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# BANKING RESTRICTIONS ON EXTREMISM-LINKED MUSLIM GROUPS

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## Introduction

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Banks are facing a rising backlash regarding decisions to close the accounts of certain Muslim organisations in the UK. Most recently, Cage, a group that campaigns for convicted terrorists and terror suspects, made a formal complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service following the forced closure of their accounts with Barclays and the Co-operative Bank. This followed HSBC's decision in late July 2014 to close some of their accounts, which included three Muslim groups: the Ummah Welfare Trust (UWT), the Finsbury Park Mosque and the Cordoba Foundation – a decision which was criticised by the groups and prompted wider accusations of 'Islamophobia'. However, while HSBC did not disclose its reasoning, this briefing shows the groups' known or suspected extremist links that could have motivated the bank's decision.

## 1. HSBC's Recent Closures

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In December 2012, HSBC was fined \$1.9bn by the UK and US governments over "poor money laundering controls".<sup>1</sup> As part of a deferred prosecution agreement, the bank conducted a global, in depth review of all its businesses, including all services provided to charities. As a result of these ongoing assessments, HSBC terminated customer relationships with personal and business customers in more than 70 countries.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'HSBC closes some Muslim groups' accounts', *BBC News*, 30 July 2014, available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-28553921](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-28553921). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>2</sup> 'Muslim groups accuse HSBC of Islamophobia after it threatens to close its accounts', *Independent*, 30 July 2014, available at: [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslim-groups-accuse-hsbc-of-islamophobia-after-it-threatens-to-close-accounts-9638456.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslim-groups-accuse-hsbc-of-islamophobia-after-it-threatens-to-close-accounts-9638456.html). Last visited: 15 September 2014.

On 22 July 2014, UK charities which included the Cordoba Foundation, UWT and Finsbury Park Mosque received letters from HSBC stating that their provision of services now falls outside the bank's "risk appetite" and that, within two months (22 September), their accounts would shut down.<sup>3</sup> Both Muslim groups and non-Muslim groups have therefore had their accounts closed by HSBC, including customers suspected to be linked to drug dealing.<sup>4</sup>

In many cases, this is not the first time these organisations have had their accounts shut down; in 2008, Barclays<sup>5</sup> froze the Cordoba Foundation's account. Muslim group Helping Households Under Great Stress (HHUGS) has also had its accounts previously closed by both HSBC and Lloyds-TSB.<sup>6</sup> Cage, an organisation infamous for supporting convicted terrorists, had its accounts with Barclays and Co-operative Bank "shut down earlier in the year after its director, Moazzam Begg, was arrested and charged with terrorism offences".<sup>7</sup>

The aforementioned groups have other bank accounts that are still active. The UWT, for example, has reassured its supporters that "bank transfers, online donations, PayPal, cash payments, cheques and paying by card over the phone still remain the same" and that they "can continue to donate from outside of the UK".<sup>8</sup> On 22 September the UWT announced that it had moved its accounts to the Islamic Bank of Britain (IBB), whose parent company is Mashraf al Rayan, based in Qatar.<sup>9</sup>

The IBB has a history of taking in groups with alleged extremist links whose accounts have been shut down elsewhere. In 2007, for example, Interpal<sup>10</sup> moved its accounts to IBB<sup>11</sup> after having been closed by Natwest<sup>12</sup> and, in 2008, Interpal issued a statement claiming that Lloyds TSB had served notice to the IBB to discontinue its services to Interpal or face closure itself.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Letter from HSBC to the Ummah Welfare Trust, 22 July 2014, PDF version available at: [www.uwt.org/site/upload/HSBCClosureLetter.pdf](http://www.uwt.org/site/upload/HSBCClosureLetter.pdf); see also: 'HSBC closes the account of Finsbury Park mosque', *ITV*, 30 July 2014, available at: [www.itv.com/news/london/update/2014-07-30/letter-giving-finsbury-park-mosque-notice-to-close-account/](http://www.itv.com/news/london/update/2014-07-30/letter-giving-finsbury-park-mosque-notice-to-close-account/). See also: copy of letter from HSBC to the Cordoba Foundation, 22 July 2014, available at: [s3-ec.buzzfeed.com/static/2014-07/29/21/enhanced/webdr02/enhanced-4703-1406682786-2.jpg](http://s3-ec.buzzfeed.com/static/2014-07/29/21/enhanced/webdr02/enhanced-4703-1406682786-2.jpg). Last visited: 16 September 2014.

<sup>4</sup> 'Muslim groups accuse HSBC of Islamophobia after it threatens to close its accounts', *Independent*, 30 July 2014.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> 'Are UK banks targeting Muslim charities?', *AlJazeera*, 5 August 2014, available at: [www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/are-uk-banks-targeting-muslim-charities-20148582932885804.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/are-uk-banks-targeting-muslim-charities-20148582932885804.html). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>7</sup> The charges against Moazzam Begg were later dropped. See: *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> 'HSBC Notice to Close Ummah Welfare Trust Accounts: Frequently Asked Questions & Answers', *Ummah Welfare Trust*, available at: [www.uwt.org/site/upload/HSBCClosureFAQs.pdf](http://www.uwt.org/site/upload/HSBCClosureFAQs.pdf). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>9</sup> 'About Mashraf Al Rayan', *Islamic Bank of Britain*, available at: [www.islamic-bank.com/useful-info-tools/about-us/masraf-al-ryan/](http://www.islamic-bank.com/useful-info-tools/about-us/masraf-al-ryan/). Last visited: 25 September 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Interpal is an organisation that was designated by the US Treasury as one of the organisations that "provide support to Hamas and form part of its funding network in Europe". It was alleged in a 2013 Home Affairs Select Committee report that Interpal "[provided] financial support for the proscribed terrorist organisation Hamas" and that its senior trustees have shared platforms with Hamas leaders but deny they are linked to the organisation. In 2006, Interpal was subject to a BBC Panorama investigative documentary that alleged that Interpal had given money to Hamas-linked Palestinian charities.

