



NEWS RELEASE

25 July 2011

Statement by Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK

We are profoundly shocked and saddened by the tragic loss of life in Norway and the actions that led to this. We join with those around the world in offering to all affected our deepest sympathy and prayers.

The individual arrested in the wake of these terrorist acts has offered a rationale rooted in opposition to multiculturalism and to the presence of Islam in Europe. He has claimed a justification based, in part, on what he sees as Christian belief. The Prime Minister has today chaired a meeting of the National Security Council looking at what the implications of the attacker's actions may be for Britain. Security services are to examine whether 'adequate scrutiny' is being applied to far-Right extremists in this country.

Where terrorists justify their actions with reference to positions which they call religious, this reflects ignorance and breeds suspicion and mistrust. This has a direct relevance for all those working for good inter faith relations. We know that religious teachings – of any tradition – can be distorted and used as justification for brutal acts of violence that have no place in any society, nor any true foundation in any faith tradition. In the United Kingdom, people of different faiths coexist as part of one society. We are committed, as people of faith, to discerning our shared values and building on these – alongside all people of goodwill - to strengthen our society.

Dr Manazir Ahsan MBE, Co-Chair
Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern, Co-Chair
Dr Girdari Lal Bhan, Vice-Chair
Dr Natubhai Shah, Vice-Chair
Dr Indarjit Singh CBE, Vice-Chair
Mr Vivian Wineman, Vice-Chair

Notes

1. Press queries to Inter Faith Network: Tel 020 7931 7766 ifnet@interfaith.org.uk
2. The Inter Faith Network for the UK, www.interfaith.org.uk, was founded in 1987 and links 200 member bodies including: national representative bodies of the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Zoroastrian faiths; national, regional, local and other inter faith bodies; and academic institutions and educational bodies concerned with inter faith issues. It works with members and other agencies to promote good inter faith relations in the UK.

The Inter Faith Network for the UK – www.interfaith.org.uk

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