

UNDUE INFLUENCE:

THE IRANIAN REGIME'S ABUSE
OF THE UK CHARITY SYSTEM
AND THE LIMITATIONS
OF OVERSIGHT

A report by Lord Walney

UNDUE INFLUENCE:

THE IRANIAN REGIME'S ABUSE
OF THE UK CHARITY SYSTEM
AND THE LIMITATIONS
OF OVERSIGHT

A report by Lord Walney

March 2026

Title: Undue Influence: The Iranian Regime’s Abuse of the UK Charity System and the Limitations of Oversight

Author: Lord Walney

March 2026

Published by: Powerful Street Ltd

Publisher address: Level 1 Devonshire House, One Mayfair Place, W1J 8AJ, London, United Kingdom

Publisher website: <https://powerfulstreet.com>

© 2026 Powerful Street Ltd.

All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-0369-5159-7

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Powerful Street Ltd



A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

John Woodcock, Lord Walney, is a crossbench peer who was the author of a major review, *Protecting Our Democracy from Coercion*, when he served as the UK Government's Independent Adviser on Political Violence and Disruption between 2020 and 2025.

Lord Walney is the co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Defending Democracy. He is a former Labour MP and adviser to the last Labour government. He is a graduate of the Royal College of Defence Studies and holds an MA in International Security and Strategy from Kings College London.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: SINCE THE COMPLETION OF THIS REPORT, MAJOR GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN AND AROUND IRAN HAVE OVERTAKEN SOME OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN. ON 28 FEBRUARY 2026, THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL LAUNCHED COORDINATED MILITARY STRIKES ON IRANIAN TERRITORY, RESULTING IN A SIGNIFICANT DIMINUTION OF IRAN'S LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING THE DEATH OF ITS SUPREME LEADER, AYATOLLAH KHAMENEI. THE FACTUAL CONTENT PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT WAS ACCURATE AT THE TIME OF WRITING.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

- This report examines a number of charities operating in the UK and identifies patterns of ideological alignment, structural linkage and interaction with institutions and individuals associated with the Iranian regime.
- The organisations concerned deny acting on behalf of any foreign state. However, the cumulative evidence raises questions about the extent of their institutional independence. Three overarching features emerge:
 - **There is evidence of governance and personnel overlap, both with regime institutions and among the UK charities themselves:**
 - Senior figures associated with UK charities have held senior positions within Iranian regime-linked clerical and policymaking institutions. This includes the SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION and bodies connected to the QOM SEMINARY establishment, which oversee the formulation of cultural and education policy and the promotion of state-sanctioned religious doctrine.
 - The report also identifies links to AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, designated by the US Treasury Department for recruiting for the ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS' (IRGC) QUDS FORCE.
 - In the case of the ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND (ICEL), a formal constitutional provision previously required that one trustee must be appointed by the Supreme Leader at all times. Although that provision has since been amended, it demonstrates that institutional alignment has, at times, been explicit rather than incidental.
 - Within the UK, charities share trustees and senior figures and operate through recurring institutional relationships, suggesting an interconnected ecosystem rather than isolated entities.
 - In a smaller number of cases, the report documents engagement with IRGC-linked figures, including meetings with commanders and participation in events involving sanctioned individuals.
 - **There is evidence of ideological alignment with Khomeinist doctrine:**

¹ This Executive Summary is intended as a high-level overview only. The report should be read as a whole, including the detailed evidence, context and sources set out in the main body.

Undue Influence

- Public messaging, educational material and events frequently include reverence for Ayatollah KHOMEINI, Ayatollah KHAMENEI or sanctioned IRGC commander Qasem SOLEIMANI. At least half of the charities examined publicly marked or eulogised SOLEIMANI following his death in 2020.
- Some institutions, senior figures within the charities, or invited speakers have expressed support for Iranian proxy groups such as HEZBOLLAH or HAMAS, or promoted narratives aligned with the regime's revolutionary worldview.
- Quds Day rallies and related events hosted by UK charities have featured rhetoric widely criticised as antisemitic or hostile to Israel; organisations involved reject allegations of antisemitism and alignment with Iran.
- Activities involving children and young people – including SOLEIMANI commemorations and the filming of the “Hello Commander” song at the ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND (ICEL) featuring saluting children pledging support to the Mahdi (the awaited messianic figure in Twelver Shia Islam) and likely to the Iranian state leadership as well – indicate the transmission of regime-aligned narratives to younger audiences.
- **These UK charities operate within a wider security context involving Iranian state threat activity:**
 - UK authorities assess Iran as posing an active state threat, including espionage and transnational repression. The Intelligence and Security Committee has warned that state-linked institutions such as ICEL may present espionage risks.
 - Charities can provide platforms for engagement with the public, parliamentarians, universities, local authorities and international bodies. A former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation has described such activity, when undertaken by hostile states, as capable of constituting a form of espionage.
 - The report finds that elements within the charities identified have contributed to an atmosphere of hostility towards Iranian dissidents. Experts consulted for this report stated that some members of the Iranian diaspora are apprehensive about travelling into parts of Brent, where several prominent Iranian-linked charities are based.
 - While the report does not allege operational coordination with Iranian intelligence or terrorist plots, it raises questions about ideological, institutional and, in some cases, personal connections to regime-aligned and IRGC-associated actors.
- **Neither the government nor the Charity Commission have so far taken sufficient action against this soft power infrastructure, erected in parallel to official diplomatic channels.**

Undue Influence

- The current regulatory environment is not well configured to address systemic foreign-state-aligned ideological activity or extremism concerns that fall short of criminality.
 - Eight of the ten UK charities examined are subject to ongoing regulatory engagement or investigation by the Charity Commission. These cases variously concern alleged links to Iran; the use of charity premises for events relating to SOLEIMANI; governance and trustee oversight failings; questions about independence from Iranian institutions; and, in one case, the appropriateness of financial and operational arrangements between a charity and an associated non-charitable company. Only four of the cases are publicly visible through statutory inquiry notices or Official Warnings.
 - Charity Commission investigations can be lengthy and opaque, limiting deterrence and reducing public visibility of ongoing concerns. Regulatory compliance cases are not routinely visible on the public register, and exceptions may be made to the announcement of statutory inquiries if it is considered not to be in the public interest to do so.
 - Charity Commission interventions are primarily framed through governance and compliance, with investigations focused on trustee duties and regulatory breaches rather than institutional alignment with hostile state influence or extremism. This creates a “compliance trap”, in which procedural improvements or trustee replacement may be achieved without disrupting the underlying ideological entity.
 - The trustee-focused enforcement model may enable resilience through personnel rotation, allowing organisations to continue operating with minimal substantive change.
 - Four of the ten charities examined are recognised for HMRC Gift Aid, enabling them to claim an additional 25p for every £1 donated. Three of these are currently under live regulatory investigation. One charity also received a government Covid-19 business support grant.
- The UK has strengthened its response to Iranian state threats through measures such as the National Security Act 2023 and the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme, a transparency scheme requiring registration of political or influence activity conducted for foreign powers.
- However, the report argues that the charitable and religious infrastructure examined here remains addressed primarily through a compliance-based regulatory framework, limiting the state’s ability to respond proportionately to hostile, state-aligned ideological influences operating through civil society channels.

Undue Influence

- To effectively dismantle Iranian soft power infrastructure within the British charitable sector, the government must move beyond a strategy of inducing better behaviour and towards one of disruption and containment.

The following recommendations outline the necessary statutory and operational changes:

1. **Amend the Charity Commission’s Core Purposes and Statutory Functions to Better Address Modern Forms of Abuse in the Charity Sector.** The government should consider amending the Commission’s general functions under Section 15 of the Charities Act 2011 (and, where necessary, its associated enforcement powers) to establish an explicit remit to investigate and, where appropriate, deregister or trigger the dissolution of charities on the basis of systemic extremism concerns or hostile state influence, subject to appropriate safeguards and evidential thresholds. This would allow the Charity Commission to intervene against the ideological entity itself, rather than focusing narrowly on individual trustee misconduct, and would help prevent the “personnel swap” tactic sometimes used by Islamist-aligned groups.
2. **Expand Disqualification Powers:** Legislation should be updated to expand Charity Commission disqualification powers to include individuals subject to immigration orders and those identified as hostile state agents. The government should consider using the “enhanced tier” designation of Iran under the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS) to curb Iranian state influence in charity governance.
3. **Expedite Extremism-Related Investigations:** The Charity Commission should find ways to expedite the appeals process for cases involving suspected hostile foreign state influence or extremism. It should assess whether reforming the appeals process to mirror Judicial Review – focusing on procedural fairness rather than *de novo* reassessment – would improve efficiency without undermining its effectiveness. While this approach would prevent claimants from re-litigating facts or introducing new evidence, it could also limit the Commission’s ability to submit evidence gathered during ongoing investigations. Alternatively, the government could provide and ringfence additional funding for such high-priority cases. In such cases, automatic suspension for the duration of an investigation should also be considered.
4. **Mandate Cross-Government Information Sharing:** Formal protocols should be established to ensure information sharing between the Home Office, the police, and the Charity Commission. When an actor is investigated by one body for national security or terror financing concerns, that intelligence should be securely accessible to the Charity Commission to prevent regulatory blind spots.
5. **Enhance Transparency for the Public:** The Charity Commission should alert the public to potential abuse by flagging on the online Charitable Register ongoing investigations for cases involving suspected hostile foreign state influence and extremism. This includes relevant regulatory compliance cases as well as statutory inquiries. In addition, the Charity Commission

Undue Influence

should develop a robust process to minimise exceptions; for example, by requiring CEO-level sign-off or incorporating independent review. The current practice of piecemeal regulatory alerts and online notifications leaves the public and donors vulnerable to inadvertently funding malign actors.

6. **Protect Taxpayer Funds (Gift Aid Reform):** A vetting mechanism should be developed to exclude charities with unresolved extremism concerns from receiving Gift Aid and UK Aid Match. Due diligence checks regarding extremism and foreign state influence should be a mandatory prerequisite for any charity registering for Gift Aid.
7. **Identity Verification for Trustees:** A minimum form of identification verification should be introduced for all trustees to prevent malign actors from circumventing scrutiny or re-entering the sector under different guises.

TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS

1979

- **Iranian Revolution:** Establishment of the Shia Islamist clerical regime in Iran, which sets the ideological and operational context for later activities in the UK.

1989

- **The Satanic Verses affair:** Ayatollah KHOMEINI, the Supreme Leader of Iran, announces the *fatwa* against *The Satanic Verses*, calling for the death of British-Indian author Salman Rushdie, and all those connected with the novel's publication. The *fatwa* sparks several years of Iranian-linked assassinations and plots in the UK and worldwide.

1995–1998

- **Founding of the Islamic Centre of England (ICEL):** ICEL was founded in 1995 and officially opened in 1998. ICEL's governing document previously required that one trustee must be appointed by the Supreme Leader of Iran at all times.² ICEL removed the requirement in March 2023 at the direction of the Charity Commission.³

2018

- **British charity founder recognised by top Iranian regime official:** Syeda Umme FARWA, trustee and founder of UK-registered charity **LABAIK YA ZAHRA (LYZ)**, personally receives an award from Ebrahim RAISI, who became President of Iran in 2021. RAISI is nicknamed the "Butcher of Tehran" for overseeing mass executions of political prisoners in the late 1980s.⁴

² A written special resolution of members of the ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND dated 20 March 2023 removed Article 29 in the then Memorandum and/or Articles of Association (dated 1 March 2006) that stated: "At all times at least one of the trustees shall be a Representative of the Supreme Spiritual Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran." See the 17 Apr 2023 'Resolution of alteration of Articles of Association' and the 01 Mar 2006 'Resolution of Memorandum and/or Articles of Association' at: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD filing history', Companies House,

<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history>; see also: Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025) <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 85.

³ Rob Preston, 'Charity Commission orders governance reform at Islamic Centre of England', *Civil Society*, 16 May 2025

<https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/charity-commission-orders-governance-reform-at-islamic-centre-of-england.html>.

⁴ An LYZ trustee acknowledged FARWA had accepted the award, telling *The Times* that it was acceptable for her to have done so because RAISI was a "religious scholar". Photograph of FARWA and RAISI in: Charlie Parker, 'The 'jihadi lioness' hailed in Iran — who runs a British charity', *The Times*, 15 January 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/crime/article/the-jihadi-lioness-hailed-in-iran-who-runs-a-british-charity-9pjbv3bc2>; Charlie Parker, 'Charity's ties investigated over speaking slots for Iranian regime', *The Times*, 16 January 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/charity-investigated-over-speaking-slots-for-iranian-regime-dxv3xqh57>.

2020

- **US drone strike kills IRGC General Qasem SOLEIMANI:** Several UK-based Iranian-aligned charities hold commemorations and vigils for General Qasem SOLEIMANI, who is subject to UK sanctions, triggering Charity Commission scrutiny.
- **ICEL eulogises SOLEIMANI:** ICEL holds two events at the charity's premises that eulogise SOLEIMANI, triggering extensive engagement with the Charity Commission and an official warning.⁵
- The Kanoon Towhid Centre – owned by **AL-TAWHEED CHARITABLE TRUST (TUCF)** – is used by an unidentified third party for an event commemorating Soleimani and features chants of “death to Israel”.⁶

2021

- **AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION domain seized:** The US government seizes several website domains worldwide as part of a clampdown on the IRANIAN ISLAMIC RADIO AND TELEVISION UNION, which it alleges is linked to the IRGC. Among the domains seized and shut down is Ahlulbayt.tv, owned by UK-registered charity AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION.⁷

2022

- **“Hello Commander” video filmed at ICEL:** ICEL and the nearby School of the Islamic Republic of Iran host filming of an English-language version of “Salam Farmandeh”, a song the Iran Press News Agency describes as “themed with support for the Islamic Revolution” and encouraging “the new generation” to protect its ideals.⁸ The English version features saluting children pledging support to the Mahdi (the awaited messianic figure in Twelver Shia Islam) and likely to the Iranian state leadership.⁹

⁵ ‘Regulator launches inquiry into Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission for England and Wales (November 2022),

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-launches-inquiry-into-islamic-centre-of-england>.

⁶ Ed Thomas, ‘UK officials probe Iran generals’ antisemitic talks to students’, BBC, 22 January 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-68016330>.

⁷ ‘U.S. Seizes Websites Tied to Iran’, United States Institute of Peace (July 2021), <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/jul/07/us-seizes-websites-tied-iran>.

⁸ ‘English version of song ‘Hello Commander’ performed in London’, Iran Press News Agency, Last updated 25 June 2022, <https://iranpress.com/content/60332/english-version-song-hello-commander-performed-london>.

⁹ ‘Salam My Mawla | Nouredine Alkathemy’, Nouredine Alkathemy, YouTube, 24 June 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viDdqumyN6Y>.

See the section “Indoctrinating Children and Young People” in “Part Two: Exporting 1979 – Ideology, Antisemitism and Radicalisation Risk” below.

Undue Influence

- **The Charity Commission launches a statutory inquiry into ICEL** in November over serious governance concerns after finding that ICEL was only partially compliant with an earlier official warning over the 2020 SOLEIMANI events.¹⁰

2023

- **The Independent Review of Prevent references IHRC:** The Independent Review of Prevent describes the ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (IHRC) as “an Islamist group ideologically aligned with the Iranian regime”, which has a “history of extremist links and terrorist sympathies”.¹¹ IHRC shares premises and funding with a registered charity, the **ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST**.¹²
- **National Security Act 2023:** The Act criminalises assisting the IRGC or Iranian intelligence and introduces the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS), a transparency scheme requiring registration of political or influence activity conducted for foreign powers.
- In the House of Commons, UK Security Minister Tom Tugendhat describes cultural centres linked to the Iranian regime, including ICEL, as “Iranian proxy organisations” linked to the IRGC, whose activity he characterises as a “vile threat” to UK security.¹³
- **The Charity Commission appoints Emma Moody as ICEL interim manager** due to governance failures.¹⁴ Thirty-five civil society groups, including other Iranian-aligned organisations covered in this analysis, protest the appointment of a non-Muslim and claim that the decision “serves the interests of Islamophobes”.¹⁵

¹⁰ ‘Regulator launches inquiry into Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, (November 2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-launches-inquiry-into-islamic-centre-of-england>.

¹¹ Footnote 329 reads: “Several senior figures within IHRC have espoused support for violent jihad, expressed sympathy for convicted terrorists, and advocated for the extraction and eradication of ‘Zionists’. Campaigns have supported high-profile associates of a number of terrorist or extremist groups such as al-Qa’ida and the Taliban. By way of example, in their 2017 obituary for “blind sheikh” Omar Abdul Rehman, the mastermind of numerous bomb plots in New York in the early 1990s, IHRC described him as “a rare man of principle...[whose] death will only make him a martyr and more of an inspiration.” See ‘Press Release – USA/ Sheikh Omar Abdul Rehman: World has lost a man of principle and unshakeable faith’, IHRC, 20 February 2017. IHRC have also described convicted al-Qa’ida operative Aafia Siddiqui as an “inspiring and intelligent frontrunner [who has been] destroyed at the hands of barbaric [sic] collaborators”. See ‘Action Alert: USA – Aafia Siddiqui must be repatriated now’, IHRC, 11 September 2013.” See William Shawcross CVO, Independent Review of Prevent, House of Commons (February 2023), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf, p. 152.

¹² In October 2025, the Charity Commission announced it was escalating its engagement with the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust to a statutory inquiry, including over its funding of a non-charitable company. See ‘Charity investigated over funding of non-charitable company’, Charity Commission for England and Wales (28 October 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/charity-investigated-over-funding-of-non-charitable-company>.

¹³ ‘Topical Questions Volume 730: debated on Monday 20 March 2023’, UK Parliament (20 March 2023),

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/FDA85DA7-8393-4C7C-98E3-0A96483D5883/TopicalQuestions>.

¹⁴ ‘Charity regulator appoints Interim Manager to the Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission for England and Wales (May 2023), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/charity-regulator-appoints-interim-manager-to-the-islamic-centre-of-england>.

¹⁵ Léa Legraien, ‘Interim manager appointment at Muslim charity is ‘politically motivated’, say civil society groups’, *Civil Society*, 1 June 2023, <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/appointment-of-interim-manager-at-muslim-charity-is-politically-motivated-say-civil-society-groups.html>.

Undue Influence

- **ICEL announces closure until further notice:** Following the Charity Commission’s appointment of Moody as interim manager, a notice is posted on ICEL’s doors announcing the suspension of “upcoming programs, including prayers” [...] “after receiving the concerns of the community”.¹⁶

2024

- **DAR ALHEKMA TRUST and ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION investigations paused:** Charity Commission pauses regulatory compliance investigations into the charities at the request of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) while it assesses a dossier of evidence alleging the charities’ links to Iran.¹⁷
- **LABAIK YA ZAHRA trustees sign a memorandum with IRGC Commander:** Syeda Umme FARWA and Ali IFFI (likely also known as Iftikhar ALI),¹⁸ trustees of LYZ, are personally hosted by Brigadier General Majid Hashemi-Dana, a senior commander of the IRGC in Tehran. Iranian military-controlled news agency Defa Press reports that FARWA signed a memorandum stating intent to spread the ideals of the 1979 revolution.¹⁹

2025

- **MIS and Counter-Terrorism Police track Iranian-linked plots:** At least 20 plots are tracked,²⁰ including the arrests in May 2025 of five Iranian nationals suspected of plotting an attack against the Israeli Embassy in London.

¹⁶ ‘Islamic Center Of England Run As Iran Regime’s UK Office Shut Down’, *Iran International*, 25 May 2023, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202305250028>.

¹⁷ Fiona Hamilton, ‘Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation’, *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

¹⁸ The Charity Commission for England and Wales lists a trustee named “IFTIKHAR ALI” for Labaik Ya Zahra from 17 August 2011 onwards: ‘LABAIK YA ZAHRA - 1144740, Trustees’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/5021522/trustees?_uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=5021522.

A 2014 LABAIK YA ZAHRA Facebook post identifies “Ali Iffi” as a trustee of the organisation and captions a photo of two men (note the one on the right). Labaik Ya Zahra, Facebook, 22 July 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=339593246192957&set=a.315949601890655>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/2cp9h>.

A LABAIK YA ZAHRA YouTube video published in 2020, documenting an award event held in 2016, lists “Agha Ali Iffi” as a trustee of LYZ and includes footage showing an individual who resembles one of the men in the 2014 LYZ Facebook post (note the first from the right in the video opening): ‘LYZ Best Parents AWARD 2016 - Tejani Brothers & Zainab Tejani’s Parents’, Labaik Ya Zahra, YouTube, 28 July 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFefE17L7r4>.

Note the individual in the centre of the photo, with the caption identifying “Ali Iffi” as a trustee of the charity: Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smbr3c9>.

¹⁹ Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smbr3c9>.

²⁰ ‘Director General Sir Ken McCallum gives threat update’, MI5 Security Service (October 2025),

Undue Influence

- **The Charity Commission orders governance reform at ICEL** “compelling the trustees to provide rigorous oversight of future speakers and online activity by the charity among other actions”.²¹
- **AHLULBAYT ISLAMIC MISSION (AIM) summer camp controversy:** AIM cancels its Camp Wilayah after media and political scrutiny and radicalisation concerns. UK-based Shia organisation AIM is not a registered charity but it uses the premises of a registered charity, the **MUHAMMADI TRUST OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**.
- **The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament report on Iran links ICEL to the regime**, stating that, alongside legitimate community work, “there are grounds to suggest” that ICEL and “other cultural and educational centres supported by Iran” are “being used to promote violent and extremist ideology”.²²
- **The Foreign Influence Registration Scheme comes into effect in July.** Individuals and organisations instructed to carry out activities in the UK by either Iran or Russia must register with the ‘enhanced tier’ of the scheme.²³
- **DAR ALHEKMA TRUST and ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION regulatory compliance cases reopened:** The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) confirms that the Charity Commission is engaging with the trustees of both charities to assess the concerns raised,²⁴ suggesting that the MPS chose not to investigate or have completed their investigation.

<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/director-general-sir-ken-mccallum-gives-threat-update>.

²¹ ‘Regulator orders reform to governance at Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission of England and Wales (May 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-orders-reform-to-governance-at-islamic-centre-of-england>.

²² “We also note that whilst the Islamic Centre of England and other cultural and educational centres supported by Iran have legitimate roles supporting the Iranian diaspora community, there are grounds

to suggest that they are also being used to promote violent and extremist ideology”:

Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 5.

²³ ‘Foreign Influence Registration Scheme’, Home Office (Last updated 20 August 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/foreign-influence-registration-scheme>.

²⁴ ‘Abrar Islamic Foundation and Dar Alhekma Trust Question for Department for Culture, Media and Sport UIN 91161, tabled on 14 November 2025’, UK Parliament (Answered on 27 November 2025), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-11-14/91161>.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Timeline of Key Events	6
Contents	11
Introduction	14
Context: Iran’s Strategy, Deniability and UK Focus	15
The ‘Shia Crescent’ and Proxy Warfare	15
Global Operations Beyond the Muslim-Majority World	16
The Rushdie Fatwa as a Watershed in the West	17
Plots and Criminal Proxies in the West	19
From Violence to Soft Power Operations in the UK	20
Part One: Charities as a Platform for Legitimacy, Access and Espionage	22
Why Charity Status Is Attractive to Hostile Actors	22
“This is Espionage”: Access to People and Information	22
Case Study: Islamic Human Rights Commission and Political Leverage	23
Charities’ Links to Universities	25
Case Study: Islamic Centre of England as Network Headquarters in the UK	31
Part Two: Exporting 1979 – Ideology, Antisemitism and Radicalisation Risk	35
Khomeinist Ideology and the End Times	35
Spreading Antisemitism and Hostility to Israel	35
Indoctrinating Children and Young People	38
Case Studies: The Islamic College and Labaik Ya Zahra	42
The Islamic College	42
Labaik Ya Zahra	46
Implications: Homegrown Radicalisation and Security Risk	47
Part Three: Transnational Repression and Control over Shia Islam in the UK	48
Exporting Repression to the Iranian Diaspora	48
The Role of UK-Based Charities in Intimidation and Hostility	48
An Indicator of Reach: The Ban on Maryam Rajavi Entering the UK	50
Shaping Shia Islam in the UK	50
Part Four: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the British Charity Sector	52
The IRGC: Mandate, Structure and Ideology	52

Undue Influence

IRGC Links to Iranian-Aligned British Charities	53
Case Study: Dar Alhekma Trust and Abrar Islamic Foundation	55
Overall Assessment: Charities and the IRGC	57
Part Five: State and Charity Commission Response	58
Systemic Delays and Operational Continuity	58
Lack of Transparency Risking Public Trust in Charities	59
Government Funding via Gift Aid	60
The “Compliance” Trap and the Resilience of Malign Networks	60
Institutional Hesitancy and Political Will	61
The Legislative Gap	61
Conclusion	63
Policy Recommendations	64
Annexes	66
Annex A: ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND	66
Charity Commission Response	66
Continued Concerns of Lack of Independence from Iran	67
Moosavi Remains Influential	67
Moosavi “Out”, Najm and Hussain In	68
Iran-Influenced Guests	70
Funding	72
Annex B: DAR ALHEKMA TRUST	73
Leadership	73
Dr Saeed Shehabi	73
Abbas Al Omran	78
Alleged Connections to Iran or Its Proxy Groups	79
Guests Supporting Violence or Proscribed Groups	80
Charity Commission Response	82
Funding	82
Annex C: ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION	83
Leadership	83
Alleged Connections to Iran or Its Proxy Groups	83
Endorsing Iranian Leadership or Its Proxies	84
Religious Framing of the Israel-Palestine Conflict	85

Undue Influence

Promoting Antisemitism	86
Charity Commission Response	87
Funding	87
Annex D: Photographs and Screenshots	88

INTRODUCTION

This report examines the extent of malign Iranian influence operations in the UK, with a particular focus on the regime's soft power infrastructure within the British charitable sector.

Established as grassroots Shia religious institutions, cultural centres, and human rights or educational charities, there are as many as 30 different organisations operating in the UK with alleged links to the Iranian regime.²⁵ This report focuses on ten charities and their associated groups as referred to below.

This report draws on desk research, namely a review of Charity Commission and Companies House filings, open source media reporting, social media and research reports, parliamentary evidence and prior investigations. While journalistic inquiry has revealed many of these links, by its nature, these pieces of information have been scattered across media reporting over the course of several years. This report collates evidence of these links and provides a broader context of how they are significant to the Iranian regime's overall worldview and strategy for Britain.

Primary evidence was collected via a number of semi-structured interviews with key informants, including those with unique insight into the ideology or operations of the Iranian regime as well as those with experience of government and the Charity Commission, the charities regulator in England and Wales. The former includes Iranians with first-hand knowledge of the regime itself. The Charity Commission was approached for and provided an update on the status of investigations into the charities examined.

Those included in this report were provided with the opportunity to reply to information about them and were invited to provide their comments. Where appropriate, the report reflects their responses.

It is hoped that this report will contribute to the understanding of the nature of these charities' operations in the UK as well as their links or ideological alignment to the regime in Tehran. It also identifies gaps in the regulatory environment, with a particular focus on whether the Charity Commission is equipped to respond to exploitation of the sector by hostile state and non-state actors. A number of policy recommendations are included to aid official responses to this threat to national security and social cohesion.

The report also contains annexed case studies of three of the charities examined.

²⁵ 'Written evidence submitted by United Against Nuclear Iran (COM0033)', UK Parliament (June 2025), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/142809/pdf/>.

CONTEXT: IRAN'S STRATEGY, DENIABILITY & UK FOCUS

Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has been ruled by a Shia Islamist clerical regime.

Much like their Sunni Islamist equivalents, from the MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD through to AL-QAEDA, the regime in Tehran strives for the eventual creation of a supranational Islamic state; though in the form of a Shia Imamate rather than a Sunni Caliphate,²⁶ which the Salafi-jihadist group ISIS claimed to have restored in Iraq and Syria in 2014.²⁷

To this end, the Iranian regime places a high priority on operating well beyond its borders (in fact, it does not accept the concept of modern borders), adopting a strategy of hybrid and asymmetrical threats,²⁸ from assassinations, terrorism and proxy militias through to propaganda campaigns, cyber and infrastructure attacks, in order to wield influence and assert leadership over Shia Islam (although it does compete with Turkey and Saudi Arabia to assert authority over Islam as a whole as well).²⁹

The 'Shia Crescent' and Proxy Warfare

Across Western Asia, Iranian hard power is most visible in the form of a network of militias and proxy forces,³⁰ the most notable examples of which are HEZBOLLAH in Lebanon and powerful Shia militias in Iraq,³¹ such as the BADR ORGANISATION or KATAIB HEZBOLLAH.³² The regime has also provided

²⁶ 'Written evidence submitted by United Against Nuclear Iran (COM0033)', UK Parliament (June 2025), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/142809/pdf/>.

²⁷ 'Isis rebels declare 'Islamic state' in Iraq and Syria', BBC News, 30 June 2014, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28082962>.

²⁸ See, for example, analysis by Michael Eisenstadt: "Since the creation of the Islamic Republic in 1979, Iran has distinguished itself (along with Russia and China) as one of the world's foremost "gray zone" actors. For nearly four decades, however, the United States has struggled to respond effectively to this asymmetric "way of war" (p. 1) and "Gray zone actors probe and test to determine what they can get away with. They rely on covert or unacknowledged proxy activities to preserve deniability and avoid becoming decisively engaged with the adversary." (p. 2): Michael Eisenstadt, 'Iran's Gray Zone Strategy: Cornerstone of Its Asymmetric Way of War', The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (March 2021), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/media/4505>.

²⁹ Dimitar Bechev, Ahmet Erdi Öztürk, 'Competing over Islam: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran in the Balkans,' Middle East Institute, 11 January 2022, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/competing-over-islam-turkey-saudi-arabia-and-iran-balkans>.

³⁰ Ashley Lane, 'Iran's Islamist Proxies in the Middle East', Wilson Center (September 2023), <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/irans-islamist-proxies>.

³¹ 'What Is Hezbollah?', Council on Foreign Relations (Last updated October 2024), <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah>.

³² Michael Knights, Crispin Smith, 'Badr Organization: Iran's Oldest Proxy in Iraq', The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (June 2025), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/badr-organization-irans-oldest-proxy-iraq>.

KATAIB HEZBOLLAH: Cassandra Vinograd, 'What to Know About the Militia That Kidnapped Elizabeth Tsurkov', *The New York Times*, 5 November 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/05/world/europe/elizabeth-tsurkov-iraqi-militia-torture.html>.

extensive military, financial and logistical support to other militant and terrorist groups in the region,³³ notably the HOUTHIS in Yemen,³⁴ and HAMAS in Gaza.³⁵

Iran's proxies have been involved in widespread human rights abuses, kidnapping, assassinations, terrorism and open warfare, as well as fighting against British and US forces in Iraq.³⁶ Later, in the Syrian Civil War, HEZBOLLAH and other Iranian proxies fought to preserve the regime of the Assad family, who hail from the minority Alawite sect of Shiism.³⁷

In recent years, the regime has sought to carve out and exert control over a corridor known as the 'Shia Crescent',³⁸ stretching from Iran's western borders, through Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and all the way to Golan and the borders of Israel – the latter a state which the regime seeks to annihilate.³⁹ Although it is an open secret that these militias operate with the support of the Iranian regime, sometimes under direct coordination of the IRGC, a powerful paramilitary force created by the regime to protect and expand the revolution.⁴⁰ This strategy has afforded Tehran a degree of plausible deniability which has served to reduce, but not eliminate, backlash from neighbours and the broader international community.⁴¹

Global Operations Beyond the Muslim-Majority World

Iranian influence and special operations do not start and end with the Shia Crescent and the broader Muslim-majority world. The regime and the IRGC have reached well into the Western world, with the UK emerging as a clear priority and field of activity, relative to some of our European neighbours.

³³ Kali Robinson, Will Mellow, 'Iran's Regional Armed Network', Council on Foreign Relations (Last updated April 2025), <https://www.cfr.org/article/irans-regional-armed-network>.

³⁴ Kali Robinson, 'Iran's Support of the Houthis: What to Know,' Council on Foreign Relations (Last updated 24 March 2025), <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/irans-support-houthis-what-know>.

³⁵ Matthew Levitt, 'The Hamas-Iran Relationship', The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (November 2023), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/hamas-iran-relationship>.

³⁶ Edmund Fitton-Brown, 'Analysis: The role of Iraqi Shia militias as proxies in Iran's Axis of Resistance', *The Long War Journal*, 14 January 2025, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2025/01/analysis-the-role-of-iraqi-shia-militias-as-proxies-in-irans-axis-of-resistance.php>.

³⁷ Anne Barnard, 'Hezbollah Commits to an All-Out Fight to Save Assad', *The New York Times*, 25 May 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/26/world/middleeast/syrian-army-and-hezbollah-step-up-raids-on-rebels.html>.

³⁸ Patrick Clawson, Hanin Ghaddar, Nader Uskowi, 'Middle East FAQs Volume 1: What is the Shia Crescent?', The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (17 January 2018), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/middle-east-faqs-volume-1-what-shia-crescent>.

³⁹ According to Kasra Aarabi, "Khomeini and his followers depicted the destruction of Israel and the liberation of Palestine as an Islamic duty, and this has not changed since 1979". in: Kasra Aarabi, 'The Fundamentals of Iran's Islamic Revolution', Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (11 February 2019), <https://institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/fundamentals-irans-islamic-revolution>.

⁴⁰ CFR Editors, 'Backgrounder: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC),' Council on Foreign Relations (Last updated June 2025), <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/irans-revolutionary-guards>.

⁴¹ See, for example: "Through asymmetric tactics — including political, economic, social, intelligence, and military support for various non-state actors — Iran pursues its geopolitical objectives while avoiding full-scale conflict. This strategy enables Tehran to expand its regional influence, counterbalance its rivals, and maintain plausible deniability in the face of international criticism or retaliation." Farzin Zandi, 'How Iran Lost Before It Lost: The Roll Back of Its Gray Zone Strategy', *War on the Rocks*, 24 January 2025, <https://warontherocks.com/2025/01/how-iran-lost-before-it-lost-the-roll-back-of-its-gray-zone-strategy/>.

Unlike in the Middle East, the regime recognises that it cannot operate militias and armed proxy forces in other regions like Europe or North and South America,⁴² for example. This does not mean, however, that the regime eschews violence in the old continent and beyond.

According to the U.S. State Department, since the 1979 revolution, the regime has been implicated in assassinations, terror plots and attacks in over 40 different countries.⁴³ The 1994 Argentine Mutual Israelite Association (AMIA) Jewish community centre bombing by Iranian proxy HEZBOLLAH in Buenos Aires stands out as the bloodiest, claiming 85 lives. According to the same 2020 State Department report, the regime was responsible for over 360 targeted assassinations outside of its borders – borders in which it does not believe.

The Rushdie *Fatwa* as a Watershed in the West

Despite previous Iranian assassination plots in the West, arguably the UK's first awakening to regime interference was Ayatollah KHOMEINI's *fatwa* (religious edict) in 1989 against British-Indian author, the future Sir Salman Rushdie, in response to his allegedly blasphemous novel, *The Satanic Verses*.

