



THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL COHESION

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Centre for Social Cohesion July Update

Welcome to the July email update from The Centre for Social Cohesion. The CSC is the first think-tank in the UK to specialise in studying radicalisation and extremism within Britain. As of mid-June the Centre has become an independent think tank.

Publications

The Centre published its latest report, [Virtual Caliphate: Islamic extremists and their websites](#), on 11 June. Written by the Centre's Deputy Director James Brandon, Virtual Caliphate examines how Islamic extremists based in the UK have set up several websites in response to British anti-terrorism measures put in place following the London bombings of 5th July 2005. The report examines how these websites allow extremists to continue spreading their pro-jihadist ideas, organising themselves and recruiting new followers.

The CSC issued a [press release](#) on the subject of Abu Qatada's release from prison, based on Arabic language recordings obtained and translated exclusively by the Centre. On the basis of these recorded talks, the Centre argued that Abu Qatada should be put on trial in a British court for supporting, encouraging and funding terrorism in the UK and abroad. The transcripts of the recordings were passed onto the police, the press and Members of Parliament.

On 24th June, the Centre issued a [press release](#) on the launch of the Scottish Islamic Foundation, a new Muslim group launched by Alex Salmond, Scotland's First Minister, describing the group's links to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Centre in the Press

Virtual Caliphate received widespread coverage in both the national and international press. In the UK, the report was covered in the [Daily Mail](#), and the [Daily Telegraph](#) and its [blog](#). It was also covered in two Indian newspapers, [The Statesman](#) and [Mumbai Mirror](#). It was also picked up by several news websites and blogs, including [Harry's Place](#), [Politics.co.uk](#), and [Jihad-Watch](#).

The [Daily Telegraph](#) quoted CSC report *Crimes of the Community: Honour-based Violence in the UK* in its report on forced marriages in the UK, taking a quote from an interview CSC performed with Zalikha Ahmed, director of the South Yorkshire based women's refuge Apna Haq.

[Harry's Place](#) referred to Deputy Director James Brandon's [exposé](#) on how Campusalam, a government-backed project to tackle extremism on university campuses, invited primarily members of the Muslim Brotherhood to speak at its inaugural event.

The Centre's recent press release on Abu Qatada was referred to on the [Spectator](#) blog, and the press release on the Scottish Islamic Foundation received coverage in [The Scotsman](#) and the [Spectator](#) blog. Osama Saeed, the Scottish Islamic Foundation's chief executive, responded with an article in the [Sunday Herald](#).

CSC Director Douglas Murray, in his monthly contribution to the cultural and political magazine [Standpoint](#), questioned the extent to which a David Cameron electoral victory would constitute a triumph for conservatism.

James Brandon wrote two articles for the Jamestown Foundation, a US think-tank based in Washington DC. The [first](#) discussed the threat posed to the UK by white converts to radical Islam and [the other](#) on the next generation of extremist preachers active in Britain.

Robin Simcox, a researcher at the CSC, analysed the usefulness of the language currently used by the government to describe the threat of radical Islam in an article for the [Henry Jackson Society](#).

The Centre in Parliament

Virtual Caliphate: Islamic extremists and their websites was discussed in great detail in the [House of Lords](#), with Baroness Miller, the Liberal Democrat's Home Affairs spokesman, asking the government a series of questions regarding how websites are being used by Islamic extremists in the UK.

In response, Lord West of Spithead, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office, revealed the government do not keep statistics on the number of websites used by Islamic extremists, the amount of websites that contain recordings by Islamic extremist preachers imprisoned in this country, the amount of websites which contravene the Terrorism Act or the number of individuals prosecuted for the online encouragement of Islamic extremism.

The report was also mentioned by name in a [counter-terrorism debate](#) at the [House of Commons](#) by both Paul Goodman MP, Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government, and David Ruffley MP, Shadow Minister for Home Affairs.

Crimes of the Community: Honour-based Violence in the UK, a report published by the CSC in February, was also referred to in a rule of law debate in the [House of Lords](#) this month, Baroness Cox describing it as 'excellent' and citing the report's statistics on honour crimes and forced marriages.

The report was also cited and extensively quoted in the House of Commons' Home Affairs Committee's [report](#) on 'Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage and "Honour"-Based Violence' which was published in June. The report's conclusions closely mirrored those of *Crimes of the Community*.

Media Appearances

CSC Director Douglas Murray appeared on Al-Jazeera (Arabic), broadcasted worldwide, commenting on recent Home Office anti-radicalisation guidelines, '[Preventing Violent Extremism](#)'.

To coincide with George W Bush's visit to the UK, Murray also appeared on the Jeremy Vine show on BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Three Counties Radio, to discuss terrorism and the US government's record on the War on Terror.

James Brandon discussed the government's 42 day detention law on BBC World and BBC4.

Public Appearances

Douglas Murray addressed leading experts in the field as a guest speaker at the Mishcon de Reya law firm, speaking on contemporary anti-Semitism in the UK. He was also a panellist alongside other experts in the field at an event concerning the role of faith in the workplace entitled "Faith and Business - are they compatible?" that took place in St. Brides, Fleet Street, in the City of London.

Upcoming

CSC director Douglas Murray will be speaking at the Vanenburg conference in Madrid on the subject of Islam's place in Europe. He will also be speaking at the New West End synagogue in London on the 10th July on the subject of why Israel is not the cause of Islamic extremism. Murray is also scheduled to speak at [IslamExpo](#), which takes place in London from 11th-14th July.

The CSC will be co-hosting two events with the [Henry Jackson Society](#) in the coming month. On 2nd July Jonathan Paris, a London-based political analyst and Fellow at the Hudson Institute, will speak on the subject of "UK Counter-Radicalisation Strategy: A shift from accommodation to confrontation?" at a House of Commons debate.

On 7th July, Walid Phares, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies where he focuses on Middle East history and politics, global terrorist movements, democratization and human rights, will address a round-table seminar on "The Confrontation: Winning the War against Future Jihad".

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