was submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in April 2015 raising concerns about the issue of racism in France.

A report on Bahrain was submitted to the Committee against Torture (CAT) in February 2015. The report highlighted Bahrain's obligations under international humanitarian law and domestic obligation to fight against torture and the fact that people in detention continue to be tortured.

IHRC has organised several demonstrations in Geneva, Switzerland in coalition with the

"La Fondation Islamique et Culturelle' Ahi El Beit (S) (FICA)" and other NGOs like the Palestinian NGO "BADIL".

As well as submitting oral, written statements and reports, NGOs with consultative status can hold side events or parallel events during the Human Rights Council Session. IHRC has organised many of these. One was held in September 2015 on Islamophobia, Racism and Hate Crime in the UK. The two main speakers were Massoud Shadjareh and Abed Choudhury of IHRC. Two side events were held in March 2016. The first addressed human rights in Nigeria and the Zaria massacre in December 2015. Massoud Shadjareh gave a general background of the events that took place in Zaria. There was also a video link with eye-witnesses in Nigeria via Skype with the daughter of Sheikh Zakzaky giving a very detailed account of the massacre that took place over two days. The second side event was on PREVENT and other counter-terrorism Policies in the UK. The event specifically highlighted how PREVENT was discriminating against the Muslim minority community, curbing free speech and freedom of assembly in educational institutions.

The videos related to the UN side events can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0BCSWzStP7XZh97NYHeRi5KKDjxivEj9> or at <https://vimeo.com/album/3291202>

IHRC will be continuing to advocate for better human rights in the corridors of the UN, not just Muslim causes but those of all communities who are victims of human rights violations by nations and individuals.

# Staying connected

**THIS** year saw the continued growth of IHRC's many social media platforms - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Soundcloud and Vimeo. IHRC's supporters are situated across the globe and can't often be in London to attend the many events we hold in person or come inside the IHRC Bookshop for a quick chat and a cup of coffee. This is why it is important that IHRC maintains an engaging presence on social media that connects with the many people that continue to fight for justice regardless of where they are in the world.

Twitter users can follow us @IHRC where you'll be immediately alerted to new press releases, campaigns, articles and other forms of news. You'll also be reminded about upcoming events from major conferences to Author Evenings. The twitter handle @IHRCBookshop is especially devoted to the books IHRC sell and the publications produced - this ranges from tomes on politics to fictional works for young adults and informative texts on Islam. Following @IHRCBookshop also means you'll be the first to know about exciting new titles and exclusive special offers or discount codes.

We are also available on our Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/Islamic-Human-Rights-Commission-109724959498/>) where there will be slightly more on offer than the usual fare provided by Twitter. Facebook has also been great for interaction as users can leave messages of support, suggestions and provide commentary on the latest articles. Facebook followers can also ensure they receive reminders about upcoming events.

Be sure to also follow @ihrc-gallery on Instagram where we post photography from all our events and sometimes even give glimpses into what life is like at the IHRC office! All our video content is uploaded to both Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/IHRCtv/>) and Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com/user2933030>). But even better - you can watch events like the Islamophobia Awards and Genocide Memorial day LIVE when you tune in to our livestream at [www.IHRC.TV](http://www.IHRC.TV)

Find us also on Soundcloud (<https://soundcloud.com/ihrc>) where we will be uploading audio of talks and discussions from a number of different individuals like Ramon Grosfoguel and Imam Al Asi. If you'd like to receive active updates from us - consider subscribing to any of our mailing lists. Subscribe to the Alerts list for weekly general updates (<http://eepurl.com/OnJE9>); the IHRC Bookshop list for new titles and discount codes (<http://eepurl.com/WDZE1>) or perhaps the Islamophobia list for a carefully curated monthly newsletter (<http://eepurl.com/bWdNML>)

In the future, IHRC supporters can look forward to an overhauled website. Currently we have a vast amount of online content to offer - on the IHRC website there is access to press releases, campaigns, alerts, news media, video footage, images and more. In the coming months look ahead with us to a more slick and accessible website where it will be so much easier to find whatever it is you're looking for.

**Nadia Rasheed**

Continued from page 6

education sector, manipulation of terminology used in the Prevent rhetoric, and the inherently discriminatory nature of Prevent and guidance.

To commemorate Global Dignity Day, IHRC held a rally outside 10 Downing Street on Sunday 1 November - a chance for activists and protestors to demand that their dignity be respected. The rally featured a number of heartfelt speeches from Nisha Begum, Joint Enterprise: Not Guilty by Association, Rob Ferguson, the NUT and Damien Read, London Visual Activist Collective. Nazim Ali read aloud messages on the subject of dignity from activists and scholars from across the world, including Imam Muhammad al Asi and Emory Douglas.

On Saturday 12 December 2015, IHRC also held the second annual Islamophobia conference: 'The Changing Face of Racism'. Intended as a follow-up from the 2014 event, this conference sought to elaborate on the discussion of how Islamophobia has evolved into an accepted form of racism in an increasingly jingoistic Europe. A parallel event also took place in Edinburgh, co-organised by Scotland Against Criminalising Communities, where speakers including Abed Choudhury, Moazzam Begg and Salman Sayyid discussed shifts in racism and the Prevent strategy.

Keynote speaker, Hatem Bazian, drew parallels between American history and the civil rights movement, and the current climate of Islamophobia. Speakers included Malia Bouattia, Dr Katy Sian, Azeezat Johnson, Roshan Muhammed Salih, Ramon Grosfoguel, Les Levidow, and Head of Research at IHRC, Arzu Merali.

Panel and audience discussions addressed issues around challenging laws, the implementation of Prevent, and racism within minority communities.