In addition to the threats which forced the author into a life of hiding, pipe bombs and arson attacks on bookshops in London were followed by years of assassinations and plots against translators and publishers from Italy and Norway to even Japan.⁴⁴ CIA analysis from 1992 pointed to regime involvement, concluding that: "Iran has shifted from attacking organizations affiliated with the novel – publishing houses and bookstores – to individuals involved in its publication, as called for in the original *fatwa*".⁴⁵

The *fatwa* eventually caught up with Rushdie in 2022, when he was stabbed multiple times while on stage in New York by a man who had photos of Iranian regime officials, IRGC commanders, and leaders of Iran's militias in Iraq on his devices.⁴⁶ It is not clear whether the attack, which cost Rushdie

⁴² Although the regime has previously attempted to operate militias in mainland Europe, in particular during the Balkans conflicts. See: 'How Iran Exports its Ideology: Bosnia-Herzegovina,' United Against Nuclear Iran (November 2023), <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/ideological-expansion/bosnia-herzegovina>.

⁴³ 'Iran's Assassinations and Terrorist Activity Abroad', U.S. Department of State (May 2020), <https://2017-2021.state.gov/irans-assassinations-and-terrorist-activity-abroad/>.

⁴⁴ Liam Duffy, 'Violence Against Perceived Blasphemers in the West: From Khomeini's Fatwa to the Present', Counter Extremism Project (July 2023), https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/2023-06/Violence%20Against%20Perceived%20Blasphemers%20in%20the%20West_July%202022.pdf, p. 30-32.

⁴⁵ 'Iran: Enhanced Terrorist Capabilities and Expanding Target Selection,' Central Intelligence Agency (April 1992). As quoted in: Matthew Levitt, "Fighters Without Borders"—Forecasting New Trends in Iran Threat Network Foreign Operations Tradecraft," *CTC Sentinel*, (February 2020), <https://ctc.usma.edu/fighters-without-borders-forecasting-new-trends-iran-threat-network-foreign-operations-tradecraft/>.

⁴⁶ Graeme Wood, 'Iran's Knucklehead Assassination Strategy', *The Atlantic*, 12 September 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/09/qassem-soleimani-iran-assassination-retaliation/671394/>.

Undue Influence

one of his eyes and the use of one hand,⁴⁷ was formally set into motion by Iranian operatives or was a “grassroots” product of the regime’s worldwide radicalisation efforts.⁴⁸

The intent of the *fatwa* went well beyond immediate revenge for the perceived religious transgression. The Iranian regime was asserting leadership over Islam and Muslim matters worldwide,⁴⁹ and attempting to insert its worldview into the heart of Western liberal democracies and among the Muslims living there.⁵⁰ Crowds of protestors who had never before organised en masse along religious lines suddenly took to the streets of British cities, including Bradford,⁵¹ Bolton⁵² and Birmingham, where some demonstrators sported placards of then Ayatollah KHOMEINI,⁵³ as well as a 20,000-strong protest in London, where an effigy of Rushdie was burned.⁵⁴

The *fatwa* is useful as a watershed moment in starting to understand the regime’s ambitions within the West, both at the grassroots level and also in terms of its decades-long campaign of assassinations

⁴⁷ Sam Jones, ‘Salman Rushdie has lost sight in one eye and use of one hand, says agent’, *The Guardian*, 23 October 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/oct/23/salman-rushdie-has-lost-sight-in-one-eye-and-use-of-one-hand-says-agent>.

⁴⁸ This article suggests Iran employed a proxy operative in the attempt: Graeme Wood, ‘Iran’s Knucklehead Assassination Strategy’, *The Atlantic*, 12 September 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/09/gassem-soleimani-iran-assassination-retaliation/671394/>; whereas this article questions if the attack was “Iran-inspired” or “Iran-directed”, mentioning that the police investigation was asking the same question: James Phillips, ‘Was Iran Behind Attempt to Kill Salman Rushdie in America?’, Heritage Foundation (18 August 2022), <https://www.heritage.org/terrorism/commentary/was-iran-behind-attempt-kill-salman-rushdie-america>.

⁴⁹ See, for example, analysis in *The Guardian* at the time of the fatwa: “And then, of course, there is politics. Khomeini’s revolution is in trouble, with the war against Iraq ended but not won, and a bitter struggle underway in Tehran between the ‘pragmatists’ and the ‘radicals’ over whom will inherit the Ayatollah’s mantle when he dies. Iran has few friends in the Arab world, where antipathy towards the Persians combines with suspicion of revolution and historic antagonisms between the Sunni and Shia branches of Islam. A crusade- or perhaps jihad is a better word- against blasphemy is a good way to unite the Islamic world.” Robin Lustig, Martin Bailey, Simon de Bruxelles and Ian Mather, ‘Salman Rushdie and a war of the word’, *The Guardian*, 18 February 1989, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/1989/feb/19/race.world>.

⁵⁰ In his book, *From Fatwa to Jihad*, Kenan Malik writes: “With his four-paragraph pronouncement, the ayatollah had transcended the traditional frontiers of Islam and brought the whole world under his jurisdiction. At the same time, he helped relocate the confrontation between Islam and the West, which until then had been played out largely in the Middle East and south Asia, into the heart of western Europe. For the West, Islam was now a domestic issue.” Kenan Malik, *From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy* (Atlantic Books, 2017 paperback edition), p. 18.

⁵¹ Kenan Malik, ‘A marketplace of outrage’, *The New Statesman*, Last updated 27 September 2015, <https://www.newstatesman.com/long-reads/2009/03/british-muslims-rushdie-book>.

⁵² Robin Lustig, Martin Bailey, Simon de Bruxelles and Ian Mather, ‘Salman Rushdie and a war of the word’, *The Guardian*, 18 February 1989, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/1989/feb/19/race.world>.

⁵³ See, for example, photography from Birmingham anti-Rushdie protests published in *The New Yorker* magazine, which captured images of protestors, including young children, holding a photo of Ayatollah KHOMEINI in: Salman Rushdie, ‘The Disappeared’, *The New Yorker*, 10 September 2012, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/09/17/the-disappeared>.

⁵⁴ ‘Part 2: Timeline of Iran’s Fatwa on Rushdie’, The Wilson Center (16 August 2022), <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/part-2-timeline-irans-fatwa-rushdie>.

and terror plots,⁵⁵ which continue in the UK today and have increased in both frequency and belligerence in recent years – in particular since the Israel-Hamas conflict.⁵⁶

Plots and Criminal Proxies in the West

In October 2025, MI5 Director General, Ken McCallum, claimed that the security services had tracked at least 20 Iranian-linked terror and assassination plots in the UK in the year prior.⁵⁷ The 2025 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament (ISC) inquiry into the state threat posed by Iran found that the focus of the Iranian physical threat is against dissidents, as well as an increased risk to Jewish targets and Israeli interests.⁵⁸ As recently as May 2025, Counter-Terrorism Police (CTP) arrested five Iranian nationals suspected of plotting an attack against the Israeli Embassy in London.⁵⁹

Maintaining its strategy of plausible deniability,⁶⁰ in other countries the regime has enlisted the help of criminal gangs, such as the Foxtrot Network in Sweden,⁶¹ or even the Hell's Angels, to carry out the 'sharp end' of their operations, again, with Jews and the Iranian diaspora as the principal targets.⁶² In other cases, such as acts of arson against synagogues in Australia, regime operatives have paid low-

⁵⁵ The CIA, for example, assessed that, between 1979 and 1994, the Iranian regime "murdered Iranian defectors and dissidents in West Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Turkey", with over 60 individuals targeted during this period. Analysis from multiple sources cited in: Matthew Levitt, 'Iran's Deadly Diplomats', *CTC Sentinel* (August 2018), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/irans-deadly-diplomats/>.

There are also several plots linked to Iranian operations in the months and years following *The Satanic Verses* fatwa, see for example, database of plots in: Liam Duffy, 'Violence Against Perceived Blasphemers in the West: From Khomeini's Fatwa to the Present', Counter Extremism Project (July 2023), https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/2023-06/Violence%20Against%20Perceived%20Blasphemers%20in%20the%20West_July%202022.pdf, p. 30-32.

⁵⁶ Rob Hastings, Cahal Milmo, 'How Iran is ramping up its secret war on UK soil', *The i Paper*, Last updated 20 June 2025, <https://inews.co.uk/news/iran-ramping-up-secret-war-on-uk-soil-3761167?srltid=AfmBOoq-T89cldqa47Hdc16gXe-h1Hb7GQf2OkYM-5DeldcR0PBzYY56>.

⁵⁷ 'Director General Sir Ken McCallum gives threat update', MI5 Security Service (16 October 2025), <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/director-general-sir-ken-mccallum-gives-threat-update>.

⁵⁸ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 49.

⁵⁹ Daniel Sandford, 'Israeli embassy in London was target of suspected terror plot', BBC News, 8 May 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ce8g8jlx33xo>.

⁶⁰ J.R. Mailey, 'Iran's Criminal Statecraft: How Tehran Weaponizes Illicit Markets', Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (October 2024), <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/JR-Malley-Irans-critical-statecraft-How-Tehran-weaponizes-illicit-markets-GI-TOC-October-2024.pdf>, p. 1.

⁶¹ Remarks by David Lammy MP: 'UK sanctions Iranian organised crime network', Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (14 April 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-iranian-organised-crime-network>.

⁶² Matthew Levitt, Sarah Boches, 'Iranian External Operations in Europe: The Criminal Connection', International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) (16 October 2024), <https://icct.nl/publication/iranian-external-operations-europe-criminal-connection>.

level street criminals to carry out their attacks through layers of intermediaries.⁶³ British Security Minister, Dan Jarvis MP, suggested in 2025 that the regime uses criminal proxies in Britain, too.⁶⁴

From Violence to Soft Power Operations in the UK

Iranian operations in the UK do not start and end with murder and mayhem, however. The regime has also established and maintains or is linked to a network of more than 30 charities, religious institutions and cultural or community centres in order to further the interests of the regime and the ideals of the 1979 revolution.⁶⁵ Iran expert at United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) and report interviewee, Kasra Aarabi,⁶⁶ describes this network as one of “two sides of the same strategy” for the regime, which is also responsible for the physical threats on British soil.⁶⁷ Aarabi’s assessment is supported by other analysts who describe the regime as projecting influence via a complex setup of military and civilian entities.⁶⁸

Most of the organisations detailed in this report are registered charities and therefore receive significant financial benefits primarily in the form of tax reliefs and exemptions, an indirect form of public (taxpayer) support.⁶⁹ Some receive funding directly from the treasury through the Gift Aid scheme.⁷⁰

None of the charities and individuals in this report are involved in the terrorism and assassination tactics deployed by the regime. However, there is evidence that some of these charities are acting under the influence of the IRGC. In some instances, this means ongoing links and meetings between

⁶³ Ben Doherty, ‘Iran directed arson attacks in Australia and ‘fanned the flames’ of antisemitism, country’s spy chief says’, *The Guardian*, 26 August 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/aug/26/iran-directed-arson-attacks-in-australia-spy-chief-says-ntwnfb>.

⁶⁴ Dan Jarvis MBE MP, ‘Oral statement to Parliament: Protecting national security’, Home Office (4 March 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/protecting-national-security>.

⁶⁵ ‘Written evidence submitted by United Against Nuclear Iran (COM0033)’, UK Parliament (June 2025), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/142809/pdf/>.

⁶⁶ Aarabi specialises in the IRGC, Iranian military and security affairs, and Shia Islamist movements. He is Director of IRGC Research at UANI, having previously served as Iran Programme Lead at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. His work is cited internationally and is shaped by a critical, anti-regime policy perspective.

⁶⁷ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 24 October 2025.

⁶⁸ Michael Eisenstadt elaborated on this interplay, writing that: “Iran has created a complex institutional setup for projecting influence abroad consisting of both civilian and military entities, including the IRGC, IRGC-QF, IRGC intelligence, the Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS); foreign Shi’ite proxy forces; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA); state media entities; and a variety of parastatal foundations and business fronts. This complexity derives in part from politics (and results in no small amount of friction among competing organizations) but it also facilitates the regime’s hybrid modus operandi. It does so by providing Iran with tools and options unavailable to its adversaries—such as terrorism and intimidation, bribery, and unbridled disinformation activities—which confer on it a comparative advantage when it comes to shaping the strategic environment and projecting influence below the threshold of war.” See p. 5 : Michael Eisenstadt, ‘Iran’s Gray Zone Strategy Cornerstone of its Asymmetric Way of War’, *PRISM* (March 2021), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/media/4505>.

⁶⁹ ‘Charities and tax’, HMG, <https://www.gov.uk/charities-and-tax>.

⁷⁰ Under the Gift Aid scheme, charities that are recognised by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) can claim an extra 25p for every £1 donated by a UK taxpayer, at no extra cost to the donor. This means a £1 donation becomes £1.25 for the charity. The additional money is the basic rate tax already paid by the donor on the donation amount and is rerouted to the charity rather than kept by the government. ‘Chapter 3: Gift Aid’, HM Revenue & Customs (Last updated 5 December 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-detailed-guidance-notes/chapter-3-gift-aid>, para 3.2.2.

Undue Influence

trustees and senior staff of British charities and IRGC officials and commanders inside Iran. In other cases, this means individuals having been appointed and dispatched to the UK to run charities directly by senior figures in the Iranian clerical regime, including the now deceased Supreme Leader himself.

What this report shows is that, from the regime's perspective, the charities and individuals in this report are different non-militant parts of the same overall strategy, furthering the same set of objectives – such as, contributing to the insecurity of British Iranians and British Jews – albeit deploying radically different methods.

As the next section will demonstrate, the Iranian regime's exploitation of the British charity sector is in keeping with its overall hybrid strategy and plausible deniability. Using charities serves as a buffer against public, media and government scrutiny and, while the Charity Commission is currently investigating eight of the charities identified in this report, all continue to operate.⁷¹ The regime therefore maintains its influence and interests through this network of charities, while at the same time physical attacks, terrorism and assassinations linked to Iran are ongoing on UK soil.

⁷¹ In February 2026, the Charity Commission confirmed ongoing cases in respect of: Abrar Islamic Foundation; Al Tahweed Charitable Trust; Dar Alhekma Trust; Idara E Jaaferiya; Irshad Trust; Islamic Centre of England; Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust; and Labaik Ya Zahra. Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026

PART ONE: CHARITIES AS A PLATFORM FOR LEGITIMACY, ACCESS AND ESPIONAGE

Why Charity Status Is Attractive to Hostile Actors

When it comes to both hostile state and non-state actors, some of the UK's greatest strengths of openness, freedom of speech, religion and association, fairness, and a thriving civil society are arguably some of its greatest vulnerabilities.⁷² As the former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (2001-2011), Lord Carlile of Berriew explained: “[A] number of states are exploiting the charity sector. I believe that there are some charities which will have been established with the purpose of exploiting the charity sector.”⁷³

Lord Carlile suggests that some states and non-state actors misuse the charity sector for a few reasons: “because of the financial advantages” and the “status advantages” in being charities, and because they can evade scrutiny and governance rules. Ways of achieving misuse can be by giving the “charity a name which doesn’t actually indicate what the charity does, and it gets lost in the mass”.⁷⁴ These names often deliberately invoke community, religion or support for the vulnerable in order to obscure their true nature and purpose.

Iran’s rationale in setting up seemingly grassroots organisations inside the UK can arguably be traced back to the fallout from the Rushdie *fatwa*, which led to greater political organisation among Muslims at a time when, according to commentator Kenan Malik, “mainstream politicians were keen to find credible Muslim leaders to whom they could talk”.⁷⁵

“This is Espionage”: Access to People and Information

Lord Carlile expands on the access afforded to quasi-Iranian officials by operating as charities:

“Illegitimately claimed Charitable status provides cover for gaining access to individuals who may be regarded by the Iranians as being of significance. That could include Members of Parliament, in both houses, and others seen to be of influence. This is certainly understood by Iranian state interests.”⁷⁶

⁷² Former Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, for example, declared in a 2017 speech on Islamist movements that “it is plainly wrong that Islamists should exploit freedoms here in the UK – freedoms of speech and association – that their associates would repress overseas, and it is all too clear that some affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood are willing to turn a blind eye to terrorism”. Full speech at: Rt Hon Boris Johnson, ‘How Global Britain is helping to win the struggle against Islamist terror’, Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (7 December 2017), <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/how-global-britain-is-helping-to-win-the-struggle-against-islamist-terror>.

⁷³ Interview with Lord Carlile conducted 28 October 2025.

⁷⁴ Interview with Lord Carlile conducted 28 October 2025.

⁷⁵ Kenan Malik, *From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy* (Atlantic Books, 2017 paperback edition), p. 126.

⁷⁶ Interview with Lord Carlile conducted 28 October 2025.

Being a registered charity arguably acts as a ‘seal of approval’ from the state. This can protect organisations from the levels of due diligence or scrutiny which might otherwise be conducted ahead of engagement with police chiefs or government and local government officials, not least due to their well-meaning but easily exploited desire to support Muslim communities and combat discrimination.⁷⁷

CASE STUDY

ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND POLITICAL LEVERAGE

One interviewee, a former government adviser, describes how one London council had listed and linked to the ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (IHRC) in a directory of resources for communities on its website, and that the same council was resistant when concerns were raised about the organisation, despite those concerns being long-standing and widely reported.⁷⁸ The 2023 Prevent Review, for example, described IHRC as “an Islamist group ideologically aligned with the Iranian regime, that has a history of extremist links and terrorist sympathies”.⁷⁹ In a written response to this report, Massoud SHADJAREH, on behalf of the IHRC, rejected this characterisation as defamatory and baseless.⁸⁰

This type of engagement and the subsequent legitimacy accrued appears to be an ongoing priority for IHRC, which operates as three entities from the same North West London address: ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (known as IHRC LTD);⁸¹ IHRC LEGAL LTD (IHRC LEGAL);⁸² and ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST (IHRC TRUST), a registered charity.⁸³ IHRC LTD, for example, has held Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 2007,⁸⁴ while

⁷⁷ Extensive examples of police and local government engagement with civil society organisations, despite documented extremism concerns, can be found in the following report by David Toube, Usama Hasan, Muna Khan, ‘Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations’, Commission for Countering Extremism (September 2019), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d9b00e0ed915d359ce7ed1a/mainstreaming-islamism-islamist-institutions-and-civil-society-organisations.pdf>.

⁷⁸ Anonymous interview with former government adviser, 3 November 2025.

⁷⁹ ‘Independent Review of Prevent (accessible)’, Home Office (Last updated 20 February 2024) (“the Shawcross Review”), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-prevents-report-and-government-response/independent-review-of-prevent-accessible#fnref:329>, para 6.304.

⁸⁰ IHRC LTD said the Shawcross Review was flawed and politically motivated, and stated that, in its 28-year history, it has had no links with any state. IHRC LTD also noted that it holds Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council, and cited Amnesty International’s criticism of the Shawcross Review, including Amnesty’s statement that it is “riddled with biased thinking, errors and plain anti-Muslim prejudice”.

⁸¹ The IHRC LTD website states: “IHRC Trust was set up to support the charitable works of The Islamic Human Rights Commission Limited (IHRC Ltd).” ‘Donate’, Islamic Human Rights Commission, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/donate/>; Note that the company ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION is described as a “Private Limited Company by guarantee without share capital use of ‘Limited’ exemption”: ‘ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION overview’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/04716690>.

⁸² ‘IHRC LEGAL LTD overview’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/14654970>.

⁸³ ‘ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST - 1106120, Contact information’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/y854h8pf>.

⁸⁴ ‘IHRC at UN’, Islamic Human Rights Commission, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/ihr-at-un/>.

Undue Influence

IHRC LEGAL is authorised to provide immigration advice through its registration with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner and as a law firm regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.⁸⁵ In its written response to this report, IHRC LTD said that the three entities operating from the same address are independent, with separate management and operations, and that sharing an address is not evidence of foreign state influence. IHRC LEGAL added that it is a bona fide law firm, has never been instructed by or received funding from any government, and is solely controlled by its management team.

In recent years, the Charity Commission has investigated the appropriateness of IHRC TRUST financial support for IHRC LTD.⁸⁶ IHRC TRUST has provided funds to IHRC LTD, for example making monetary grants of over £900,000 in the two years to June 2025 for “various charitable projects undertaken on behalf of the Charity”.⁸⁷ In October 2025, the Charity Commission announced it was escalating its engagement with the IHRC TRUST to a statutory inquiry, including over its funding of a non-charitable company. The Charity Commission cited concerns about IHRC TRUST’s “involvement in publications made and events organised by a non-charitable company”, including “an event where it is alleged that inflammatory statements were made”.⁸⁸ The inquiry will also consider whether it is sufficiently clear to the public that the two organisations are distinct entities, with the Charity Commission acknowledging “the impact the unclear relationship between the charity and non-charitable company may have on public trust”.⁸⁹ In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that a statutory inquiry in relation to IHRC TRUST remains ongoing.⁹⁰ In its written response to this report, IHRC LTD said the entities are legally distinct with separate management, and described suggestions of improper linkage as confused and factually inaccurate.

IHRC LTD has published an article in its online quarterly journal that calls for the government to adopt a definition of Islamophobia and to scrap the “racist” counter-terrorism initiative Prevent.⁹¹ More

⁸⁵ House of Lords, ‘Written Question HL8821: Islamic Human Rights Commission’, Questions for Answer, 27 June 2023, <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-27/hl8821>; Solicitors Regulation Authority, *Organisation details: IHRC Legal Ltd*, SRA register, <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=8003174>.

⁸⁶ One investigation was opened in 2017, see Edward Malnick, ‘Charity Commission called spineless after failing to conclude investigation into march supporting Hizbollah’, *The Telegraph*, 3 March 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/03/charity-commission-called-spineless-failing-conclude-investigation/>, while IHRC TRUST was subsequently issued with an official warning in 2023 over its financial relationship with IHRC LTD. See: ‘Islamic Human Rights Commission: Question for Department for Culture, Media and Sport, UIN HL8822, tabled on 27 June 2023’, UK Parliament (Answered on 4 July 2023), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-27/HL8822/>.

⁸⁷ IHRC TRUST financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 show that the charity “made monetary grants totalling £481,431 to IHRC LTD for various charitable projects undertaken on behalf of the Charity”, up from £452,721 in the year ending June 2024. Projects included: immigration and employment discrimination advice; Genocide Memorial Day; hate crimes research; educational material for Muslim prisoners in the UK; and humanitarian support in Muslim-majority countries. See Accounts and TAR for 30 June 2025, p. 2 & 11: ‘ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST - 1106120, Accounts and annual returns’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/2htdvwms>.

⁸⁸ ‘Charity investigated over funding of non-charitable company’, Charity Commission for England and Wales (28 October 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/charity-investigated-over-funding-of-non-charitable-company>.

⁸⁹ ‘Charity investigated over funding of non-charitable company’, Charity Commission for England and Wales (28 October 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/charity-investigated-over-funding-of-non-charitable-company>.

⁹⁰ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

⁹¹ ‘The scourge of Islamophobia’, *The Long View* (Islamic Human Rights Commission), 12 February 2020,

Undue Influence

generally, anti-Islamophobia activism unites Sunni and Shia Islamists, as it provides not only a foil against scrutiny of Islamist activity and ideology,⁹² but also a platform for engagement with public bodies whose well-meaning desire to combat discrimination can be exploited.⁹³ In its written response to this report, IHRC LTD said it has long advocated for a definition of Islamophobia and the abolition of Prevent, describing these as mainstream human rights positions and “not novel, covert, or inherently connected to any foreign state”.

On the broader question of Iran using charities to gain further access to influential people and institutions, Lord Carlile asserts that this type of activity constitutes a form of espionage in its own right:

“Yes, one form of espionage. Finding out for example, what the contacts are of MPs, which All Party Parliamentary Groups they belong to, which other organisations they’re involved in. Looks pretty harmless. These are small pieces in a complicated jigsaw.”⁹⁴

Concerns around charities and their links to hostile state and non-state actors can be downplayed as isolated behaviour or personal links of individual trustees or officials. However, as this report will demonstrate, there is evidence that the organisations in the Iranian-aligned charities network have been established for explicit ideological ends and espionage. Thus, attempting to induce better behaviour by regulatory and governance reform will likely prove insufficient.

Several organisations rejected the suggestion that their activities could constitute a form of espionage, describing such allegations as unfounded and unsupported by evidence.⁹⁵

Charities’ Links to Universities

In evidence of something more classically resembling espionage, it was reported in 2024 that academic programmes in British universities were collaborating on potentially sensitive drone technology with SHARIF UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY in Tehran, an institution under UK and EU

<https://www.ihrc.org.uk/the-scourge-of-islamophobia/>.

⁹² French academic Bernard Rougier argues that the promotion of the concept of Islamophobia has been “of considerable use” to the MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, including to “protect Islamist associations from journalistic or academic investigation”. Bernard Rougier, *Les Territoires Conquis par L’Islamisme*, (Presses universitaires de France, 2021), p. 37.

⁹³ For examples of government engagement in the development of an Islamophobia definition, see: Andrew Gilligan, Paul Stott, ‘The Islamophobia Definition Observatory’, Policy Exchange (25 October 2025) https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-Islamophobia-Definition-Observatory_.pdf, p. 39, 60-61, 68, 80, and 85.

⁹⁴ Interview with Lord Carlile conducted 28 October 2025.

⁹⁵ DAT stated that “any suggestion of espionage or improper influence is wholly unfounded” and that it had never been used, “directly or indirectly, by any foreign state to gain access to influential persons or institutions”.

IHRC LTD denied any links to Iran or to any state, and rejected claims of Iranian alignment or espionage as unevidenced and defamatory.

The AHLULBAYT ISLAMIC MISSION said it is an independent UK organisation and is not directed, controlled or funded by the Iranian state or any foreign government. It also described allegations that it forms part of an Iranian charitable network “engaged in espionage or undue influence” as “speculative, irresponsible, and unsupported by evidence”.

The TUCF and ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION also denied allegations of espionage (both similarly denied any links to Iran and antisemitism).

Undue Influence

financial sanctions for its involvement in the Iranian nuclear programme and which is considered to have close ties to the military.⁹⁶ A 2022 report traced rapid advancements in Iranian drone technology back to research from SHARIF,⁹⁷ while Iranian drones have been deployed by Russian forces in Ukraine.⁹⁸

This section will demonstrate how a number of senior figures in the Iranian-aligned charities network are linked to Iranian academic institutions which are tightly controlled by the regime, such as SHARIF UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY or AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, the latter of which, based in Qom, has been sanctioned by the US Treasury “as a recruitment platform by the IRGC-QF for intelligence collection and operations, including recruitment for the IRGC-QF-led foreign militias fighting on behalf of Bashar Al-Assad’s regime in Syria”. IRGC-QF refers to the QUDS FORCE, responsible for foreign operations.⁹⁹ (AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY is not subject to any UK sanctions¹⁰⁰). It will also show Iranian connections in British academia through entities such as a student association and a higher education institute that are run by these charities. The overall picture corresponds to Lord Carlile’s assessment of a complex “jigsaw” of operations.

For example, Iranian-born Massoud SHADJAREH is a Director of IHRC LTD,¹⁰¹ who has in recent years spoken at SHARIF UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY and at events in Iran organised by the BASIJ RESISTANCE FORCE, the paramilitary arm of the IRGC, and alongside senior BASIJ figures.¹⁰² The BASIJ

⁹⁶ UK sanction of SHARIF UNIVERSITY: ‘Sharif University of Technology’, UK Sanctions List (Last updated 9 April 2025), <https://search-uk-sanctions-list.service.gov.uk/designations/INU0042/Entity>.

EU sanction of SHARIF UNIVERSITY: ‘COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2025/1559 of 25 July 2025 implementing Regulation (EU) No 267/2012 concerning restrictive measures against Iran’, Official Journal of the European Union (July 2025), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202501559, p. 15.

See ‘Sharif University of Technology’, European Commission, <https://data.europa.eu/apps/eusanctionstracker/subjects/7195> and ‘Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1264/2012 of 21 December 2012 implementing Regulation (EU) No 267/2012 concerning restrictive measures against Iran’, Council of the European Union, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1264/data.html>.

⁹⁷ Farzin Nadimi, ‘Iran’s Game of Drones’, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (2 March 2022), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/irans-game-drones>.

⁹⁸ ‘How Iran’s drones supercharged Russia’s 1,000-day fight in Ukraine’, *Iran International*, 19 November 2024, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202411197064>.

⁹⁹ ‘Treasury Sanctions Iran’s Envoy in Yemen and University Facilitating Recruitment for Qods Force’, U.S. Department of the Treasury (8 December 2020), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1205>.

¹⁰⁰ There is no mention of AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (or close variants) in the UK Sanctions List. Furthermore, in a 2022 UK Parliament written answer, the government acknowledged that AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY has been sanctioned by the US for facilitating recruitment for the IRGC’s Quds Force, and that the UK has its own robust sanctions against Iran and the IRGC, but the answer did not say the UK itself has listed AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY separately. See ‘Al-Mustafa International University: Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps: Question for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UIN 149139, tabled on 29 March 2022’, UK Parliament (Answered on 1 April 2022), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-29/149139>.

¹⁰¹ SHADJAREH moved to the UK in 1971 and subsequently became a British citizen. See ‘Press Release – Chair of IHRC denied entry to US’, Islamic Human Rights Commission (7 August 2012), <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/chair-of-islamic-human-rights-commission-denied-entry-to-united-states>; Fiona Parker, ‘Watch: ‘Pro-Hezbollah’ speaker calls for activists to fight back at London rally’, *The Telegraph*, 15 June 2025, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/06/15/pro-hezbollah-speaker-calls-for-activists-fight-london/>; ‘Massoud SHADJAREH personal appointments’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/ZYD4jfHyOV7hLylLval6GhfUqw74/appointments>.

¹⁰² Jane Prinsley, ‘Brains behind HMD boycott is ally of Iran regime’s street thugs’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 January 2025,

Undue Influence

was instrumental in the repression of popular protests in Iran in recent years, particularly on university campuses,¹⁰³ and contributes to the country's military and nuclear research programmes.¹⁰⁴ It is sanctioned in the UK.¹⁰⁵ Addressing media reports in January 2025 of his links to the BASIJ, SHADJAREH acknowledged speaking at events but said that he did not promote or endorse any proscribed organisation or illegal activity and has further said that the individuals were not BASIJ members.¹⁰⁶ In his written response to this report, SHADJAREH rejected claims of links to the BASIJ, stating that individuals previously cited as evidence of such links were not BASIJ members, and denied any links between IHRC and any state.

Other Iranian-aligned charities have established links to both Iranian and British universities, demonstrating the significance of research and academia to the overall strategy.

Registered charity LABAIK YA ZAHRA (LYZ), for example, held its 20th annual conference in partnership with the US-sanctioned AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, as well as with the IMAM

<https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/brains-behind-hmd-boycott-ally-iran-basij-thugs-awwuzzuw>; 'Written evidence submitted by United Against Nuclear Iran (DIS0042)', Disinformation Diplomacy Inquiry: Written Evidence Submission, UK Parliament (28 February 2025), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/138378/pdf>, para 27.

In October 2024, SHADJAREH featured in videos by the INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF THE STUDENT BASIJ discussing the repercussions of the October 7th attacks in Europe and the emergence of protests by European and American students (auto-translated): International Core of the Student Basij, Telegram, 15 October 2024, <https://t.me/icbso/5575>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/Yqzbr>; Auto-translated: International Core of the Student Basij, Telegram, 14 October 2024, <https://t.me/icbso/5562>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/XwnYn>.

In November 2023, the STUDENT BASIJ OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN organised a conference called "Message of Resistance: Resistance Cells: A Narrative of Imam Khomeini's Foresight in the Founding Message of the Student Basij", which it described as a "Special Programme for the Anniversary of the Formation of the Student Basij" featuring SHADJAREH (auto-translated): Student Basij of the University of Tehran, Telegram, Last updated 25 November 2023, https://t.me/basijut_ir/7271, archived at: <https://archive.ph/qVZo0>. For flyer, see Annex D1: Shadjareh at Tehran Basij Flyer; for photos of SHADJAREH from the event, see (auto-translated): Student Basij of the University of Tehran, Telegram, 28 November 2023, https://t.me/basijut_ir/7279, archived at: <https://archive.ph/Ze6rm>. See Annex D2: Shadjareh at University of Tehran Basij Photos.

In June 2023, the International Affairs Core of the STUDENT BASIJ OF FARHANGIAN UNIVERSITY organised a conference called "Khomeini, the Teacher of the Ummah" featuring SHADJAREH (auto-translated): International Core of the Student Basij, Telegram, Last updated 2 June 2023, <https://t.me/icbso/3052>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/V0KCB>. For flyer, see Annex D3: Shadjareh at Farhangian Basij.

2020 interview with SHADJAREH by the BASIJ OF SHARIF UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (auto-translated): 'مسئله اویغور - ویرگول', Sharif University of Technology Student Basij, Virgool.io, 6 September 2020 (date is written in the source metadata), https://virgool.io/@Basij_Sharif/%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A6%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%BA%D9%88%D8%B1-pl4dfkugoqf4.

¹⁰³ Tara Kangarlou, 'The Brutal Militia Trained to Kill for Iran's Islamic Regime', *Time*, 5 December 2022, <https://time.com/6238623/iran-basij-militia-meaning-mahsa-amini/>.

¹⁰⁴ Jane Prinsley, 'Brains behind HMD boycott is ally of Iran regime's street thugs', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 January 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/brains-behind-hmd-boycott-ally-iran-basij-thugs-awwuzzuw>.

¹⁰⁵ The reasons given are: "There are reasonable grounds to suspect that the Basij Resistance Force is an involved person under the Iran (Sanctions) Regulations 2023 as it has been involved in serious human rights violations in Iran, including being responsible for, engaging in and providing support for violations of the right to life and right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly through the violent repression of protests in Iran." 'Basij Resistance Force', UK Sanctions List (Last updated 9 April 2025), <https://search-uk-sanctions-list.service.gov.uk/designations/IRN0123/Entity>.

¹⁰⁶ He said: "Attending these events and sharing a platform with other individuals does not equate to supporting them or endorsing their views, associations or actions." Jane Prinsley, 'Brains behind HMD boycott is ally of Iran regime's street thugs', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 January 2025,

<https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/brains-behind-hmd-boycott-ally-iran-basij-thugs-awwuzzuw>.