While the group denies such accusations and claims to have been "vindicated" by a Charity Commission inquiry, the Commission's Chief Executive, Andrew Hind, said that "our report does not give the charity a clean bill of health". Furthermore, Interpal was ordered by the Commission to sever all links with the Hamas-linked Union for Good. See: 'U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities', US Department of the Treasury, 22 August 2003, available at: [www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js672.aspx](http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js672.aspx). Last visited: 17 September 2014; and: 'Written evidence submitted by the Henry Jackson Society [CT 09]', Parliament UK, available at:

[data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidencePdf/4876](http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidencePdf/4876). Last visited: 10 November 2014; and: "'Not enough proof" for Panorama allegations linking charity to terrorism', *The Guardian*, 27 February 2009, available at: [www.theguardian.com/global/2009/feb/27/bbc-palestinian-territories?guni=Articlein%20body%20link](http://www.theguardian.com/global/2009/feb/27/bbc-palestinian-territories?guni=Articlein%20body%20link). Last visited: 10 November 2014; and: 'Panorama's Faith, Hate and Charity: standing by the allegations', *OrganGrinder Blog, The Guardian*, available at: [www.theguardian.com/media/organgrinder/2009/mar/03/panorama-stands-by-charity-allegations](http://www.theguardian.com/media/organgrinder/2009/mar/03/panorama-stands-by-charity-allegations). Last visited: 10 November 2014.

<sup>11</sup> 'Spot Report: Ummah Welfare Trust and the Barclays Bank Controversy', *The NEFA Foundation*, 5 January 2009, available at: [www.web.archive.org/web/20100508163747/http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/SpotReport\\_UmmahWelfareTrust.pdf](http://www.web.archive.org/web/20100508163747/http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/SpotReport_UmmahWelfareTrust.pdf). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>12</sup> 'Interpal account closed', *Third Sector*, 4 April 2007, available at: [www.thirdsector.co.uk/interpal-account-closed/finance/article/648069](http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/interpal-account-closed/finance/article/648069). Last visited: 25 September 2014.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Union of Good: INTERPAL and the U.K. Member Organizations', *The NEFA Foundation*, 23 March 2009, available at: [www.globalmbwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/27722268-The-Union-of-Good-Interpal-and-the-UK-Member-Organizations-NEFA-Foundation.pdf](http://www.globalmbwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/27722268-The-Union-of-Good-Interpal-and-the-UK-Member-Organizations-NEFA-Foundation.pdf). Last visited: 25 September 2014.

### ***1.1 Accusations of ‘Islamophobia’ Against HSBC***

Muslim groups in the UK have accused HSBC of launching an “Islamophobic campaign against Muslim organisations”, some of whom are threatening to take legal action against the bank under discrimination laws and have called for members of the public to boycott the bank.<sup>14</sup> Several local politicians and councils have also been vocal in defending the groups. For example, the Islington council stated on its website, following the announced closures in July, “Finsbury Park Mosque is at the heart of the local community and does fantastic work. HSBC's actions are a threat to the work the mosque does and are extremely worrying”.<sup>15</sup> Rakhia Ismail, Islington Council’s Executive Member for Community Development, said, “Finsbury Park Mosque plays a vital role in the local community and HSBC’s unjustified decision to close the mosque’s bank account is disgraceful”. Islington Labour Councillors also launched a petition calling on HSBC to “drop its plans to close the bank account of the Finsbury Park Mosque”.<sup>16</sup>

While, in fact, the closures of these bank accounts occurred as a result of HSBC receiving a large fine and it conducted a large-scale risk assessment, the announced closures received wide press coverage that was largely sympathetic to the groups involved and their claims that the HSBC was staging an ‘Islamophobic’ campaign. In the majority of coverage, however, the groups’ known or suspected extremist links were not mentioned and/or denied.

HSBC has made it clear that “decisions to end a customer relationship are not taken lightly, and are absolutely not based on the race or religion of a customer. Discrimination against customers on grounds of race or religion is immoral, unacceptable and illegal, and HSBC has comprehensive rules and policies in place to ensure race or religion are never factors in banking decisions.”<sup>17</sup>

While HSBC did not specify any particular reasons for the closures, the groups’ links to extremist ideology, individuals and groups, both in the UK and abroad, should leave little doubt as to the reasons behind HSBC’s decision. To blame those who recognise and attempt to distance themselves from extremism of ‘Islamophobia’ detracts from the real problem of charities that represent an extremist fringe in the UK’s Muslim community, while allowing them to present themselves as mainstream moderates.

