



THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Clutha House
10 Storey's Gate
London
SW1P 3AY
Tel: 0207 222 8909
mail@socialcohesion.co.uk
www.socialcohesion.co.uk

Centre for Social Cohesion August Update

Welcome to the August 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. The Centre is an independent think tank.

New publication: Islam on Campus

The Centre published its latest report, [*Islam on Campus: A survey of UK student opinion*](#), by John Thorne and Hannah Stuart, on 27 July. Based on a specially commissioned YouGov poll of over 1400 students in the UK, fieldwork and interviews, the report is the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken of Muslim student opinion in the UK.

Islam on Campus examines students' attitudes on key issues including killing in the name of religion, establishing a worldwide Caliphate, introducing Sharia law to the UK, setting up an Islamic political party in the UK, gender equality, the treatment of apostates and homosexuals and the compatibility of Islam with secularism and democracy.

The report was widely covered across the British press including the [Observer](#), the [Sunday Times](#), the [Sunday Telegraph](#), the [Sunday Herald](#), the [Daily Mail](#), the [Daily Express](#), the [Daily Star](#), the [Evening Standard](#), the [Scotsman](#) and the [Belfast Telegraph](#). Islam on Campus was also covered by the [Press Association](#) and widely across the blogosphere, including the [Spectator](#) and [Harry's Place](#).

Over 100 regional newspapers also covered the report and its findings. Among them were the [Yorkshire Evening Post](#), [Blackpool Gazette](#), the [Bath Chronicle](#), the [Chester Chronicle](#), the [Liverpool Daily Post](#), [Wales Online](#), the [Birmingham Post](#) and the [Croydon Guardian](#).

The report was also widely covered in the foreign press. In Canada, the report was the subject of a lengthy comment piece in the [Ottawa Citizen](#); in the US, the [Washington Post](#); in India, the [Deccan Herald](#), [The Hindu](#) and the [Howrah News Service](#); in Ireland, the [Evening Herald](#) and the [Independent](#); in Israel, the [Jerusalem Post](#); in Italy, [Il Secolo XIX](#); in Pakistan, the [Daily Times](#); in Denmark, the [Kristeligt Dagblad](#); in Sweden, [Nationell Idag](#); and in Norway, the [Vårtoland](#) covered the report.

The Centre in the Press

The Centre's recent publication, [*Virtual Caliphate: Islamic extremists and their websites*](#), examining how Islamic extremists based in the UK have set up several websites in response to post 7/7 British anti-terrorism measures, was referred to in a Taxpayers Alliance [report](#) on the cost of government policy towards jailed radicals and other extremists. The same report also quoted Abu Qatada advocating the murder of non-Muslims from a recent CSC [press release](#) based on Arabic language recordings obtained and translated by the Centre.

[*Crimes of the Community: Honour-based violence in the UK*](#), a report published by CSC in February, was referred to in the [Daily Mail](#). The article highlighted the report's finding that groups for domestically abused women are wary of approaching the police, as they do not trust Asian officers not to return the women back to their abusive families. The report's findings were also explored at length in an article on forced marriages in Britain in the German daily [Frankfurter Allgemeine](#).

The Centre's recent [press release](#) exposing the links between the recently launched Scottish Islamic Foundation and the Muslim Brotherhood prompted the group's Chief Executive, Osama Saeed, to respond in a letter in the [Sunday Herald](#). CSC Director Douglas Murray responded in a letter in the [Sunday Herald](#) repeating the Centre's unanswered allegations, and arguing that Saeed is "seeking public funds and using his political connections in order to promote Muslim separatism."

In his monthly contribution to the cultural and political magazine [Standpoint](#), Murray criticised Peter Osborne's recent Channel 4 Dispatches programme 'It shouldn't happen to a Muslim' following its broadcast on the three year anniversary of the 7/7 London bombings.

Murray was also interviewed by US journal [The Weekly Standard](#) for an article on the future of British conservatism.

Elsewhere, Robin Simcox, a Researcher at the CSC, wrote about how foreign policy under a Conservative government will look in a piece for the [Henry Jackson Society](#).