Undue Influence

KHOMEINI RELIEF FOUNDATION (IKRF),¹⁰⁷ whose head, Seyyed Morteza BAKHTIARI, was sanctioned by the UK government in December 2020.¹⁰⁸ IKRF and BAKHTIARI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.¹⁰⁹

The founder and head of LYZ is Syeda Umme FARWA, a woman of Pakistani origin who has been described as a “jihadi lioness” in Iran,¹¹⁰ and has been given multiple awards by senior officials, commanders and/or clerics in the Iranian regime.¹¹¹ FARWA denies links between LYZ and the Iranian regime, rejecting allegations as “rooted in paranoia and conspiracy theories”.¹¹² FARWA and LYZ did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication. The Charity Commission confirmed in January 2025 that it had opened a compliance case into LYZ over alleged ties to extremism and terrorism.¹¹³ In February 2026, the Charity Commission confirmed that a regulatory compliance case in relation to LYZ remains ongoing.¹¹⁴

Another charity, the IRSHAD TRUST, owns and trades under the name of the ISLAMIC COLLEGE (IC), a West London higher education institution specialising in Islamic Studies, alongside a publishing house and the AL-HIKMA SEMINARY,¹¹⁵ previously known as HAWZA ILMIYYA or HAWZA ILMIYYAH OF ENGLAND and as HAWZA IMAM AL-HUSAYN.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁷ Charlie Parker, ‘The ‘jihadi lioness’ hailed in Iran — who runs a British charity’, *The Times*, 15 January 2015, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/crime/article/the-jihadi-lioness-hailed-in-iran-who-runs-a-british-charity-9pjbv3bc2>.

¹⁰⁸ According to the FCDO, BAKHTIARI was sanctioned for the following reasons: “During his time as Minister of Justice, prison conditions within Iran fell well below accepted international standards, and there was widespread mistreatment of prisoners. In addition, he played a key role in threatening and harassing the Iranian diaspora by announcing the establishment of a special court to deal specifically with Iranians who live outside the country. He also oversaw a sharp increase in the number of executions in Iran, including secret executions not announced by the government, and executions for drug-related offences.” Sanction (See both the “Designation” and “Names” sections): ‘Bakhtiari Seyyed Morteza’, UK Sanctions List (Last updated 9 April 2025), <https://search-uk-sanctions-list.service.gov.uk/designations/IRN0076/Individual>.

¹⁰⁹ Two attempts were made to contact IKRF and BAKHTIARI for comment prior to publication; however, no response was received, possibly due to widespread internet outages in Iran at the time.

¹¹⁰ Charlie Parker, ‘The ‘jihadi lioness’ hailed in Iran — who runs a British charity’, *The Times*, 15 January 2015, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/crime/article/the-jihadi-lioness-hailed-in-iran-who-runs-a-british-charity-9pjbv3bc2>.

¹¹¹ Auto-translated: Mohammad Amin, ‘سومین دوره «جایزه جهانی گوهرشاد» با معرفی برگزیدگان به کار خود پایان داد’, *Khorasan Razavi News*, <http://khorasanrazavi.khorasannews.com/newspaper/BlockPrint/198728>.

¹¹² Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smb3c9>.

¹¹³ Charlie Parker, ‘Charity’s ties investigated over speaking slots for Iranian regime’, *The Times*, 16 January 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/charity-investigated-over-speaking-slots-for-iranian-regime-dxv3xqh57>.

¹¹⁴ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

¹¹⁵ Structure: ‘Timeline’, The Islamic College, <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/about-us/history/>; Ownership: ‘Student Protection Plan’, The Islamic College (September 2025), <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Students-Protection-Plan-1.pdf>, p. 3, para 1.01.

Trading Name: ‘Specific Course Designation: report of the monitoring visit of Irshad Trust t/a The Islamic College’, QAA (November 2018), https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/irshad-trust-ta-the-islamic-college-scd-am-18.pdf?sfvrsn=b970c081_4, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ ‘Al-Hikma Seminary’, The Islamic College, <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/study-with-us/hawza-ilmiyya/>;

Note that the Hawza Imam al-Husayn was described as having been established in 1997 and the ‘2014’ entry states: “The College’s Hawza adopted a new name, Hawza Ilmiyyah of England, to reflect its inclusive perspective”: ‘Timeline’, The Islamic College,

Undue Influence

In 2022 and 2023, media reports raised concerns over the IC's alleged affiliation with AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, which the Trust denied at the time.¹¹⁷ However, AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY had previously stated on its own website that the IC was an affiliate,¹¹⁸ prior to the university being sanctioned by the United States in 2020.¹¹⁹ In its written response to this report, the IRSHAD TRUST said it did not maintain institutional, academic, governance or any other links with AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY and stated that similar allegations had been addressed through the IPSO complaints process.¹²⁰

One IC founder, Dr Saied Reza AMELI, has worked at the UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN since 2001.¹²¹ AMELI is also a co-founder of the IHRC (serving as a director between 2006 and 2022¹²²) and a former Secretary of the SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION in Tehran (2019-2023; he remains a member).¹²³ (The UK government sanctioned the SUPREME COUNCIL in 2023 for its role in

<https://islamic-college.ac.uk/about-us/history/>.

¹¹⁷ David Rose, 'Minutes from a shul, the college that is Iran's hidden UK 'foothold'', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 1 December 2022, <https://www.thejc.com/news/minutes-from-a-shul-the-college-that-is-irans-hidden-uk-foothold-etljhq5d>.

Camilla Turner, 'University watchdog 'engaged' in talks with London college over Iran links', *The Telegraph*, 4 March 2023, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/03/04/university-watchdog-engaged-talks-london-college-links-iranian/>. Daniel Ben-David, 'Middlesex Uni terminates partnership with Islamic college', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 5 March 2023, <https://www.thejc.com/news/middlesex-uni-terminates-partnership-with-islamic-college-up3j7t3a>.

¹¹⁸ 'English - almustafa international university', Al-Mustafa International University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200222040109/http://en.miu.ac.ir/index.aspx>.

¹¹⁹ 'Treasury Sanctions Iran's Envoy in Yemen and University Facilitating Recruitment for Qods Force', U.S. Department of the Treasury (8 December 2020), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1205>. See also 'Resolution Statement – 17343-23 The Islamic College v The Jewish Chronicle, Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) (14 September 2023), <https://www.ipso.co.uk/rulings/17343-23/>, para 11.

¹²⁰ A complaint by the IC to IPSO concerning an article alleging links with AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY was resolved through mediation. During the process, references to alleged staff affiliations with AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, student visits to Iran, and claims that students were directed to AL-MUSTAFA were removed from the online article. However, the article continued to state that pro-Iranian websites had claimed the college was a British affiliate of AL-MUSTAFA. IPSO did not issue a formal adjudication under the Editors' Code. See 'Resolution Statement – 17343-23 The Islamic College v The Jewish Chronicle', Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) (14 September 2023), <https://www.ipso.co.uk/rulings/17343-23/>, paras. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 19 and 21.

¹²¹ Saied Reza Ameli, LinkedIn, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/saied-reza-ameli-b18a14119/?originalSubdomain=ir>, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/saied-reza-ameli-b18a14119/details/experience/>.

¹²² 'ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION people', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/04716690/officers>.

¹²³ In 2022, IHRC told *The Times* that: "Professor Ameli has been a director of IHRC from its outset", see David Brown, Andrew Norfolk, 'Iranian linked to hijab crackdown is director of British migrant charity', *The Times*, 12 October 2022, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/article/iranian-linked-to-hijab-crackdown-is-director-of-british-migrant-charity-7729fcrkp?t=1769506306714>.

Iranian state media reported that AMELI was appointed secretary of the SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION in January 2019 for a four-year tenure: 'President appoints new secretary of Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution of Iran', Islamic Republic News Agency, 3 January 2019, <https://en.irna.ir/news/83157077/President-appoints-new-secretary-of-Supreme-Council-of-the-Cultural>.

In January 2023, the website of Iran's president reported that AMELI was replaced as secretary: 'Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution's mission is cultural guidance/ Leader has always expected the Council to lead a deep cultural transformation', Official Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (January 2023), <https://president.ir/en/141994>. Iranian state media have further described AMELI as a member of the SUPREME COUNCIL in February 2025: 'Iran holds 5% share of nanotech science articles worldwide', Islamic Republic News Agency, 11 February 2025, <https://en.irna.ir/news/85747789/Iran-holds-5-share-of-nanotech-science-articles-worldwide>.

Undue Influence

enforcing social and cultural norms that oppress Iranian citizens).¹²⁴ In its written response to this report, the IRSHAD TRUST said that the ISLAMIC COLLEGE should not be assessed on the basis of historical associations with former figures whose involvement pre-dates the current leadership. AMELI did not respond to requests for comment prior to publication.

A partnership between Middlesex University and the IC ended in 2023,¹²⁵ amid media reports that both the Office for Students and the Charity Commission were engaging with the IC over allegations of links to “an institution in Iran”.¹²⁶ In its written response to this report, the IRSHAD TRUST stated that the termination of the partnership was due to financial reasons.¹²⁷ In February 2026, the Charity Commission confirmed that a regulatory compliance case in relation to the IRSHAD TRUST remains ongoing.¹²⁸

Other initiatives, such as the ISLAMIC STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF BRITAIN (ISAB; a branch of the UNION OF ISLAMIC STUDENTS ASSOCIATIONS IN EUROPE,¹²⁹ which has in turn stated that it is committed to the ideals of KHOMEINI “and the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution”),¹³⁰ were reported by the BBC as having promoted online talks by former and active IRGC commanders to UK students between 2020 and 2021. In one of the videos, an IRGC commander said universities had become “the battlefield” and urged the students listening to become “soft-war officers”, while in the other, a former IRGC commander describes an apocalyptic war in which British students could “bring an end to the life of the oppressors and occupiers, Zionists and Jews across the world”. At the time of reporting, ISAB told the BBC that it was an independent group led by student volunteers with no affiliations to

¹²⁴ The reasons given are: “The Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution is an “involved person” under the Iran (Sanctions) Regulations 2023 because it is or has been involved in the commission of a serious human rights violation or abuse in Iran, including being responsible for, engaging in, providing support for and promoting violations of the right to liberty and security and the right to freedom of expression through determining and enforcing mandatory dress codes for women, including the use of unreasonable force against individuals they deem to be non-compliant.” ‘Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution’, UK Sanctions List (Last updated 9 April 2025), <https://search-uk-sanctions-list.service.gov.uk/designations/IRN0162/Entity>.

¹²⁵ ‘Timeline’, The Islamic College, <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/about-us/history/>.

¹²⁶ Camilla Turner, ‘University watchdog ‘engaged’ in talks with London college over Iran links’, *The Telegraph*, 4 March 2023, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/03/04/university-watchdog-engaged-talks-london-college-links-iranian/>.

¹²⁷ The reason for the termination is clearly expressed in the joint (The University and The College) statement to the external enquiries. The statement is as follows: “Middlesex University is in the process of reviewing all its academic partnerships to ensure financial sustainability, quality standards and alignment with the University strategy. The University recently reviewed its partnership with the Islamic College in London. While the review determined that there were no quality concerns, given the challenges of the current financial climate the University has concluded that the partnership is no longer sustainable for Middlesex University. Thus, it was jointly agreed with The Islamic College to terminate the partnership on 31 December 2023.”

¹²⁸ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

¹²⁹ The UNION OF ISLAMIC STUDENTS ASSOCIATIONS OF EUROPE is an umbrella body that includes the ISLAMIC STUDENTS ASSOCIATIONS OF BRITAIN: Ed Thomas, ‘UK officials probe Iran generals’ antisemitic talks to students’, BBC News, 22 January 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-68016330>.

ISAB is also known as UISAEUK: UISAEUK/Islamic Students Associations of Britain, Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/uisaeuk/>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/3EZgo>.

¹³⁰ Note the URL is from uisae.org: ‘Statement by the Union of Islamic Student Associations in Europe on the occasion of Khordad 14th and 15th’, Union of Islamic Student Associations in Europe (June 2023), <https://uisae.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Statement-by-the-Union-of-Islamic-Student-Associations-in-Europe-on-the-occasion-of-Khordad-14th-and-15th.docx>, p. 2.

any government, that the speakers were not IRGC members, that one had been misrepresented, and that ISAB had refused a request for a further event with the other.¹³¹

Separately, ISAB has used the Kanoon Towhid Centre in West London, owned by a third charity, the AL-TAWHEED CHARITABLE TRUST (TUCF), as a meeting place. TUCF responded to a request for comment but did not address the specific allegation regarding ISAB's use of the Kanoon Towhid Centre.

It is clear that a number of individuals in the Iranian-aligned charity network in the UK have links to regime-controlled universities in Iran, campuses which are used for IRGC recruitment or military and drone technology, the latter on which the regime is eager to collaborate with British and Western institutions.

CASE STUDY

ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND AS NETWORK HEADQUARTERS IN THE UK

The ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND (ICEL) is a central node in the Iranian-aligned British charity network. It was founded in 1995 and officially opened in 1998.¹³² Until December 2022, its director and secretary was Seyed Hashem MOOSAVI,¹³³ who is also a trustee of the TUCF.¹³⁴ Appointed a director in June 2019,¹³⁵ MOOSAVI was widely reported as the UK representative of the then Supreme

¹³¹ Ed Thomas, 'Inquiry into 'death to Israel' chants at Islamic centre', BBC News, 14 February 2024 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68288598>.

¹³² 'Islamic Center Of England Run As Iran Regime's UK Office Shut Down', *Iran International*, 25 May 2023, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202305250028>; ICEL was founded in December 1995 under the name EDGERICH LIMITED changing to ISLAMIC CENTRE ENGLAND (LONDON) LIMITED in 1996 and ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND (LONDON) LTD in 2000. 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD overview', Companies House,

<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456>; ICEL website states that it was established in 1998: 'About Us', Islamic Centre of England, <https://ic-el.uk/about-us/>.

¹³³ See the 06 Dec 2022 'Termination of appointment of Seyed Hashem Moosavi as a director on 6 December 2022' and 'Termination of appointment of Seyed Hashem Moosavi as a secretary on 6 December 2022', 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD filing history' Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history?page=1>; See Accounts and TAR for 31 December 2022, p. 6: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED - 1058998, Accounts and annual returns', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1058998/accounts-and-annual-returns? uk gov ccew onereg charitydetails web portlet CharityDetailsPortlet organisationNumber=1058998>.

¹³⁴ 'AL-TAWHEED (TUCF) CHARITABLE TRUST - 1040652, Trustees', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1040652/trustees? uk gov ccew onereg charitydetails web portlet CharityDetailsPortlet organisationNumber=1040652>.

¹³⁵ See the 25 Jun 2019 'Appointment of Mr Seyed Hashem Moosavi as a director on 21 June 2019', 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD filing history' Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history?page=2>.

Undue Influence

Leader,¹³⁶ appointed to ICEL by then Ayatollah KHAMENEI.¹³⁷ In March 2023, at the direction of the Charity Commission,¹³⁸ ICEL removed the requirement from its governing document for one trustee to be an appointee of Iran's Supreme Leader.¹³⁹ Kasra Aarabi told us that this means that, until recently, the director of ICEL was: "actually the most senior Iranian regime official even though he's not a diplomat and he's not on a diplomatic passport".¹⁴⁰ In its written response to this report, ICEL did not dispute that its constitution historically provided for the appointment of a trustee by the Supreme Leader of Iran, but said that this provision reflected a religious custom rather than political control and that the Charity Commission understood the religious context of the provision. Although the correspondence to ICEL was addressed jointly to the trustees and to MOOSAVI personally, no separate response was received from him. The TUCF said that MOOSAVI is not an official of the Iranian government and never has been. In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that a statutory inquiry in relation to ICEL remains ongoing.¹⁴¹

The significance of ICEL to the regime was echoed by Aliasghar Ramezanzpour, Deputy Minister of Culture in the Iranian government between 2000 and 2003, who is now a London-based critic of the regime working for dissident media, Iran International. According to Ramezanzpour: "Islamic Centre [of England] is kind of a headquarters that supervises all the network [of charities in the UK]."¹⁴² Ramezanzpour's assessment is supported by a research paper from the US-based National Union for Democracy in Iran (NUFDI), which labels ICEL as the "head of the figurative octopus" of the regime's

¹³⁶ Media reports identify MOOSAVI directly as the UK representative of the Supreme Leader. See, for example, Marc Horne, 'Iran's 'propagandist-in-chief' billed to speak at Scottish mosque', *The Times*, 20 June 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/scotland/article/irans-propagandist-in-chief-to-speak-at-scottish-mosque-3txbv039n>. MOOSAVI was introduced as the "representative of the Supreme Leader of Iran" at an event at a North London mosque in June 2022, see 43:45: 'The Lady of Heaven (Film)', FaizanelIslam, YouTube, 8 June 2022, https://www.youtube.com/live/x73ox8hZ_HM?si=vpQ0Wk2WTN5IErQC&t=2626. The lobby group Labour Friends of Israel described MOOSAVI as "the supreme leader's official representative in the UK" in a 2023 policy briefing. See 'Britain and the Middle East:

Priorities for the Next Labour Government', Labour Friends of Israel (October 2023), <https://www.lfi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Britain-and-the-Middle-East.pdf>, p. 6 & 31. The 2025 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament report on Iran states of ICEL: "its director is the Supreme Leader's religious representative in the UK (and is personally appointed by the Supreme Leader)". See Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 85, para. 293.

¹³⁷ Richard Spencer, 'Iran leader's office took £100,000 furlough grant from UK taxpayers', *The Times*, 4 November 2021, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/asia/article/iran-leader-s-office-took-100-000-furlough-grant-from-uk-taxpayers-hmrprg0hh>.

¹³⁸ Rob Preston, 'Charity Commission orders governance reform at Islamic Centre of England', *Civil Society*, 16 May 2025, <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/charity-commission-orders-governance-reform-at-islamic-centre-of-england.html>.

¹³⁹ A written special resolution of members of ICEL dated 20 March 2023 removed Article 29 in the then Memorandum and/or Articles of Association (dated 1 March 2006) that stated: "At all times at least one of the trustees shall be a Representative of the Supreme Spiritual Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran." See the 17 Apr 2023 'Resolution of alteration of Articles of Association' (p. 1) and the 01 Mar 2006 'Resolution of Memorandum and/or Articles of Association' (p. 8, para. 29): <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history>; see also Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 85.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, conducted 16 October 2025.

¹⁴¹ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

¹⁴² Interview conducted with Aliasghar Ramezanzpour, 5 November 2025.

Undue Influence

network in the UK.¹⁴³ In its written response to this report, ICEL denied being “the headquarters nor a participant in any alleged network of charities furthering the direction of Iran’s supreme leader”.

Accounts show that ICEL has distributed grants to “sub-branches” in other UK cities, such as Birmingham, Newcastle, Glasgow and Manchester.¹⁴⁴ According to Ramezanzpour, ICEL is used for purposes which resemble traditional espionage and not simply soft-power influence alone: “[The] Ministry of Intelligence actually uses their sites as a kind of site for information gathering about the UK in general.” Ramezanzpour also claims personally to have seen documents inside the Iranian Ministry of Culture which contained budgets for the UK network, including ICEL. He stated that ICEL and the broader network’s activities are supervised by officials between the Ministry of Intelligence, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as senior regime clerics in Qom and IRGC intelligence. He emphasised that these organisations: “do not have autonomy. Its day to day connection and decision... [The ministries] just support, but the decision-making process comes from the Supreme Leader’s office.”¹⁴⁵

The 2025 ISC Iran inquiry, which concluded that it is “likely that the IIS [Iranian Intelligence Services] use state-linked institutions to identify and recruit targets – for example, the Islamic Centre of England (ICE) and the Iranian Embassy” and that “[g]iven the close links with the Iranian state, the ICE may well provide IIS agents with a useful base from which to act”.¹⁴⁶ The ISC recommended: “the Intelligence Community not to underestimate the potential espionage threat they [the Iranian Embassy and ICEL] pose.”¹⁴⁷

In its written response to this report, ICEL denied that it acts as a headquarters for any network linked to Iran’s Supreme Leader, stating that neither the Iranian political system nor any political figure has influence or control over its activities, and that it does not represent any foreign government. It said any engagement with other charities is limited to occasional collaboration or knowledge-sharing for shared religious purposes. ICEL further stated that it believes the publication of what it described as inaccurate and inflammatory claims risks promoting religious hatred and causing harm.

Iran has replicated this hierarchical model in other European countries. In 2024, German authorities closed the Islamic Centre of Hamburg and deported its head Imam, who was, like MOOSAVI, a personal appointee of the Supreme Leader of Iran. Explaining the closure, Germany’s Interior Minister said that the institution was responsible for spreading “an Islamist, totalitarian ideology in Germany ...

¹⁴³ ‘The Islamic Republic’s Influence Network in the United Kingdom’, National Union for Democracy in Iran (NUFDI), 16 June 2025, <https://nufdiran.org/reports/the-islamic-republics-influence-network-in-the-united-kingdom/>, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>.

¹⁴⁵ Interview conducted with Aliasghar Ramezanzpour, 5 November 2025.

¹⁴⁶ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 85, paras. 293-294.

¹⁴⁷ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 86, para. II.

Undue Influence

against human dignity, against women's rights, against an independent judiciary and against our democratic state".¹⁴⁸

Another example is the Islamic Centre of Vienna, which, according to Austria's state-established Documentation Centre on Political Islam, "has been led by clerics who report to the 'Supreme Leader'".¹⁴⁹ Also corresponding to the description of Iranian-linked institutions and intelligence-gathering outlined by Ramezanpour, the Swedish government claimed in 2025 that the Imam Ali Islamic Centre in Stockholm was being used by Iran for espionage, in particular against Iranian diaspora.¹⁵⁰

This chain of command demonstrates that Tehran will 'play the game' in terms of operating embassies, but that it also operates through alternative channels outside of normal diplomatic structures. In the UK, Iran has chosen the charity sector upon which to erect this infrastructure.

¹⁴⁸ 'Cleric linked to Iran's supreme leader deported from Germany', *Iran International*, Last updated 11 September 2024, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202409113821>.

¹⁴⁹ 'DPI report: Revolution export and the Al-Quds Day in Austria', Dokumentationsstelle Politischer Islam, 29 April 2024, <https://www.dokumentationsstelle.at/en/news/detail-news/dpi-report-revolution-export-and-the-al-quds-day>.

¹⁵⁰ 'Swedish government says Stockholm mosque used by Iran for spying', *Reuters*, Last updated 3 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/swedish-government-says-stockholm-mosque-used-by-iran-spying-2025-02-03/>.

PART TWO: EXPORTING 1979 – IDEOLOGY, ANTISEMITISM AND RADICALISATION RISK

Khomeinist Ideology and the End Times

The clerical regime in Tehran ascribes to an extreme, revolutionary and apocalyptic interpretation of Shia Islamist ideology. In short, it believes that exporting its revolutionary worldview, and a confrontation with Israel and Jews, are preconditions for the return of the Messiah and the creation of a global Islamic state.

In traditional Shia interpretations, the 12th Imam, the Mahdi, will one day reappear with 313 warriors in order to bring order and justice to the world through the creation of the worldwide Imamate – the Shia Islamist version of the Sunni Islamists' Caliphate. Khomeinist ideology departs, however, in believing that the creation of the Islamic state by a clergy is a necessary precondition for the return of the 12th Imam, and that it is the responsibility of Muslims to create it – which again echoes the ideology of jihadist groups like ISIS.

This element of Khomeinist ideology helps to explain why the Iranian regime pursues an aggressively expansionist strategy well outside of its borders, which includes the spreading of this ideology among Muslims in the UK. Kasra Aarabi points out that, with ISIS, there was no recognised state behind it with an embassy operating in London.¹⁵¹ Also, despite extremism concerns around charities connected to Sunni Islamism, nor was there an equivalent network of registered charities furthering ISIS ideology in the UK at the height of its Caliphate.

Iran's ideological objectives, therefore, extend well beyond the ways in which other states in the region have sought to influence and create leverage outside of their borders. They entail spreading the Khomeinist worldview in order to bring about the conditions for the apocalyptic return of the Mahdi.

Operating outside of Iran's borders is not standard geopolitics or foreign policy. Rather, it is part of the regime's *raison d'être*, a task for which it has created the IRGC and units like the Quds Force. It also helps to explain why the network of charities in the UK enjoys such extensive links to the IRGC.

Spreading Antisemitism and Hostility to Israel

Inseparable from exporting Khomeinism is the fostering of extreme antisemitism. Khomeinist ideology combines sustained political hostility to the state of Israel with religiously charged language, at times invoking Shia end-times themes – including the return of the Mahdi and the defeat of forces of evil – to portray Israel as aligned with forces opposed to divine justice.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

¹⁵² Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA Center), 'Antisemitism Is Inseparable from Khomeinism', <https://besacenter.org/antisemitism-is-inseparable-from-khomeinism/>; International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT), Itzhakov, M.,

Undue Influence

In addition, Iran views Israel's existence as "a barrier to the return of the hidden Imam", something Kasra Aarabi describes as "even more extreme than the traditional Islamist opposition to Israel".¹⁵³ Khomeinism's transformation of pre-1979 Shia Messianism into a revolutionary antisemitic worldview has been described as "one of the most consequential religious-political shifts of the modern era".¹⁵⁴

One of the most visible manifestations of hostility towards Israel are the annual Quds Day rallies held in London. Originally created by former Ayatollah KHOMEINI, Quds Day is co-organised and sponsored by the IHRC, with other Iranian-aligned British charities also involved. Framed as a worldwide day of solidarity with Palestinians, critics have raised longstanding concerns surrounding antisemitic rhetoric and symbolism at the London rallies, including the display of flags and symbolism connected to groups such as HEZBOLLAH, a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK.¹⁵⁵ In his written response to this report, Massoud SHADJAREH, representing the IHRC, said that these claims are "spurious, disingenuous and outright misrepresentative" and that "there have been no illegal displays of material or any illegality at Al-Quds Day".

IHRC has also produced and sold a range of material on its website which promote regime ideas, such as posters depicting Palestinian resistance (with the words 'From the West Bank to Baltimore' printed across) or the POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE hijacker, Leila KHALED, with a rifle.¹⁵⁶ This activity attempts to mainstream hostility to Israel, with the broader objective of Israel's annihilation as a precursor to the Mahdi's return as the driving – but obscured – ideology behind it. In its written response to this report, IHRC rejected the suggestion that such material promotes Iranian regime ideology, stating that it relates to lawful resistance under international law and does not evidence alignment with any state.

Through Quds Day rallies and deliberately provocative initiatives such as the 'Islamophobe of the Year' awards – previously bestowed on the murdered staff of Charlie Hebdo¹⁵⁷ – IHRC has consistently courted controversy while amplifying polarising narratives. IHRC figures have also appeared

'Ayatollah Khomeini's Approach to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict and Its Longstanding Ramifications', 11 November 2023, https://ict.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Itzhakov_Ayatollah-Khomeinis-approach-to-the-Palestinian-Israeli-conflict-and-its-longstanding-ramifications_2023_11_11-1.pdf; Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), 'Evolution of Iran's Perception of Israel', https://www.inss.org.il/strategic_assessment/evolution-of-irans-perception-of-israel/.

¹⁵³ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

¹⁵⁴ Tim Orr, 'How Khomeini Turned Shi'i Eschatology into a Revolutionary Antisemitic Ideology', *Times of Israel*, 1 October 2025, <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/how-khomeini-turned-shi-ca%BFi-eschatology-into-a-revolutionary-antisemitic-ideology/>.

¹⁵⁵ See, for example, images and video posted to X by user @habibi_uk, including footage of IHRC Chair Masoud SHADJAREH draped in a HEZBOLLAH flag (for screenshot, see Annex D4: Shadjareh Hezbollah Flag), @habibi_uk, X, 6 February 2025, https://x.com/habibi_uk/status/1887532478845329513, archived at: <https://archive.ph/F7Lxz>.

¹⁵⁶ 'Brains behind HMD boycott is ally of Iran regime's street thugs', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 January 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/brains-behind-hmd-boycott-ally-iran-basij-thugs-awvuzzuw>.

¹⁵⁷ Victoria Richards, 'Charlie Hebdo given 'Islamophobe of the Year' award', *The Independent*, 17 March 2015 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/charlie-hebdo-murdered-staff-given-islamophobe-of-the-year-award-10100317.html>.

Undue Influence

repeatedly on Iran's propaganda media arm in the West, Press TV,¹⁵⁸ which spreads anti-Western narratives and conspiracy theories.¹⁵⁹ In its written response to this report, IHRC said that appearing on a media platform does not amount to endorsing it or its editorial line. Nonetheless, the cumulative effect of such engagement can be to lend credibility and reach to regime-aligned messaging.

The network of Iranian-aligned British charities have been key players in the exporting of this revolutionary antisemitic worldview. This is not an interpretation the charities themselves share: in its written response to this report, the DAR ALHEKMA TRUST (DAT) said that they "reject antisemitism in all its forms and has consistently promoted inter-faith understanding and peaceful coexistence".¹⁶⁰ IHRC LTD denied any Iranian alignment or state links, rejected allegations of antisemitism as

¹⁵⁸ For example, co-founder and chair Massoud SHADJAREH, and co-founder, former head of IHRC research and co-editor of the IHRC's journal, *The Long View*, Arzu MERALI. 'A Muslim Bloc Vote: A Dream Worth Chasing? – Part I Transcript', Islamic Human Rights Commission (14 May 2025), <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/a-muslim-bloc-vote-a-dream-worth-chasing-part-i-transcript/>.

SHADJAREH: 'Iran foreign policy principles', Press TV, 24 September 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/09/24/755661/Iran-foreign-policy-principles->; 'Australia's anti-Iran move', Press TV, Last updated 28 August 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/08/27/753888/Australia-anti-Iran-move->; 'Fight against global arrogance', Press TV, Last updated 3 November 2024, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/11/03/736577/Fight-against-global-arrogance>.

MERALI: 'VIDEO: Women of Resistance. Noha Mahmoud Al-Zaneen', Arzu Merali (4 October 2025), <https://www.arzumerali.com/video-women-of-resistance-noha-mahmoud-al-zaneen/>; 'VIDEO: Crackdown on Protests in Austria for Palestine', Arzu Merali (11 March 2024), <https://www.arzumerali.com/video-crackdown-on-protests-in-austria-for-palestine/>; 'VIDEO: Disease could kill more children in Gaza than Israeli bombings', Arzu Merali (19 December 2023), <https://www.arzumerali.com/video-disease-could-kill-more-children-in-gaza-than-israeli-bombings/>.

¹⁵⁹ Press TV reported on an Ipsos poll about the state of democracies in Europe and the US, repeatedly putting the words "democracy" and its variants in scare quotes and using language that is more negative than and unsupported by the poll. For example, writing that voters are losing "faith" in democracy or saying that it is "failing" when the poll instead recorded respondents being "dissatisfied with the way democracy works in their country" and "worried about the state of democracy in the next five years", while still finding that clear majorities say democracy is essential and worth preserving, with only a very small minority believing it is not worth keeping. See 'Western voters lose faith in their own 'democracies,' new international poll shows', Press TV, Last updated 16 November 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/11/16/758900/West-democracy-poll-ipsos>. Ipsos Poll: 'The State of Democracy 2025', Ipsos (14 November 2025), <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/the-state-of-democracy-2025>

Press TV editorials and other articles have repeatedly characterised the US as an imperial power whose "hegemony" is coming to an end. See: Nahid Poureisa, 'Iran remains the strongest, most consistent force challenging US hegemony', Press TV, Last updated 15 March 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/03/15/744479/iran-remains-strongest-consistent-force-challenging-us-hegemony>; S.L. Kanthan, 'End of the American empire and lessons for India', Press TV, Last updated 26 February 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/02/26/743516/end-of-american-empire-lessons-for-india>; 'All US policies in West Asia failing, its hegemony ending', Press TV, Last updated 3 January 2023, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2023/01/02/695589/All-US-policies-West-Asia-failing-hegemony-ending-Author>.

Press TV has repeated a narrative that the EU financially supports Ukraine while a significant amount of its own citizens are suffering in poverty. In an article about a €90 billion loan to Ukraine, the opening line is "In Brussels, the de facto capital of the EU, these were the scenes on Friday morning at one of the city's busiest metro stations. Entire families spent Thursday night sleeping here in freezing conditions." See '€90 billion interest-free EU financial package for Ukraine', Press TV, 20 December 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/88arkisd>; 'EU accused of building 'war economy' amid deepening poverty', Press TV, 25 October 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/10/25/757545/Expanding-EU-war-economy-amid-deepening-poverty>; 'Record poverty amid record military spending in EU', Press TV, 26 October 2024, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/10/26/735992/Poverty-rife-in-EU-amid-record-military-spending->.

Press TV has also spread the conspiracy theory that Israeli authorities deliberately allowed the 7 October 2023 attacks to happen to justify invading Gaza. 'Iran's top general warns of false-flag Israeli attacks on Jews to fuel anti-Semitism', Press TV, 21 December 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/12/21/761035/Iran-Israel-Jews-anti-Semitism>.

Press TV reported uncritically on Iranian Major General Abdolrahim MOUSAVI, asserting that Israel is staging false-flag operations against Jewish communities abroad to stoke fears of antisemitism and portray Israel as a victim, among other alleged aims. 'Iran's top general warns of false-flag Israeli attacks on Jews to fuel anti-Semitism', Press TV, 21 December 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/12/21/761035/Iran-Israel-Jews-anti-Semitism>.

¹⁶⁰ An example cited by DAT was a lecture they hosted for Dr Saeed Shehabi which "emphasised that Muslims in the UK should prioritise strong community ethics, law-abiding conduct, and positive civic engagement" while "fostering [...] respect for other faiths".

unevidenced, and said that such claims “read like a pro-Israel propagandists instruction manual or even wish list”. Similarly, the ISLAMIC COLLEGE (AKA IRSHAD TRUST) said it “categorically opposes antisemitism” and cited its “warm and well-documented relations with the Chief Rabbi” and hosting of “renowned Jewish academics” among its interfaith advocacy. The ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION said any allegations of antisemitism were “entirely false...baseless, damaging, and irresponsible”, highlighting its commitment to “principles of equality, dignity, and peaceful civic engagement”. Another UK-based Shia organisation, the AHLULBAYT ISLAMIC MISSION, denied promoting antisemitism or advancing an Iranian ideological worldview, stating that criticism of Israeli state policies should not be conflated with hostility towards Jewish people.

Indoctrinating Children and Young People

Other Iranian-aligned charities have undertaken activities that spread the ideology of the 1979 revolution and may risk radicalising younger generations.

Much of this activity came into focus following the killing of IRGC commander Qasem SOLEIMANI, as the US operation was greeted with an outpouring of commemorations from Iranian-linked mosques and other charities, including sermons where children were encouraged to celebrate the IRGC commander’s martyrdom.¹⁶¹ (The concept of martyrdom occupies a central place in Khomeinist ideology and in the mobilisation of BASIJ volunteer forces during the Iran-Iraq War.¹⁶²)

For example, a photograph in the *Daily Mail* shows young boys in attendance at one of the events ICEL held to eulogise SOLEIMANI.¹⁶³ The following year, ICEL co-organised a competition via Facebook calling for 30-second video submissions from children aged 12 and under in response to the question “What does Imam Khomeini mean to you?” ICEL said that the messages would be broadcast at an event held on its premises on 3 June 2021 on the anniversary of KHOMEINI’s death.¹⁶⁴ ICEL did not address these specific examples in its written response to this report, but said it provides religious services based on the edicts of recognised Shia religious authorities, including former Ayatollah KHAMENEI, but that this should not be interpreted as affiliation or as representing his political views.

¹⁶¹ David Rose, ‘Schoolchildren at British mosques given lessons in praise of Iranian terror ‘martyr’’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 12 January 2023, <https://www.thejc.com/news/schoolchildren-at-british-mosques-given-lessons-in-praise-of-iranian-terror-martyr-r9lqf26f>.