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<sup>14</sup> ‘HSBC shuts accounts of Muslim organisations, including Finsbury Park mosque’, *The Guardian*, 30 July 2014, available at: [www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/30/hsbc-shuts-accounts-muslim-organisations-finsbury-park-mosque](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/30/hsbc-shuts-accounts-muslim-organisations-finsbury-park-mosque). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>15</sup> ‘HSBC - Don’t close Finsbury Park Mosque’s bank account’, Islington Labour, available at: [www.islington-labour.org.uk/hsbc\\_don\\_t\\_close\\_finsbury\\_park\\_mosque\\_s\\_bank\\_account](http://www.islington-labour.org.uk/hsbc_don_t_close_finsbury_park_mosque_s_bank_account). Last visited: 13 October 2014.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> ‘Muslim groups accuse HSBC of Islamophobia after it threatens to close its accounts’, *Independent*, 30 July 2014.

## 2. Extremist Links of Groups with Recent Restrictions

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The Cordoba Foundation; Finsbury Park Mosque; and, the Ummah Welfare Trust (UWT) were three groups with known and/or alleged extremist links to have had their accounts closed by HSBC in September 2014.

### 2.1 *The Cordoba Foundation*

The Cordoba Foundation is an NGO that serves as a forum for pro-Islamist activism in the UK. The group was described as “a front for the Muslim Brotherhood” by Prime Minister David Cameron<sup>18</sup> in 2008 and was named in a leaked document prepared by a top British security official for the director general of the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) listing peaceful British Islamic groups that often possess extremist ideology. The document cautioned that if the government engages with such groups it could encourage this ideology.<sup>19</sup>

The Cordoba Foundation’s founder and president is prominent Islamist activist Anas al-Tikriti, who is also vice-president of the Stop the War Coalition (a UK anti-war organisation) and former president of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). The MAB is a group which has its own extremist links, including having reportedly served as the Muslim Brotherhood’s UK wing (see: ‘Muslim Association of Britain’ profile).<sup>20</sup>

Al-Tikriti is the son of Dr. Osama Tawfiq al-Tikriti (the former leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Iraq<sup>21</sup> and the current leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party, the Brotherhood’s political wing in Iraq) and is known to lobby politicians in support of the Muslim Brotherhood. He has also publically defended<sup>22</sup> the terrorist organisation Hamas, with which he has been accused of having connections.<sup>23</sup>

Al-Tikriti has reportedly claimed that calls for an Islamic state should “not scare us...or bring about a negative reaction”.<sup>24</sup> After the 2003 invasion of Iraq, he affirmed “the right of the Iraqis to engage in legitimate resistance against foreign occupation”, in an interview featured on the Muslim Brotherhood’s official website.<sup>25</sup> In another interview with IslamOnline, al-Tikriti said that, while

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<sup>18</sup> ‘Cameron gets tough with Islamic extremists, apologists for terror and the idea of “state multiculturalism”’, *Conservative Home*, 4 March 2008, available at: [www.conservativehome.com/torydiary/2008/03/cameron-gets-to.html](http://www.conservativehome.com/torydiary/2008/03/cameron-gets-to.html). Last visited: 16 September 2014.

<sup>19</sup> ‘List sent to terror chief aligns peaceful Muslim groups with terrorist ideology’, *The Guardian*, 4 August 2010, available at: [www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/aug/04/quilliam-foundation-list-alleged-extremism](http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/aug/04/quilliam-foundation-list-alleged-extremism). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Anas Altikriti Profile’, *The Guardian*, available at: [www.theguardian.com/global/2007/jun/03/resource2](http://www.theguardian.com/global/2007/jun/03/resource2). See also: ‘Why is the left so blinkered to Islamic extremism?’, *Independent*, 28 June 2013, available at: [www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/why-is-the-left-so-blinkered-to-islamic-extremism-8679265.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/why-is-the-left-so-blinkered-to-islamic-extremism-8679265.html). See also: ‘Officers & Steering Committee’, *Stop the War Coalition*, available at: [www.stopwar.org.uk/officers](http://www.stopwar.org.uk/officers). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Devichand, M., ‘Rashid Ghannouchi on Britain, Islam and liberal democracy’, *BBC News*, 12 February 2012, available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-16932923](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-16932923). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>22</sup> For example, al-Tikriti writes: “Hamas is totally different [to al-Qaeda]. In fact, Hamas supports democracy, is the democratically elected majority representative of the Palestinian people and takes up arms solely within Palestine because there is no alternative against an illegal occupying power that confiscates its people’s lands and destroys their livelihoods”, see: Al-Tikriti, A., ‘Hamas is not al-Qaida’, *The Guardian*, 21 September 2009, available at: [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/sep/21/hamas-al-qaida](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/sep/21/hamas-al-qaida). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>23</sup> In 2003, Louise Ellman MP told Parliament that Anas al-Tikriti and others “are connected to the terrorist organisation Hamas”. See: Parliamentary Business, Hansard, 18 December 2003, available at: [www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200304/cmhansrd/v0031218/debtext/31218-18.htm](http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200304/cmhansrd/v0031218/debtext/31218-18.htm). Last visited: 17 August 2014.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Why is the left so blinkered to Islamic extremism?’, *Independent*, 28 June 2013.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Al-Zarqawi’s Importance was Exaggerated’, *IkhwanWeb*, 9 June 2006, available at: [www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=4138](http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=4138). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

he would rather the Iraqi resistance “happen without any spillage of blood on any side”, that “to expect to rule people with guns and missiles and not expect a reaction in kind is extremely foolish and naïve” and defended the Iraqi’s right “to free themselves using any means and methods”.<sup>26</sup>

