



**THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL COHESION**

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Pro-jihadist to speak at City University Islamic Society Centre for Social Cohesion Press Release 07 April 2009

Al-Qaeda [sympathiser](#) Anwar al-Awlaki is due to [address](#) students at City University Islamic Society's annual dinner via video-link on Wednesday 8th April 2009. Also speaking at the event are UK-based speakers Murtadha Khan and Haitham al-Haddad, both of whom encourage intolerance and separatism within Britain's Muslim communities.

Anwar al-Awlaki – prominent Yemeni-based al-Qaeda sympathiser, [supporter](#) of the terrorist Somali group al-Shabab, and former [spiritual leader](#) to three of 9/11 hijackers, al-Awlaki is currently [banned](#) from entering the United States. al-Awlaki has [said](#):

"In times like these, when Muslim lands are occupied by the kuffar [unbelievers]...and when Islam is being attacked in order to uproot it, Jihad becomes obligatory on every Muslim...Again, the point needs to be stressed: Jihad today is obligatory on every capable Muslim."

Murtadha (Murtaza) Khan– teacher at [Al Noor primary school](#) in London and advocate of extreme intolerance towards non-Muslims, in a 2007 Channel 4 [documentary](#) Khan asked his Muslim audience:

"For how long do we have to see our mothers, sisters and daughters having to uncover themselves before these filthy non-Muslim doctors? We should have a sense of shame."

In the same documentary Khan criticised Muslims who follow Jewish and Christian ways:

"We've become Jews in our clothing, Jews in our eating, Jews in everything that we do. And the other half is Christian in everything that they do. Muslims are following one of these accursed nations. And people are still not waking up to understand the fact that these people are enemies towards us."

Haitham al-Haddad – a regular lecturer on Islamic issues, al-Haddad recently gave a [talk](#) declaring a victory for Hamas, in which he advocated the abolition of Israel:

"My proposed solution for the Israelis is to leave Palestine and to go back to their own countries to live in peace. If they want to live in peace, in real peace, they should leave Palestine and leave it for the Palestinians and those Jews who would like to live in Palestine, but under the Palestinian government, not under the Israeli government."

The Centre for Social Cohesion has repeatedly written to City University's Vice-Chancellor expressing concerns over the extreme nature of the speakers. In a response received today a City University spokesperson said:

"The Islamic Society has approached the Students Union through the normal procedures. The University has considered its obligation, as with all speaker applications, under section 43 of the Education Act [guaranteeing freedom of speech within the law], and has found no proven reason to decline this Students Union event."

In 2008 the government [said](#), 'there is a real, current and sustained threat to the UK from Al-Qa'ida (AQ) influenced terrorism' and universities were asked to 'take reasonable steps to ensure that an external speaker is not likely to promote or advocate violent extremism and that the university is able to make sure what is said falls within the law.'

Recent government [guidance](#) for preventing violent extremism on UK campuses states that unacceptable extremism on UK campuses includes 'incitement of social, racial or religious hatred'. The guidance warns that external speakers may 'seek to exploit feelings of alienation and sometimes offer "religious" justifications for extreme actions.' Such speakers, it continued 'can be forceful, persuasive and eloquent, and often have a scholarly background, the latter fact being emphasised in order to give them greater credibility in the eyes of students.'

Centre for Social Cohesion researcher Houriya Ahmed says:

“The extreme message being propagated by these speakers is no different to the supremacist ideology of al-Qaeda. Given the influence that hate preachers can have on their audience, it is irresponsible for City University to knowingly give a platform to such intolerant and pro-jihadist voices on campus.”

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The Centre for Social Cohesion is an independent think tank

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