¹⁶² Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), The martyr’s logic: why provoking Iran risks a global spiral of violence, 19 June 2025, <https://aoav.org.uk/2025/the-martyrs-logic-why-provoking-iran-risks-a-global-spiral-of-violence/>.

¹⁶³ Luke Andrews, ‘British Islamic charity is investigated after praising assassinated Iranian general Qassem Soleimani as a martyr’, *Daily Mail*, Last updated 6 January 2020, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7859123/British-Islamic-charity-investigated-praising-assassinated-general.html>.

¹⁶⁴ The competition was held in conjunction with the Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission (AIM). Islamic Centre of England, Facebook, 27 May 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/IslamicCentreEngland/posts/pfbid02Zfw2ShFFW7AhKUsp6iLShwxFHMGNdgwMm8hBs9cVagucxwyys7rSqJXXCC9Q4uUSJ>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/CDQIJ>.

The day after the scheduled event, ICEL posted a link to a YouTube video titled ‘Children’s views on Imam Khomeini’. The video has since been removed. Islamic Centre of England, Facebook, 4 June 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/IslamicCentreEngland/posts/pfbid0wwtTd1P3sKn7v3jfYDW5fp5XRLBGPM8Kp3DBhD4p8MRr1NUuZRthfD1JkskGpWiel>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/wip/qYdjq>. The original YouTube link is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oD_3UICaPOE.

Undue Influence

In June 2022, ICEL was one of the locations used for the filming of an English-language performance of the song “Hello Commander”, alongside the nearby School of the Islamic Republic of Iran (also known as IRIS School).¹⁶⁵ The song is addressed to the Mahdi and expresses longing for his return. According to the Iran Press News Agency, its original version was first televised on Iranian national television after KHAMENEI delivered a New Year’s speech, has since been performed in schools and on national public occasions as a support for the Islamic Republic, and includes a part in which children promise Imam Mahdi that they will tread on the path of SOLEIMANI.¹⁶⁶ In the English version filmed at ICEL and IRIS, video footage shows saluting children while lyrics such as “We wait for you under the flag of our leaders”, “Do not see me as too young for I will rise and remain standing tall” and “Do not see me as too young, From the 313, you’ll see I’ll answer the call” are sung.¹⁶⁷ The “313” is a Shia eschatological reference to the fighters which will return with the Mahdi.¹⁶⁸ As in the original version, the “leaders” in “We wait for you under the flag of our leaders” likely refers to Iran’s state leadership, invoking the state’s interpretation of Mahdist “waiting” as preparation for the Mahdi’s return through the Islamic Republic.¹⁶⁹ The Iran Press News Agency additionally presents the song as promoting the ideals and ambitions of the Islamic Republic to the next generation.¹⁷⁰ IRIS did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication. ICEL did not comment on the “Hello Commander” filming, but said it is independent, does not condone violence or hatred, and promotes peace and interfaith tolerance.

A similar example of attempted influence of children can be found at IDARA E JAAFERIYA (IEJ), a registered charity in South London which runs a mosque, community centre and supplementary school. The IEJ has supported the Quds Day rallies, which it has previously described as “a peaceful

¹⁶⁵ ‘Salam My Mawla | Nouredine AlKathemy’, Nouredine Alkathemy, YouTube, 24 June 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viDdqumyNGY>.

Compare the video locations with ICEL interior and the playground markings at the School of the Islamic Republic of Iran. For ICEL, see ‘Ghadir Khumm Celebration at the Islamic Centre of England – 2025’, ICEL blog, 15 June 2025, <https://ic-el.uk/blog/2025/06/15/ghadir-khumm-celebration-at-the-islamic-centre-of-england-2025/>. For the school, see Google Earth images here: <https://tinyurl.com/5fruewux>.

¹⁶⁶ ‘English version of song ‘Hello Commander’ performed in London’, Iran Press Agency, Last updated 25 June 2022, <https://iranpress.com/content/60332/english-version-song-hello-commander-performed-london>.

¹⁶⁷ “We wait for you under the flag of our leaders” (1:00-1:08); “Do not see me as too young for I will rise and remain standing tall” and “Do not see me as too young, From the 313, you’ll see I’ll answer the call” and similar messages, with children saluting (2:57-3:25). ‘Salam My Mawla | Nouredine AlKathemy’, Nouredine Alkathemy, YouTube, 24 June 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viDdqumyNGY>.

¹⁶⁸ Saeid Golkar, Kasra Aarabi, ‘Iran’s Revolutionary Guard and the Rising Cult of Mahdism: Missiles and Militias for the Apocalypse’, Middle East Institute (3 May 2022), <https://mei.edu/publication/irans-revolutionary-guard-and-rising-cult-mahdism-missiles-and-militias-apocalypse/>.

¹⁶⁹ For example, in a 2008 speech, then Supreme Leader KHAMENEI directly links the formation of the Iranian state with preparation for and “waiting” for the Mahdi’s return: “What does waiting for the savior mean? It means waiting for the strong, powerful and divine hand of Imam Mahdi to put an end to the domination of the oppressive powers with the help of humans, to bring justice to the world, to raise the flag of monotheism, and to lead humans to worshipping God. We should get prepared for this. The formation of the Islamic Republic prepared the ground for this great and historic movement. Everything that is done to achieve justice in the world takes us one step forward towards reaching this lofty goal. This is the meaning of waiting for Imam Mahdi.” ‘Supreme Leader’s Speech on the Occasion of Imam Mahdi’s Birth Anniversary’, The Official Website of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei (17 August 2008), <https://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=100867>.

¹⁷⁰ ‘English version of song ‘Hello Commander’ performed in London’, Iran Press Agency, 25 June 2022, <https://iranpress.com/content/60332/english-version-song-hello-commander-performed-london>.

Undue Influence

and lawful expression of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people”.¹⁷¹ At least as late as January 2025, the school featured images of then Ayatollah KHAMENEI on its walls.¹⁷² In its written response to this report, IEJ said that placing images of KHAMENEI on its walls is a religious matter and does not represent political allegiance to a foreign state.¹⁷³ One teacher at the school posted an image on social media of a senior HEZBOLLAH commander following his death at Israeli hands in September 2024, describing him as a “martyr” and, the day after the 7 October 2023 terrorist attacks in Israel, posted: “We will make our children soldiers of Imam (Aaj)”.¹⁷⁴ In Shia theology, the 12th Imam Mahdi (Aaj) is expected to appear during a period of widespread oppression, defeat tyrannical evil forces and establish global justice.¹⁷⁵ As outlined above, KHOMEINI, differing from previous clerics who passively waited for the Mahdi’s return, argued that an Islamic government must first be established to prepare for his return, an interpretation the Iranian state and IRGC have applied to actions such as combating the Islamic State and eradicating Israel.¹⁷⁶ In its written response to this report, IEJ said that the comments and social media posts by its trustees, volunteers and others do not represent IEJ’s official position.

In December 2025, IEJ was subject to a Charity Commission Official Warning on the grounds that, among other governance issues, in January 2020, “a volunteer at the Charity gave a Madrassa lesson to children appearing to memorialise Major General Soleimani”, who had been killed in a US airstrike the day before. The Charity Commission found that “the trustees subsequently failed to respond adequately to the lesson once they became aware of it”.¹⁷⁷ In February 2026, a Charity Commission

¹⁷¹ IEJ described the Quds Day rallies in a response to an investigation by the *Jewish Chronicle* published in January 2025. See Jane Prinsley, ‘Pro-Hezbollah teacher in London vows to make children holy warriors’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 16 January 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/pro-hezbollah-teacher-in-london-vows-to-make-children-holy-warriors-fd13j3e0>. In its written response in January 2026, IEJ said: “These are peaceful, lawful demonstrations of solidarity with the Palestinian people, attended by people of many faiths including Jews, Christians, and Muslims. In 2017, then-Home Secretary Amber Rudd refused requests to ban Quds Day marches, affirming that people ‘should be allowed to peacefully protest and demonstrate their views’. Support for Palestinian rights is consistent with positions held by human rights organisations globally and significant portions of British civil society.”

¹⁷² Jane Prinsley, ‘Pro-Hezbollah teacher in London vows to make children holy warriors’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 16 January 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/pro-hezbollah-teacher-in-london-vows-to-make-children-holy-warriors-fd13j3e0>.

¹⁷³ “Your characterisation of images of Ayatollah Khamenei as evidence of promoting “the ideals and ambitions of the Islamic Republic of Iran” demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of Shia Islam. Ayatollah Khamenei is a marja al-taqlid (source of religious emulation) for millions of Shia Muslims worldwide. A marja is the highest level of religious authority in Twelver Shia Islam, qualified to issue religious rulings to their followers. Shia Muslims are religiously obligated to follow a qualified marja on matters of religious practice.

There are approximately 50 living maraji worldwide. Alongside Ayatollah Sistani of Najaf, Ayatollah Khamenei is among the most widely followed. Images of one’s marja in a religious or educational setting are no different from images of religious scholars or leaders in any faith tradition—they represent religious authority, not political allegiance to a foreign state. To conflate religious scholarship with state ideology is to misunderstand the very nature of Shia religious practice.”

¹⁷⁴ Jane Prinsley, ‘Pro-Hezbollah teacher in London vows to make children holy warriors’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 16 January 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/pro-hezbollah-teacher-in-london-vows-to-make-children-holy-warriors-fd13j3e0>.

¹⁷⁵ ‘6.11 – The 12th Imam [Fourteenth Ma’soom] – Imam Al-Mahdi (‘Aj) | Shi’a Islam: Belief System, Leadership And History’, Al-Islam.org, <https://al-islam.org/shia-islam-belief-system-leadership-and-history/611-12th-imam-fourteenth-masoom-imam-al-mahdi-aj>.

¹⁷⁶ Saeid Golkar, Kasra Aarabi, ‘Iran’s Revolutionary Guard and the Rising Cult of Mahdism: Missiles and Militias for the Apocalypse’, Middle East Institute (3 May 2022), <https://mei.edu/publication/irans-revolutionary-guard-and-rising-cult-mahdism-missiles-and-militias-apocalypse/>.

¹⁷⁷ ‘OFFICIAL WARNING OF THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES to IDARA-E-JAAFERIYA (260968) (the “Charity”) dated the 15 December 2025’, Charity Commission of England and Wales (15 December 2025), <https://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/SCHEMES/137354.PDF>.

Undue Influence

spokesperson said that an Official Warning had been issued in December 2025 and that the charity's compliance with the actions set out in the Official Warning would be assessed in March 2026, so the case remains ongoing.¹⁷⁸ In its written response to this report, IEJ said it has "engaged constructively with the Commission and are addressing the governance matters raised". Furthermore, the charity rejects allegations that elements within the network of Iranian-aligned British charities demonstrate extensive and ongoing links to the IRGC, the body that SOLEIMANI served within. In its written statement, IEJ said it has no "organisational, financial, or operational links" to the IRGC or to any other "foreign government, military, or intelligence organisation".

In August 2025, *The Telegraph* reported that the AHLULBAYT ISLAMIC MISSION (AIM) had organised a gender-segregated summer camp for children aged 9-14 years old called *Camp Wilayah*. The summer camp was cancelled after media and political scrutiny, which AIM described as "Zionist". Photos promoting the camp posted online showed one AIM-associated cleric who had claimed European persecution of Jews in the 20th Century was justified.¹⁷⁹ In a written response to this report, AIM said that the Camp has run for many years without incident and that it had postponed the most recent iteration because of safeguarding and security concerns. While AIM is not a registered charity,¹⁸⁰ it uses the premises of the registered charity MUHAMMADI TRUST OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.¹⁸¹ In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that it had no open case in relation to the MUHAMMADI TRUST.¹⁸² The MUHAMMADI TRUST did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

According to a Lawyers for Israel dossier reported on in *The Telegraph*, AIM also spreads anti-Israeli and antisemitic content on its public social media accounts, including videos such as one titled "Know Thy Enemy", in which Jews are described as "squatters" and "violent", and Muslims who accept Israel as "filth" and "devils". The dossier states that other posts appear to glorify martyrdom – with one AIM post saying that it "honour[s] the martyrs of Palestine & Lebanon who have been killed by the Zionist regime" – and depicts the terrorist attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 as legitimate "resistance".¹⁸³ In

¹⁷⁸ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

¹⁷⁹ Patrick Sawyer, 'Pro-Iranian' children's camp axed amid extremism fears', *The Telegraph*, 13 August 2025, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/08/13/islamic-summer-camp-for-children-that-praised-iran-closes/>

¹⁸⁰ 'Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission: Question for Department for Culture, Media and Sport: UIN 54906, tabled on 30 May 2025', UK Parliament (Answered on 9 June 2025), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-30/54906>.

¹⁸¹ Address (131 WALM LANE, LONDON, NW2 3AU): 'MUHAMMADI TRUST OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND – 265673, Contact information', Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/265673/contact-information?_uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=265673.

MTGBNI address given as AIM's address: Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission, Telegram, 19 January 2023, <https://t.me/aimislam/1596>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/UcTHG>.

AIM event at MUHAMMADI TRUST: Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission, Telegram, 15 May 2024, <https://t.me/aimislam/1598>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/d8Vm3>.

¹⁸² Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

¹⁸³ 'Calls for summer camp which risks radicalising children to be cancelled', UK Lawyers for Israel (12 July 2025), <https://www.uklfi.com/calls-for-extremist-childrens-summer-camp-to-be-cancelled>.

its written response to this report, AIM said the allegations were based on mischaracterisation, omission of context, and inference, stating that it distinguishes between Judaism and Jewish people, and political criticism of Israel. It denied depicting Jews as inherently violent or dehumanising Jewish people, and rejected allegations of endorsing terrorism or justifying attacks on civilians, including in relation to 7 October 2023. AIM also said references to “martyrs” reflect a theological concept of those killed unjustly, rather than endorsement of violence.

CASE STUDIES

THE ISLAMIC COLLEGE AND LABAIK YA ZAHRA

THE ISLAMIC COLLEGE

The ISLAMIC COLLEGE and the IRSHAD TRUST, the charity that owns it and trades under its name,¹⁸⁴ were named (alongside ICEL¹⁸⁵) by the Home Secretary in oral evidence provided to the ISC Iran inquiry, specifically as examples of institutions spreading Khomeinist ideology in the UK:

“[I]t is highly likely that institutions, educational institutions linked with the ICE, including the Irshad Trust, the Islamic College, and Hawza Ilmiyya also promote ‘Khomeinei-ism’, and that is due to multiple links between these organisations through a crossover of staff and speakers, as well as previous trustees and family members. So there is a whole ecology of these organisations operating, promoting extremist ideology, promoting violence and inciting hatred.”¹⁸⁶

ISLAMIC COLLEGE teaching staff and leadership have held senior political and clerical roles in the Iranian regime. This includes Ayatollah Mohsen Mohammadi ARAKI. A former IRSHAD TRUST trustee, ARAKI is also a member of both Iran’s Assembly of Experts (constitutionally empowered to elect and, nominally, supervise Iran’s Supreme Leader)¹⁸⁷ and its Expediency Discernment Council (senior Iranian

¹⁸⁴ Ownership: ‘Student Protection Plan’, The Islamic College (September 2025), <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Students-Protection-Plan-1.pdf>, p. 3, para 1.01.

Trading name: ‘Specific Course Designation: report of the monitoring visit of Irshad Trust t/a The Islamic College’ QAA (November 2018), https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/irshad-trust-ta-the-islamic-college-scd-am-18.pdf?sfvrsn=b970c081_4, p. 1.

¹⁸⁵ These remarks were put to ICEL for comment. ICEL did not address directly the allegation that it spreads Khomeinist ideology or promotes violence or incites hatred, but said it is independent and does not promote extremism, violence or hatred.

¹⁸⁶ ‘Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran’, Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p. 114, para 389.

¹⁸⁷ Assembly of Experts description: ‘Assembly of Experts’, United Against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/government-institution/assembly-of-experts>.

According to the Assembly of Expert’s Secretariat, ARAKI served in the second, third and fifth terms of the assembly and is serving in the current sixth term (1991-2007, 2016-present; auto-translated): ‘محمدی اراکی، محسن’، Secretariat of the Assembly of Experts,

Undue Influence

state policy council).¹⁸⁸ It also includes former teacher Ahmad VAEZI.¹⁸⁹ VAEZI acts as KHAMENEI's representative in the UNION OF ISLAMIC STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS IN EUROPE, an umbrella body that counts the ISAB among its members.¹⁹⁰ VAEZI is also the head of the influential QOM SEMINARY's ISLAMIC PROPAGANDA OFFICE and a member of the SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.¹⁹¹ ARAKI and VAEZI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.¹⁹² In its written response to this report, the IRSHAD TRUST said that the ISLAMIC COLLEGE should not be assessed through historical associations with former figures.

A former ISLAMIC COLLEGE principal Mohammad Saeed BAHMANPOUR said at the 10 June 2018 Al-Quds day rally in London that "My message to the Jewish people of Palestine is that [...] you can make sure that the resistance will come and free Palestine and wipe Israel off the map."¹⁹³ Additionally, at a

<https://majlesekhobregan.ir/fa/member/4046/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%DA%A9%DB%8C%D8%8C-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86>; Auto-translated: 'معرفی منتخبان مجلس خبرگان مرکزی رهبری در استان مرکزی', *Mehr News*, 3 March 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/ynwm7zcx>; Katherine Donlevy and Steven Nelson, 'Iran's Supreme Leader picks '3 stooges' to replace him as fear of assassination surges: report', *New York Post*, 21 June 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/06/21/world-news/irans-ayatollah-ali-khamenei-picking-supreme-leader-successors/>; Explanation of the terms, which run for eight years: Fariyeh Farhi, 'The Assembly of Experts', *Tehran Bureau | FRONTLINE | PBS*, 30 June 2011, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2011/06/the-assembly-of-experts-1.html>.

¹⁸⁸ Role of the Expediency Discernment Council: 'What are statuses and duties of the "Expediency Council" in the Iranian system?', The Official Website of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei (August 2017),

<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/5072/What-are-statuses-and-duties-of-the-Expediency-Council-in-the>

ARAKI as member of the Expediency Discernment Council: 'Leader appointed members of Expediency Council for the new term', The Official Website of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei (September 2022),

<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/9169/Leader-appointed-members-of-Expediency-Council-for-the-new-term>.

ARAKI was a founding trustee of the IRSHAD TRUST: Sean O'Neill, 'Muslim students 'being taught to despise unbelievers as filth'', *The Times*, 20 April 2006, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/religion/article/muslim-students-being-taught-to-despise-unbelievers-as-filth-gh6k75lwlh8>.

¹⁸⁹ VAEZI as former teacher at the ISLAMIC COLLEGE (auto-translated): 'احمد واعظی - اشتراك دانش دانشگاه باقرالعلوم (ع)', Baqir al-Uloom University, <https://kms.bou.ac.ir/professor/vaezi/>.

¹⁹⁰ VAEZI's role in UISAE: 'Ayatollah Khamenei outlines the novelty of Iran political system', *Tehran Times*, 2 January 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/480370/Ayatollah-Khamenei-outlines-the-novelty-of-Iran-political-system>; KHAMENEI appointed VAEZI to the role: 'Leader's new rep. appointed to the Islamic Students Assoc in Europe', The Official Website of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei (24 January 2021),

<https://english.khamenei.ir/print/8302/Leader-s-new-rep-appointed-to-the-Islamic-Students-Assoc-in>.

ISAB & UISAE relationship: Ed Thomas, 'UK officials probe Iran generals' antisemitic talks to students', BBC News, 22 January 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-68016330>.

¹⁹¹ Auto-translated: 'احمد واعظی - اشتراك دانش دانشگاه باقرالعلوم (ع)', Baqir al-Uloom University, <https://kms.bou.ac.ir/professor/vaezi/>.

¹⁹² Two separate attempts were made to contact each of ARAKI and VAEZI for comment prior to publication; however, no response was received, possibly due to widespread internet outages in Iran at the time.

¹⁹³ BAHMANPOUR as former IC principal: The Islamic College, Telegram, 9 April 2018, <https://t.me/TheIslamicCollege/105>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/OzGz5>.

Photo for confirmation. Also note that he is also said to be a former principal of the ISLAMIC COLLEGE: 'Shaykh Muhammad Saeed Bahmanpour', Hawza Online, https://www.hawzaonline.org/academic_staff/shaykh-muhammad-saeed-bahmanpour/.

Date of al-Quds Day in London, 2018: 'Al Quds Day 2018', Islamic Human Rights Commission, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/al-quds-day-2018/>.

Full quote: "My message to the Jewish people of Palestine is that the British governments several

Undue Influence

2013 rally in London, BAHMANPOUR reportedly called on the crowd to chant their support for HEZBOLLAH.¹⁹⁴ BAHMANPOUR did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.¹⁹⁵

Multiple former ICEL leaders have also held roles with the IRSHAD TRUST and the ISLAMIC COLLEGE or the AL-HIKMA SEMINARY (previously known as HAWZA ILMIIYYA or HAWZA ILMIIYYAH OF ENGLAND and as HAWZA IMAM AL-HUSAYN¹⁹⁶).

For example, Ayatollah ARAKI was a founding director of ICEL, serving from 1996 until 2004.¹⁹⁷ According to Iran's SUPREME COUNCIL OF SEMINARIES (a policy-making institution subject to approval and oversight by the Supreme Leader), ARAKI was sent to England by the then Supreme Leader to establish ICEL and he also established the ISLAMIC COLLEGE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES (ICAS), now known as the ISLAMIC COLLEGE.¹⁹⁸ Two attempts were made to contact ARAKI for comment prior to

decades ago, and then America, used you to wipe Palestine off the map. And you can

make sure that the resistance will come and free Palestine and wipe Israel off the map," video available on request (1:52-2:24). For confirmation, BAHMANPOUR is seen speaking in this ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION video about al-Quds Day in London 2018, saying the same content at 0:42-0:56 as he was in 3:02-3:16 in the previous video that is no longer available online: 'AL QUDS DAY - LONDON – 2018', Islamic Human Rights Commission, YouTube, 12 June 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIGV49aYXtM>.

¹⁹⁴ David Rose, 'Minutes from a shul, the college that is Iran's hidden UK 'foothold'', *The Jewish*

Chronicle, 1 December 2022, <https://www.thejc.com/news/minutes-from-a-shul-the-college-that-is-irans-hidden-uk-foothold-etljhq5d>.

¹⁹⁵ Two attempts were made to seek comment from Mohammad Saeed BAHMANPOUR. An initial request was sent via an organisation with which he is associated online; the organisation stated that he was no longer affiliated, but did not provide forwarding details. A subsequent request was sent to the ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND, which neither confirmed nor denied any current association and did not provide a specific response to the request. It is therefore unclear whether the requests were received. Similar difficulties in contacting BAHMANPOUR were noted by Dr Paul Stott in a 2021 report, in which ICEL stated that he no longer worked for the organisation, and attempts to contact him via Facebook and LinkedIn received no reply. See Dr Paul Stott, 'IRANIAN INFLUENCE NETWORKS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: AUDIT AND ANALYSIS', The Henry Jackson Society (2021), <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/HJS-Iranian-Influence-Networks-in-the-UK-Report-HR-web-1.pdf>, p. 33.

¹⁹⁶ 'Al-Hikma Seminary', The Islamic College, <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/study-with-us/hawza-ilmiyya/>;

Note that the Hawza Imam al-Husayn was described as having been established in 1997 and the '2014' entry states: "The College's Hawza adopted a new name, Hawza Ilmiyyah of England, to reflect its inclusive perspective": 'Timeline', The Islamic College,

<https://islamic-college.ac.uk/about-us/history/>; further, an archive of the ISLAMIC COLLEGE's website describes "the rebranding of the Hawza Ilmiyya of England as Al Hikma School" while also referring to it as "Hawza Ilmiyya": 'Taster Course For Al-Hikma School (Previously Known as Hawza Ilmiyya)', The Islamic College, <https://islamic-college.ac.uk/taster-course-for-al-hikma-school/>, archived at:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20250911155349/https://islamic-college.ac.uk/taster-course-for-al-hikma-school/>.

¹⁹⁷ 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD people', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/officers>.

¹⁹⁸ Auto-translated: 'شورای عالی حوزه های علمیه | حضرت آیت الله محسن اراکی', Supreme Council of Seminaries, <https://www.schowzeh.ir/fa/person/detail/3>.

About the SUPREME COUNCIL OF SEMINARIES (auto-translated): 'اساسنامه شورای عالی حوزه های علمیه', Supreme Council of Seminaries (November 1996), <https://tinyurl.com/cbtpe3b>.

Renaming of the ISLAMIC COLLEGE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES: 'Timeline', The Islamic College,

<https://islamic-college.ac.uk/about-us/history/>.

Note ARAKI's directorship of ICEL – choose the 10 Feb 1997 'Annual return made up to 29/12/96', p. 2: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD filing history', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history?page=6>.

Undue Influence

publication; however, no response was received, possibly due to widespread internet outages in Iran at the time.

In an article about ICAS in *The Times* in 2006, another IRSHAD TRUST trustee, Abdolhossein MOEZI, was described as a personal representative of KHAMENEI and as a director of ICEL. This was confirmed by a spokesperson for ICAS in their response to the article.¹⁹⁹ Two attempts were made to contact MOEZI for comment prior to publication; however, no response was received, possibly due to widespread internet outages in Iran at the time.

Another former ICEL director, Mohammed Ali SHOMALI,²⁰⁰ also served as a director of the HAWZA ILMIYYA OF ENGLAND between 2014 and 2019.²⁰¹ In a 2018 interview with the Hawza News Agency, SHOMALI confirmed taking over leadership of ICEL in 2014 as the representative of the then Supreme Leader after the previous representative stepped down.²⁰² SHOMALI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

Most recently, Seyed Hashem MOOSAVI, ICEL director between 2019 and 2022,²⁰³ was reportedly involved in ISLAMIC COLLEGE leadership. For example, an ICEL blog post states that he was appointed director of the HAWZA ILMIYYAH OF ENGLAND in 2019,²⁰⁴ while a Persian Shia news agency also states that he became director of the HAWZA ILMIYYAH OF ENGLAND in 2019.²⁰⁵

In its written response to this report concerning the IRSHAD TRUST, the ISLAMIC COLLEGE and the HAWZA ILMIYYA programme, the IRSHAD TRUST said that individuals cited in the report have not been involved with the ISLAMIC COLLEGE for many years, that any such associations pre-date the current leadership, and that the institution should not be assessed on the basis of historical affiliations.²⁰⁶ The

¹⁹⁹ Sean O'Neill, 'Muslim students 'being taught to despise unbelievers as filth'', *The Times*, 20 April 2006, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/religion/article/muslim-students-being-taught-to-despise-unbelievers-as-filth-gh6k75lwh8>.

²⁰⁰ Companies House records show that Mohammed Ali SHOMALI was a director of ICEL between 2014 and 2019. 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD people', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/officers>.

²⁰¹ SHOMALI is described as the outgoing director in 2019 (auto-translated): 'مراسم جشن فارغ التحصیلی اولین دوره طلاب حوزه علمیه انگلیس با تقدیر: 'از دکتر شمالی به انجام رسید: حوزه خانه علما است', Shafaqna Shia News Agency, 21 June 2019, <https://fa.shafaqna.com/news/768071/>.

SHOMALI is described as the head of the HAWZA ILMIYYAH OF ENGLAND at its opening ceremony in 2014 (auto-translated): 'حوزه علمیه '، International Quran News Agency, 17 September 2014, <https://tinyurl.com/3me4hwb9>.

²⁰² (auto-translated): 'در گفت‌وگو با نماینده مقام معظم رهبری در انگلیس مطرح شد؛ مرکزی بین المللی که ۳۶۵ روز سال فعال است/ حوزه علمیه در غرب ناشناخته '، Hawzah News Agency, 8 May 2018, <https://tinyurl.com/7dxs7axu>.

²⁰³ 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD people', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/officers>.

²⁰⁴ 'HIWM Seyed Hashem Moosavi', Islamic Centre of England, <https://ic-el.uk/blog/category/icel-speakers/speaker-group-5/hiwm-seyed-hashim-moosavi/>.

²⁰⁵ Auto-translated: 'مراسم جشن فارغ التحصیلی اولین دوره طلاب حوزه علمیه انگلیس با تقدیر از دکتر شمالی به انجام رسید: حوزه خانه علما است', Shafaqna Shia News Agency, 21 June 2019, <https://fa.shafaqna.com/news/768071/>

²⁰⁶ "Individuals who may be regarded as controversial, problematic or politically exposed have not been part of this institution for almost two decades. The College should not be assessed through the prism of historical associations that has not existed for a long time. All individuals referenced in your summary have not held any role within the Islamic College for many years, and their involvement with the College pre-dates the tenure of the current leadership entirely. The repeated referencing of former figures risks giving a misleading impression that historical associations equate to current influence, which is not the case."

Undue Influence

IRSHAD TRUST also said that the ISLAMIC COLLEGE is distinct from ICEL, that there are no links between the two institutions, and that MOOSAVI had never had a role in the ISLAMIC COLLEGE.²⁰⁷

LABAIK YA ZAHRA

LYZ leader, Syeda Umme FARWA, has had her work in the UK, to export the ideals of the revolution, formally recognised by the regime. In 2024, FARWA and fellow LYZ trustee Ali IFFI (likely also known as Iftikhar ALI) were hosted by Second Brigadier General Majid HASHEMI-DANA, a senior IRGC commander who runs the state media platform, Defa Press,²⁰⁸ with the news agency reporting that FARWA had signed a memorandum promising to spread “the ideals and discourse of the Islamic revolution on an international level”.²⁰⁹ In an interview with Defa Press, FARWA also discussed carrying out the “jihad of tabeen” in Britain, which the regime views as countering its enemies’ propaganda.²¹⁰ FARWA, however, told *The Times* that “tabeen jihad” was intended as “purely spiritual and non-violent”.²¹¹ Taken together, however, her comments suggest an attempt by LYZ to advance Iranian goals in the UK.

Prior to this, FARWA was also personally recognised and filmed receiving an award from Ebrahim RAISI at a 2018 ceremony in Iran. RAISI was a senior regime figure, nicknamed the “Butcher of Tehran” for his role in overseeing the executions of thousands in the 1980s. He described FARWA as a “faithful revolutionary woman”.²¹²

Kasra Aarabi described the LYZ dealings with IRGC commanders as a “clear violation of the National Security Act [2023].”²¹³

²⁰⁷ “The Islamic College is institutionally and legally completely separate from the Islamic Centre of England (ICEL). There is no link in any shape or form such as governance, management, or staff, between the two institutions. Sayed Hashim Moosavi has never had any role in the College. Therefore, assertions that ICEL personnel exercise influence over the College today are absolutely without foundation.”

²⁰⁸ Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smbr3c9>.

²⁰⁹ ‘The presence of the director of the London-based "Labaik Ya Zahra" Institute at the Holy Defense News Agency’, Defa Press, 1 January 2024, <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/642009>.

²¹⁰ Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smbr3c9>.

²¹¹ Note that, in the video attached to the article, the Defa Press logo is found in the background and she says, “I know all the work we [at LYZ] have done and are doing is from the perspective...”, matching the text said in the interview (see 0:27): Charlie Parker, ‘UK charity bosses hosted by Iranian military chief linked to terrorism’, *The Times*, 20 April 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/uk-charity-bosses-hosted-by-iranian-military-chief-linked-to-terrorism-b3smbr3c9>.

²¹² A spokesperson for LYZ acknowledged FARWA had accepted the award, telling *The Times* that it was acceptable for her to have done so because RAISI is a “religious scholar”. Photograph of FARWA and RAISI in: Charlie Parker, ‘The ‘jihadi lioness’ hailed in Iran — who runs a British charity’, *The Times*, 15 January 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/crime/article/the-jihadi-lioness-hailed-in-iran-who-runs-a-british-charity-9pjbv3bc2>.

²¹³ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

LYZ, FARWA and ALI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

Implications: Homegrown Radicalisation and Security Risk

The material examined in this section indicates an identifiable ideological pattern across the activities of a number of British charities, reflecting themes consistent with Khomeinist doctrine and positions linked to IRGC leaders.

Kasra Aarabi describes this activity by British registered charities as “homegrown radicalisation”, at which the tools of terrorism prevention should be pointed, adding that the government views Iran only “through the lens of foreign policy”, but that it is also a “CVE (Countering Violent Extremism) threat”. He continued: “that’s how it operates. It’s radicalisation, [it also requires a] counter-terrorism [response], combined with dealing with a threat that also has an embassy.”

Aarabi also suggests that the seemingly widespread and growing hostility to Israel, as well as the increasing blurring of the lines between opposition to the Jewish state, solidarity with Palestinians and outright antisemitism, is at least in part due to the regime’s campaign on British soil.²¹⁴ In Aarabi’s view, years of agitation, through activities such as the IHRC’s Quds Day rallies, were a precursor to the much larger protests and antisemitic displays or shows of support for Iranian-backed groups like HAMAS and HEZBOLLAH seen since the 7 October 2023 HAMAS terrorist attack. In its written response to this report, IHRC said that Quds Day is supported by a wide range of organisations, including Jewish groups, and stated that there have been “no illegal displays of material or any illegality” at the London rally.

Given the intentional importation of revolutionary Khomeinist ideology by the Iranian regime’s soft power network in Britain to the some 400,000-strong Shia Muslim community, the threat of a “homegrown” terror attack, committed by an individual or individuals taking the radical and apocalyptic worldview to its logical conclusion without being set into motion by Iranian state operatives (as is the case with most Iranian-linked plots), must be taken into serious consideration by counter-terrorism authorities.

It should also be considered a concern for radicalisation prevention initiatives such as Prevent, although it does not currently seem to be routinely considered or analysed within Prevent circles, despite videos of children pledging their allegiance to KHOMEINI and IRGC commanders in videos produced on the premises of British charities.

²¹⁴ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

PART THREE: TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AND CONTROL OVER SHIA ISLAM IN THE UK

Exporting Repression to the Iranian Diaspora

Just as the Iranian regime has mercilessly clamped down on protests and dissent inside its borders since the 1979 regime, it also exports that repression to the Iranian diaspora overseas. Of the dozens of assassination plots on British soil, and those in Western Europe or North America, the vast majority target critics, dissidents and journalists of the regime from within the diaspora.

Interviewed for this analysis, former head of the Charity Commission, Sir William Shawcross, stressed that, although he left the Commission eight years ago, “it was already clear that the Iranians were very, very active in Britain, both in charitable and non-charitable organisations”, and that members of the diaspora in Britain had recently told him of their apprehension over travelling into the London Borough of Brent²¹⁵ – where several of the most prominent Iranian-linked charities are based, often housed in the same addresses.

This corner of West London is not only home to several of these charities; it is also the site of the exposure of numerous Iranian intelligence operations. For example, the arrests of HEZBOLLAH operatives operating a bomb factory in London,²¹⁶ as well as multiple plots against Iranian dissidents and journalists.²¹⁷ However, some of the charities identified in this report that replied to requests for comment prior to publication sought to push back on the notion that Brent may be hostile territory for critics of the Iranian regime.²¹⁸

The Role of UK-Based Charities in Intimidation and Hostility

There is no evidence that these charities are directly involved in the assassination and surveillance operations for which the regime has been known to pay established thugs and gangsters. However, there are questions to be asked about the role they play in the regime’s overall campaign to create an

²¹⁵ Interview with Sir William Shawcross, 30 October 2025.