Al-Tikriti has also been an outspoken supporter and defender of the movement to boycott Holocaust Memorial Day, and wrote an article criticising the Muslim Council of Britain for withdrawing its plans to boycott the day, asking why they appeared to “give in to the pressure and vilification of the pro-Zionist lobby”. In the article he also referenced those who “coined the ‘Holocaust industry’” and the “farce it has become”.<sup>27</sup>

According to the Tax Payers’ Alliance, between 2007 and 2008, the Cordoba Foundation received £38,000 in Prevent funding for a ‘Muslim Media Project’ and the ‘Muslim debating society’.<sup>28</sup> However, due to having organised the event with Dr Abdul Wahid entitled ‘Has Political Participation Failed British Muslims?’ (with a vote taken at the event concluding that it had), the Cohesion Minister stated in parliament that Tower Hamlets Council had withdrawn from the agreement. As a result, the group was required to return the £4,000 it had received.<sup>29</sup> Dr Wahid is the leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), a radical extremist group that calls for the destruction of Israel, the establishment of a global caliphate and refuses to condemn suicide bombers.<sup>30</sup>

The group has previously sponsored an event entitled ‘Beyond Guantanamo’ that was to feature a video address from al-Qaeda cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, killed in Yemen by a US drone strike in September 2011. The video was cancelled shortly before the event took place following pressure from the local council.<sup>31</sup> The group has also hosted<sup>32</sup> prominent HT member Jamal Harwood and hate preacher Haitham al-Haddad, who has spoken<sup>33</sup> at an event at which a video message of al-Awlaki was scheduled to play.<sup>34</sup>

## **2.2 Finsbury Park Mosque**

Finsbury Park Mosque has a long history of radical Islamist activity. It formerly served as the hub for hate preacher Abu Hamza al-Masri’s terrorist network, recruitment and planning of terrorist activities. Abu Hamza – who was the mosque’s imam between 1997 and 2003 – used the mosque to radicalise young men before sending them abroad to fight jihad, to such an extent that Reda Hassaine, who was paid by MI5 to spy inside the mosque, described it as an “al-Qaeda guesthouse in London”.<sup>35</sup> Abu Hamza has since been convicted in the UK of offences which included inciting racial hatred and soliciting to murder and has also been convicted in the US on 11 terrorism

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<sup>26</sup> ‘Iraqis in Exile: How They Look at Today’s Iraq’, *IslamOnline*, 8 April 2004, available at: [www.web.archive.org/web/20070318005214/http://www.islamonline.net/livedialogue/english/Browse.asp?hGuestID=r7f9Ll](http://www.web.archive.org/web/20070318005214/http://www.islamonline.net/livedialogue/english/Browse.asp?hGuestID=r7f9Ll). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Tikriti, A., ‘Forgetting to remember’, *The Guardian*, 4 December 2007, available at: [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/dec/04/forgettingtoremember](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/dec/04/forgettingtoremember). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Council Spending Uncovered II; No.5: The Prevent Strategy’, *The Taxpayers’ Alliance*, 2009, available at: [www.taxpayersalliance.com/prevent.pdf](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com/prevent.pdf). Last visited: 14 September 2014.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> ‘Hizb ut-Tahrir’, *Hope Not Hate*, available at: [www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/ht/](http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/ht/). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Meleagrou-Hitchens, A., ‘Anwar al-Awlaki: The UK Connection’, *The Centre for Social Cohesion*, 11 November 2009, available at: [www.henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/anwar.pdf](http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/anwar.pdf). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>32</sup> ‘Debate: Must Muslim Leades [sic.] be Blamed for Extremism in Britain?’, *The Cordoba Foundation*, 3 October 2007, available at: [www.thecordobafoundation.com/events.php?id=1&art=14](http://www.thecordobafoundation.com/events.php?id=1&art=14). Last visited: 16 September 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Copy of invitation to event held at City University’s Islamic Society Annual Dinner, 2009, available at: [www.hurryupharry.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/awlaki-city-u-4-09.jpg](http://www.hurryupharry.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/awlaki-city-u-4-09.jpg). Last visited: 16 September 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Meleagrou-Hitchens, A., ‘Anwar al-Awlaki: The UK Connection’, *The Centre for Social Cohesion*, 11 November 2009.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Abu Hamza trial: London cleric found guilty on terror charges by US jury’, *The Telegraph*, 19 May 2014, available at: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/10841160/Abu-Hamza-trial-London-cleric-found-guilty-on-terror-charges-by-US-jury.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/10841160/Abu-Hamza-trial-London-cleric-found-guilty-on-terror-charges-by-US-jury.html). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

charges.<sup>36</sup> He was then extradited to the US where, in May 2014, he was convicted of a variety of terrorism charges.

