

RE: Mail on Sunday enquiry: Mr Massoud Shadjareh

IHRC Media <[REDACTED]>

Sat 20/08/2022 09:21

To: Max Aitchison <Max.Aitchison@[REDACTED]>;

Hi Max,

With respect you were being disingenuous about IHRC and IHRC Trust (unless of course you were extremely confused). We have responded clearly as to what the structure is. We corrected you that Mr. Shadjareh does not chair the Trust. This is factual and your stating otherwise would be an egregious misrepresentation.

With regard to the 'opportunity' to condemn the attack on Rushdie you have offered, we are not entirely sure why you would be offering such opportunities. It is unclear who else you would be offering those opportunities to, and finally why anyone would feel the need to take you up on those offers. We don't think you can infer anything from that or Mr. Shadjareh's quote beyond the fact that you offering such opportunities appears somewhat conceited on your part.

Please note the Press Office is closed now until Monday morning.

Best wishes for the weekend,

IHRC Press Office.

From: Max Aitchison <Max.Aitchison@[REDACTED]>

Sent: 19 August 2022 19:26

To: IHRC Media

Subject: RE: Mail on Sunday enquiry: Mr Massoud Shadjareh

Hello,

Thanks for getting back to me. I will, of course, make clear that Mr Shadjareh is chairman of the IHRC and not the IHRC Trust. But it is disingenuous to suggest they are completely separate entities when they share an address and the latter exists to fund the other.

I strongly reject your suggestion that the piece will contain 'racialised tropes and innuendos based on Mr. Shadjareh's ethnicity'. Everything reported will be based on fact and words he has spoken out of his own mouth.

I'm grateful to Mr Shadjareh for providing a quote. But I'm afraid it leaves more questions than answers. What does he actually feel about the fatwa? Does he support it as he suggested last year? I also note that he has not taken the opportunity to condemn the recent attack on Mr Rushdie. Do I take that to mean he supports it?

Kind regards,
Max

From: IHRC Media [REDACTED] >
Sent: 19 August 2022 19:03
To: Max Aitchison [REDACTED] >
Subject: RE: Mail on Sunday enquiry: Mr Massoud Shadjareh

External Sender msw

Hi Max,

Thanks for your email. We are sorry you seem to be very confused about any number of issues, and we're not sure that your article will be able to do anything except portray that confusion and possibly even misrepresent Mr Shadjareh and or IHRC (and the IHRC Trust), and or contain racialised tropes and innuendos based on Mr. Shadjareh's ethnicity.

We passed on your enquiry to Mr. Shadjareh for comment regarding his response as discussant on panel 1 of the Islamophobia Conference last December and some of your bulleted demands, and he said:

"It seems the Mail on Sunday does not understand the talk I gave in December 2021 or more broadly the issues around the "fatwa" and the Muslim community's response to it. In the spirit of honesty, openness and inquiry I suggest they organise an event where I and maybe one of their contributors such as Peter Hitchens can have a discussion about the affair, and what Muslims in general and I in particular feel about the matter."

Regarding your bulleted questions, we note again that you seem really confused about many issues. In particular you have not understood the structure of IHRC, which has been set up this way according to direct advice given by the Head of Registration at the Charity Commission. This advice and structure has been used by many organisations from different confessional backgrounds in England and Wales like UK Lawyers for Israel. In particular you have not understood that Mr. Shadjareh is chair of Islamic Human Rights Commission the not for profit organisation (which is constituted as a limited company) and **not** chair of Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust which is the charity you refer to that receives Gift Aid.

As a side note to that question, are you suggesting IHRC Trust, which is a British charity, should not receive Gift Aid because you believe the chair is Iranian? The rest of your questions also seem to find their justification in Mr. Shadjareh's ethnicity or other 'reports' that use Mr. Shadjareh's ethnicity to make unsubstantiated claims. Clearly, as an anti-racist organisation, we would not dignify those types of questions with answers.

A final note, as you also seem to be confused (or deliberately misrepresenting) what Gift Aid is.

Assuming it is the former, for you information, Gift Aid is money paid to an eligible organisation at the request of donors who are tax payers. They choose for their taxes to be used in this manner. It is not as you state the government or tax payers in general whose money is being given to IHRC Trust. You can be rest assured that your taxes have not come to IHRC Trust, unless you have donated to IHRC Trust – in which case we are sure they will happily return the donation + gift aid if you are unhappy.

All best wishes,

IHRC Press Office

From: Max Aitchison [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 August 2022 12:16
To: IHRC Media
Subject: Mail on Sunday enquiry: Mr Massoud Shadjareh

Good morning,

I'm writing a story about some of the past comments made by the chairman of Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), Massoud Shadjareh, in support of the fatwa on Sir Salman Rushdie.

Addressing an Islamophobia Conference last December, Mr Shadjareh said: **'I am old enough to remember what was happening at the time of the Rushdie affair. We weren't organised as a Muslim community. We didn't even have any huge national umbrella organisations. But ordinary Muslims from all different backgrounds, even those who were not fully practicing, they came with the understanding that this was wrong and they supported the fatwa against this.'**

Mr Shadjareh goes on to note that he helped set up The Muslim Parliament of Great Britain which supported the fatwa. A video of the conference, uploaded to the IHRC's YouTube channel, can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/EUiAfMAXxIQ?t=4472>

The story will also mention that the IHRC has received over £20,000 in Government grants during the pandemic and benefited from tens of thousands of pounds in taxpayer-funded gift aid. It will also highlight that the IHRC is closely aligned with the regime in Tehran, as has been reported elsewhere.

In reporting this story fairly and accurately, it would be helpful if you could answer the following questions:

- Does Mr Shadjareh support the recent attack on Mr Rushdie?
- If not, will Mr Shadjareh take this opportunity to condemn the attack?
- If he does condemn it, how does he square it with past comments in support of the fatwa?
- Does the IHRC think it is acceptable to benefit from taxpayer-funded gift aid while its chairman supports a death sentence issued on a British citizen?
- Does the IHRC receive funding from Iran?
- Does Mr Shadjareh have any other points he wishes to make?

My deadline is close of play today or 10am tomorrow (SATURDAY) at the latest.

Kind regards,

Max Aitchison

News Reporter

The Mail
ON SUNDAY

The Mail on Sunday

2 Derry Street, London, W8 5TT

[REDACTED]

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