

# The Joint Declaration of British Islamic Scholars and Imams on July 15th 2005

In the name of Allah, the all-Merciful, the most Compassionate

*A special meeting of imams (leaders) and ulama (scholars) held at the Islamic Cultural Centre, Regents Park, London on 15th July 2005 endorsed the following declaration:*

Along with all Londoners and the people of Britain, we are deeply shocked and saddened by the bombing attacks of 7 July 2005 that caused the loss of at least 52 innocent lives, wounded hundreds and disrupted the peace and order of the civic and community life of the metropolis. We regard these acts as utterly criminal, totally reprehensible, and absolutely un-Islamic.

On behalf of our communities and congregations, we express heartfelt sorrow and extend condolences to the families and friends of the victims. We pray for the speedy recovery of the injured. We extend our sympathy to the entire British public, a nation to which we all belong by the Grace of God.

There can never be any excuse for taking an innocent life. The Qur'an clearly declares that killing an innocent person was tantamount to killing all mankind and likewise saving a single life was as if one had saved the life of all mankind. (The Qur'an, Al-Maidah 5:32) This is both a principle and a command.

We are firmly of the view that these killings had absolutely no sanction in Islam, nor is there any justification whatsoever in our noble religion for such evil actions. It is our understanding that those who carried out the bombings in London should in no sense be regarded as martyrs.

It is incumbent upon all of us, Muslims and non-Muslims – to help the authorities with any information that may lead to the planners of last week's atrocity being brought to justice. The pursuit of justice for the victims of last week's attacks is an obligation under the faith of Islam.

Islam is the middle path and the Qur'an designates Muslims as the *ummatah wasata* – the middle community. Any form of extremism is to be utterly and completely rejected. What we need, therefore, in our troubled world, more than ever before is to stick to the middle and balanced way of Islam.

We need also to remind ourselves, young as well as old, that the solution to our problems and concerns lies in following and adhering to the noble discipline of Islam and to the way of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and not falling prey to a culture of conflict and discord. The social culture of Islam is based on

the principle of inviting people towards good, courteously and wisely – with *Hikmah* and *mawizah Hasana*. (The Qur'an, Al-Nahal 16:125) The Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, was sent as a mercy to mankind and that is the ideal and norm that we ought to be following all the time.

The tragedy of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005 demands that all of us, both in public life and in civil and religious society, confront together the problems of Islamophobia, racism, unemployment, economic deprivation and social exclusion - factors that may be alienating some of our children and driving them towards the path of anger and desperation. Islam prohibits both anger and desperation. Anger and desperation are *haram* (forbidden) and may lead to some people being targeted by people with a sinister and violent agenda. There is, therefore, a great deal of positive work to be done together with everyone in our own and wider community in order to channel the energy and talent of our youth particularly into constructive avenues, serving God and society for the common good. The youth need understanding, not bashing.

We do naturally feel deeply for the sufferings, injustices and oppression the world over. Yet we also remind ourselves of the verse of the Qur'an, "O you who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity and let not abhorrence of any people make you swerve from justice. Deal justly, that is nearer to God-fearing. Fear Allah. Allah is aware of what you do." (Al Maidah, 5:8)

We also call on the international community to work towards just and lasting peace settlements in the world's areas of conflict and help eliminate the grievances that seem to nurture a spiral of violence. We also urge the media to refrain from character assassinations of our reputable scholars and denigration of the community.

We reiterate our resolve and commitment to work towards nurturing an identity that is true to its faith and its rights and responsibilities of British citizenship. Finally, we pray to God Almighty to bless all the people of the world with His Peace and Mercy. *Wa akhiru da'wana ani-lhamdulillahi rabbil-alameen.*

The meeting was convened by The Muslim Council of Britain with the British Muslim Forum and other leading national and regional organisations from across the country. Signatories to the Declaration included:

Shaykh	Ali	Ahdash	Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, London
Dr	Manazir	Ahsan	The Islamic Foundation, Leicester
Maulana	Jomshed	Ali	The Council of Mosques, Tower Hamlets
	Hussain	Ali	The Council of Mosques, Tower Hamlets
Mufti	Muhammad	Aslam	Jamiat Ulama-e-Britain
Khateeb	Muhammad Iqbal	Awan	UK Islamic Mission, Luton

	Muhammad	Azim	Kashmir Forum UK
Mufti	AbdulKader	Barkatulla	Senior Imam, Finchley Mosque
Imam	Driss	Boumzough	Imam, Moroccan Muslim Community of London
	Abdal	Choudhury	British Muslim Action Front
Maulana	Abdal	Choudhury	The Council of Mosques, Tower Hamlets
Shaykh	Ahmed	Dahdorh	Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, London
Dr	Ahmed	Dubyan	Islamic Cultural Centre & London Central Mosque
	Abdel Shaheed	El-Ashal	Muslim Association of Britain
Shaykh	Muslehuiddin	Faradhi	Islamic Forum Europe
Shaykh	Rached	Ghannoushi	
Maulana	Moudood	Hasan	Uleman Council of Da'watul Islam
Shaykh	Suhaib	Hasan	Islamic Shariah Council
Dr	Usama	Hasan	Imam, Masjid Al-Tawhid, Leyton
Maulana	Mahmoudul	Hassan	Da'watul Islam
Hafiz	Shamsul	Hoque	Imam, Eshatul Islam Mosque, Ilford
Hafiz Maulana	Shamsul	Hoque	The Council of Mosques, Tower Hamlets
	Aboochitar	Khaled	International Muslim Committee
Dr	AbddulKarim	Khalil	Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, London
Maulana	Masood Alam	Khan	Jamia Islamia, Birmingham
Shaykh	Hokei	Majouli	Muslim Welfare House Trust
Professor	Sayyid Fadhil	Milani	International College for Islamic Studies
	Ahmed Sheikh	Mohamed	Muslim Association of Britain
	Hasan	Mueenuddin	Da'watul Islam UK & Eire
Maulana	Gul	Muhammad	British Muslim Forum
Maulana	Farooq	Mulla	Lincoln Mosque
Professor	Dawud	Noibi	Nigerian Muslim Community & Imam, Old Kent Road Mosque
Maulana	Muhammad Imdad Hussain	Pirzada	Jamia-al-Karam, Nottingham
Maulana	Bostan	Qadri	Confederation of Sunni Mosques, Midlands
Shaykh	Abdul	Qayoom	Imam, East London Mosque
Maulana	Muhammad Shahid	Raza	The World Islamic Mission & Imam, Leicester Central Mosque
Maulana	Sayyid Mohammad	Sabzwary	Al Asr Community & Education Centre
Maulana	Ismail Ali	Shah	Jamiat Ulama-e-Britain
Maulana	Muhammad Akram Khan		UK Islamic Mission, Luton

*Messages of support were received from other ulama including Dr Musharraf Hussain, Karimia Institute, Nottingham, and Maulana Ismail, Birmingham Central Mosque.*