Finsbury Park Mosque was attended by individuals who went on to commit serious terrorist offences. This included Richard Reid,<sup>37</sup> who later attempted to detonate a bomb concealed in his shoe on a US-bound transatlantic aircraft on behalf of al-Qaeda; Saajid Badat, also recruited by al-Qaeda for the plot but backed out shortly before the attack;<sup>38</sup> Nizar Trabelsi,<sup>39</sup> who was to become involved in the 'shoe bomb' plot and was convicted for plotting to bomb a NATO airbase; and, Oussama Kassir, convicted of charges which included an attempt to establish a terrorist training camp in Bly, Oregon. Djamel Beghal, an Osama bin Laden lieutenant later convicted in France for his involvement in an al-Qaeda inspired plot to bomb the US embassy and a US cultural centre in Paris in 2001,<sup>40</sup> <sup>41</sup> was instrumental in selecting potential recruits at Finsbury Park Mosque to be sent to Afghan training camps and potentially perform martyrdom missions for al-Qaeda.<sup>42</sup>

Salman Abdullah – a British Muslim who fought in Kashmir in the late 1990s and who was a regular at Finsbury Park Mosque when Abu Hamza al-Masri was the imam – estimates that approximately fifty Muslims that had attended that mosque alone were killed fighting abroad.<sup>43</sup>

During Abu Hamza's time as imam at Finsbury Park, he claimed that the 11 September 2001 attacks were part of a Jewish plot, while marking the anniversary of 9/11 with a sermon praising the virtue of the hijackers involved.<sup>44</sup>

In February 2002 it was reported that MI5 had found evidence of weapons training being offered to and carried out amongst certain more radical members of Finsbury Park Mosque. Furthermore, evidence was found of a policy of systematic radicalisation with possible links to al-Qaida recruitment.<sup>45</sup> In 2003 police reported finding biological and chemical weapon equipment, a small haul of weapons, over 100 stolen and forged passports as well as a plethora of other illicit items at the mosque, which was raided in connection with al-Qaeda's 2002 Wood Green Ricin Plot.<sup>46</sup> In 2004, Finsbury Park Mosque was linked to the Beslan Massacre which saw 300 people dead, half of whom were children. The plot, carried out in Chechnya, was partially planned and carried out by three members of the mosque.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> 'Mustafa Kamel Mustafa, A/K/A "Abu Hamza," Convicted Of 11 Terrorism Charges In Manhattan Federal Court', The United States Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York, 19 May 2014, available at: [www.justice.gov/usao/nys/pressreleases/May14/AbuHamzaVerdictPR.php](http://www.justice.gov/usao/nys/pressreleases/May14/AbuHamzaVerdictPR.php). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>37</sup> Elliott, M., 'The Shoe Bomber's World', *Time*, 12 February 2002, available at: [www.content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,203478,00.html](http://www.content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,203478,00.html). See also: Gibson, H., 'Looking for Trouble', *Time*, 14 January 2002, available at: [www.content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,193661,00.html](http://www.content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,193661,00.html). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>38</sup> 'Shoebomb plotter given 13 years', *BBC News*, 22 April 2005, available at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4474307.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4474307.stm). Last visited 18 September 2014.

<sup>39</sup> O' Neill, S. & McGrory, D., (2006) *The Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque* (London: Harper Perennial), p. 226.

<sup>40</sup> 'KSM's Transatlantic Shoe Bomb Plot', *The NEFA Foundation*, September 2007, available at: [www.nefafoundation.org/file/shoebombplot.pdf](http://www.nefafoundation.org/file/shoebombplot.pdf). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>41</sup> 'Thwarting terror cells in Europe', *CNN*, 26 October 2001, available at: [www.articles.cnn.com/2001-10-26/world/inv.thwarting.cells\\_1\\_terror-cells-french-investigators-nizar-trabelsi?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://www.articles.cnn.com/2001-10-26/world/inv.thwarting.cells_1_terror-cells-french-investigators-nizar-trabelsi?_s=PM:WORLD). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>42</sup> O' Neill, S. & McGrory, D., (2006) *The Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque*, (London: Harper Perennial), p. 87.

<sup>43</sup> Simcox, R. et. al., 'Islamist Terrorism; the British connections', *The Henry Jackson Society*, 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Halliday, J., 'Abu Hamza: from Egypt to a US prison via Finsbury Park mosque', *The Guardian*, 20 May 2014, available at: [www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/20/abu-hamza-profile](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/20/abu-hamza-profile). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>45</sup> 'AK-47 training held at London mosque', *The Guardian*, 17 February 2002, available at: [www.theguardian.com/uk/2002/feb/17/terrorism.religion](http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2002/feb/17/terrorism.religion). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>46</sup> 'Mosque raid findings revealed', *BBC News*, 17 February 2006, available at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4689816.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4689816.stm). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>47</sup> 'London mosque link to Beslan', *The Guardian*, 3 October 2004, available at: [www.theguardian.com/world/2004/oct/03/chechnya.russia](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/oct/03/chechnya.russia). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

Finsbury Park Mosque was shut down in January 2003 as part of a major police investigation. Upon its reopening in 2005, the mosque was placed under the control of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB).<sup>48</sup> One of the mosque's newly appointed trustees<sup>49</sup> – Mohammad Sawalha (who is still a trustee at the mosque)<sup>50</sup> – has been described in a BBC documentary as a “fugitive Hamas commander”.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, Azzam Tamimi – one of the MAB's leading figures who acted as a spokesman to the media regarding the MAB's takeover of Finsbury Park Mosque – has previously claimed he would like to carry out a ‘martyrdom’ operation if he had the opportunity and said it was “a noble cause”.<sup>52</sup>

