

‘YES TO EQUAL CITIZENSHIP, NO TO DOUBLE STANDARDS’

VIGIL OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING STREET

SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY ‘08 2- 4 PM

There come moments when it is important for fair-minded people to stand their ground. Now is a time for solidarity; to affirm respect, equality and parity for all Britons, irrespective of race and creed. Can it be good for Britain if a section of society – however small and socio-economically deprived - feels scape-goated and ostracised?

Following the Archbishop of Canterbury's thoughtful address calling for a dialogue on shariah issues there have been appalling displays of prejudice and contempt towards Islam and Muslims. It is not a matter of being unduly sensitive to criticism, but rather a warning of the slippery slope from verbal mockery to physical intimidation. Do we really want Mosely's Black Shirts back on the streets of Britain?

We are deeply troubled with the suggestion that it is somehow OK for a Muslim MP to be bugged because of the 'war on terror'. We are worried by headlines like 'Minister warns of inbreeding Muslims'. We are disturbed when an eminent Islamic scholar is denied entry to the UK. We are troubled that our concerns on issues of sacrilege are dismissed as an infringement on freedom of speech. It is no wonder that even in our schools, Muslim children highlight their fear of bullying more frequently than those from other faith groups. Is this the society of the future we want – one of first-class, confident citizens and second-class, anxiety-ridden citizens?

It is with these questions in mind that a number of civil society organisations have come together to stage a vigil outside No. 10 Downing Street on Saturday 16th February 2008 at 2pm, under the slogan 'Yes to Equal Citizenship, No to Double Standards'.

Organised by: British Muslim Initiative, Islamic Forum of Europe, Muslim Association of Britain, Islamic Human Right Commission, Da'watul Islam, Young Muslim Organisation UK, Muslumaat UK, The Cordoba Foundation, Centre for the Study of Terrorism, Friends of Al Aqsa, Palestinian Forum in Britain. IslamExpo, FOSIS, ICMG UK, Sri Lanka Islamic Forum UK, Algerian League in Britain, Council of Nigerian Muslim Organisations, Indian Muslim Federation, Jama'at Ahle Sunnat UK, Muslim Doctors and Dentists Association, Muslim Solidarity Committee, Muslim Welfare House Trust (London), Muslim Women Society (MWS), Muslim Women's Association, The Council of European Jamaats, UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs, UK Islamic Mission, UK Turkish Islamic Association, World Federation of KSIMC, World Islamic Mission

Supported by: Muslim Council of Britain & British Muslim Forum