**Ashiya Mendheria**

# IHRC at the heart of Islamophobia discussions in the EU

**SINCE** the European Commission's first Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights in Brussels (1-2 October 2015) and the landmark nomination of the Coordinator for Islamophobia in the European Commission and the S&D Special Representative for Muslim Communities in the European Parliament, IHRC has greatly increased its activities with the EU in 2015 / 2016. The high-level Colloquium brought together for the first time, in an interactive roundtable discussion, local, national and EU policy makers, international and civil society organisations, religious and community leaders, equality bodies, representatives from the

worlds of education, work and media, and renowned academics. Participants examined the underlying reasons behind the surge in anti-Muslim incidents in Europe and identified avenues to urgently address these phenomena. ([http://ec.europa.eu/justice/event/s/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/event/s/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/index_en.htm))

The Colloquium has been a necessary step following the establishment of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) in the European Parliament (EP), on 11 December 2014. ARDI is the second largest European Parliament (EP) intergroup, and it commits to tackling racial discrimination and racist violence as a top priority item on the EP

agenda. IHRC obtained consultative status with ARDI in January 2015 and is taking part in the NGOs coalition against Islamophobia in the EU. The consultative status in the European Parliament allows NGOs to actively participate and lobby during public hearings, debates, roundtables and in chambers meetings, with the object of submitting alternative reports or recommendations and to make written and oral statements during the sessions.

As from October 2015, IHRC has taken part in the roundtable discussion on Islamophobia, attended meetings with the EU Coordinator, participated in public hearings with NGOs engaged in the struggle against Islamophobia and met privately with UK MEPs to discuss further IHRC prospective proposals. This has helped IHRC build up a solid and steady relation with all the NGOs and EU stakeholders working in the field. As a result of this initial collaboration, IHRC set up a newsletter on Islamophobia and is planning to have its first 'Launch Report Event' at the European Parliament in September 2016.

All these achievements are important steps, and IHRC believes in the importance of sending a first strong signal to give further momentum to the fight against Islamophobia at the EU level. As a second step, concrete actions must follow in order to efficiently combat Islamophobia and promote full equality and inclusion across Europe.

**Caterina Aiena**

# UNIVERSAL JUSTICE NETWORK

**SET** up in 2008, the Universal Justice Network (UJN) is an umbrella organisation for 50 different Muslim-led NGOs with two secretariats headed by IHRC in London and Citizens International (CI) in Penang, Malaysia. Addressing sectarianism at an intra-Muslim level is at the core of the UJN agenda, and the focal point of the conflict resolution projects implemented by UJN in the last two years in Pakistan and in Indonesia.

The campaign "Democratisation and Empowerment in Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt and Saudi Arabia" (CDE), has addressed recurring violent suppression of human rights defenders and legitimate political actors in the Gulf States, who currently suffer brutal attacks for their unbreakable commitment to the peaceful struggle for freedom. (<http://www.ihr.org.uk/activities/projects/11364-democratization-and-empowerment-in-bahrain-bangladesh-egypt-and-saudi-arabia->)

In 2015 UJN focused on Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Both continued to severely restrict freedoms of expression, association and assembly by arresting, prose-

cuting and imprisoning human rights defenders and then committing serious crimes such as unfair trials, unjustified imprisonment, torture and confession under duress.

In Saudi Arabia, the number of executions was the highest seen there in 20 years, with more than 150 executions carried out by the Saudi authorities. In the last four months the country has already executed 70 people — almost half as many people as it did in the entirety of last year. In January 2016 UJN strongly condemned the execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr and is launching a campaign calling for urgent intervention to stop the execution of 17 others who are still on death row.

UJN has also expressed its concerns over the crackdown by the Bahraini authorities against human rights activists. Along with the arbitrary detention of human rights defender Zainab Al-Khawaja, and the death sentences against Mohamed Ramadan and Husain Ali Moosa, UJN has been constantly campaigning for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Al-Singace since his unlawful arrest in 2011.

In the EU, UJN has been actively engaged in campaigns and awareness-raising activities aimed at drawing EU representatives' attention to these cases in an attempt to spark concrete action. Since 2015, UJN has also been lobbying MEPs for the support of Al-Singace as a nominee for the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. The Sakharov Prize, established in 1988, is awarded by the European Parliament to individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to the fight for human rights across the globe..

Since CDE began, an informative digest is published on a weekly

basis on Saudi Arabia with the aim of disseminating material on the persecution of political dissidents as well as the ongoing war in Yemen. In this regard, CDE has dedicated a detailed paperwork, 'The War in Yemen. Sacrificing Human Rights in the name of an Illegitimate War' (<http://www.ihr.org.uk/publications/briefings/11476-war-in-yemen>). This is a pioneering work, in that for the first time the Saudi authorities have been asked by NGOs to respond to the war crimes committed against civilians.

**Caterina Aiena**

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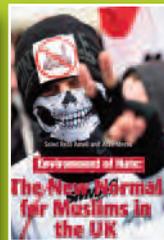
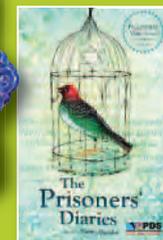
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If you live in or near London, UK you can always pop in to our store. We are open from 10am – 6pm Monday to Saturday. Our address is 202 Preston Road, Wembley, HA9 8PA (nearest tube Preston Road, Metropolitan Line). **See you soon in-store or on-line, insha Allah.**



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**What issues will the surgeries cover?**

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- Complaints against the Police

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**Where are the surgeries?**

The surgeries will be held at Islamic Human Rights Commissions office in Wembley: 202 Preston Road, Wembley HA9 8PA. Closest tube station is Preston Road station

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