²¹⁶ Ben Riley-Smith, ‘Iran-linked terrorists caught stockpiling explosives in north-west London’, *The Telegraph*, 9 June 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/06/09/iran-linked-terrorists-caught-stockpiling-explosives-north-west/>.

²¹⁷ Rohit Kachroo, ‘The Wedding’: Iranian spy plot to kill two news presenters in London uncovered by double agent’, *ITV News*, 21 December 2023, <https://www.itv.com/news/2023-12-20/iran-spy-plot-to-kill-two-news-presenters-in-london-uncovered-by-double-agent>.

²¹⁸ The allegation was put to the Brent-based charities identified in this report. The IHRC TRUST did not respond. However, IHRC LTD and IHRC LEGAL – non-charitable entities associated with the IHRC – responded to the same correspondence. IHRC LTD said the claim was “pathetic and unevicenced” and alleged that Iranian dissidents had sought to intimidate Iranian-run businesses into displaying flags of the deposed Shah and had threatened violence against those who refused. IHRC LEGAL described the assertion as “entirely unsupported”, stating that it has acted for members of the Iranian diaspora, including dissidents, refugees and individuals who have fled persecution in Iran, and that such clients have attended its offices in Brent. The IRSHAD TRUST did not address the allegation in its written response to this report. The AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION and the MUHAMMADI TRUST did not respond to requests for comment prior to publication.

Undue Influence

atmosphere of intimidation and hostility towards Iranian dissidents that stretches well beyond its borders.

For example, at the height of the 2022-23 mass protests against the regime on the streets of Tehran, the former head of ICEL and personal appointee of the then Supreme Leader, Seyed Hashem MOOSAVI, gave a sermon in English, describing supporters (of which many of the UK-based Iranian diaspora were) of the pro-democracy protests in Iran as “soldiers of Satan”, referring to women removing headscarves as “poison”.²¹⁹

In oral evidence provided to the ISC’s 2025 report on Iran, the Home Secretary made reference to the “incendiary language used against protestors in 2022”, and reports that ICEL was “intimidating protestors”.²²⁰ Coupled with the ISC’s conclusion that there is likely overlap between ICE and Iranian intelligence operations, this rhetoric and intimidation can represent a real risk to British-Iranians, their quality of life and their sense of security in the UK.

These matters were put to ICEL for comment. ICEL did not respond directly to the sermon by MOOSAVI or his characterisation of protestors, nor to the allegation that such activity constitutes intimidation. In its written response to this report, ICEL denied that it is politically directed or controlled by Iran, said it does not project the views of any foreign government, and stated that it does not promote extremism, violence or hatred, and that any personal political views expressed by individuals do not reflect the charity’s position. ICEL also said it works with law enforcement and other stakeholders to ensure that its community can worship peacefully. Although the correspondence to ICEL was addressed jointly to the trustees and to MOOSAVI personally, no separate response was received from him.

Nonetheless, tensions surrounding pro- and anti-regime demonstrations in London have, at times, escalated into physical altercations, illustrating the potential real-world impact of inflammatory rhetoric by pro-regime figures based in the UK.²²¹ In one incident in May 2024, Sayed Ahmed ALWADAEI, who worked with two Iranian government-aligned charities on a freelance basis – the ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION (AIF) and the DAR ALHEKMA TRUST (DAT) – was involved in an altercation with Iranian dissidents, which left one victim with serious spinal cord injuries, and during which another victim was sexually assaulted.²²² In written responses to this report, DAT and AIF denied being Iranian government-aligned charities, and said that ALWADAEI performed on a freelance basis and it is defamatory to seek to impute to the Charity responsibility for his actions. DAT also emphasised that it has “never engaged in, supported, or facilitated intimidation or hostility towards

²¹⁹ Harriet Whitehead, ‘Regulator investigates Islamic Centre of England’, *Civil Society*, 22 November 2022, <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/regulator-investigates-islamic-centre-of-england.html>.

²²⁰ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Iran (July 2025), <https://isc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Intelligence-and-Security-Committee-of-Parliament-Iran.pdf>, p.114.

²²¹ ‘Arrests as two assaulted outside Iranian embassy’, BBC News, 20 June 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5y2r27jn24o>.

²²² David Rose, ‘UK ‘interfaith’ charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhbrkan>.

Iranian dissidents or any other group”, nor was it connected to any Iranian-aligned network of British charities that might do so. A request for comment was also sent, via DAT, to ALWADAEI; no response was received from him directly, and DAT’s response has therefore been treated as addressing these matters on his behalf.

Based on activities like this, Kasra Aarabi assesses that:

“[T]his infrastructure they have built in Britain, whether it’s charities, mosques or educational centres - they are an arm of Iranian regime transnational repression, and I say that from both witnessing the level of activity that they dedicate to targeting members of the diaspora that are vocal against the regime, whether that be cyber campaigns, online trolling campaigns, doxxing campaigns, whether that be physical intimidation.”²²³

Aarabi relays his own experience of walking in public in West London (echoing Sir William Shawcross’ remarks), where he was approached and intimidated by individuals he believed to be connected to Iranian regime circles in the area. While this does not equate to evidence that these potential agents or intelligence assets are collaborating with the charities discussed in this analysis, it renders it unlikely that there is no interaction between these elements of the overall Iranian operation in Britain, given that many of the charities themselves are based in Brent and North-West London, which is perceived by dissidents to be an area of regime and pro-regime activity in the UK.

AN INDICATOR OF REACH: THE BAN ON MARYAM RAJAVI ENTERING THE UK

Perhaps underlining the extent of Iranian activity, or at least authorities’ sense of caution surrounding it, the UK government has barred Iranian dissidents (such as Maryam Rajavi²²⁴) from entering the country on public interest grounds. Lord Carlile, who led an unsuccessful legal challenge against the decision in 2014, explained that this is “not because she is perceived to be a danger, but it is perceived by the British government that allowing her here might involve a risk to UK national security”, perhaps a tacit admission by the state of the extent of Iranian influence in Britain, either from its assassins or the capacity of its soft power infrastructure – as described in this analysis – to whip up controversy and disorder.²²⁵

Shaping Shia Islam in the UK

In a broader sense than stifling critics, just as the regime has jostled for influence over Islam with regional rivals, it also uses its charity network to advance and present its interpretation of Shia Islam as normative to both the British state and to British Shia Muslims. This makes it harder for the British state and civil society to identify and separate *Islamic* from *Islamist* beliefs and practices, especially

²²³ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

²²⁴ Melanie Gower, CJ McKinney, Grace Alston, ‘Research Briefing: Visa bans: exclusion of foreign nationals whose presence is not conducive to the public good’, House of Commons Library (4 April 2024), <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07035/SN07035.pdf>.

²²⁵ Interview with Lord Carlile, 24 October 2025.

Undue Influence

when combined with lobbying for contentious definitions of Islamophobia, which critics argue is designed to render this distinction impossible.

Kasra Aarabi notes how these regime-linked organisations have growing constituencies in Britain, not necessarily among the Iranian diaspora, with whom the regime has little traction, but among first, second and third generation Shia Muslims with their origins in other countries, such as Pakistan, Iraq or Lebanon. Aarabi claims that the regime-linked charities have successfully fostered a “Shia Islamist constituency” for themselves.²²⁶

This activity goes back to that detailed in the previous section, whereby institutions such as LYZ do not hide their intention to spread the vision of former Ayatollah KHOMEINI, or how the curriculum courses of institutions such as the ISLAMIC COLLEGE are replete with the writings of the Supreme Leaders and senior clerics of the regime, presented as normative Shia Islam, rather than its 20th-century millenarian reality. In a written response to this report, the IRSHAD TRUST said that the ISLAMIC COLLEGE curriculum has evolved over time, is not politically driven, is subject to academic and regulatory oversight, and reflects scholarly plurality rather than the promotion of any state ideology. LYZ did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

²²⁶ Interview with Kasra Aarabi, 16 October 2025.

PART FOUR: THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS AND THE BRITISH CHARITY SECTOR

The IRGC: Mandate, Structure and Ideology

The activities and operations of the IRGC in the UK merit closer attention in the context of regime exploitation of the British charity sector. The ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS (IRGC) was established after the 1979 revolution outside Iran's regular military structures, conceived to defend the revolution and answer directly to the Supreme Leader rather than to the elected government. The IRGC has since evolved into a powerful military, political and economic force in Iran.²²⁷

The QUDS FORCE, the IRGC's external operations branch, is responsible for the regime's overseas activities, including relationships with allied militias and non-state armed groups across the region. IRGC and QUDS FORCE personnel have been killed in military strikes in Iraq and Syria, often in proximity to leaders of allied militia groups.²²⁸

The IRGC, together with the BASIJ RESISTANCE FORCE – a volunteer paramilitary militia under IRGC command – has been implicated by human rights organisations in the violent repression of protesters in Iran, including the unlawful use of lethal force against demonstrators.²²⁹ IRGC-backed militias, including US-designated terrorist organisations, have played a central role in regional conflicts and in supporting the Assad regime's campaign in Syria.²³⁰

The IRGC was described by Kasra Aarabi in research for the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change as “in essence, a militaristic and increasingly apocalyptic cult”,²³¹ highlighting its use of Mahdist and apocalyptic narratives in framing its ideological worldview and hostility towards Israel.

It is the IRGC and the QUDS FORCE which are also chiefly responsible for the assassinations and terror-style operations in Europe and the West, although often operating through layers of deniability and criminal enterprises, whose services and expertise in everything from low-level sabotage to

²²⁷ CFR Editors, 'Backgrounder: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)', Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) (Last updated 13 June 2025), <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/irans-revolutionary-guards>.

²²⁸ CFR Editors, 'Backgrounder: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)', Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) (Last updated 13 June 2025), <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/irans-revolutionary-guards>.

²²⁹ Amnesty International, 'What happened at the protests in Iran?', 11 January 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2026/01/what-happened-at-the-protests-in-iran/>; United States Foundation for Liberty and Human Rights, 'New Report by Javaid Rehman: Iran's IRGC, Basij and Police Opened Deadly Fire on Protesters', 19 March 2020, <https://www.usflhr.org/new-report-by-javaid-rehman-irans-irgc-basij-and-police-opened-deadly-fire-on-protesters/>

²³⁰ Pierre Bousel, 'The Quds Force in Syria: Combatants, Units, and Actions', *CTC Sentinel*, (June 2023), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-quds-force-in-syria-combatants-units-and-actions/>

²³¹ Kasra Aarabi, 'Making the Case for the UK to Proscribe Iran's IRGC', Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (17 January 2023), <https://institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/making-case-uk-proscribe-irans-irgc>, para. 11.

surveillance and targeted killings are enlisted for simple payments.²³² Despite this, the IRGC is not listed as a terrorist organisation, although there are calls for it to be so.²³³ In May 2025, Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, announced new legislation modelled on counter-terrorism powers to proscribe “state threats” – covering state-backed bodies such as the IRGC – following a review by the Independent Reviewer of State Threat Legislation, Jonathan Hal KC. The government reaffirmed its commitment in principle in October 2025.²³⁴

IRGC Links to Iranian-Aligned British Charities

At least half of the charities examined in this report marked the ‘martyrdom’ of General Qasem SOLEIMANI, the IRGC commander killed in Iraq by an American drone in 2020. But, on occasion, the connections have gone beyond ideological affinity and mourning.

Some links with the IRGC have already been touched upon, under the activities of registered charity LYZ, whose founder, Syeda Umme FARWA, has had personal audiences and has signed a memo with a senior IRGC commander.²³⁵ FARWA and LYZ did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication. This report has also identified the promotion of former and active IRGC commanders to UK students in online events between 2020 and 2021, organised by a student group that also uses the premises of registered charity TUCF. In its written response to this report, TUCF denied any links to Iran and said that it did not act in a malign way.

Chants of “Death to Israel” were reportedly heard at a separate in-person event commemorating SOLEIMANI, held at the TUCF-owned Kanoon Towhid Islamic Centre, in West London.²³⁶ The Charity Commission confirmed in February 2024 that it had opened a statutory inquiry into TUCF following concerns raised regarding the ‘religious remembrance’ event for SOLEIMANI held at its premises.²³⁷ In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that a statutory inquiry in relation to TUCF remains ongoing.²³⁸ In its written response to this report, TUCF said that the event was organised by a third party, not by TUCF, and was not endorsed by the charity.

²³² Matthew Levitt, Sarah Boches, ‘Iranian External Operations in Europe: The Criminal Connection’, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (16 October 2024), <https://icct.nl/publication/iranian-external-operations-europe-criminal-connection>.

²³³ Dominic Penna, Charles Hymas, ‘Get tough on Iran, 550 MPs and peers tell Starmer’, *The Telegraph*, 17 May 2025, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/05/17/get-tough-on-iran-550-mps-and-peers-tell-starmer/>.

²³⁴ ‘Subversion: Powers, Question for Home Office, UIN 79969, tabled on 10 October 2025, UK Parliament (Answered on 22 October 2025), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-10-10/79969>

²³⁵ FARWA and LYZ did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

²³⁶ Ed Thomas, ‘Inquiry into ‘death to Israel’ chants at Islamic centre’, BBC News, 14 February 2024, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68288598>.

²³⁷ ‘Regulator to investigate Al-Tawheed Charitable Trust over event held at its premises’, Charity Commission, 14 February 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-to-investigate-al-tawheed-charitable-trust-over-event-held-at-its-premises>.

²³⁸ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

Undue Influence

IHRC Director, Massoud SHADJAREH, has also given interviews to a propaganda outlet for the Iranian regime. In a three-part English interview on MASAF INTERNATIONAL,²³⁹ SHADJAREH praised the Iranian regime and backed the fatwa issued against Sir Salman Rushdie,²⁴⁰ the author of *The Satanic Verses*. MASAF INTERNATIONAL presents itself as an English-language platform distributing content produced by the MASAF INSTITUTE,²⁴¹ reportedly part of Iran's propaganda infrastructure or linked to the IRGC.²⁴² The institute was accordingly sanctioned by the EU in January 2026 on the grounds that it serves as a propaganda outlet for the Iranian state and engages in smear and "doxing" campaigns against political dissenters, including participation in coordinated "doxing" campaigns led by the IRGC.²⁴³ In its written response to this report, IHRC LTD denied any links to the IRGC or to any state, and rejected claims of Iranian alignment as unevicenced. It also stated more generally that appearing on a particular media platform does not amount to endorsement of that platform or its editorial line.

In another media case, it was the US government that acted. On 22 June 2021, the Justice Department seized a website domain affiliated with the Brent-based registered charity the AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION as part of a clampdown on media network the IRANIAN ISLAMIC RADIO AND

²³⁹ 'The Green Mile with Dr. Masoud Shajareh; Episode#1', Masaf International, YouTube, 27 July 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_c79QAkSk.

'The Green Mile with Dr. Masoud Shajareh; Episode #2', Masaf International, YouTube, 12 August 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFixWtKn8EU>.

'The Green Mile with Dr. Masoud Shajareh; Episode #3 (last)', Masaf International, YouTube, 15 September 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejBSHrE-N_o.

²⁴⁰ On Iran, SHADJAREH said: "Let us not forget that the religious democracy with the Islamic revolution brought to Iran was the only democracy which was ever offered to people of the Middle East" (6:19): 'The Green Mile with Dr. Masoud Shajareh; Episode #3 (last)', Masaf International, YouTube, 15 September 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejBSHrE-N_o.

On Rushdie, he said: "No self-respecting Muslim or Islamic scholar anywhere around the world was able to come up and say this fatwa... is not right from [an] Islamic perspective. Not a single person" (21:44). 'The Green Mile with Dr. Masoud Shajareh; Episode #2', Masaf International, YouTube, 12 August 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFixWtKn8EU>.

²⁴¹ 'About us', Masaf International, <https://masaf-intl.com/masaf/>.

²⁴² A 2025 independent expert submission from UANI identifies the MASAF INSTITUTE as a key organisation in what it calls the IRGC's psychological-warfare and disinformation operations. See 'Written evidence submitted by United Against Nuclear Iran (DIS0042)', UK Parliament (28 February 2025), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/138378/html/>. A July 2023 news report describes the MASAF INSTITUTE as a hardline organisation founded and directed by Ali-Akbar RAEFIPOUR and linked to the IRGC, in the context of RAEFIPOUR's detention while travelling. See 'Detention Of Iranian Propagandist Shows Cracks In Saudi Relations', *Iran International*, 12 July 2023, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202307127100>. A May 2022 think tank report co-authored by Kasra Aarabi of UANI describes the MASAF INSTITUTE as a "direct recipient of IRGC financial support." See 'Iran's Revolutionary Guard and the Rising Cult of Mahdism: Missiles and Militias for the Apocalypse', Middle East Institute (3 May 2022), <https://mei.edu/publication/irans-revolutionary-guard-and-rising-cult-mahdism-missiles-and-militias-apocalypse/>. A December 2020 investigative piece describes the MASAF INSTITUTE as functioning as part of the Iranian regime's propaganda infrastructure, producing media content and messaging that reinforces official state narratives. Note that it does not allege direct links to the IRGC but describes it as central to Iran's international propaganda machine. Ali Akbar Ebrahimpour, 'Iran's International Propaganda Machine: The Masaf Institute and the Apocalyptic Worldview', *IranWire*, 14 December 2020, <https://iranwire.com/en/features/68317/>.

²⁴³ The reasons provided for the EU sanction are as follows: "The Masaf Institute is an organisation founded in 2011 by Ali Akbar Raefipour. The Masaf Institute plays a key role in silencing political opposition, by engaging in "doxing" and smear campaigns against anti-regime Iranians. It develops pro-regime cyber armies, orchestrates online attacks and disseminates disinformation, with the aim of identifying political dissenters. It has been involved in coordinated "doxing" campaigns led by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), leading to the detention of political dissenters. The Masaf Institute serves as a propaganda outlet for the Islamic Republic through the use of multiple tools, such as video clips, documentaries, short films, games, software, music, graphics, cartoons, illustrations and analysis of political events. In doing so, the Masaf Institute is violating the rights to freedom of information, assembly and expression of the Iranian people. The Masaf Institute is therefore responsible for serious human rights violations in Iran". 'COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2026/267 of 29 January 2026', Official Journal of the European Union (29 January 2026), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202600267.

TELEVISION UNION (IRTVU), which it claimed is “owned or controlled” by the IRGC and targets the US with disinformation campaigns and malign influence operations.²⁴⁴ AHLULBAYT TV (run by the AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION²⁴⁵) responded, saying it had not received any legal correspondence from any government or regulatory body, and said it was seeking clarification from Ofcom.²⁴⁶ The channel operates today through a new domain.²⁴⁷ The AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication. In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that it had no open case in relation to the AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION.²⁴⁸

CASE STUDY DAR ALHEKMA TRUST AND ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Two Iranian-aligned charities, the DAR ALHEKMA TRUST (DAT) and the ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION (AIF), share a trustee: Saeed SHEHABI, who is a prominent member of the Bahraini opposition movement living in exile in the UK.²⁴⁹ Iran has historically expressed claims of influence over Bahrain, including statements by Iranian officials referring to Bahrain as Iran’s “14th province”, and Bahraini authorities have long accused Tehran of supporting Shia opposition movements in the kingdom.²⁵⁰ In a written response to this report, DAT denied any connection with the Iranian state and any “direct or indirect” links to the IRGC, while AIF said it “is not, and has never been, aligned with, directed by, controlled by, or funded by the Iranian state” and also denied any links to the IRGC.

²⁴⁴ ‘Office of Public Affairs | United States Seizes Websites Used by the Iranian Islamic Radio and Television Union and Kata’ib Hizbollah’, United States Department of Justice (June 2022), <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/united-states-seizes-websites-used-iranian-islamic-radio-and-television-union-and-kata-ib>.

Ahlulbayt.tv inclusion: ‘U.S. Seizes Websites Tied to Iran’, The Iran Primer, 7 July 2021, <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/jul/07/us-seizes-websites-tied-iran>.

Ahlulbayt.tv inclusion: Ahmed Twajj, ‘What Happened to Free Speech?’, *Newsweek*, Last updated 30 June 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-happened-free-speech-opinion-1605353>.

FBI Notice: Bureau of Industry and Security, Office of Export Enforcement; Federal Bureau of Investigation, <https://ahlulbayt.tv/>.

US sanction of IRTVU: ‘Counter Terrorism Designations and Designations Updates; Iran-related Designation and Designations Updates; Foreign Interference in U.S. Election Designations; Non-Proliferation Designation Update; Syria Designation Update’, Office of Foreign Assets Control (22 October 2020), <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20201022>.

²⁴⁵ AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION, Charity Commission Register of Charities, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/5008319/full-print>.

²⁴⁶ Ahlulbayt TV, X, 23 June 2021, <https://x.com/AhlulbaytTV/status/1407594666678177793>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/G1aso>.

²⁴⁷ See <https://ahlulbayt.co.uk>.

²⁴⁸ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

²⁴⁹ ‘DAR ALHEKMA TRUST - 1007090, Trustees’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1007090/trustees?_uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=1007090.

²⁵⁰ William Roebuck, ‘The Sources of Bahrain’s Confident Regional Policy’, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (17 July 2024), <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/the-sources-of-bahrains-confident-regional-policy-180847>; Johnathan Spyer, ‘Iran’s silent war in the Gulf’, *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 April 2013, <https://www.jpost.com/features/front-lines/irans-silent-war-in-the-gulf-308735>.

Undue Influence

SHEHABI has publicly praised IRGC commander Qasem SOLEIMANI following his death in 2020, has given interviews to Iranian state media, and provided a pre-recorded message to an online event at which representatives of HAMAS and PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD also appeared. His wider record includes historic arrest under UK counter-terrorism legislation, associations with another Bahraini opposition figure later convicted of terrorism offences, and the use of office premises later revealed to be owned by the Iranian government. (See Annex B: DAR ALHEKMA TRUST for examples of SHEHABI's conduct). In written responses to this report, SHEHABI denied supporting terrorism or extremism, said his comments and media appearances were made in a personal capacity and did not indicate political alignment, and rejected any suggestion of links to the Iranian state. DAT said that his personal activities and statements do not represent the views of the Trust.

DAT's own materials indicate it has hosted one individual, Muhammad Baqir AL-HAKIM (killed in 2003),²⁵¹ the former head of the SUPREME COUNCIL FOR ISLAMIC REVOLUTION IN IRAQ (SCIRI),²⁵² whose military wing (the BADR CORPS, now known as BADR ORGANISATION), has been described in US congressional testimony as an Iranian proxy created and directed by the IRGC.²⁵³ In its written response to this report, DAT said that AL-HAKIM visited in the 1990s and delivered a purely religious address, that his entry to the UK was lawful, and that it is misleading to infer any political alignment or present-day organisational links on that basis.

Concerns surrounding AIF relate not only to its trustees but also to its publications and media output. Media reporting has alleged that AIF's Arabic newsletter has republished material from outlets described as aligned with Iranian proxy groups, and that it has published or reproduced content praising Iran's then Supreme Leader and calling for Israel's destruction. Media reporting has also raised concerns that the newsletter has included antisemitic book reviews, including material suggesting Holocaust exaggeration. (See Annex C: ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION for examples). In its written response to this report, AIF denied antisemitism and Holocaust denial, and said that quoting or reproducing third-party material in newsletters or book reviews does not amount to endorsement.

In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that regulatory compliance cases remain ongoing in relation to DAT and the ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION following an earlier pause at the direct request of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).²⁵⁴ In November 2025, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had confirmed that the Charity Commission was

²⁵¹ Guests (auto-translated): 'من نحن - مؤسسة دار الحكمة', Dar alHekma Trust, https://www.al-hekma.org/?page_id=10.

²⁵² Michael Knights & Crispin Smith, 'Badr Organization: Iran's Oldest Proxy in Iraq', Hudson Institute (3 June 2025), <https://www.hudson.org/international-organizations/badr-organization-irans-oldest-proxy-iraq>.

²⁵³ The BADR ORGANISATION was described in a testimony delivered to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade as "Iran's premiere proxy in Iraq" and "created, funded, trained, and directed" by the IRGC. See 'Testimony of Michael Pregent Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute on "Countering Iranian Proxies in Iraq"', U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade (26 September 2018), <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA18/20180926/108719/HHRG-115-FA18-Wstate-PregentM-20180926.pdf>.

²⁵⁴ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

Undue Influence

engaging with the trustees of both charities.²⁵⁵ It had previously been reported that the MPS was assessing a dossier of evidence alleging the charities' links to Iran,²⁵⁶ suggesting that the MPS chose not to investigate or have completed their investigation. In a written response to this report, DAT said that they remain open to engaging constructively with any inquiry from the Charity Commission or the Metropolitan Police and are not prepared to comment on any investigation.

Overall Assessment: Charities and the IRGC

This analysis does not make the case that British charities are receiving orders or coordination from the IRGC. Nonetheless, questions are raised by the fact that some senior figures in some of the Iranian-aligned charities in this report – such as LYZ founder, Syeda Umme FARWA – have been in contact with elements of the paramilitary force and that they appear to be spreading an ideology which corresponds to that of the radical and cult-like worldview of the IRGC. The British state finds itself in a paradoxical state of affairs whereby it is taking increasingly robust action to counter and intercept Iranian threats, while taking limited action against the soft power and ideological structures of the regime, rendering the more security-focused measures of limited and short-term effectiveness.

²⁵⁵ 'Abrar Islamic Foundation and Dar Alhekma Trust Question for Department for Culture, Media and Sport UIN 91161, tabled on 14 November 2025', UK Parliament (Answered on 27 November 2025), <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-11-14/91161>.

²⁵⁶ Fiona Hamilton, 'Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation', *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

PART FIVE: STATE AND CHARITY COMMISSION

The analysis will now turn to the state response, and in particular, the Charity Commission response to Iranian-linked charities on British soil.

In response to this report, the Charity Commission said:

The Commission is alive to the threats posed by hostile foreign states and works with other agencies to protect the charity sector from the risks of being exploited. In the Commission's recently published Sector Risk Assessment we recognised that hostile foreign states may seek to gain influence in the UK by using charities as a vehicle for promoting their worldview.

While such issues are rare in the context of the c.170,000 charities on our register, we always deal robustly with those who intentionally or recklessly misuse charities for malign purposes, working within our statutory remit and powers to ensure that charitable status is not misused.

In cases of extremism or criminal abuse we can and do take action under our own civil powers and also refer criminal matters to the police and other authorities for them to assess and consider.

We are not aware of any individual involved in a charity, or a charity itself, being prosecuted or convicted in the UK in relation to Iran-linked activity. While criminal investigation falls outside the Commission's remit, where we become aware of a conviction linked to a charity, we assess the circumstances and determine the appropriate regulatory response.

While the Charity Commission intends to take cases of Iran-linked activity or extremist abuse seriously, there are several factors that have the effect of limiting its effectiveness in practice.

Systemic Delays and Operational Continuity

Eight of the 10 UK charities referred to in this analysis are subject to some kind of ongoing investigation by the Charity Commission.²⁵⁷ These cases variously concern alleged links to Iran; the use of charity premises for events relating to SOLEIMANI; governance and trustee oversight failings; questions about independence from Iranian institutions; and, in one case, the appropriateness of financial and operational arrangements between a charity and an associated non-charitable company.

²⁵⁷ In February 2026, the Charity Commission confirmed ongoing cases in respect of: ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION; AL TAHWEED CHARITABLE TRUST; DAR ALHEKMA TRUST; IDARA E JAAFERIYA; IRSHAD TRUST; ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND; ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TRUST; and LABAIK YA ZAHRA. There are currently no cases in respect of AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION and the MUHAMMADI TRUST. Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

Undue Influence

The investigations launched against these charities (and others) can take years before providing any update. There are several structural reasons for these delays, which must be addressed:

- **Information Sharing:** The Charity Commission often struggles to access classified information from the Home Office or other partners, forcing reliance on public sources.
- **The Appeals Process:** Trustees may currently appeal a decision on a *de novo* basis, allowing new evidence to be considered afresh rather than assessing the appeal strictly on fairness or procedure. This process stretches the Commission's limited resources.
- **Police Primacy:** Charity Commission investigations are frequently paused when allegations are referred to the police.

Delays are therefore not merely a bureaucratic inconvenience; they are a systemic failure that allows some charities under investigation to remain operational – raising funds and projecting legitimacy – for extended periods when there is an argument that they should be automatically suspended until the investigation is concluded.

Lack of Transparency Risking Public Trust in Charities

Crucially, the public is often kept in the dark during Charity Commission investigations and delays. In the four cases involving statutory inquiries or an Official Warning in respect of charities in this report, the Charity Commission released a public statement and placed a “regulatory alert” prominently on the online charity register. This policy is a welcome step. However, the Charity Commission confirmed that exceptions may be made if an announcement and online notification is considered to be not in the public interest, for example if the trustees are not aware that an inquiry is being opened or if the Charity Commission assesses that doing so would interfere with or prejudice legal proceedings or give rise to national security issues.²⁵⁸

In addition, there is no equivalent notification on the register for charities subject to regulatory compliance cases. The Charity Commission has confirmed that it does not routinely publish statements on the opening or closing of all its regulatory cases, and these are not flagged on the charity's entry on the public register. It assesses that doing so “would not be proportionate or an effective use of the Commission's resources in the context of approximately 4,000 – 5,000 regulatory compliance cases opened and closed per year”.²⁵⁹ Instead, the Commission may release a discretionary statement, for example responding to media or Parliamentarians, or if it believes highlighting a case would be in the public interest or increase public trust in charities.

This means that there is not always a clear and accessible warning to help the public or public bodies make decisions about whether to engage with a charity. Such lack of transparency may allow some

²⁵⁸ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

²⁵⁹ Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

charities under investigation to operate without public scrutiny, risking the trust of donors and institutions. Given the detrimental impact on public trust and confidence in charities, there is a strong case for mandating public notification for all cases involving suspected hostile foreign state influence, extremism or criminal abuse.

Government Funding via Gift Aid

Four of the ten UK charities referred to in this analysis are recognised by HMRC for Gift Aid, meaning that they can claim an extra 25p from the government for every £1 donated.

This includes ICEL, the nominal head of the network of Iranian-aligned charities in the UK; IDARA E JAAFERIYA, which runs a mosque and primary school in South London; the AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION, which runs a tv station; and the IHRC TRUST, which also received a £10,000 business support grant from the government during the Covid-19 pandemic.²⁶⁰

At the time of writing, three of these four charities recognised for Gift Aid are subject to live investigations by the Charity Commission.²⁶¹

The “Compliance” Trap and the Resilience of Malign Networks

When the Charity Commission determines regulatory outcomes, its investigations tend to focus on compliance and governance. Ideological concerns – or links to foreign and subversive states or bodies such as the Iranian regime or the IRGC – are typically treated as out of scope. As a result, the Commission’s interventions often amount to technical remedies: replacing an individual trustee, or issuing guidance on safeguarding or online policies.

In practice, this approach seeks to induce better behaviour from organisations that may not have been established for genuine charitable purposes, but rather operate as instruments of soft power. It may therefore inadvertently assist extremist-linked charities in obscuring their true nature, enabling them to “get over the line” of regulatory acceptability while their underlying mission remains unchanged.

This weakness is compounded by the fact that the Charity Commission’s powers largely target trustees and senior staff rather than the ideological entity itself. Organisations can therefore swap personnel, rebrand and continue operating with minimal disruption.

²⁶⁰ William Shawcross CVO, Independent Review of Prevent, House of Commons (February 2023), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf, para. 6.034

²⁶¹ In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that it had no open case in relation to the AHLULBAYT FOUNDATION. Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

Even in its strongest intervention in this report – requiring ICEL to remove the Supreme Leader trustee clause after its Soleimani event – the Commission secured a governance change, but not necessarily a break with underlying ideological influence, which ICEL denies.

This points to a broader structural issue: the Charity Commission’s statutory framework is not currently designed to address modern forms of abuse in the charity sector, where influence may be exercised through ideology, networked structures and foreign-state alignment rather than straightforward financial misconduct.

Institutional Hesitancy and Political Will

There are other factors limiting an effective state response. Sir William Shawcross, former chair of the Charity Commission, explained that, during his tenure, he encountered:

“A real nervousness, about talking about suspicions of Muslim organisations ... there’s a widespread fear amongst police, amongst schools, the headmasters and others of being accused of being racist.”

This view was echoed by Kasra Aarabi, who stated:

“I think this goes back to political will, and also unfortunately the fear of being labelled Islamophobic. The first thing that these people [the charities being scrutinised] will allege is Islamophobia.”

Aarabi noted that:

“Politicians and civil servants fail to distinguish between Islam and Islamism. As a result they bite their tongue in confronting and countering Islamism which is a threat to British national security. They forget that the main victims of Islamism are Muslims. Until that [knowledge] exists, this problem will exist, and get bigger.”

This problem may be more pronounced regarding Iran-linked activity because there is less institutional understanding of the Shia Islamist extremism of the Iranian regime compared to that of Sunni Islamism which has animated the majority of the Islamist-inspired terrorist activity in the UK in recent decades.

The Legislative Gap

Sir William Shawcross gave the view that the Charity Commission has “never had the resources it needs for any investigations, and certainly not for counter-terrorism or counter-extremism investigations”. He stressed the need for a “unit at the Charity Commission devoted to Islamist assault [on democracy], covert and overt”.

Undue Influence

However, even with resources, the current legal framework is insufficient. Unlike Germany or France, which have moved to dissolve extremist NGOs, the UK focuses on rehabilitation. The National Security Act 2023 has begun to bite in policing²⁶² – evidenced by the 2025 charging of three Iranian nationals for assisting intelligence services – but its impact on the charity sector remains theoretical. While the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS) specifies Iran for the “enhanced tier”, there is no public evidence yet that FIRS has materially disrupted UK charities with Iranian links.

There is a considerable distance between the current state of inertia and the necessary action. A “business case” for reform is clear: charitable status confers legitimacy, and Gift Aid channels taxpayer money to hostile state actors. The policy concern is not mere “links”, but patterns of conduct – such as eulogising Soleimani – that occur despite regulatory action.

²⁶² The National Security Act 2023 criminalised assisting the IRGC or Iranian intelligence, with a penalty of 14 years in prison, which is in line with Terrorism Act-based offences of the same kind.

CONCLUSION

This report identifies a pattern of ideological alignment, structural linkage and sustained interaction between certain UK charities and elements of the Iranian regime that is difficult to reconcile with the expectation of institutional independence underpinning charitable status in England and Wales.

Across multiple case studies, three features emerge:

First, there is evidence of governance and personnel overlap, both with regime-linked institutions in Iran and among the UK-based charities themselves. Senior figures associated with UK charities have held senior roles within Iran's clerical or political establishment, or have been appointed, recognised or publicly endorsed by regime authorities. In the case of ICEL, a formal constitutional provision previously required that one trustee must be appointed by the Supreme Leader at all times. Although that provision has since been amended, the historical record demonstrates that institutional alignment has, at times, been explicit rather than incidental.