The Centre in Parliament

In a debate in the House of Commons, Robert Wilson, Shadow Minister for Innovation, Universities and Skills, [referred to](#) the Centre's forthcoming report by Anthony Glee on how Islamic studies are funded at British universities. Wilson said:

"A leading academic expert has called on the Government to ban universities from accepting money from Saudi or Islamic groups to fund Islamic studies, and has also called on all university donations to be made public. Will the Secretary of State explain why his Department's recent report on preventing extremism in universities contains nothing about financial donations, even those from dangerous extremist groups?"

The exchange was referred to in the [Daily Mail](#).

The Home Office [announced](#) in July a series of important measures aimed at tackling forced marriage. The government's new measures closely mirror the recommendations made in [Crimes of the Community: Honour-based violence in the UK](#), a report published by the CSC in February. This follows a recent House of Commons' Home Affairs Committee's [report](#) on 'Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage and "Honour"-Based Violence', which quoted extensively from Crimes of the Community.

Media Appearances

CSC Director Douglas Murray spoke on BBC World Service radio criticising '[Preventing Violent Extremism](#)', the anti-radicalisation initiatives announced by Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Murray also featured on BBC World Service Newshour discussing Iran's nuclear weapons programme and the threat of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. In addition, Murray appeared on the Islam Channel debating Peter Osborne regarding his recent Channel 4 Dispatches [programme](#) 'It shouldn't happen to a Muslim'.

Elsewhere, James Brandon appeared on various broadcast media, including BBC News 24, the Ten O'clock News, the Breakfast Show and Radio Five Live commenting on claims by the Shiite Islamic Resistance in Iraq that one of five Britons kidnapped by the group more than a year ago had committed suicide.

Public Appearances

CSC Director Douglas Murray was scheduled to speak at [IslamExpo](#), a 4-day Islamic festival which took place in Olympia, London from 11th-14th July.

However due to the legal action being taken against the [Harry's Place](#) blog by Mohammed Sawalha, the President of the British Muslim Initiative and one of IslamExpo's organisers, Murray withdrew in protest. In an open letter on the CSC [blog](#) and on [Conservative Home](#), Murray wrote:

"I will not come on a platform hosted by people carrying out legal action against a deeply admirable and informed proponent of free speech."

All cabinet and shadow ministers and MPs due to speak at IslamExpo also withdrew, as did [Martin Bright](#) of the New Statesman.

Murray also addressed leading European philosophers and opinion formers at the Vanenburg conference in Madrid on the subject of Islam's place in Europe. He also spoke on the topic 'Winning the war on terror at home and abroad' to an audience of military officials and security experts, including Dame Daphne Park, at the Royal Air Force Club in London.

In addition, Murray spoke at the New West End synagogue in London on the 10th July on the subject of why Israel is not the cause of Islamic terrorism. He also attended the [inaugural lecture](#) of The European Institute for the study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism, for which he is a board member.

Murray was also a panellist at an event in Washington organised by the [Heritage Foundation](#) entitled 'The Decline and Fall of New Labour in Britain: What Can the U.S. Expect from a Future Conservative Administration?' Murray spoke alongside Shadow Defence Secretary Liam Fox and former spokesman for the British Army, Crispian Cuss. Murray's contribution to the event was covered in the [Washington Times](#).

He also spoke at St Mary-le-Bow church alongside Dr Usama Hasan in a [debate](#) chaired by Amedee Turner QC, titled 'Islam and democracy – are they compatible?'

Events

The CSC co-hosted two events with the [Henry Jackson Society](#) last month. On 2nd July Jonathan Paris, a London-based political analyst and Fellow at the Hudson Institute, spoke to policy-makers, journalists and religious leaders 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 Defence of Democracies and specialist in Middle East history and politics, global terrorist movements, democratisation and human rights, addressed security experts and leading opinion formers during a round-table seminar on "The Confrontation: Winning the War against Future Jihad".

Upcoming

CSC Director Douglas Murray will be participating in a panel discussion to launch the History Channel's new series '50 things you need to know about British history'. Co-panellists include Diane Abbot MP, columnists Polly Toynbee and Simon Heffer as well as historian Dominic Sandbrook.

Other news

The Centre for Social Cohesion would like to congratulate Shahien Taj of the Henna Foundation on the receipt of her MBE. The Henna Foundation is an agency in Wales that supports Muslim women and their families who are victims of honour-based violence.

Press enquiries: 0207 222 8909 / 07538 248610 / pressoffice@socialcohesion.co.uk

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