

# Charity regulator issues Official Warning to Islamic Centre of England Ltd

Press release

Warning follows trustees' failure to comply with regulatory advice over events



The Charity Commission has issued an Official Warning to the Islamic Centre of England Ltd ([registered charity 1058998](#)) as it found the trustees failed to discharge their legal duties towards the charity, which has resulted in misconduct and/or mismanagement.

The charity was set up to advance the religion of Islam and education among the Muslim community and operates in London.

On 3 January 2020 the trustees allowed a candlelit vigil to be held at the charity's West London premises in response to the death of the Iranian Major General Qasem Soleimani. Soleimani has been subject to financial sanctions by HM Treasury for terrorism and/or terrorist financing since 17 October 2011 following a designation under the Terrorist Asset Freezing Etc Act 2010.

The event risked associating the charity with a speaker who may have committed an offence under the Terrorism Acts, as the speaker was filmed during the event appearing to praise and call for support for Soleimani. The trustees failed to intervene or provide a counter narrative.

The following day the trustees organised a further event for Soleimani and published statements on the charity's website offering condolence and praise for him.

The trustees clearly failed to take account of regulatory advice and guidance issued by the Commission in January 2015 regarding the hosting of public events and the selection of speakers. They also put the charity's reputation at risk.

As a result, the regulator has exercised its power under section 75A of the Charities Act 2011 to issue an Official Warning to the charity. This requires the trustees to take specific steps to review content on the charity's website and ensure appropriate consideration is given and risk assessments conducted for any future events held at the charity's premises.

**Tim Hopkins, Assistant Director of Investigations and Inquiries at the Charity Commission said:**

Through their actions the trustees have failed in their legal duties towards this charity, putting its reputation at risk. Any charity being associated with terrorism is completely unacceptable and we are concerned by the corrosive effect this might have on public confidence in this and other charities.

Charities exist to improve lives and strengthen society, so it is vital that trustees honour their responsibility to act in the best interests of their charity at all times. We expect the charity's trustees to comply with the required actions to address our concerns.

The Official Warning is published [here](#). The Commission has an ongoing regulatory case into the Islamic Centre of England Ltd.

Failure to comply with the actions set out in the Official Warning may lead to further regulatory action being taken by the regulator as part of its ongoing case.

**Ends.**

#### **Notes to editors:**

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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## **[European foreign ministers meet to discuss Iran](#)**

In the Foreign Secretary's first visit to Berlin, Dominic Raab will discuss some of the UK's top foreign policy priorities including Iran, and China's

proposed new national security law in Hong Kong.

Talks between Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and his 'E3' counterparts, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, will focus on the importance of finding a diplomatic solution to de-escalate tensions, holding Iran to account for its destabilising regional activity, and keeping the door open for Iran to find a peaceful way forward.

In January this year, the E3 triggered the Dispute Resolution Mechanism to preserve the nuclear deal and bring Iran back into compliance. It remains committed to that process.

Following the G7 Foreign Ministers' joint statement on Hong Kong, the Ministers will also discuss China's proposed new security law in Hong Kong and the importance of working together to encourage China to live up to its international obligations.

The Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

International collaboration is vital as we continue managing the coronavirus pandemic, as well as working together on Iran and Hong Kong.

The UK, Germany and France have a long-shared history and I look forward to continue working together to promote our common values.

The Foreign Secretary will also hold bilateral talks with Heiko Maas, where the pair will look to increase co-operation on a range of issues, such as PPE supply to continue the fight against coronavirus, climate change and the conflict in Libya following the UK's departure from the EU.

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## [MPs to transfer sanctions power to independent panel](#)

Press release

Members of Parliament are to be asked to agree changes to Commons rules next week which remove their ability to determine the sanctions faced by MPs.



Members of Parliament are to be asked to agree changes to Commons rules next week which remove their ability to determine the sanctions faced by MPs in cases of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

A motion tabled for debate on Tuesday 23 June will establish an Independent Expert Panel empowered to determine the appropriate sanction in cases referred to it under the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS).

The changes bring about a fundamental break with the past in which sanctions were determined through the Committee on Standards, comprising Members of Parliament and lay members.

Leader of the House of Commons Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

This is an historic moment for Parliament. It is absolutely right that the process of handling complaints against MPs has been taken away from a parliamentary committee and handed to an entirely independent panel of experts.

We have now acted on all three of Dame Laura Cox's recommendations but there remains more we can do – which is why I will be keeping up the momentum for further cultural change in Parliament.

I am committed to doing everything I can to ensure that everyone working in Westminster is treated courteously and with respect.

The most severe sanctions imposed by the Independent Expert Panel, including suspension and expulsion, will require the formal authorisation of the House of Commons.

In response to concerns that the findings of the Independent Expert Panel could be reopened or questioned by MPs, the Leader of the House is seeking an additional change to the Commons' rules on proceedings.

This change would prevent the name of the complainant and details of the investigation from being disclosed in the debate. MPs would not be able to call into question the determination of the panel's sanctions.

## **UN Human Rights Council 43: interactive dialogue on the Central African Republic**

Thank you, Madame Vice President,

The UK remains concerned that armed groups continue to commit the majority of human rights abuses against the Central African Republic population, despite being signatories to the 2019 Peace Agreement. The UK calls on all armed groups to adhere to the Peace Agreement and cease all forms of violence.

We urge the CAR Government to prioritise their efforts to strengthen the judicial system and hold perpetrators of human rights abuses to account in the fight against impunity. Tangible progress is desperately needed to improve prospects for stability and prosperity throughout CAR.

CAR is at a crossroads in its history, with presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December 2020 – the first since the Peace Agreement was signed. The UK urges the CAR Government, the African Union, the UN and the international community to support free, fair, inclusive and peaceful elections in CAR.

Madame Vice President,

We would welcome advice on what the international community can do to ensure the Peace Agreement is protected at this critical juncture.

Thank you.

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## **Joint Call of Finance Ministers of the Five Eyes Nations**

News story

The call took place on 18 June 2020.



The Chancellor Rishi Sunak participated in a call with the Finance Ministers of the Five Eyes nations – Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States – to discuss the economic impact of COVID-19.

The Ministers shared updates on policy responses currently in place and discussed strategies to accelerate economic activity, in line with necessary health and safety measures as our economies reopen.

They agreed to remain in regular contact as a group and will continue to work together to support a strong and sustained economic recovery.

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