Second, there is evidence of ideological alignment with Khomeinist doctrine. Public messaging, invited speakers, educational material and public events frequently include reverence for Ayatollah KHOMEINI, Ayatollah KHAMENEI or sanctioned IRGC commander Qasem SOLEIMANI. Quds Day rallies and related events hosted by UK charities have featured rhetoric widely criticised as antisemitic or hostile to Israel. Some institutions (including via their personnel or invited speakers) have expressed support for Iranian proxy groups or promoted narratives aligned with the regime's revolutionary worldview. The organisations concerned deny acting on behalf of any foreign state and reject allegations of extremism, often arguing that references to Iranian religious authorities reflect theological affiliation rather than political direction or allegiance. However, when viewed cumulatively rather than as isolated incidents, the material points to a coherent ideological orientation rather than accidental overlap.

Third, these charities operate within a wider security context, in which Iran is assessed by UK authorities to pose an active state threat. This includes through espionage, transnational repression and the use of proxies. The Intelligence and Security Committee has warned against underestimating the espionage risks associated with certain state-linked institutions in the UK. In that context, the charities examined in this report should be understood as one strand of Iran's wider strategy, which combines hard and soft power mechanisms designed to shape narratives and cultivate influence over time. While this report does not allege operational coordination with Iranian intelligence or terrorist plots, it raises questions about ideological, institutional and, in some cases, personal connections to regime-aligned and IRGC-associated actors.

As one former government adviser observed: "This is not a grassroots Shia manifestation. It's basically been imported in. And it's been imported because the Iranian government has picked a few people to come and run British religious institutions." The evidence presented suggests that elements of this infrastructure have been deliberately cultivated rather than organically developed.

The immediate impact is felt most acutely by members of the Iranian diaspora, who reject Khomeinist revolutionary ideology and report intimidation and hostility, as well as by British Jews. The longer-term risks extend further: the blurring of lines between legitimate religious expression and state-aligned ideological activism and the gradual entrenchment of the same polarising Khomeinist worldview within elements of British society over time, placing pressure on democratic norms and social cohesion.

The central policy question is therefore whether the UK's regulatory framework can adequately address foreign state influence and extremism exercised through ostensibly civil society channels. The current regime is primarily designed to address financial mismanagement and discrete regulatory breaches. It is less clearly configured to respond to ideological alignment or networked influence that falls short of criminality but may nonetheless undermine public trust and national resilience. The evidence set out in this report suggests that the challenge is structural and strategic.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To effectively dismantle the soft power infrastructure erected by Tehran within the British charitable sector, the government must move beyond a strategy of “inducing better behaviour” and towards one of disruption and containment.

The following recommendations outline the necessary statutory and operational changes:

1. **Amend the Charity Commission's Core Purposes and Statutory Functions to Better Address Modern Forms of Abuse in the Charity Sector.** The government should consider amending the Commission's general functions under Section 15 of the Charities Act 2011 (and, where necessary, its associated enforcement powers) to establish an explicit remit to investigate and, where appropriate, deregister or trigger the dissolution of charities on the basis of systemic extremism concerns or hostile state influence, subject to appropriate safeguards and evidential thresholds. This would allow the Charity Commission to intervene against the ideological entity itself, rather than focusing narrowly on individual trustee misconduct, and would help prevent the “personnel swap” tactic sometimes used by Islamist-aligned groups.
2. **Expand Disqualification Powers:** Legislation should be updated to expand Charity Commission disqualification powers to include individuals subject to immigration orders and those identified as hostile state agents. The government should consider using the “enhanced tier” designation of Iran under the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS) to curb Iranian state influence in charity governance.
3. **Expedite Extremism-Related Investigations:** The Charity Commission should find ways to expedite the appeals process for cases involving suspected hostile foreign state influence or extremism. It should assess whether reforming the appeals process to mirror Judicial Review

Undue Influence

– focusing on procedural fairness rather than *de novo* reassessment – would improve efficiency without undermining its effectiveness. While this approach would prevent claimants from re-litigating facts or introducing new evidence, it could also limit the Commission’s ability to submit evidence gathered during ongoing investigations. Alternatively, the government could provide and ringfence additional funding for such high-priority cases. In such cases, automatic suspension for the duration of an investigation should also be considered.

4. **Mandate Cross-Government Information Sharing:** Formal protocols should be established to ensure information sharing between the Home Office, the police and the Charity Commission. When an actor is investigated by one body for national security or terror financing concerns, that intelligence should be securely accessible to the Charity Commission to prevent regulatory blind spots.
5. **Enhance Transparency for the Public:** The Charity Commission should alert the public to potential abuse by flagging on the online Charitable Register ongoing investigations for cases involving suspected hostile foreign state influence and extremism. This includes relevant regulatory compliance cases as well as statutory inquiries. In addition, the Charity Commission should develop a robust process to minimise exceptions; for example, by requiring CEO-level sign-off or incorporating independent review. The current practice of piecemeal regulatory alerts and online notifications leaves the public and donors vulnerable to inadvertently funding malign actors.
6. **Protect Taxpayer Funds (Gift Aid Reform):** A vetting mechanism should be developed to exclude charities with unresolved extremism concerns from receiving Gift Aid and UK Aid Match. Due diligence checks regarding extremism and foreign state influence should be a mandatory prerequisite for any charity registering for Gift Aid.
7. **Identity Verification for Trustees:** A minimum form of identification verification should be introduced for all trustees to prevent malign actors from circumventing scrutiny or re-entering the sector under different guises.

ANNEXES

Annex A: ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND

Charity Number: 1058998, Company Number: 03142456

The ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND (ICEL), a UK-registered Shia charity, was established in 1998 and describes itself as a Shia religious and cultural centre which advances education and provides social welfare services for the Muslim community, as well as providing publication, library and outreach services.²⁶³ According to ICEL’s online factsheet, the charity has a “religious” connection to the now deceased Iranian Supreme Leader Ali KHAMENEI.²⁶⁴

CHARITY COMMISSION RESPONSE

The Charity Commission issued ICEL an official warning after it hosted two events in 2020 that eulogised sanctioned Iranian general Qasem SOLEIMANI. After finding that ICEL was only partially compliant with the warning, the Charity Commission launched a statutory inquiry in November 2022 over serious governance concerns.²⁶⁵ In May 2025, the Commission issued a formal order requiring the charity to implement governance reforms following findings of misconduct, mismanagement and failures to comply with previous regulatory directions. As of November 2025, the statutory inquiry is ongoing. A final report detailing the findings and outcomes is due to be published once the inquiry has concluded.²⁶⁶

In its written response to this report, ICEL said that the Charity Commission had raised concerns about ICEL’s policy for reviewing speakers and events and the need to ensure they were supportive of ICEL’s charitable purpose, and ICEL has engaged proactively with the Commission and adopted policies to do so.²⁶⁷

²⁶³ ‘About Us’, Islamic Centre of England, <https://ic-el.uk/about-us/>.

²⁶⁴ According to ICEL: “The Centre continues this religious heritage [of Twelver Shia Islam] and the resulting religious links with Iran. [...] [ICEL scholars] follow a senior cleric qualified as a “source of emulation” (marja’ al-taqlid). One such source of emulation is Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei. While Khamenei also has a political role in Iran, the Centre’s connection to him is a religious one.” See ‘Basic Fact Sheet’, Islamic Centre of England, <https://ic-el.uk/blog/2024/04/19/basic-fact-sheet-the-islamic-centre-of-england/>.

In its written response to this report, ICEL said that: “ICEL has previously published its position very clearly. It is an English charity, governed by English law and exists to promote religious, educational and community based purposes. We have previously confirmed the position of ICEL in relation to Ayatollah Khamenei. For clarification, in furtherance of its religious purposes, ICEL serves Shia communities of various nationalities. It provides religious services and counsel based on the edicts of religious authorities who are considered scholars of sufficient calibre of religious knowledge, and this includes Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. This guidance is strictly within the scope of his role as a spiritual and religious authority and should not be interpreted as political affiliation or representation of the Supreme Leader of Iran or his political views or opinions.”

²⁶⁵ ‘Regulator launches inquiry into Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, (November 2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-launches-inquiry-into-islamic-centre-of-england>.

²⁶⁶ ‘Regulator orders reform to governance at Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, (May 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-orders-reform-to-governance-at-islamic-centre-of-england>.

²⁶⁷ ICEL’s response stated: “The Charity Commission previously raised concerns regarding ICEL’s policy for reviewing speakers and events and the need to ensure that the same were wholly supportive of ICEL’s charitable purpose. Trustees engaged proactively with the Commission and subsequently with the Commission’s appointed Interim Manager (an English charity lawyer) and have adopted robust and comprehensive due diligence processes and policies designed to support ICEL’s compliance in practice. Any personal political views or opinions of any person, do not reflect the charity’s position, ICEL is independent.”

CONTINUED CONCERNS OF LACK OF INDEPENDENCE FROM IRAN

During its investigation, the Charity Commission said that concerns about a conflict of interest and apparent lack of independence had been resolved by removing “a requirement from the charity’s governing document for one trustee to be the official UK religious representative of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Seyed Hashem MOOSAVI],²⁶⁸ and the occupant left this role”.²⁶⁹ In its written response to this report, ICEL said that this provision reflected a religious custom, the trustee was not appointed for political reasons, and the Charity Commission understood the religious context of the provision.²⁷⁰ Although the correspondence to ICEL was addressed jointly to the trustees and to MOOSAVI personally, no separate response was received from him.

However, there are reasons to believe that these conflicts of interest and lack of independence remain:

Moosavi Remains Influential

While MOOSAVI, an Iranian national, resigned from his official positions at ICEL in December 2022, there are reasons to question whether conflicts of interest remain, as MOOSAVI is ICEL’s “incumbent imam”,²⁷¹ his e-mail address there is Director@ic-el.com,²⁷² and he has since cited KHOMEINI in sermons at ICEL.²⁷³ There are also framed photographs of KHAMENEI and KHOMEINI on the walls of

²⁶⁸ MOOSAVI is the UK representative of Iran’s Supreme Leader: Marc Home, ‘Iran’s ‘propagandist-in-chief’ billed to speak at Scottish mosque’, *The Times*, 19 June 2025, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/scotland/article/irans-propagandist-in-chief-to-speak-at-scottish-mosque-3txbv039n>.

²⁶⁹ ‘Regulator orders reform to governance at Islamic Centre of England’, Charity Commission, (May 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-orders-reform-to-governance-at-islamic-centre-of-england>.

²⁷⁰ “ICEL can further confirm that: - Its governing document historically contained a provision requiring that one trustee be appointed by the Supreme Leader of Iran. This provision reflected the religious custom that many Shia Muslims follow religious authorities (marāji’) based in Iran for everyday religious guidance and for the payment of khums, which is a religious charitable obligation. At no point was any trustee appointed for the purpose of promoting any political agenda of a religious authority or acting under their direction. All trustees act independently, this is a matter of law.

- The Charity Commission reviewed and approved the constitution and understood the religious context in which the provision operated. Following engagement with the Commission, this provision was removed from the constitution in March 2023. For your information, trustees of ICEL are recruited based on their skills and expertise, and the experience and value they can add to ICEL and its work. Our governance procedures support this.”

²⁷¹ Note MOOSAVI’s Iranian nationality, company resignation: ‘ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD people’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/officers>; Trusteeship Resignation: See Accounts and TAR for 31 December 2022, p. 6: ‘ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED – 1058998, Accounts and annual returns’, Companies House, <https://tinyurl.com/3zfx4bu8>;

As “incumbent imam”: ‘Hujjat-ul-Islam Seyed Hashim Moosavi’, Islamic Centre of England, https://ic-el.uk/hiwm_seyed_hashim_moosavi/.

²⁷² Auto-translated: ‘(حجة السلام والمسلمين سيد هاشم موسى - مركز اسلامي انگليس (لندن))’, Islamic Centre of England, <https://ic-el.uk/fa/s-h-mousavi/>.

²⁷³ E-mail address: Citing KHOMEINI in 2025 - “This is why Imam Khomeini (may Allah have mercy on him) said in this regard: ‘Islam is alive with Muharram and Safar, and just as the blood of Imam Hussein (AS) ensured the survival of Islam, according to historical reports, if Imam Hussein (AS) had not been martyred, Islam would not have survived.’” See (auto-translated): ‘(عزاداری اباعبدالله الحسين (ع) در لندن - جلوه ای از ایمان و همبستگی - محرم 2025 - مرکز اسلامی انگلیس (لندن))’, Islamic Centre of England, (2025), <https://tinyurl.com/4ebmcm4j>.

Undue Influence

the ICEL mosque.²⁷⁴ In its written response to this report, ICEL said that MOOSAVI's engagement in ICEL is religious and its trustees would not tolerate any action or activity which was political in nature.

Moosavi "Out", Najm and Hussain In

Additionally, on 6 December 2022, the day of MOOSAVI's resignations, two Iran-connected individuals gained powers at ICEL:

- British national Jafar Ali NAJM became a director and trustee.²⁷⁵ NAJM has met with and praised former Ayatollah KHOMEINI.²⁷⁶ He has also appeared in photos with former ASSEMBLY OF EXPERTS (constitutionally empowered to elect and, nominally, supervise Iran's Supreme Leader)²⁷⁷ member Grand Ayatollah Jafar SUBHANI,²⁷⁸ and with KHOMEINI's grandson and cleric, Hasan KHOMEINI.²⁷⁹ NAJM has also been the editor-in-chief of Sada-e-

²⁷⁴ Photographs on wall (2025): 'مرکز اسلامی انگلیس (لندن): (جشن میلاد با سعادت سه ستاره آسمان ولایت در مرکز اسلامی انگلیس - 2025 - مرکز اسلامی انگلیس (لندن)', Islamic Centre of England (2025), <https://tinyurl.com/2x2kmkh3>; 'شهبستان - فیلم + همبستگی + ایمان از ایمان و همبستگی', Shabestan News Agency, 30 June 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/mmp37tb>; For verification and comparison, see the ICEL's 'main prayer hall' (2018): Will Noble, 'Ever Wondered What London's Mosques Look Like Inside? These Photos Show You', *Londonist*, 19 March 2018, <https://londonist.com/london/art-and-photography/ever-wondered-what-london-s-mosques-look-like-inside-these-photos-show-you>.

²⁷⁵ Nationality and directorship: 'Jafar Ali NAJM personal appointments', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/6Bj0CmTUfZzOupPobDHaGhdvVoS/appointments>; Trusteeship: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED - 1058998, Trustees', Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1058998/trustees?_uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=1058998.

²⁷⁶ Auto-translated: 'امام جمعه شرق لندن: دنیا تشنه تفکر حضرت امام خمینی (ره) است - ایرنا', Islamic Republic News Agency, 14 June 2007, <https://tinyurl.com/2x6sbv98>.

²⁷⁷ 'Assembly of Experts', United Against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/government-institution/assembly-of-experts>.

²⁷⁸ SUBHANI as member of the Assembly (auto-translated): 'سبحانی (اقبال سبحانی)، جعفر', Secretariat of The Assembly of Experts, <https://tinyurl.com/2nntpfvc>.

NAJM is 3rd from left: 'درخواست فعال فرهنگی مقیم انگلیس از آیت الله سبحانی', *Hawza News*, 19 December 2016, <https://tinyurl.com/bdhyhact>.

²⁷⁹ Identity of Hassan KHOMEINI: 'Imam Khomeini's Biography', The Official Website of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, <https://english.khamenei.ir/news/2116/Imam-Khomeini-s-Biography>; Gallery with Hassan KHOMEINI: 'Sayyid Hassan Khomeini et les membres du conseil chiite européens', International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 7 July 2018, http://fr.imam-khomeini.ir/fr/p103_26891/Photos_d_%C3%89v%C3%A8nements/Sayyid_Hassan_Khomeini_et_les_membres_du_conseil_chiite_euro_p%C3%A9ens.

Additional gallery with Hassan KHOMEINI: 'شيعه سنی علماء نے سيد حسن خمینی سے ملاقات کی', International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 23 June 2019, <http://ur.imam-khomeini.ir/ur/p31789/>.

Sitting on couch with KHOMEINI: International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 23 June 2019, http://staticsml.imam-khomeini.ir/UserFiles/ur/Images/NewsPhoto/2019/w61_8.jpg.

Sitting on couch with KHOMEINI: International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 23 June 2019, http://staticsml.imam-khomeini.ir/UserFiles/ur/Images/NewsPhoto/2019/31_95_5.jpg.

Other (center, left of KHOMEINI): International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 23 June 2019, http://staticsml.imam-khomeini.ir/UserFiles/ur/Images/NewsPhoto/2019/48_3.jpg.

Other (center, left of KHOMEINI): International Affairs Department The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 23 June 2019, http://staticsml.imam-khomeini.ir/UserFiles/ur/Images/NewsPhoto/2019/73_38_38_2.jpg.

Undue Influence

Saqalain,²⁸⁰ apparently an Urdu-language version of *Message of Thaqaalayn*,²⁸¹ an English-language quarterly journal published by ICEL and the AHL AL-BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY (The AHL AL-BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY is an international Shia religious organisation established under former Supreme Leader KHAMENEI.²⁸² Policy reporting has described it as part of Iran's overseas ideological infrastructure and has alleged links and coordination with IRGC's QUDS FORCE).²⁸³ In its written response to this report, ICEL said that "Trustees and/or employees of ICEL may from time to time collaborate or share knowledge with other like-minded charities, where they share a similar religious purpose".

- On the same day, the British national Mir Abbas HUSSAIN, already the chair of trustees and a company director,²⁸⁴ gained powers that MOOSAVI had resigned, becoming the company's

²⁸⁰ For the July–September 2016 issue (Sade-e-Saqalain, No. 29), an ABNA news report lists Jafar Ali Najm in an editorial role (auto-translated). See 'شماره 29 مجله "پیام ثقلین" به زبان اردو منتشر شد – ابنا', *ABNA24*, 15 December 2016, <https://tinyurl.com/32ry5yrv>.

²⁸¹ Note that the AHL AL BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY-affiliated news agency ABNA reports that an AHL AL BAYT ASSEMBLY in London publishes both *Sada-e-Saqalain* and *Message of Thaqaalayn* and that *Sada-e-Saqalain* is published in Urdu with the aid of the WORLD AHL AL BAYT ASSEMBLY (auto-translated): 'شماره 29 مجله "پیام ثقلین" به زبان اردو منتشر شد – ابنا', *ABNA24*, 15 December 2016, <https://tinyurl.com/32ry5yrv>.

Further note that the AHL AL BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY refers to *Message of Thaqaalayn* as *Payam al-Saqalain*, says its editor in chief is Mohammed Ali SHOMALI, and says it is published in London (auto-translated): 'شصت و هشتمین شماره مجله پیام ثقلین به زبان انگلیسی منتشر شد', *Ahl Al-Bayt World Assembly* (2017), <https://tinyurl.com/48xp586d>.

Affiliation of ABNA: 'Strengthening joint cooperation between ABNA News Agency and media department of Hazrat Abbas holy shrine', *ABNA English*, 30 April 2025,

<https://en.abna24.com/news/1553687/Strengthening-joint-cooperation-between-ABNA-News-Agency-an>.

Further note that archived editorials authored by Mohammad Ali SHOMALI are in the journal from at least March 2009 (when the journal resumed publication, the most recent volume having previously been published in autumn and winter 1425-1426/2004-2005). See Dr. Mohammad Ali Shomali, 'Editorial Volume 10, Number 1, Spring 1430/2009', *Message of Thaqaalayn*, March 2009, <https://messageofthaqaalayn.com/archive/volume-10/number-1/> (PDF available at <https://messageofthaqaalayn.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/37-editorial.pdf>).

Further note that the journal's current website continues to list him as editor-in-chief:

'Editor-in-Chief', *Message of Thaqaalayn*, <https://messageofthaqaalayn.com/editor-in-chief/>.

²⁸² The official journal website states that *Message of Thaqaalayn* is a quarterly Islamic studies journal published by ICEL and the AHLUL BAYT (A) WORLD ASSEMBLY. See 'About', *Message of Thaqaalayn*, <https://messageofthaqaalayn.com/about/>; the Mahdism.net journal directory also lists the publisher as AHLUL BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY in association with ICEL, see 'MESSAGE OF THAQALAYN, A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Studies', The Promised Mahdi Cultural Foundation, 20 March 2024, <http://mahdism.net/blog/journals/P45639-message-of-thaqaalayn-a-quarterly-journal-of-islamic-studies.ht>.

Editor in chief: For the July–September 2016 issue (Sada-e-Saqalain, No. 29), the ABNA news report lists Jafar Ali Najm in an editorial role. See (auto-translated) 'شماره 29 مجله "پیام ثقلین" به زبان اردو منتشر شد – ابنا', *ABNA24*, 15 December 2016, <https://tinyurl.com/32ry5yrv>; Description of the AHL AL-BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY: 'AhlulBayt (a.s.) World Assembly, pioneer in international activities', *AhlulBayt World Assembly* (English), 4 January 2023, <https://www.ahl-ul-bayt.ir/en/news/item/ahlulbayt-a-s-world-assembly-pioneer-in-international-activities-abdipour>.

²⁸³ According to United Against Nuclear Iran, this collaboration includes assisting with intelligence-gathering, spotting and recruiting foreign students, and moving resources to support QUDS FORCE (and MOIS) operations. 'Ahlul Bayt World Assembly', United Against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/ideological-expansion/ahlul-bayt-world-assembly>.

²⁸⁴ Chair of trustees: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED – 1058998, Trustees', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/3nmx5wvb>; company directorship: 'Mir Abbas HUSSAIN personal appointments', Companies House, https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/Fmj_pT0Qth3XhpwKYsvj3pUk814/appointments.

Undue Influence

secretary²⁸⁵ and a person with significant control.²⁸⁶ HUSSAIN is also known as Abbas ABEDI.²⁸⁷ ABEDI posted an event commemorating the death of Ayatollah KHOMEINI held at ICEL on 3 June 2021 on his Facebook profile.²⁸⁸ According to the *Jewish Chronicle*, in 2021 ABEDI spoke at ICEL and praised Ayatollah KHOMEINI for his service to Allah and his strength against “all types of power”.²⁸⁹ The *Jewish Chronicle* further alleges that, in a 2021 speech about the foundation of Israel, ABEDI said “the Zionist lobby” allowed for Jews to take revenge on Muslims, compared non-believers to animals in a December 2020 speech, and said in another speech (date unknown) that “Zionism is the mother of Isis”, referring to the Islamic State terrorist group. At the time, ABEDI said the paper was “misinterpreting my old speeches”.²⁹⁰

These matters were put to ICEL for comment. In its written response to this report, ICEL confirmed that Mir Abbas Hussain is known as Abbas Abedi. It did not address specifically the allegations concerning Abedi’s past speeches, but stated that any personal political views expressed by individuals do not reflect the charity’s position. ICEL also said it does not promote or condone violence or hatred, and that it did not intend to comment further on historical incidents which it believes are being used to promote an untrue narrative about the charity. The correspondence was addressed to the trustees collectively, including HUSSAIN and NAJM; no separate response was received from either of them personally.

Iran-Influenced Guests

- At a 27 March 2022 LABAIK YA ZAHRA event, which took place at ICEL, the British priest Frank GELLI made an antisemitic insinuation about “dark forces” oppressing Palestine and praised HEZBOLLAH as a “patriotic, virtuous force” of which he calls himself a “great fan”.²⁹¹ GELLI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.

²⁸⁵ ‘ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD people’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/officers>.

²⁸⁶ ‘ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LTD persons with significant control’, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/persons-with-significant-control>.

²⁸⁷ David Rose, ‘New leader of Iranian regime’s ‘London office’ in Jew ‘rape and murder’ rant’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 30 March 2023, <https://www.thejc.com/news/new-leader-of-iranian-regimes-london-office-in-jew-rape-and-murder-rant-j7imp67i>.

²⁸⁸ Syed Abbas Abedi, Facebook, 30 May 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10225730256984247&set=a.10208200275465665>, archived at <https://archive.ph/vEwoX#selection-475.0-504.0>.

²⁸⁹ Jane Prinsley, ‘London Islamic centre brazenly showed Ayatollah’s ‘intifada’ rant despite Charity Commission probe’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 February 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/london-islamic-centre-brazenly-showed-ayatollahs-intifada-rant-despite-charity-commission-probe-oe5v3wd8>.

²⁹⁰ David Rose, ‘New leader of Iranian regime’s ‘London office’ in Jew ‘rape and murder’ rant’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 30 March 2023, <https://www.thejc.com/news/new-leader-of-iranian-regimes-london-office-in-jew-rape-and-murder-rant-j7imp67i>.

²⁹¹ Identity of GELLI: ‘UK priest hails Imam Ali’s government’, *IRNA English*, 19 March 2019, <https://en.irna.ir/news/83248999/UK-priest-hails-Imam-Ali-s-government>; Antisemitic Insinuation (1:07:18): “...I want to say we have a very important battle for Palestine, for the

Undue Influence

- ICEL's recent guests have included Zameer JAFFRI, a 2024 graduate of AL-MUSTAFA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY,²⁹² an institution designated by the US Treasury for recruiting for the ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS' QUDS FORCE,²⁹³ who spoke in a 26 July 2024 video on ICEL's YouTube channel, where he ended a sermon with a prayer for the protection of then Supreme Leader KHAMENEI.²⁹⁴ JAFFRI did not respond to a request for comment prior to publication.
- An 8 March 2025 ICEL YouTube video features footage of several speakers, including KHAMENEI, Hossein VAHIDPOUR (professor at QOM SEMINARY,²⁹⁵ a prominent Islamic seminary operated by senior clerics and state-affiliated institutions and "Iran's political and spiritual powerhouse" according to Iran International),²⁹⁶ and Dr. Seyed Mohsen MIRBAGHERI of the UNIVERSITY OF RELIGIONS AND DENOMINATIONS,²⁹⁷ (an offshoot of QOM SEMINARY according to the university;²⁹⁸ its president, Dr. Seyed Abolhassan NAWAB, has been appointed by the then Supreme Leader of Iran to several roles over the course of his career, including positions within the AHL AL-BAYT WORLD ASSEMBLY and ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS).²⁹⁹

These matters were put to ICEL for comment. ICEL did not address the specific speakers referenced, but stated that it is an independent English charity not directed or controlled by Iran, that it does not

people of Palestine, whose land has been stolen, who have been oppressed, who have been downtrodden and humiliated by some of the dark forces. And I probably am sure you know who I mean by dark forces here." Praise for HEZBOLLAH (1:07:46): "...I'm a great fan of Hezbollah in Lebanon. It's interesting, I was reading in Germany they shut down - the German government, which is always kissing the backside of American imperialism - shut down an Imam al-Mahdi mosque because they supported Hezbollah. And Hezbollah is a patriotic, virtuous force which, again, shows the way." See: 'Imam Mahdi (aj) Seminar - Labaik Ya Zahra (S.A)', Labaik Ya Zahra, YouTube, 27 March 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2t-PchD4-2E>.

²⁹² Note "Al Mustufa International University": 'Zameer Abbas Jaffri', LinkedIn, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/zameerabbasjaffri/>.

²⁹³ Michael R. Pompeo, 'The United States Sanctions IRGC Facilitators in Iran and an IRGC Official in Yemen', United States Department of State (December 2020), <https://2017-2021.state.gov/the-united-states-sanctions-irgc-facilitators-in-iran-and-an-irgc-official-in-yemen/>.

²⁹⁴ See 01:06:02 (auto-translation of AI-generated transcript): 'Muharram 2024 Night 9 - Urdu - Maulana Syed Zameer Jaffri', Islamic Centre of England, YouTube, 26 July 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lowjclC09w0>.

²⁹⁵ Auto-translated: 'حجت الاسلام وحیدپور در گفتگو با تقریب: حضرت علی (ع) در تمام مذاهب اسلامی و غیر اسلامی شناخته شده است', The World Forum for Proximity of Islamic School of Thought (February 2022), <https://tinyurl.com/8df34nbs>.

²⁹⁶ Maryam Sinaiee, 'Inside Qom Seminary, Iran's political and spiritual powerhouse', *Iran International*, 7 May 2025, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202505070842>.

²⁹⁷ 'Dr. Seyed Mohsen Mirbagheri', University of Religions and Denominations, <https://urd.ac.ir/en/44515/Dr.-Seyed-Mohsen-Mirbagheri-44515/>.

²⁹⁸ 'University of Religions and Denominations', University of Religions and Denominations, <https://urd.ac.ir/en/>.

²⁹⁹ KHAMENEI speaks at 37:30, VAHIDPOUR at 19:04, MIRBAGHERI at 7:04. Note that the video description includes a disclaimer which reads: "The Centre displays presentations and third-party contents in furtherance of its religious purposes, and in order to ensure its community and beneficiaries can fully access and participate in the Holy Month of Ramadan and other religious events and programs. The Centre does not promote any political party or person, nor does the Centre condone or endorse any political views." However, the ICEL logo is displayed throughout the video and MOOSAVI also speaks (see 24:13). See: 'بهار ایمان | ویژه برنامه سحر ماه مبارک رمضان ۲۰۲۵ | سحر هفتم', Islamic Centre of England, YouTube, 8 March 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUdeYB08NeQ>.

'Dr. Seyed Abolhassan Nawab', University of Religions and Denominations, <https://urd.ac.ir/en/36212/Dr.-Seyyed-Abolhassan-Nawab/>.

Undue Influence

promote or condone violence or hatred, and that personal political views expressed by individuals do not reflect the charity's position.

FUNDING

According to the Charity Commission's online register, ICEL's total gross income in the last five years averages £559k per annum. ICEL has not declared any government income.³⁰⁰ According to an official DAT document for 2024, ICEL derives most of its income from donations, with smaller amounts from sales of books, hire of the conference hall, marriage fees, other religious activities and insurance claims.³⁰¹ ICEL is recognised by HMRC for Gift Aid.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED – 1058998, Financial history', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/3ma5z8ap>.

³⁰¹ See Accounts and TAR for 31 December 2024, p. 4: 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED – 1058998, Accounts and annual returns', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/3zfx4bu8>.

³⁰² 'ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND LIMITED – 1058998, Governance', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/yx9647dk>.

Annex B: DAR ALHEKMA TRUST

Charity number: 1007090

The DAR ALHEKMA TRUST (DAT) was founded in 1986 by expatriate and displaced Bahrainis to meet social and religious needs by providing cultural, intellectual and scientific events and providing educational services.³⁰³ According to their Charity Commission profile, they advance Islam in accordance with the Shia Ithna-Ashari faith (Twelvers; Shia subsect who recognise twelve imams as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad).³⁰⁴ Their address is in London,³⁰⁵ and they operate throughout the UK.³⁰⁶

LEADERSHIP

DAT's trustees have included Dr Saeed SHEHABI and Abbas AL OMRAN.³⁰⁷

Dr Saeed Shehabi

Saeed SHEHABI is the founder of the dissolved Bahraini AL-WEFAQ opposition party and has lived in the UK since 1973, gaining asylum in 1985 and citizenship in 2002.³⁰⁸ He leads the BAHRAIN FREEDOM MOVEMENT,³⁰⁹ which describes itself as a London-based Bahraini opposition group,³¹⁰ and was previously listed as the Assistant Secretary General of the dissolved ISLAMIC UNITY FORUM (IUF), led by Dr Kamal EL-HELBAWY,³¹¹ a former spokesperson for the MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, who died in 2023.³¹² In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said his involvement with the IUF was related to

³⁰³ Auto-translated: 'مُن نحن - مؤسسة دار الحكمة', Dar alHekma Trust, https://www.al-hekma.org/?page_id=10.

³⁰⁴ 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Governing document', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/bdfu4sc8>.

Description of the Shi'a Ithna-Ansari faith: John L. Esposito (ed.), 'The Islamic World: Past and Present', Oxford University Press, 2004, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780195165203.001.0001/acref-9780195165203-e-170>.

³⁰⁵ 45 CHALTON STREET, LONDON, NW1 1HY: 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Contact information', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/3tnvpvxa>.

'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, What, who, how, where', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/4s8hkxch>.

³⁰⁶ 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Governing document', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/bdfu4sc8>.

³⁰⁷ 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Trustees', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/yctd4j4n>.

³⁰⁸ Dissolution of AL-WEFAQ: 'Federal Foreign Office on the dissolution of the Bahraini opposition party Al Wefaq', Federal Foreign Office (Germany; July 2016), <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/160718-bhr-282348>; '[2024] EWCA Civ 1158', Judiciary of England and Wales (October 2024), <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Shehabi-v-Kingdom-of-Bahrain-04.10.24.pdf>, p. 4, para. 9.

³⁰⁹ 'Al-Shehabi to Bahrain Mirror: Saudi Arabia Is a Cornered Beast, Furious at How Bahraini Uprising Carries on', *Bahrain Mirror*, 24 August 2016, <https://bahrainmirror.com/en/news/33330.html>.

³¹⁰ 'Written evidence from Bahrain Freedom Movement', Parliament Foreign Affairs Select Committee, (November 2012), <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmfa/88/88vw22.htm>.

³¹¹ Auto-translated: 'نبذة عن منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية – منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية', Islamic Unity Forum (September 2014), <https://tinyurl.com/24znu6dd>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/Fotap>; confirmation of SHEHABI's involvement in ISLAMIC UNITY FORUM, nationality of EL-HELBAWY: 'ISLAMIC UNITY FORUM LIMITED people', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/06414918/officers>.

³¹² "Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings", House of Commons (December 2015), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a817cdaed915d74e6232892/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf, p. 3-4.

Undue Influence

inter-community dialogue aimed at reducing sectarian tensions and did not indicate political alignment or ongoing affiliation.³¹³ DAT said the IUF operated lawfully, was never proscribed, and that the Muslim Brotherhood has never been banned in the UK.³¹⁴

SHEHABI has a number of connections to Iran.

- In 2021, SHEHABI sent a video message to an online event called “Jerusalem is Closer” where other speakers included representatives of HAMAS and PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ) and included a message of support to the political arm of the AL-ASHTAR BRIGADES,³¹⁵ a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK and US that has received material support and training from the IRGC.³¹⁶ AL-ASHTAR formally integrated IRGC insignia into its logo,³¹⁷ and both HAMAS and PIJ are proscribed terrorist groups in the UK and backed by the IRGC.³¹⁸ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that he did not attend the event, had no knowledge of the other speakers, and had provided only a pre-recorded message expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people, maintaining that he has always been a peaceful, non-violent activist. DAT said that any activities undertaken by SHEHABI in a personal capacity do not represent the views of the Trust.
- After IRGC commander General Qasem SOLEIMANI was killed on 3 January 2020, SHEHABI tweeted: “He had heart of iron, he feared only God, and looked down on arrogant people. Fair people described him as courageous, intelligent, wise, gentle and humble, but his enemies found no faults other than his resistance to tyranny.”³¹⁹ He also called SOLEIMANI a

³¹³ Shehabi stated: “My early involvement with IUF reflected engagement with inter-community dialogue [...] rather than alignment with any political movement or ideology [...] any historical association does not indicate current affiliation, influence, or ongoing activity.”

³¹⁴ DAT stated: “At no point was the Islamic Unity Forum banned, proscribed, or subject to any sanction [...] and it operated lawfully within the UK’s legal and regulatory framework. [...] The Muslim Brotherhood has never been a proscribed organisation in the United Kingdom.”

