

**Rt Hon Theresa May MP**  
**Prime Minister**  
**10 Downing Street**  
**London SW1A 2AA**

17 March 2019

Dear Prime Minister

On Friday, thousands of British Muslims were preparing to attend the Friday prayers at their local mosques across the UK. This weekly act of worship and community was overshadowed by the horrific news of the terrorist attack thousands of miles away in Christchurch, New Zealand. Muslims were targeted as they too went to attend the call to prayer at their local mosques, with 49 never to return.

I would therefore like to express, on behalf of the Muslim Council of Britain and its affiliates, our gratitude for your solidarity in response to this outrage. This has been complemented by visits to mosques by the Secretaries of State, James Brokenshire and Penny Mordaunt, as well as strong words of support from the Home Secretary.

At the Muslim Council of Britain, we were sent heartfelt messages of support from fellow Britons. This was replicated in mosques and Muslim communities across the country who were in receipt of moving expressions of support from all faiths and none.

I am glad we all redoubled our efforts to come together, as we have done in the past. After such outrages, steps are also taken to improve the security of those affected. Today I am asking you to do the same for Britain's Muslim communities living under a palpable sense of fear.

Open seven days a week, especially on Fridays, mosques across the UK are places servicing well-attended congregations. This makes the risk of copy-cat attacks here in the UK a real possibility, especially in a climate where we are now fully appreciating the growth in the far-right. There is form here when, in 2017, we saw a terrorist attack against Muslim worshippers during the holy month of Ramadan at Finsbury Park.

You may recall your "total commitment" on security to Jewish communities in September 2017 at Number 10, and the Government's commitment of £14m to support the security of approximately 400 synagogues and 150 Jewish schools (equivalent to £25k per institution). These commendable steps were a powerful demonstration of support for Jewish communities who faced and are continuing to face a large amount of religiously based hate crime (12% of total).

At this difficult hour, it is crucial that the government demonstrate equivalent support to Muslim communities. As you will be aware, hate crime against Muslims represents the majority of

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religiously based hate crime (52%). Yet the Government's fund for security of all other faith institutions is currently closed and had only distributed c.£2.4m over three years (equivalent to less than £500 per institution if only Muslim institutions are considered).

A long-term commitment to ensure Muslim communities are supported similarly to Jewish communities, is absolutely essential in these troubling times as we struggle with how we balance the necessity of security with our desire for continued openness. In time, I hope all vulnerable institutions are given adequate support.

We will be writing separately to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to highlight our concerns with Islamophobia, including how to best support Muslim children, many of whom have asked their parents why Muslims are hated after these attacks. These same Muslim children are at schools where 31% of young children believe that Muslims are taking over the country, and where claims of bullying of Muslim children appears to be on the rise. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Harun Rashid Khan  
Secretary General