Under the new management, and while apparently trying to distance themselves from the Mosque's past,<sup>53</sup> officials at Finsbury Park have in recent months damaged their reputations, in locking an Al-Arabiya reporter inside the mosque against his will for asking questions about the mosque's possible links to the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, the current Imam of Finsbury Park Mosque, Sheikh Rajab Zaki, has reportedly spoken at pro-Muslim Brotherhood rallies in Egypt,<sup>55</sup> while the mosque also recently hosted Jamal Badawi,<sup>56</sup> who has described suicide bombers as “freedom fighters”.<sup>57</sup>

### ***2.3 Ummah Welfare Trust (UWT)***

The UWT appears to have in 2007 worked<sup>58</sup> alongside the Al-Salah Islamic Association, a group that was designated in the same year as a Hamas fundraising operation by the US Treasury,<sup>59</sup> which described the group as “one of the largest and best-funded Hamas charitable organizations [sic.] in the Palestinian territories”.<sup>60</sup> The Al-Salah Islamic Association was also confirmed by Senior Hamas officials to have “identified with us”.<sup>61</sup>

The UWT is alleged<sup>62</sup> to have given money to the Nablus Zakat Committee and the Tulkarem Zakat Committee – both of which are Hamas-controlled organisations<sup>63</sup> (whose members were accused of financing Hamas, convicted in 2008<sup>64</sup> and given substantial prison terms).<sup>65</sup> The UWT

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<sup>48</sup> ‘The battle for the mosque’, *BBC News*, 7 February 2006, available at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4639074.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4639074.stm). Last visited 18 September 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Lambert, R., (2011) *Countering Al-Qaeda in London: Police and Muslims in Partnership*, (London: C. Hurst & Co.).

<sup>50</sup> ‘1136945 - FINSBURY PARK MOSQUE’, Charity Commission, available at: [apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/ContactAndTrustees.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=1136945&SubsidiaryNumber=0](http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/ContactAndTrustees.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=1136945&SubsidiaryNumber=0). Last visited: 30 October 2014.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Faith, hate and charity: Transcript’, *BBC Panorama*, 1 August 2006, available at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/5234586.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/5234586.stm). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Interview with Dr Azzam Al-Tamimi, Institute of Islamic Political Thought’, *BBC News 24: HardTalk*, 2 November 2004, *Daniel Pipes Middle East Forum*, available at: [www.danielpipes.org/2813/interview-with-dr-azzam-al-tamimi-institute-of-islamic](http://www.danielpipes.org/2813/interview-with-dr-azzam-al-tamimi-institute-of-islamic). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Locked up: Finsbury Park Mosque detains journalist after tricky questions’, *Al Arabiya*, 24 August 2014, available at: [www.english.alarabiya.net/en/media/print/2014/08/24/Locked-up-Finsbury-Park-Mosque-detains-journalist-after-tricky-questions.html#.U\\_o8w8mads0.twitter](http://www.english.alarabiya.net/en/media/print/2014/08/24/Locked-up-Finsbury-Park-Mosque-detains-journalist-after-tricky-questions.html#.U_o8w8mads0.twitter). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> ‘Dr. Mohamed Morsi Electoral Campaign Stops in Beni Suef and Fayoum, Wednesday’, *IkhwanWeb*, 16 May 2012, available at: [www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29991](http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29991). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>56</sup> ‘The Status of Woman in Islam by Dr. Jamal Badawi’, *Finsbury Park Mosque*, available at: [web.archive.org/web/20140622033954/http://www.finsburyparkmosque.org/resources/the-status-of-woman-in-islam-by-dr-jamal-badawi/](http://web.archive.org/web/20140622033954/http://www.finsburyparkmosque.org/resources/the-status-of-woman-in-islam-by-dr-jamal-badawi/). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>57</sup> ‘Jamal Badawi: Enduring Link to ISNA's Radical Past’, *The Investigative Project on Terrorism*, 8 May 2012, available at: [www.investigativeproject.org/3569/jamal-badawi-enduring-link-to-isna-radical-past](http://www.investigativeproject.org/3569/jamal-badawi-enduring-link-to-isna-radical-past). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>58</sup> A photographic image archived by the Henry Jackson Society appears to show that the Al-Salah Islamic Association conducted a project with the UWT.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Treasury Designates Al-Salah Society Key Support Node for Hamas’, US Department of the Treasury, 7 August 2007, available at: [www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/hp531.aspx](http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/hp531.aspx). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Levitt, M., ‘Undercutting a Culture of Militancy’, *The Washington Institute*, 8 August 2007, available at: [www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/undercutting-a-culture-of-militancy-designating-hamas-charities](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/undercutting-a-culture-of-militancy-designating-hamas-charities). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Spot Report: Ummah Welfare Trust and the Barclays Bank Controversy’, *The NEFA Foundation*, 5 January 2009.