³¹⁵ Fiona Hamilton, ‘Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation,’ *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

Auto-translated: ‘لجنة إحياء يوم القدس العالمي تنظم مهرجانًا خطابيًا افتراضيًا’, February 14 Revolution Youth Coalition (6 May 2021), <https://tinyurl.com/2smnt92d>.

³¹⁶ ‘Al-Ashtar Brigades, Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations’, Home Office (Last updated 11 November 2025), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version>; ‘Al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB)’, Office of the Director of National Intelligence [United States Government] (Last updated March 2025), https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/aab.html.

³¹⁷ ‘State Department Terrorist Designation of al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB)’, U.S. Department of State (10 July 2018), <https://2017-2021.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designation-of-al-ashtar-brigades-aab/>.

³¹⁸ ‘U.S. and U.K. Target IRGC-QF Support to Hamas and Other Proxy Groups’, US Treasury (14 December 2023), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1987>.

³¹⁹ Auto-translated: Saeed Shehabi, X, 4 January 2020, <https://x.com/SaeedShehabi/status/1213446253092245505>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/JyHpZ>. For screenshot, see Screenshots D5: Heart of Iron.

Undue Influence

hero of Iran,³²⁰ a “great martyr”,³²¹ and “an icon to many who adopted struggle to achieve liberty & freedom”.³²² An article for *The Times* covering the first tweet reported: “Of his tweets on Soleimani, the [DAT] spokesman said Shehabi did not go beyond describing the commander’s character.”³²³ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that he has previously addressed the matter on the public record, the IRGC is not proscribed in the UK, and that it was a private eulogy about a man’s personal character.³²⁴ In a written response to this report, DAT said that SHEHABI’s comments do not represent the views of the Trust.³²⁵

- In August 2018, SHEHABI was photographed at an event in London alongside Ayatollah Mohsen ARAKI, a former head of the ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND and member of Iran’s Assembly of Experts, which selects the Supreme Leader.³²⁶ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that being photographed at the same event as an individual does not amount to endorsement, affiliation or evidence of links. DAT said that it does not adopt or endorse the views of individuals who attend community events and that a historic photograph cannot properly be used to imply involvement with a foreign state or institution. ARAKI did not respond to a request for comment.

SHEHABI has posted on social media praising the Palestinians and the “resistance” in the aftermath of the 7 October 2023 HAMAS-led terrorist attacks.

³²⁰ Auto-translated: Saeed Shehabi, X, 6 January 2020, <https://x.com/SaeedShehabi/status/1214195426217406464>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/qMNdV>. For screenshot, see Screenshots D6: Hero.

³²¹ Saeed Shehabi, X, 6 January 2020, <https://x.com/SaeedShehabi/status/1214193104263286786>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/Tx6EW>. For screenshot, see Screenshots D7: Great Martyr.

³²² Saeed Shehabi, X, 4 January 2020, <https://x.com/SaeedShehabi/status/1213448111089209344>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/JRqul>. For screenshot, see Screenshots D8: Icon.

³²³ Fiona Hamilton, ‘Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation,’ *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

³²⁴ Shehabi stated: “Dr Shehabi has previously addressed his tweet regarding Qasem Soleimani on the public record. The IRGC is not a proscribed organisation in the UK. The insinuation that a private eulogy referring to a man’s personal character is supportive of terrorism is particularly grave and misleading.”

³²⁵ DAT stated: “The comments made by Dr. Shehabi do not represent the views of The Trust.”

³²⁶ David Rose, ‘UK ‘interfaith’ charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhbrkan>.

The photo can be found beneath the heading “The Ahlulbait Islamic Mission (est. 2003)”: Hannah Somerville, ‘Iran’s Overseas Propaganda: London, Gateway to the World’, *IranWire*, 22 November 2020, <https://iranwire.com/en/features/68084/>.

Former head of ICEL: See the 19 Jun 1996 and 16 Sep 1996 Special resolutions of alteration of Memorandum of Association, 1996, Islamic Centre of England, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03142456/filing-history?page=6>, p. 1, <https://tinyurl.com/3u65f3km>; Mohsen MOHAMMADI ARAGHI, Islamic Centre of England, Companies House, https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/q_ejY1ivpy2OKsmZe623f5g9mPE/appointments; Ayatollah Mohsen Araki, Facebook, 7 January 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1408178529475751&set=a.1408098636150407>;

Member of the Assembly of Experts: ‘عضو مجلس خبرگان: تهدیدکنندگان خامنه‌ای «محارب» هستند’ (auto-translated), *Iran International*, 10 July 2021, <https://www.iranintl.com/202507102733>; According to the Assembly of Expert’s Secretariat, Araki served in the second, third and fifth terms of the assembly and is serving in the current sixth term (1991-2007, 2016-present; auto-translated): ‘محمدی اراکی، محسن’, Secretariat of the Assembly of Experts, <https://tinyurl.com/yc5npr3m>; Auto-translated: ‘Introducing the elected members of the Assembly of Experts of the Leadership in Markazi Province’, *Mehr News*, 3 March 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/ynwm7zcx>; Katherine Donlevy and Steven Nelson, ‘Iran’s Supreme Leader picks ‘3 stooges’ to replace him as fear of assassination surges: report’, *New York Post*, 21 June 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/06/21/world-news/irans-ayatollah-ali-khamenei-picking-supreme-leader-successors/>.

Undue Influence

- In November 2023, SHEHABI reposted a tweet showing a demonstration in support of Palestine and the “resistance” and containing an image of HEZBOLLAH leader Hasan NASRALLAH.³²⁷ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI has said that his X account features a prominent notice stating that ‘RTs are not endorsements’ and that has always been his position.³²⁸ DAT said that tweets posted in SHEHABI’s personal capacity do not represent the views of the Trust.
- On 8 October 2023, SHEHABI posted that Palestinians “rose up and became the master of the situation” and prayed for their victory.³²⁹ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that his comments did not endorse violence but expressed solidarity with the oppressed.³³⁰ DAT said that SHEHABI did not advocate violence and may have included a prayer to support those facing oppression.³³¹

SHEHABI has also given interviews with Iranian state media outlets.

- He spoke on Al Alam TV in support of the 2011 Bahraini uprising (a series of Shia-led anti-government protests in Bahrain),³³² and to Press TV in 2016 opposing Bahrain’s decision to strip a prominent Shia cleric of citizenship.³³³ In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that providing interviews with foreign media outlets does not amount to political alignment with their states or institutions,³³⁴ and DAT said that comments made by SHEHABI in interviews in his personal capacity do not represent the views of the Trust.

SHEHABI’s wider record includes a historic terrorism arrest, association with an individual later convicted of terrorism offences, and the use of office premises later revealed to be owned by the Iranian government.

³²⁷ Auto-translated; see Screenshot D9: Shehabi Nasrallah: البحرين اليوم, X, 10 November 2023, <https://x.com/BahrainAlyoum/status/1723053990949064926>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/JSNEN>.

³²⁸ SHEHABI said that reposting third-party material does not amount to endorsement and may be shared for a range of reasons, including disagreement. He said the repost related to alleged crimes during the Gaza war and “did not express support for, allegiance to, or endorsement of any individual, organisation, or armed group”, and that he did not create the image or slogan or add commentary endorsing it.

³²⁹ Auto-translated: Saeed Shehabi, X, 8 October 2023, <https://x.com/SaeedShehabi/status/1710970002013098096>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/8K0Xm>. See Screenshots D10: Shehabi October 7th.

³³⁰ SHEHABI said he is a “lifelong advocate for the peaceful resolution” of the conflict, that he opposes violence and terrorism, and that his remarks expressed solidarity with Palestinians rather than endorsement of violence.

³³¹ DAT said the posts expressed support for Palestinians “in view of their endurance of severe human rights violations under occupation”, did not advocate violence, and did not support acts contrary to international law.

³³² ‘Dr Saeed Al Shehabi on Al Alam TV 19 Feb 2011’, Moosa81Mohammed, YouTube, 20 February 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsEyg_-9tgA.

³³³ ‘Bahrain must be put under real pressure to undertake reforms: Activist’ Press TV, Last updated 11 July 2016, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2016/07/11/474694/Bahrain-protest-Sheikh-Isa-Qassim-Al-Khalifah-Diraz-crackdown>.

³³⁴ SHEHABI said that he has worked as a journalist and political commentator for over 40 years and has appeared on “independent and state television channels across Europe and the Middle East”, and that such appearances do not indicate political alignment with any state.

Undue Influence

- In 2014, SHEHABI was pictured at an event alongside Bahraini opposition figure Abdulraoof Abdulla AHMED (AL SHAYEB).³³⁵ AL SHAYEB was arrested the following month and later convicted of a terrorism offence relating to material found in his possession which the prosecutor described as “the information you might want or need if planning to bring down a regime by stealth and by force, and by terror tactics – particularly when it comes to bombs, missiles and mortars”.³³⁶

In August 2023, AL SHAYEB had attended an event commemorating the killing of a prominent IRGC QUDS FORCE colonel in Syria in 2017.³³⁷ Posting on X, AL SHAYEB said: “The opposition forces affiliated with the Great Bahrain shared, alongside the rest of the revolutionary and jihadist forces affiliated with the Resistance Axis, in the sixth anniversary events commemorating Martyr Commander Hussein Al-Qomi,”³³⁸ and praised participant Zainab SOLEIMANI, referring to her as the “daughter of a martyr of the Resistance Axis [Qasem SOLEIMANI]”.³³⁹ In December 2023, AL SHAYEB shared an invitation on Twitter to a vigil for his deceased mother in several locations, including DAT.³⁴⁰

In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that he has not met AL-SHAYEB for more than a decade and that being photographed with individuals in the course of public work does not amount to endorsement of their views. DAT said that AL-SHAYEB is not affiliated with the Trust and has not attended for over a decade; it described the December 2023 event as a private religious condolence gathering, not a political event, and rejected any suggestion that it evidenced an ongoing relationship or ideological alignment.

- In 2012, it was reported that the London office used by SHEHABI for 13 years was owned by the Iranian government; at the time, SHEHABI said this was a coincidence.³⁴¹ In a written

³³⁵ Auto-translated: @qasim_alhashmi, Instagram, 8 March 2014, <https://www.instagram.com/p/IR5DRwJsb9/?igsh=dnczaGMzODV4cGNx>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/WkFlz>. For a screenshot, see Screenshot D11: Shehabi and al Shayeb.

³³⁶ ‘Terrorist who attended human rights conferences with Jeremy Corbyn faces jail’, *The Telegraph*, 16 December 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/12054443/Terrorist-who-attended-human-rights-conferences-with-Jeremy-Corbyn-faces-jail.html>.

³³⁷ Auto-translated: @AmalSociety, X, 9 August 2023, <https://twitter.com/AmalSociety/status/1689349995840024576>. For a screenshot, see Screenshot D12: Al Shayeb Syria 2017.

³³⁸ Auto-translated: @Raooof_Alshayeb, X, 9 August 2023, https://x.com/Raooof_Alshayeb/status/1689304512081612801?s=20, archived at: <https://archive.ph/FUHAS>. For a screenshot, see Screenshot D13: Al-Shayeb Qomi.

³³⁹ Auto-translated: @Raooof_Alshayeb, X, 9 August 2023, https://x.com/Raooof_Alshayeb/status/1689307920851173376, archived at: <https://archive.ph/JwJlq>. For a screenshot, see Screenshot D14: Al-Shayeb Zainab Soleimani.

³⁴⁰ Auto-translated: @Raooof_Alshayeb, X, 13 December 2023, https://x.com/raooof_alshayeb/status/1734840761210818784?s=48&t=0b0txNO4yTBiEyHgJtC_Ng, archived at: <https://archive.ph/CVxUh>. For a screenshot, see Screenshot D15: Al Shayeb DAT Vigil.

³⁴¹ ‘Files link activist to Iran regime’, *The Standard*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/files-link-activist-to-iran-regime-6437913.html>

Undue Influence

response to this report, SHEHABI said that he was unaware of the building's ownership and added that Barclays Bank was also a tenant in the same building.

- As far back as 1990, SHEHABI was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act in relation to threats to Salman Rushdie, who had gone into hiding the previous year following Ayatollah KHOMEINI's fatwa.³⁴² In a written response to this report, SHEHABI said that no charges were brought and no wrongdoing established, that he believes the arrest was unrelated to Rushdie, and that it cannot support any inference of association with Iran.

These matters were put to SHEHABI. In a written response to this report, he said that he has spent his life campaigning peacefully for democratic rights and that the allegations form part of a smear campaign linked to the Bahraini authorities, following his successful legal action against them in the UK. He rejected any suggestion that he supports extremism or acts on behalf of a foreign state.

Abbas Al Omran

Bahraini national Abbas AL OMRAN (AKA Abbas Abdulaziz ALOMRAN) describes himself as a member of the BAHRAIN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS on his X account and was the director of a company by the same name, which dissolved on 24 April 2012.³⁴³

- On 28 September 2024, one day after the assassination of NASRALLAH, AL OMRAN tweeted in Arabic: "Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return May Allah grant you great reward, my lord, O Master of the Time," between reposting two tweets about NASRALLAH.³⁴⁴ One contains an image bearing the text: "Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return."³⁴⁵ The other features a video where a speaker eulogises NASRALLAH as a brave and wise leader and martyr, following the path of the prophets and martyred imams, and as having led HEZBOLLAH from victory to victory in a religiously framed armed struggle in defence of Lebanon and in pursuit of Palestine. The speaker also referred to then Iranian

³⁴² Arrests over Rushdie threats, *The Financial Times*, 24 May 1990, <https://archive.org/details/FinancialTimes1990UKEnglish/May%2024%201990%2C%20Financial%20Times%2C%20%2331156%2C%20UK%20%28en%29/page/8/mode/2up>.

³⁴³ Note that the correspondence address of VISIONMED LIMITED company matches that of DAR ALHEKMA TRUST (45 Chalton Street, London, United Kingdom, NW1 1HY): 'Abbas Abdulaziz ALOMRAN personal appointments', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/k4KzXE5PZkk2ZsCDmyDEdMqU7g4/appointments>; 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Contact information', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/3tnvpvxa>; Abbas Al Omran, X, <https://x.com/abbasalomran>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/JA1lp>. 'BAHRAIN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS overview', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/07369720>.

³⁴⁴ Auto-translated: Abbas Al Omran, X, 28 September 2024, <https://x.com/abbasalomran/status/1839997550792765497>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/V3Zyn>; For screenshot of the tweet and retweets, see Screenshot D16: Abbas Alomran's Nasrallah Memorial Tweets.

³⁴⁵ Auto-translated: Mazen Mahdi, X, 28 September 2024, <https://x.com/MazenMahdi/status/1839994254594027684>, archived at <https://archive.ph/xIEJK>.

Undue Influence

Supreme Leader Ayatollah KHAMENEI as the “Guardian of the Affairs of Muslims”, offering prayers and condolences to him.³⁴⁶

- On 31 October 2021, Bahraini media identified AL OMRAN as an official of the HAQ MOVEMENT,³⁴⁷ a Shia faction outlawed in Bahrain after calling for regime change.³⁴⁸ According to HEZBOLLAH-operated Al-Manar TV,³⁴⁹ the HAQ MOVEMENT issued a statement on al-Quds Day (6 May) in 2021, which named “resistance as the only path which can liberate the Palestinian territories occupied by the Israeli enemy” and hailed a speech by NASRALLAH.³⁵⁰

In a written response to this report, DAT said that AL OMRAN has resigned as a trustee and no longer holds any role within the Trust, and that the allegations concern him in a personal capacity and do not reflect DAT. At the time of receiving DAT’s response, he remained listed as a trustee on the Charity Commission register.³⁵¹ Although the correspondence was addressed to the DAT trustees collectively, including AL OMRAN, and DAT stated that it had forwarded the right of reply to him, no separate response was received from him personally.

ALLEGED CONNECTIONS TO IRAN OR ITS PROXY GROUPS

DAT and its guests have praised Iran, Iranian figures or their ideology.

- In a 22 November 2024 video on DAT’s YouTube channel discussing the relationship between religion and politics in the life of Imam Ali (successor of the Prophet Mohammad for Shia Muslims),³⁵² one speaker argued that politics and religion are inseparable in Islam, citing KHOMEINI’s teachings that “our politics is the very essence of our religion”.³⁵³ In a written response to this report, DAT said the video formed part of a theological discussion about

³⁴⁶ Auto-translation of AI-generated transcript: همام شعلان || H . Shaalan, X, 28 September 2024, <https://x.com/osSWSso/status/1839998540480655453>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/syZRT>.

³⁴⁷ ‘Confirmed Information Says Martyr Ali Qambar Denied Treatment after Return to Bahrain: Haq Movement’, *Bahrain Mirror*, 31 October 2021, <https://www.bahrainmirror.com/en/news/60394.html>.

³⁴⁸ ‘Bahrain: Unrest, Security, and U.S. Policy’, Congressional Research Service (Last updated 25 September 2020), https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/RS/PDF/95-1013/95-1013.175.pdf.

³⁴⁹ ‘Lebanon media guide’, BBC News, 4 October 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14648683>.

³⁵⁰ ‘Bahrain’s Haq Movement: Only Resistance Can Liberate Palestine from Israeli Occupation’, Al-Manar TV, 6 May 2021, <https://english.almanar.com.lb/1331926>.

³⁵¹ ‘DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Trustees’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1007090/trustees?uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=1007090.

³⁵² Mansour Leghaei, ‘Imam Ali (as), whose Imam is he?’, Al-Islam.org, <https://al-islam.org/articles/imam-ali-whose-imam-he-mansour-leghaei>.

³⁵³ See 12:56 for context, 15:05-15:38 for KHOMEINI quote (auto-translation of AI-generated transcript): ‘العلاقة بين الدين | الأمسية الأسبوعية | الدكتور سعيد الشهابي، Dar alHekma Trust, YouTube, 22 November 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxCeWYpXU0>.

Undue Influence

religion and public life, and that citing Khomeini in that context does not amount to political endorsement or alignment with any foreign state.

- On 12 January 2024, DAT published a video memorialising the death of Morteza MOTAHHARI, described by KHOMEINI's official archival and publication body as regarded as a "right-hand" of KHOMEINI,³⁵⁴ was president of Iran's Constitutional Council (governance body responsible for vetting legislation, among other tasks),³⁵⁵ and member of the Revolutionary Council (the secret, religious body that supervised revolutionary tribunals following the Islamic Revolution) at the time of MOTAHHARI's assassination in 1979.³⁵⁶ In a written response to this report, DAT said the video was commemorative and educational material concerning a deceased religious scholar and that suggesting it evidences political endorsement or state alignment would be a misleading 'guilt-by-association' inference.
- On 14 April 2023, International Quds Day, DAT hosted an event titled "International Quds Day as Seen by Imam Khomeini", which featured Saeed SHEHABI, who discussed the Qur'anic phrase "those who believe in the unseen", linking trust in divine laws and divine justice against supposed oppressors.³⁵⁷ In a written response to this report, DAT said this was a faith-based event and that referencing religious themes or historical figures does not amount to endorsement of violence, proscribed organisations, or any foreign government, nor establish alignment with Iran.

Responding to these matters, DAT said it has no connection whatsoever with the Iranian state or any body acting on its behalf, and denied that its materials or guest speakers amount to praise for Iran or endorsement of Iranian ideology, describing its output as religious and educational in nature.

GUESTS SUPPORTING VIOLENCE OR PROSCRIBED GROUPS

Several guests on DAT's YouTube channel have expressed support for violence, jihad or proscribed groups.

³⁵⁴ 'Motahhari hailed as exceptional talent', Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works (May 2016), <http://ar.imam-khomeini.ir/en/NewsPrint.aspx?ID=16016>;

About the Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works: 'The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works', Al-Islam.org, <https://al-islam.org/call-divine-unity-letter-imam-khomeini-president-mikhail-gorbachev-sayyid-ruhullah-musawi-khomeini-2>.

³⁵⁵ 'About Us', Constitutional Council of Iran, <https://www.shora-gc.ir/en/about>.

³⁵⁶ Auto-translated: 'الأمسية الأسبوعية | الشهيد مرتضى مطهري .. عطاء متجدد | الأستاذ محمد علي', Dar alHekma Trust, YouTube, 12 January 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JWJa-IP00s>.

Description of Revolutionary Council: John Kifner, 'Ayatollah on Khomeini's Council Is Slain by Islamic Guerrilla Band', *The New York Times*, 2 May 1979, <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/05/02/archives/ayatollah-on-khomeinis-council-is-slain-by-islamic-guerrilla-band.html>.

³⁵⁷ Auto-translated: 'يوم القدس العالمي كما رآه الإمام الخميني - مؤسسة دار الحكمة', Dar alHekma Trust, 14 April 2023, <https://www.al-hekma.org/?p=15217>.

Undue Influence

- In a 19 January 2024 video, a Dr. Hassan AL-SAHLAWI praised the “Axis of Resistance” and “our brothers in Yemen, our people in Lebanon, our brothers in Iraq” as best understanding Imam Ali’s principles, and criticised clerics who distance themselves from HAMAS or other Islamic movements.³⁵⁸ AL-SAHLAWI also made an antisemitic insinuation by, when discussing a list he had of companies to boycott and why, saying: “And it became clear, when you read the list, that the group, I won’t mention their names, are really controlling the global economy. Really, not just a little.”³⁵⁹ In a written response to this report, DAT said that it unequivocally opposes antisemitism, racism, violence and extremism in all its forms, including any support for proscribed organisations, and the speaker’s comments were made in a personal capacity.
- In the 12 January 2024 video commemorating Morteza MOTAHHARI, religious chanter Sayed Ahmed ALWADAEI prayed for “oppressed brothers everywhere”, including Yemen, Gaza and Palestine, and invoked Qur’anic battle imagery (steadying feet, sometimes used in battle contexts),³⁶⁰ before referring to “martyrs of truth and freedom”, which he said reminded him of the “brothers” in Gaza and their sacrifices and jihad for the sake of God.³⁶¹ In a written response to this report, DAT said that these remarks are not an expression of support for violence or the endorsement of any proscribed group but rather prayers for oppressed people, and the Qur’anic language constitutes a battle between right and wrong and oppression and justice, not encouragement of unlawful acts or violence.

Responding to these matters, DAT said it does not endorse violence, antisemitism or proscribed organisations and does not adopt the views of third-party speakers, and that these show meanings and intentions not borne out by the words used. Requests for comment were also sent, via DAT, to Dr Hassan AL-SAHLAWI and Sayed Ahmed ALWADAEI; no responses were received from them directly, and DAT’s response has therefore been treated as addressing these matters on their behalf.

³⁵⁸ See 24:59-27:10 (auto-translation of AI-generated transcript): “الأمسية الأسبوعية | لمحات من حياة الإمام علي عليه السلام | الدكتور حسن | السهلاوي”, Dar alHekma Trust, YouTube, 19 January 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2QyGP5eoxE>.

³⁵⁹ See 6:00 for identification, 30:13 for discussion of the boycott list, antisemitic insinuation at 31:35-31:59 (auto-translation of AI-generated transcript): “الأمسية الأسبوعية | لمحات من حياة الإمام علي عليه السلام | الدكتور حسن السهلاوي”, Dar alHekma Trust, YouTube, 19 January 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2QyGP5eoxE>.

³⁶⁰ ‘Quranic Reflection No. 507. Āyat 8:45 – Standing Firm’, The Academy for Learning Islam, <https://academyofislam.com/quranic-reflection-no-507-ayat-845-standing-firm/>.

³⁶¹ Identity of ALWADAEI: David Rose, ‘UK ‘interfaith’ charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups’. *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024,

<https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhrkan>.

See 23:16-23:38 for ALWADAEI’s first prayer and 1:23:15-1:23:51 for “martyrs of truth and freedom” (auto-translation of AI-generated transcript): “الأمسية الأسبوعية | الشهيد مرتضى مطهري .. عطاء متجدد | الأستاذ محمد علي”, Dar alHekma Trust, YouTube, 12 January 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JWJa-IPO0s>; a DAT page about this event confirms ALWADAEI’s participation (auto-translated): “الشهيد مرتضى مطهري .. عطاء متجدد”, Dar alHekma Trust (January 2024), <https://www.al-hekma.org/?p=16013>.

CHARITY COMMISSION RESPONSE

In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that regulatory compliance cases remain ongoing in relation to DAT (and the ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION), following an earlier pause at the direct request of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS),³⁶² which was assessing a dossier of evidence alleging the charities' links to Iran,³⁶³ suggesting that the MPS chose not to investigate or have completed their investigation. In a written response to this report, DAT said that they remain open to engaging constructively with any inquiry from the Charity Commission or the Metropolitan Police and are not prepared to comment on any investigation.

FUNDING

According to the Charity Commission's online register, DAT's total gross income in the last five years averages £109k per annum. DAT has not declared any government income.³⁶⁴ In documents submitted to the Charity Commission, DAT has said that letting of property is the charity's principal activity for generating funds, with the vast majority of its income coming from investments and comparatively little from donations and legacies or interest.³⁶⁵ DAT is not recognised by HMRC for Gift Aid.³⁶⁶

³⁶² Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

³⁶³ Fiona Hamilton, 'Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation', *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

³⁶⁴ 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Financial history', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/4n33wcwa>.

³⁶⁵ See Accounts and TAR for 31 December 2024, p. 2 (letting as principal activity), 5 (comparison), 10 (investment and other income): 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Accounts and annual returns', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/bdzmfwzw>, p. 2, 5, 10.

³⁶⁶ 'DAR ALHEKMA TRUST – 1007090, Governance', Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://tinyurl.com/vd53dc8j>.

Annex C: ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Charity number: 293802

According to the Charity Commission register, the ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION (AIF), registered in 1986, is active as “an information and research centre [...] devoted to the study and dissemination of Muslim Shia Ithna-Ashari thought [Twelvers; Shi’a subset who recognise twelve imams as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad]³⁶⁷ and the educational needs of Muslims in the United Kingdom”.³⁶⁸ Their address is in London and they operate throughout England and Wales, but also nationally and overseas according to the charity’s governing document.³⁶⁹

LEADERSHIP

AIF’s trustees include Dr Saeed SHEHABI (detailed in Annex B: DAR ALHEKMA TRUST above).³⁷⁰

ALLEGED CONNECTIONS TO IRAN OR ITS PROXY GROUPS

According to media reports, AIF has longstanding connections to Iran and its proxy groups.

- In 2011, Saudi media reported AIF as being affiliated with Iranian state satellite channels.³⁷¹ In a written response to this report, AIF said that Saudi state-aligned media played a documented role during the Arab Spring in portraying dissenting groups as Iran-aligned in order to delegitimise them.³⁷²
- More recently, on 7 August 2024, the *Jewish Chronicle* noted that AIF’s Arabic newsletter had republished material from AL-MAYADEEN, which the media describe as a HEZBOLLAH-aligned Lebanese outlet.³⁷³ In a written response to this report, AIF said that sourcing material from an outlet does not amount to endorsement of it.

³⁶⁷ John L. Esposito (ed.), ‘The Islamic World: Past and Present’, Oxford University Press, 2004, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780195165203.001.0001/acref-9780195165203-e-170>.

³⁶⁸ ‘ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/293802/full-print>.

³⁶⁹ ‘ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/293802/full-print>.

³⁷⁰ ‘ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802, Trustees’, Charity Commission for England and Wales, https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/293802/trustees?_uk_gov_ccew_onereg_charitydetails_web_portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_organisationNumber=293802.

³⁷¹ Auto-translated: Mohammed al-Arab, ‘صحيفة بريطانية تكشف علاقة المعارض البحريني سعيد الشهابي بالنظام الإيراني’, *Al Arabiya*, 3 September 2011, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/09/03/165182.html>, archived at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20161112050508/http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/09/03/165182.html>.

³⁷² AIF said the allegation is unsupported and no court or regulator has found it to be affiliated with Iranian media or any Iranian state institution.

³⁷³ Examples of media describing AL-MAYADEEN as HEZBOLLAH-aligned include: William Christou, ‘Three journalists killed by Israeli airstrike in southern Lebanon’, *The Guardian*, 25 October 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/25/israel-airstrike->

ENDORISING IRANIAN LEADERSHIP OR ITS PROXIES

AIF publishes English and Arabic newsletters fortnightly, edited by SHEHABI.³⁷⁴ There is evidence that suggests that AIF's Arabic newsletter has endorsed or praised Iran's leadership and its proxy groups.

- On 2 July 2025, the Arabic AIF newsletter published a statement by SHEHABI's ISLAMIC UNITY FORUM (officially dissolved in 2022,³⁷⁵ also see DAR ALHEKMA TRUST above) condemning the "Zionist-American alliance" for aggression against Iran, and praising "the Supreme Leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (may he live long) a global religious and political figure who is respected by many peoples and religious and political leaders around the world", while urging international and religious institutions to denounce such aggression (Israel and the US had launched attacks on Iran's military and nuclear infrastructure)³⁷⁶ and prevent further "aggression and encroachment on the highest religious authorities in the Islamic world".³⁷⁷ In a written response to this report, AIF said that this does not evidence alignment between AIF and Iran and references to KHAMENEI do not constitute an endorsement of any state, government policy or political ideology.
- On 7 August 2024, *The Jewish Chronicle* reported that AIF's Arabic newsletter published sermons by Ayatollah KHAMENEI calling for Israel's destruction.³⁷⁸ In a written response to this report, AIF said that referencing third-party religious or political material does not amount to endorsement of it and that it does not support violence against civilians or the destruction of any state.

There is also evidence of AIF's media and speakers or guests appearing to endorse or praise Iran's leadership or its proxy groups.

- On 2 July 2025, Dr. Amir AL-BASRI delivered a speech at the AIF in which he linked the historical struggle of Imam Husayn (grandson of the Prophet Muhammad; died at the battle

[southern-lebanon-journalists-killed](#); Ahmed Asmar and Mohammed Sio, 'Israeli airstrike kills 4, injures 7 in southern Beirut', Anadolu Agency, Last updated 1 April 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israeli-airstrike-kills-4-injures-7-in-southern-beirut/3525114>.

David Rose, 'UK 'interfaith' charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhbrkan>.

³⁷⁴ The most recent three editions (517-519 at the time of writing) are available at: 'Newsletter', Abrar Islamic Foundation, <https://abraronline.net/en/?cat=12>; for edition 519 see 'Abrar', Abrar Islamic Foundation, Vol 22, No. 15, 1st-15th February 2026, <https://abraronline.net/en/?p=137069>.

³⁷⁵ 'ISLAMIC UNITY FORUM LIMITED overview', Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/06414918>.

³⁷⁶ Sean Seddon, 'How a volatile 24 hours edged Iran and Israel to a ceasefire', BBC News, 24 June 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3vdpeg606do>.

³⁷⁷ See p. 2, left column (auto-translated): 'منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية يستنكر العدوان على الجمهورية الإسلامية' *Al-Abrar Newsletter*, 2 July 2025, <https://abraronline.net/ar/?p=138256>, archived at: <https://archive.ph/I4UIW>. For screenshot, see Annex D17: Statement Condemning "Zionist-American" Action against Iran and Praising Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in AIF Arabic Newsletter, 2 July 2025, full PDF available upon request.

³⁷⁸ David Rose, 'UK 'interfaith' charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhbrkan>.

of Karbala in Iraq as a martyr)³⁷⁹ to contemporary political events. AL-BASRI described the 1979 Islamic Revolution as the “greatest fruit” of Husayn’s martyrdom in the modern era and said the Israeli Minister of Defence at the time referred to it as an “earthquake” whose aftershocks continue today in the conflict between Iran, Israel and the United States. He compared present-day “oppressed peoples” to Husayn and argued that attempts to silence him through martyrdom only increased his power.³⁸⁰ In a written response to this report, AIF said that AL-BASRI’s remarks were delivered in a religious context and did not represent an endorsement by the charity or evidence of political alignment with Iran. AL-BASRI did not respond to a request for comment sent via AIF prior to publication.³⁸¹

- In an August 2021 video published on AIF’s YouTube channel, an unidentified speaker, while speaking about sacrifice for God in the context of lives and wealth, referred to what he called “crises” in Afghanistan and Iraq and asked for God to raise the status of the POPULAR MOBILISATION FORCES (Iraqi Shi’ite militias, the most powerful of which act as Iranian proxies³⁸²) and all Mujahideen.³⁸³ He also offered a prayer for SOLEIMANI, stating that the former IRGC commander had been concerned with global humanitarian issues.³⁸⁴ In a written response to this report, AIF said this was taken out of context, was not a call to action nor incitement to violence, and does not reflect the views of the charity.

RELIGIOUS FRAMING OF THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

There are examples of AIF media bringing a transnational Islamist framing to the Israel-Palestine conflict, including religious-political claims on al-Aqsa Mosque.

- On 7 August 2024, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported that AIF’s Arabic newsletter had invited readers to support “the jihad-engaging Palestinian people” in the week following the 7 October massacre.³⁸⁵ In a written response to this report, AIF said its position on the Palestinian people is consistent with international law, AIF does not support terrorism, and

³⁷⁹ ‘Imam Husayn’, British Museum, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG85221>.

³⁸⁰ See page 4 (auto-translated): Amir al-Basri, ‘تورة الحسين واستشهاده.. ضرورة وجودية تاريخية لإحياء وبقاء الإسلام’, *Al-Abrar Newsletter*, 14 July 2025, <https://abraronline.net/ar/?p=138298> (deleted), p. 4. For screenshot see Annex D18: Amir al-Basri Speech, PDF available upon request.

³⁸¹ AIF said the remarks were delivered as part of a Muharram lecture series (an annual period of religious mourning and commemoration) and that reference to the 1979 Iranian Revolution constituted political or theological commentary rather than endorsement, and did not evidence alignment with Iran or direction by any foreign state.

³⁸² Renad Mansour and Faleh A. Jabar, ‘The Popular Mobilization Forces and Iraq’s Future’, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (April 2017), <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2017/04/the-popular-mobilization-forces-and-iraqs-future?lang=en¢er=middle-east>.

³⁸³ Auto-translation of AI-generated transcript: ‘مجلس اليوم العاشر من مجالس شهر محرم الحرام’, Abrar Islamic Foundation, YouTube, 18 August 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FcOFqV0Lqo>, (18:15-19:00).

³⁸⁴ Auto-translation of AI-generated transcript: ‘مجلس اليوم العاشر من مجالس شهر محرم الحرام’, Abrar Islamic Foundation, YouTube, 18 August 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FcOFqV0Lqo>, (19:01-19:25).

³⁸⁵ David Rose, ‘UK ‘interfaith’ charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhbrkan>.

Undue Influence

did not advocate for violence or support for HAMAS.³⁸⁶

- In a 3 March 2022 video on AIF's YouTube channel, one of the speakers described Palestine as "the mother of all issues", called al-Aqsa a sacred duty for Muslims "until the Day of Resurrection", and urged listeners to be "permanent soldiers" for it forever, until the order of Allah comes.³⁸⁷ Later in the video, he said that it is extremely clear that the Sacred Mosque [al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, Saudi Arabia] cannot be liberated without liberating al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.³⁸⁸ In a written response to this report, AIF said that this is incorrect and a deliberate mischaracterisation of the content, Al-Aqsa Mosque is of profound spiritual and religious significance to Muslims worldwide, and emphasising a religious responsibility to protect sacred spaces and expressing solidarity do not indicate any political endorsement.³⁸⁹

PROMOTING ANTISEMITISM

On 7 August 2024, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported that the AIF newsletter promoted antisemitism through book reviews.

- This included a November 2023 piece denying Jews' historic connection to Israel and portraying them as contemptuous towards non-Jews and seeking world conquest, and a June 2024 review claiming the Holocaust was exaggerated to benefit Israel and revealing "the secret why Jews are hated and despised around the world".³⁹⁰ The newsletter further published false claims that Jews agreed to become a "foreign body" in the Middle East during secret talks with the British government in 1907, and published an article discussing "ways to confront the Israeli entity and remove it from existence".³⁹¹

These matters were put to AIF. In a written response to this report, AIF denied antisemitism, said it does not deny the Holocaust or Jewish historical presence in the region, and argued that quoting extracts in book reviews does not amount to endorsement. It also said it does not support violence against civilians or the destruction of any state.

³⁸⁶ AIF said its position is consistent with international law, that it does not support terrorism or violence against civilians, and that the newsletter expressed solidarity with Palestinians in the form of a prayer following events in Gaza.

³⁸⁷ Auto-translation of AI-generated transcript: 'مبعوث السماء الى الارض', Abrar Islamic Foundation, YouTube, 3 March 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTKISzhk8ZE>, (30:42-32:29).

³⁸⁸ Auto-translation of AI-generated transcript: 'مبعوث السماء الى الارض', Abrar Islamic Foundation, YouTube, 3 March 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTKISzhk8ZE> (1:06:56-1:09:32).

³⁸⁹ AIF said the speech had been mischaracterised, that references to al-Aqsa reflected its religious significance to Muslims, and that expressions of solidarity or religious duty do not amount to endorsement of any state, armed group or proscribed organisation.

³⁹⁰ David Rose, 'UK 'interfaith' charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhrkan>.

³⁹¹ David Rose, 'UK 'interfaith' charities worth millions unmasked as hubs of support for terror groups', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 August 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-interfaith-charities-worth-millions-unmasked-as-hubs-of-support-for-terror-groups-vlhrkan>.

CHARITY COMMISSION RESPONSE

In February 2026, a Charity Commission spokesperson confirmed that regulatory compliance cases remain ongoing in relation to AIF (and the DAR ALHEKMA TRUST), following an earlier pause at the direct request of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS),³⁹² which was assessing a dossier of evidence alleging the charities' links to Iran,³⁹³ suggesting that the MPS chose not to investigate or have completed their investigation. In a written response to this report, AIF said it remains willing to engage constructively with the Charity Commission and rejected any allegation that it is aligned with, controlled by, or funded by the Iranian state.

FUNDING

According to the Charity Commission's online register, AIF's total gross income in the last five years averages £288k per annum. AIF has not declared any government income.³⁹⁴ In documents submitted to the Charity Commission, AIF has said that its primary source of income is the letting of investment property, with the vast majority of its income coming from investments and comparatively little from donations and legacies.³⁹⁵ AIF is not recognised by HMRC for Gift Aid.³⁹⁶

³⁹² Statement from the Charity Commission, 4 February 2026.

³⁹³ Fiona Hamilton, 'Charity with alleged links to Iran faces police investigation', *The Times*, 19 December 2024, <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/society/article/charity-with-alleged-links-to-iran-faces-police-investigation-rzts2g2cp>.

³⁹⁴ 'ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802, Financial history', Companies House, <https://tinyurl.com/mrrv96nn>.

³⁹⁵ See Accounts and TAR for 31 March 2024: 'ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802, Accounts and annual returns', Companies House, <https://tinyurl.com/mr3679vj>, p. 2, 9.

³⁹⁶ 'ABRAR ISLAMIC FOUNDATION – 293802, Governance', <https://tinyurl.com/mvfmu22j>.

Annex D: Photographs and Screenshots

D1: SHADJAREH at Tehran Basij Flyer

پیام مقاومت

هسته های مقاومت؛ روایتی از آینده نگری امام راحل در پیام تشکیل بسیج دانشجویی

 <p>دکتر مسعود شجره رئیس کمیسیون حقوق بشر اسلامی لندن</p>	 <p>دکتر محمد صادق کوشکی استاد دانشگاه و کارشناس مسائل منطقه</p>
 <p>عبدالعزیز عدنان فعال رسانه ای از غزه</p>	 <p>دکتر محمد صادق شهبازی تحلیلگر مسائل انقلاب اسلامی</p>

یکشنبه ۵ آذر، ساعت ۳:۳۰

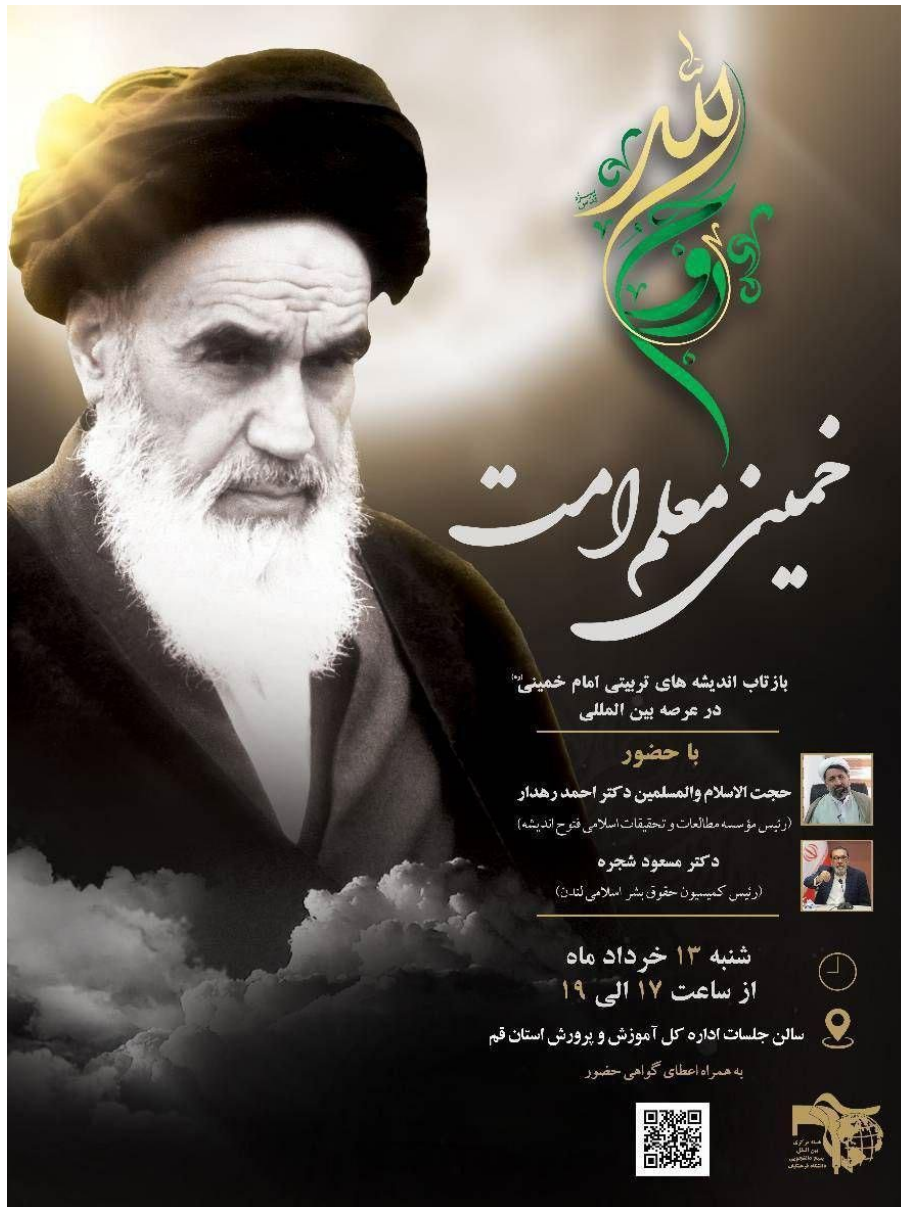
دانشکده فنی پردیس مرکزی، تالار شهید رجایی

بسیج دانشجویی دانشگاه تهران

D2: SHADJAREH at University of Tehran Basij Photos



D3: SHADJAREH at Farhangian Basij



الله
محمد

خمینر معلم امت

بازتاب اندیشه های تربیتی امام خمینی
در عرصه بین المللی

با حضور



حجت الاسلام والمسلمین دکتر احمد رهنما
(رئیس مؤسسه مطالعات و تحقیقات اسلامی قزوین اندیشه)

دکتر مسعود شجره
(رئیس کمیسیون حقوق بشر اسلامی لندن)

شنبه ۱۳ خرداد ماه
از ساعت ۱۷ الی ۱۹

سالن جلسات اداره کل آموزش و پرورش استان قم

به همراه اعطای گواهی حضور



D4: SHADJAREH Hezbollah Flag



D5: Heart of Iron



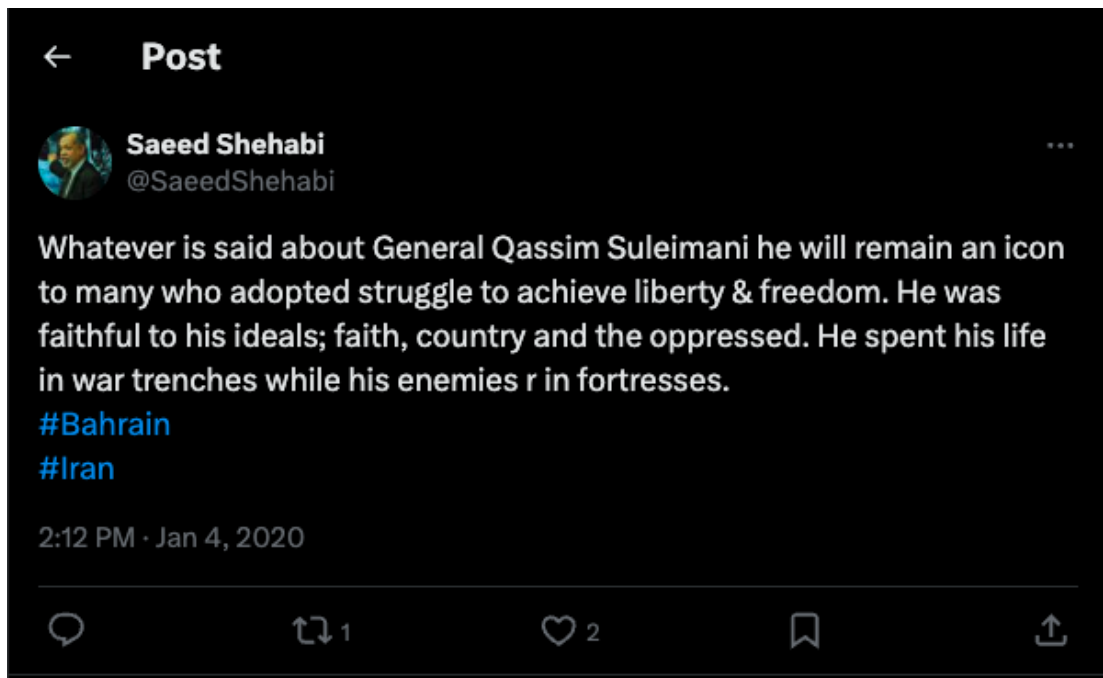
D6: Hero



D7: Great Martyr



D8: Icon



D9: SHEHABI NASRALLAH

← Post

Saeed Shehabi reposted

 البحرين اليوم
@BahrainAlyoum

Show translation

#البحرين_اليوم | تظاهرة ثورية في بلدة #الدير نصره لـ #فلسطين وتأييداً للمقاومة، وتنديداً بجرائم كيان الاحتلال الاسرائيلي.

الجمعة : ١٠ نوفمبر ٢٠٢٣

#طوفان_الأقصى #فلسطين_قضية_الشرفاء



8:04 PM · Nov 10, 2023 · 1,009 Views

6 5

Post your reply Reply



D10: SHEHABI October 7th



D11: SHEHABI and AL SHAYEB



SHEHABI (left), AL SHAYEB (1st from left)

D12: AL SHAYEB Syria 2017



AL SHAYEB (first row, 3rd from left)

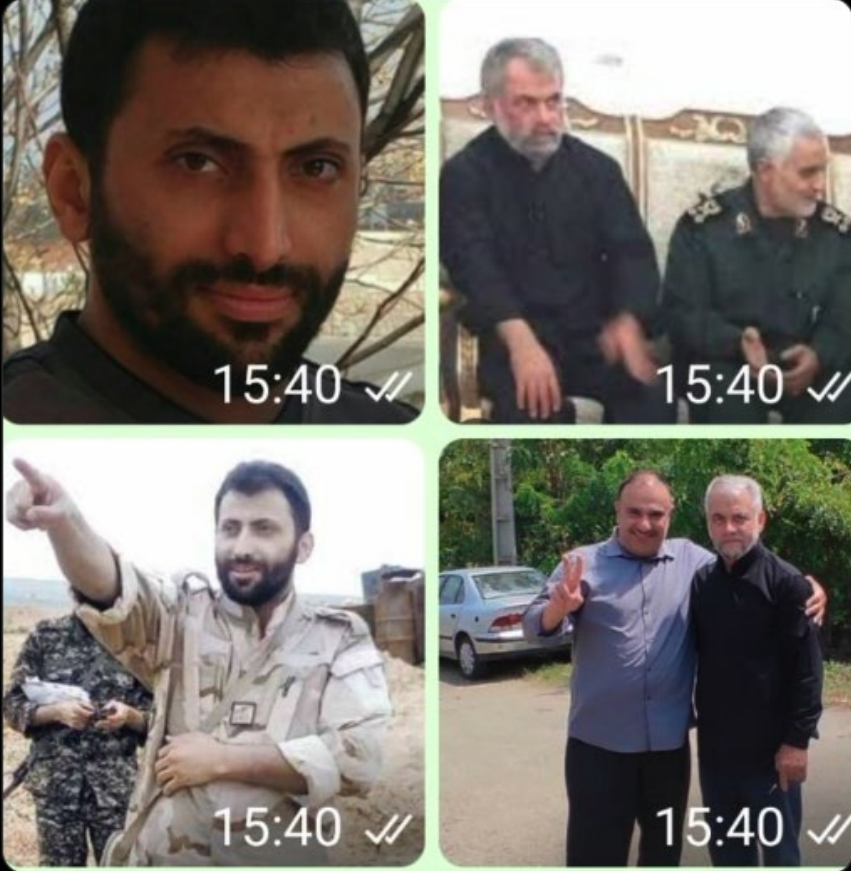
D13: AL SHAYEB QOMI

← Post

 الدكتور عبدالرؤف الشايب
@Raouf_Alshayeb

1- شاركت قوى المعارضة التابعة للبحرين الكبرى الى جانب بقية القوى الثورية والجهادية التابعة لمحور المقاومة في الفعاليات السادسة لتأبين الشهيد القائد حسين القمي، والذي قال عنه شهيد الامة (لتمنيت استشهادي وبقائه، فالحرص الثوري بحاجة لعشرين سنة اخرى ليصنع قائدا كحسين القمي مجددا)

[Translate post](#)





15:40 ✓✓

15:40 ✓✓

15:40 ✓✓

15:40 ✓✓

5:55 PM · Aug 9, 2023 · 280 Views

   1  

D14: AL SHAYEB ZAINAB SOLEIMANI

← Post

 الدكتور عبدالرؤف الشايب
@Raouf_Alshayeb

2-من المشاركين في الفعالية زينب سليمان، ابنة شهيد محور المقاومة، كما شارك الرادود ابوذر روعي، صاحب اشهر انشودة مؤخر (سلام فرماندة) وكان لي شرف المشاركة الاعلامية مع بعض الفضائيات وفي معرض الصور التابع للتيارات المعارضة للنظام السعودي، وقد كانت اعلام فصائل المقاومة ظاهرة للعيان

[Translate post](#)



6:09 PM · Aug 9, 2023 · 420 Views

🗨️ ↻️ 1 ❤️ 3 📌 ⬆️

D15: AL SHAYEB DAT Vigil

← Post

 الدكتور عبدالرؤف الشايب
@Raouf_Alshayeb

انتقلت الى رحمة الله والدفن الميرزبة (نورية علي المعلم)، فانا لله وانا اليه راجعون، وسيوارى جثمانها عصر اليوم في مقبرة الحورة، وستكون الفاتحة في المنامة فريق المخارقة، بمأتم (الساميج) مقابل مسجد مؤمن، وفي لندن في دار الحكمة، وفي قم في حسينية احباب الحسين. الفاتحة. #بحرين_ابوطالب_الشايب

Translate post

﴿ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴾
﴿ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا ﴾
﴿ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴾
﴿ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ﴾
﴿ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴾

8:40 AM · Dec 13, 2023 · 805 Views

6 1 6

D16: ABBAS ALOMRAN'S NASRALLAH Memorial Tweets



D17: Statement Condemning "Zionist-American" Action against Iran and Praising Ayatollah ALI KHAMENEI in AIF Arabic Newsletter, 2 July 2025

أخبار محلية

2

شباب السبطين (في البلاغية): الخطيب السيد مهدي المدرسي، والراوند السيد حمزة الشخص. شباب علي الأكبر: الخطيب الشيخ أسامة العطار، والراوند الملا حيد بو حمد وميرزا محمد الخياط.

منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية يستنكر العدوان على الجمهورية الإسلامية



أصدر منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية في بريطانيا بياناً يدين فيه العدوان على الجمهورية الإسلامية في إيران ويهدد مقام الولي الفقيه، هذا نصه:
يدين منتدى الوحدة الإسلامية في بريطانيا بأشد عبارات الإدانة العدوان الذي شنه الحلف الصهيوني على الجمهورية الإسلامية في إيران دون مرور أو مقدمات قانونية، وأدى إلى سقوط ضحايا من المدنيين من الأطفال والنساء والشيوخ. وهذا يكشف عن ضعف كبير في القوانين الدولية ويهدد بانتهيار النظام العالمي وعودة البشرية إلى شريعة الغاب والظلم. كما يستنكر المنتدى بأشد عبارات الاستنكار التهديدات التي أطلقها مجرمو الحروب ورجال الإبادة البشرية ضد مقام الولي الفقيه سماحة آية الله العظمى السيد علي الخامنئي (دام ظله الشريف)، هذه الشخصية الدينية والسياسية العالمية التي تحظى باحترام الكثير من الشعوب وقادة العالم الدينيين والسياسيين، فضلاً عن مقامها الديني والمرجع بين المسلمين عامة، والشيعية خاصة.
وبهذه المناسبة نطالب المؤسسات القانونية والدولية باتخاذ الإجراءات المناسبة لمنع تكرار مثل هذا العدوان. كما نطالب المنظمات العلمية والمجامع الدينية والحوزات الإسلامية بإدانة ذلك العدوان واستنكار تلك التصريحات ضد مقام المرجعية الدينية والسياسية في الجمهورية الإسلامية، وإصدار القرارات والفتاوى المناسبة لمنع تكرار العدوان والتعدي على المرجعيات الدينية العليا في العالم الإسلامي.
(والله غالبٌ علينِ أمره ولكن أكثر الناس لا يعلمون) سورة يوسف: (21)
والحمد لله رب العالمين وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين الطاهرين.

عبدالله حسين القضي، والراوند نور الدين الكاظمي والسيد أحمد الوداعي.
هيئة آل ياسين (المركز الإسلامي في إنجلترا): الخطيب الشيخ علي الكريبادي، والراوند الملا محمد الأشتر.
مؤسسة الإمام الخوئي: الخطيب السيد مضر الطلو، والراوند السيد حمزة الشخص.
مركز دار الإسلام: الخطيب السيد جعفر فضل الله، والراوند نور الدين الكاظمي والملا عباس يوسف.
ديوان الكفيل: الخطيب الشيخ رشاد الأنصاري، والراوند الملا أمير الكاظمي.
المجلس الحسيني (البلاغية): الخطيب الشيخ أسامة الرفيعي، والراوند الملا سعد الخطيب والملا علي الحويجي.
خيمة العباس (ع): الخطيب السيد عبدالمنعم حسن، والراوند الملا عباس الوزني.
حمينية الرسول الأعظم (ص): الخطيب الشيخ أسامة العطار، والراوند الملا علي الزهري.
مسجد الإمام الحسين (ع) - الجمعية اللبنانية: الخطيب الشيخ محمد زعرور، والراوند الملا عمار الناشد والملا عثمان ديب.
مؤسسة المصطفى (ص) هارو: الخطيب الشيخ حسين الناصر، والراوند الملا علي الغزي.
مركز أهل البيت (ع) (سري): الخطيب الشيخ جاسم حسن، والراوند الملا سيد علي الموسوي.
المجالس التهارية باللغة العربية:
مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية: الخطيب الشيخ عبدالله حسين القضي، والراوند السيد يوسف اللهيبي.
مركز أهل البيت (ع) الثقافي: الخطيب السيد علي الصالح.
المركز الحسيني للدراسات (الشيخ الكريبادي): الخطيب آية الله الكريبادي والسيد عبدالمنعم حسن، والراوند الملا علي الغزي والملا عباس الوزني.
مركز أهل البيت (ع) (ويميلي): الخطيب الشيخ محمد الرفيعي، والراوند الملا سعد مطوق أبو زهران.
الجمعية اللبنانية مسج الإمام الحسين (ع): الخطيب السيد جعفر فضل الله (البرنامج للنساء فقط).
المجالس المسمانية باللغة الإنجليزية:
مكتب بقية الله (حركة أهل البيت (ع) AIM): الخطيب السيد حيدر حسنين، والراوند الملا محمد باقر وملا نور الدين الكاظمي وضيغم علي شان.
الحركة الحسينية (في ديوان الكفيل): الخطيب الشيخ أ. زهر.

نشاطات الأبرار



ضمن برامج مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية الأسبوعية، وبمناسبة حلول شهر محرم الحرام للعام الهجري الجديد 1447 هـ، أقامت المؤسسة ندوة بعنوان: "عاشوراء الثقافة والهوية"، استضافت فيها كلا من: سماحة الشيخ الدكتور علي الخطيب، وفضيلة الأستاذ أبو ذر الصغبر.
كان ذلك يوم الخميس 23 ذو الحجة 1446 الموافق 19 يونيو 2025. وأدار الندوة وقدم لها الأستاذ أحمد الحلقي.

مجلس مؤسسة الأبرار الحسيني للعام 1447 هـ



بمناسبة حلول عاشوراء الإمام الحسين (ع) أقامت مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية مجلسها الحسيني السنوي لهذا العام 1447 هـ تحت شعار: "عاشوراء هوية". وتضمن البرنامج الفقرات التالية:
- تلاوة آيات من الذكر الحكيم.
- كلمة قصيرة من وحى الشعار.
- المجلس الحسيني لسماحة الشيخ عبدالله حسين - لطمية ومرثي للشاب السيد يوسف اللهيبي - بدءاً من اليوم الأول من محرم: الجمعة 27 يونيو 2025 وحتى يوم السبت 5 يوليو 2025.
بعد صلاة الظهر مباشرة على مصلى مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية.

المجالس الحسينية في العاصمة البريطانية لمحرم 1447 هـ

أجبت المراكز الإسلامية والمؤسسات الدينية في العاصمة البريطانية لندن موسم عاشوراء الإمام الحسين (ع) لهذا العام 1447 هـ. المجالس المسمانية باللغة العربية: مؤسسة دار الحكمة (البحارنة): الخطيب الشيخ

الأبرار

نشرة تصدر مرة كل اسبوعين عن مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية، وتهتم بشؤون المسلمين عموماً، وتسعى لتركييز قيم الإسلام ومفاهيم القرآن، في ما يشجع الإيمان والخير والحب والتسامح والإعتدال بين الناس. للإتصال والمراسلة:
45 Crawford Place London W1H 4LP. Tel: 02077243033
Website: www.abraronline.net
email: abrarhouse@hotmail.com
Charity no. 293802

ثورة الحسين واستشهاده.. ضرورة وجودية تاريخية لإحياء وبقاء الإسلام*

ضروري لوعي الناس في كل أمة وزمان.. لأنه يتعلق بحياتهم ونيلهم ومسيرهم.

ومن هنا جاءت ضرورة وأهمية نظرية وعقيدة الإمامة والخلافة والولاية في القرآن وفي أحاديث الرسول والسيرات النبوية.. لأنها تعني الترجمة العملية للتطبيقية التجسيدية للدين.. فالدين لا يعرف ولا يقتنع به الإنسان ويتأثر من خلال الفكرة فصبب بل رجال (صدقوا ما عاهدوا الله عليه فممن من قضى نحبه ومنهم من ينتظر وما بدلوا تبديلاً) (٢٣ - الأحزاب). ولذلك رأينا كيف أن القرآن يصفهم بالمطهرين وعندهم علم الكتاب، وحصر الولاية فيهم وأمرى النبي أن يبلغ بولائهم ودعاهم من دون المسلمين جميعاً لمباهلة نصارى نجران، وجعل موثقتهم أجر تبليغ الرسالة. أما رسول الله فقد صرح بعشرات بل بمئات الأحاديث بأسمائهم ومنازلهم وعلمهم وجهادهم.. علي مع الحق يدور معه حيث دار.. فاطمة بضعة مني.. الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب أهل الجنة.. حسين مني وأنا من حسين.. أحب الله من أحب حسيناً.. إلى الكثير من النصوص التي تؤكد منزلتهم وولائهم وإمامتهم وطهارتهم وأعلميتهم ومناقبتهم في الإنسانية والأخلاقية والسلوك.

وقد أنتجت هذه العلاقة والرابطة بأهل البيت ع في شتمهم أكبر الأثام في وعيهم وأخلاقهم وسلوكهم وجهادهم وتضحياتهم. وأنتجت إيماناً بفهم الحياة ووعي القسط والعدل وكراهية الظلم والطغيان طوال تاريخهم. وبهذا ينبغي أن نحيا الأمم وتميش عندما تعتنق مبادئ الحرية والكرامة وعدم الخوف للظلمة التي جسدها الحسين عليه السلام.. هذه المبادئ التي تتسببها البشرية وتبحث عنها فلن تجدوها مجسدة بكاملها وعظمتها إلا في هؤلاء.. أولياء الله العظام، فكان البقاء والمستقبل لهذا الخط والطريق لتجاة الأمة اليوم وحريرتها وعزتها ولكل المستضعفين.

وقد أثمرت هذه الثورة التاريخية العظيمة للإمام الحسين واستشهاده.. جناها وثمرتها الكبرى في عصرنا الحديث منذ انطلقت العام ١٩٧٩م الثورة الإسلامية في إيران، وقد أسماها وزير دفاع الكيان آنذاك بالزلزال الذي ضرب منطقة الشرق الأوسط والعالم... وكان دقيقاً في وصفه هذا ونحن نعيش اليوم بعد أكثر من أربعين عاماً ازدهارها الكبرى في الصراع في الحرب التي نشهدها اليوم على إيران من قبل إسرائيل وأمريكا.

فما أشبه موقف المستضعفين في إيمانهم وثباتهم ومواقفهم اليوم بسيد الشهداء عالم المستضعفين التاريخي قديماً وحديثاً الحسين عليه السلام سريع العبرة الساكنة وصاحب العصية الراتبة سيد شباب أهل الجنة.. مواقف يسجلها تاريخ العالم السياسي اليوم بشارة وإذنا يعلم جديد إن شاء الله تعالى.

ظنوا بأن قتل الحسين يزيدهم، لكنما قتل الحسين يزيدنا

* كلمة لقيت في مؤسسة الأبرار الإسلامية في شهر محرم الحرام 2 يوليو 2025

(الذبحين) ..

هذان الإفتداهن الخاسان بأل إبراهيم وآل محمد كان لهما قربان هما الذبح العظيم والمائة من الإبل كما ذكرنا.. غير أن استشهاد الحسين وعياله وصحبه لا قربان له ولا افتداه.. إلا بمواجهة طواغيت المعصوم واستشهاد المؤمنين والمستضعفين في كل مكان و زمان من أجل الكرامة والحرية من نير الذل والعبودية.. وتحت ذات الشعار الحسيني الخالد (هيات منا الذلة) ولذلك وصفناها ثورة وجودية لإحياء وبقاء الإسلام.. كما يستصح لنا

تالياً في تاريخ الإسلام وعصر النبوة وفي السنة الرابعة للهجرة ولد سبط الرسول الحسين، غير أن فرح الولادة ما أسرع أن شابه الحزن والأسى لما جاءه في روايات الشيعة، وتواتر في أحاديث أهل السنة، مما يقارب الأريبيين مصدراً من أمهات كتبهم الحديثية أن الوحي جاء للنبي بعد ميلاد الحسين بخبر استشهاد الحسين ومصيبة كربلاء. كما ورد في حديث أم سلمة ونص عليه ابن عبد ربه المالكي في الجزء الثاني من (العقد الفريد).. قالت كان عندي النبي فأخذت الحسين الوليد فيكي فتركته فدنا منه فأخذته فيكي فتركته، فقال له جبرئيل: أحبه يا محمد؟ ثم قال إن أمك ستقله وإن شئت أريتك الأرض التي يقبل فيها فيكي النبي (ص).

وفي مشهد آخر دخل الحسين بن علي على رسول الله وهو يوحى إليه، فقال جبرئيل إن أمك ستقلنك بعنك وتقلنك إنك هذا من بعدي، ومد يده وأناه بتقوية بوضاء، فلما ذهب جبرئيل خرج رسول الله على أصحابه ويده التربة البيضاء التي جاءه بها جبرئيل من أرض كربلاء وهو يبكي، فقالوا ما يبكيك يا رسول الله؟ فقال أخبرني جبرئيل أن إبني الحسين يقتل بعدي بأرض الطف وجامني بهذه التربة وقال إن فيها منجى من هذا الإختبار الإلهي الأكبر والأشد وقعا على العترة الطاهرة لأنه واقع لا محالة كفر وقضاء إلهي، ولأن وقوعه سيؤدي الوظيفة الكبرى في بقاء الدين وحفظه من الإتحراف.

إن ما أراده رسول الله من ذكر وبيان واقعة كربلاء في استشهاد الحسين وأثارها في مواضع عديدة ومشاهد كثيرة، فإتاما كان كي يرسخ في وجدان الأمة وذاكرتها عظم هذه المسببة وفداحتها ولتكون حافزاً للتأسي في الوقوف في وجه الظلم والطغيان.. والذي يصطلح عليه القرآن بصيغة المبالغة (الطاغوت).

(ولقد بعثنا في كل أمة رسولا أن اعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطاغوت فمنهم من هدى الله ومنهم من حفت عليه الضلالة فسبوا في الأرض فانظروا كيف كان عقبة المكذبين) (٢٦ - النحل) (الله ولي الذين آمنوا يخرجهم من الظلمات إلى النور والذين كفروا أولياهم الطاغوت).. (٢٥٧ - البقرة).

فصعرة أولياء الله الذين آمنوا.. الرساليين القادة كعنوان للحق والعدل والخير أمر في غاية الأهمية أكدت عليه سنة رسول الله وأحاديثه.. وتخصيص الطاغوت والظلمة أولياء الكافرين الظالمين أمر

الدكتور امير البصري



جاء في السيرة أن محمد بن الحنفية أبا الحسين لأبيه في طلبعة من حارلوا منع الحسين، أن لا يستجيب لأهل العراق وأن يبقى بعيداً عنهم، وقد ذكره مع من تكروه بمواقفهم مع أبيه وأخيه، وقد كان قد أشار عليه أن يذهب لليمن أو بعض نواحي الكوفة، فوعدته الحسين أن ينظر في الأمر. وفي مطلع الفجر من تلك الليلة أخبر ابن الحنفية أن

الحسين قد تهباً للخروج مع أخوته وبني عمومته وسناته إلى العراق، فأقبل عليه وقد أشرف على التحرك وأخذ يزمزما نطقه وهو يبكي وقال له: ألم تحبني النظر فيما سألتك فما حثاك على الخروج عاجلاً؟ فقال الحسين ع: لقد جاني رسول الله بعد ما فارقته، وقال لي: لقد شاء الله أن يراك فتبلياً، فاسترجع بين الحنفية، وقال له: إنا كان الأمر كما تقول، فما معنى حثك للنساء وأنت تخرج لهذه الغاية؟ فقال له: شاء الله أن يراهن سبياً.

السؤال الذي يرد هنا: لماذا هذه المشيئة أو الإرادة الإلهية المغروضة، (شاه الله أن يراني فتبلياً.. وشاه الله أن يراهن سبياً) أما كان يمكن له سبحانه أن يرفع هذا الغرض والقدر وينجي الحسين وأهله، ليس هو باقتدر القادرين؟

والجواب ان مهمات الأنبياء والأولياء وحياتهم وسلوكهم ووجودهم كله مرهون ومرتب بوظائف إلهية رسالية. وحيث تبدو هذه المهمة فرضاً قانونياً أو سنة إلهية تقع على أولياء الله ورسله بشكل خاص، أن ينفقوا إيماناً ورضاً وتسلماً أشير إليها في أكثر من موضع قرآني. من مصاديقه الآية ١٠٢ من سورة الصافات (يا بني إني أرى في المنام أني أنطق فتنظروا ماذا ترى؟ قل يا أيت لعلم ما تومر مستجدي إن شاء الله من الصابرين)، ففذا أمر الله (فلما أسلما وتله للجبين.. وناديانه أن يا إبراهيم.. قد صدقت الرؤيا إنا كذلك نجزي المحسنين.. إن هذا ليهو البلاء المبين.. وفدينه بنبح عظيم.. وتركنا عليه في الآخرين.. سلام على إبراهيم.. كذلك نجزي المحسنين.. إله من عبادنا المؤمنين) (١٠٢ - الصافات).

وفي قوله تعالى (إن هذا ليهو البلاء المبين) تأكيد أن الله يعرض أنبياءه وأصفياءه الرساليين لأعظم درجات الإختبار ليروى كيف يكونوا في التجربة. وفيما ورد عندنا في زيارة سيدة نساء العالمين (السلام عليك يا ممتحنة، امتحنتك الذي خلقك، فوجدك لما امتحنتك صابرة) قيل في عالم النور.

هذا النوع من البلاء المقرر في دين الله وقرآنه وقضاء الله وسنته جرى على مستوى حادثتين فرديتين خاصتين.. الأولى ذكرها القرآن على نبي الله إبراهيم وولده إسماعيل والذي فيه إشارة ورمزية لمشيئة ربانية ما لمصلحة ما وكان القربان فيها الكيش من السماء (وفديناه بنبح عظيم).. والثانية ذكرت في السيرة النبوية على والد النبي عبد الله وحيث افتداه أبوه عبد المطلب بعانة من الإبل ولذلك جاء عن النبي قوله (أنا ابن

About Powerful Street Ltd

Founded by John and taking its name from the first street he lived on when he moved to Walney Island in Cumbria, Powerful Street Ltd is a strategic advisory firm helping leaders analyse public policy and navigate complex geopolitical environments successfully.

Powerful Street Ltd.