<sup>63</sup> ‘United States of America v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et. Al’, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas Dallas Division, 26 July 2004.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Five Convicted in Terrorism Financial Trial’, *The New York Times*, 24 November 2008, available at: [www.nytimes.com/2008/11/25/us/25charity.html?\\_r=2&](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/25/us/25charity.html?_r=2&). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

has also sent “significant financial transfers” to Interpal,<sup>66</sup> an organisation designated by the US Treasury as one of the organisations that “provide support to Hamas and form part of its funding network in Europe” (Interpal deny such accusations).<sup>67</sup>

The charity is also known to have published extremist material. For example, it posted an article on its website claiming that the British government was “an enemy to Islam and the Muslims” and encouraging readers to “consider the Police and Intelligence as filthy human beings”.<sup>68</sup> On another occasion, the group posted an article praising “martyrdom” as a “lofty rank” and “unparalleled in Islam”.<sup>69</sup>

UWT hosts gender-segregated events<sup>70</sup> and, on 2 September 2014, hosted Shaykh Shams Aduha Mohammad,<sup>71</sup> an extremist who has previously claimed: “the most logical thing for anyone to want to protest against and to want to be critical about is homosexuality”.<sup>72</sup> He has also written that: “homosexuality is a symptom of the bigger problem and Islam has always acknowledged its existence in people as a vice among vices”.<sup>73</sup> When asked if infidels should be killed, he stated “there is no yes or no answer”.<sup>74</sup>

### 3. Extremist Links of Groups with Previous Restrictions

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Cage; Helping Households Under Great Stress (HHUGS); and, the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) are three groups with known and/or alleged extremist links to have faced previous banking restrictions.

#### 3.1 Cage

Cage describes itself as an “independent advocacy organisation working to empower communities impacted by the War on Terror”<sup>75</sup> and a “human rights organisation that exists solely to raise awareness of the plight of the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay and other detainees held as part of the War on Terror”.<sup>76</sup>

However, Cage has supported<sup>77 78</sup> convicted terrorists, including Aafia Siddiqui, who “had wide ranging links to al-Qaeda”<sup>79</sup> and was imprisoned for the attempted murder of US officers;<sup>80</sup> Nizar

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<sup>65</sup> ‘Federal Judge Hands Downs Sentences in Holy Land Foundation Case’, Department of Justice, 27 May 2009, available at: [www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2009/May/09-nscl-519.html](http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2009/May/09-nscl-519.html). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Spot Report: Ummah Welfare Trust and the Barclays Bank Controversy’, *The NEFA Foundation*, 5 January 2009.

<sup>67</sup> ‘U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities’, US Department of the Treasury, 22 August 2003.

<sup>68</sup> ‘A Practical Guide to Dealing With Hassle From British Authorities’, *Ummah Welfare Trust*, available at:

[www.web.archive.org/web/20040829232726/www.uwt.org/Download/whattodo.htm](http://www.web.archive.org/web/20040829232726/www.uwt.org/Download/whattodo.htm). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Martyrdom’, *Ummah Welfare Trust*, available at: [web.archive.org/web/20041017161343/www.uwt.org/Download/Martyrdom.pdf](http://web.archive.org/web/20041017161343/www.uwt.org/Download/Martyrdom.pdf). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Mobile Uploads’, *Facebook*, 2 September 2014, available at:

[www.facebook.com/UWTLuton/photos/a.1414957978748169.1073741830.1407192369524730/1509893665921266/?type=1&theater](http://www.facebook.com/UWTLuton/photos/a.1414957978748169.1073741830.1407192369524730/1509893665921266/?type=1&theater). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> ‘How should we respond to anti-Islamic films? - Shaykh Shams Ad Duha’, *Youtube*, 24 September 2012, available at:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7S4GgXneU2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7S4GgXneU2s). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Homosexuality is the least of our worries’, *Shamsadduha.com*, 12 February 2013, available at: [shamsadduha.com/homosexuality-is-the-least-of-our-worries/](http://shamsadduha.com/homosexuality-is-the-least-of-our-worries/). Last visited at: 17 September 2014.

<sup>74</sup> ‘How should we respond to anti-Islamic films? - Shaykh Shams Ad Duha’, *Youtube*, 24 September 2012.

<sup>75</sup> ‘About Us’, *Cage*, [www.cageuk.org/about](http://www.cageuk.org/about). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> ‘The evidence shows that Cage is a pro-terrorist group’, *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2014, available at: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/10981050/The-evidence-shows-that-Cage-is-a-pro-terrorist-group.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/10981050/The-evidence-shows-that-Cage-is-a-pro-terrorist-group.html). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

Trabelsi, found guilty of involvement in a plot to target a military base in Belgium;<sup>81</sup> and, Djamel Beghal, jailed in France for “belonging to a criminal association in relation to preparing an act of terrorism”.<sup>82</sup>

Cage has also published an interview sympathetic to Abu Hamza (see: Finsbury Park Mosque),<sup>83</sup> while Moazzam Begg, Cage’s Outreach Director, has defended Babar Ahmad, despite Ahmad pleading guilty to terrorism charges in a US court late last year.<sup>84</sup> Cage has also previously invited the al-Qaeda cleric Anwar al-Awlaki to speak at events on multiple occasions.<sup>85</sup>

At a HT rally in 2006, Cage’s director of research Asim Qureshi said:

When we see the examples of our brothers and sisters, fighting in Chechnya, Iraq, Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan, then we know where the example lies...We know that it is incumbent upon all of us to support the jihad of our brothers and sisters in these countries when they are facing the oppression of the West.<sup>86</sup>

### ***3.2 Helping Households Under Great Stress (HHUGS)***

HHUGS exists to provide ideological and financial support to Muslims arrested under terrorism laws, and to provide relief for their families. While its website states<sup>87</sup> that this does not extend to those convicted of offences, HHUGS posted a piece online criticising the conviction of jihadist recruiter Munir Farooqi, who was found guilty of soliciting to murder and preparing terrorist acts.<sup>88</sup> In February 2012 HHUGS posted articles<sup>89</sup> and videos,<sup>90</sup> including one<sup>91</sup> by the extremist cleric Haitham Al-Haddad,<sup>92</sup> on their website in support of Farooqi’s family.

The group has also encouraged supporters to write to Khalid Al-Fawwaz, Osama Bin Laden’s former UK spokesman, and Adel Abdul Bary, who have been extradited to the US to face a variety of terrorism charges, including those related to the East African US Embassy bombings of August 1998.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> ‘Djamel Beghal – A Muslim Prisoner’s Reflections on Imaan’, *Cage*, 2 August 2013, available at: [www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/opinion-editorial/item/6827-djamel-beghal-a-muslim-prisoners-reflections-on-imaan](http://www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/opinion-editorial/item/6827-djamel-beghal-a-muslim-prisoners-reflections-on-imaan). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>79</sup> ‘The evidence shows that Cage is a pro-terrorist group’, *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Harris, S., ‘Lady al Qaeda: The World’s Most Wanted Woman’, *Foreign Policy*, 26 August 2014, available at:

[www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/08/26/lady\\_al\\_qaeda\\_the\\_worlds\\_most\\_wanted\\_woman](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/08/26/lady_al_qaeda_the_worlds_most_wanted_woman). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>81</sup> ‘Al-Qaeda plotters sentenced’, *BBC News*, 30 September 2003, available at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3150594.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3150594.stm). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>82</sup> ‘Profile: Abu Qatada’, *The Telegraph*, 13 March 2012, available at: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9019817/Profile-Abu-Qatada.html?mobile=basics](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9019817/Profile-Abu-Qatada.html?mobile=basics). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>83</sup> ‘Interview with Abu Hamza’, *Cage*, 6 June 2008, available at: [www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/interviews/item/140-interview-with-abu-hamza](http://www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/interviews/item/140-interview-with-abu-hamza). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>84</sup> ‘Corrupt Chinese hiding in Western nations elude Beijing’s “fox hunt”’, *International Extradition Lawyers*, 27 August 2014, available at: [www.internationalextraditionblog.com/tag/extradition-from-the-us/](http://www.internationalextraditionblog.com/tag/extradition-from-the-us/). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>85</sup> ‘The evidence shows that Cage is a pro-terrorist group’, *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2014.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Asim Qureshi speaks at Hizb ut-Tahrir rally’, *Youtube*, 19 August 2006, available at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXGPqyK3Srg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXGPqyK3Srg). Last visited: 17 September 2014.

<sup>87</sup> ‘About us’, *HHUGS*, available at: [www.hhugs.org.uk/about-us](http://www.hhugs.org.uk/about-us). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>88</sup> ‘The Munir Farooqi Issue by Sheikh (Dr) Haitham Al Haddad’, *HHUGS*, 14 February 2012, available at:

[www.web.archive.org/web/20120809000846/http://www.hhugs.org.uk/the-munir-farooqi-issue-by-sheikh-dr-haitham-al-haddad/383](http://www.web.archive.org/web/20120809000846/http://www.hhugs.org.uk/the-munir-farooqi-issue-by-sheikh-dr-haitham-al-haddad/383). See also: ‘Munir Farooqi given four life sentences for terror charges’, *BBC News*, 9 September 2011, available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-14851811](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-14851811). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>89</sup> ‘Collective Punishment of an Innocent Family British Justice?’, *HHUGS*, available at: [www.hhugs.org.uk/collective-punishment-of-an-innocent-family-british-justice/384](http://www.hhugs.org.uk/collective-punishment-of-an-innocent-family-british-justice/384). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>90</sup> ‘Save the Family Home Public Meeting’, *HHUGS*, available at: [www.hhugs.org.uk/save-the-family-home-public-meeting/385](http://www.hhugs.org.uk/save-the-family-home-public-meeting/385). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>91</sup> ‘The Munir Farooqi Issue by Sheikh (Dr) Haitham al Haddad’, *HHUGS*, 14 February 2012.

<sup>92</sup> ‘Tags: Haitham Al-Haddad’, *Student Rights*, available at: [www.studentrights.org.uk/tag/Haitham+Al-Haddad](http://www.studentrights.org.uk/tag/Haitham+Al-Haddad). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>93</sup> ‘The extradition suspects “who led to Bin Laden”’, *BBC News*, 5 October 2012, available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19843376](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19843376). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

HHUGS has held events promoting extremist individuals. One event featured Shakeel Begg, a cleric at the Lewisham Islamic Centre who in 2006 reportedly<sup>94</sup> told students “You want to make jihad? Very good...take some money and go to Palestine and fight, fight the terrorists, fight the Zionists”. HHUGS has also hosted the extremist cleric Uthman Lateef at events in 2013.<sup>95</sup>

### 3.3 Muslim Association of Britain (MAB)

The MAB had “for many years been the most active organization [sic.] in the UK Muslim Brotherhood”, until many of its leaders left in 2007 to form another group (the British Muslim Initiative).<sup>96</sup> However, it still maintains extremist links. In 2010 it was reported that the MAB had been identified by a top British security official as a British Islamic group possessing extremist ideology.<sup>97</sup> A former senior figure of the MAB, Dr. Ahmed Al-Rawi,<sup>98</sup> has been linked to organisations known for supporting terrorism. He was former president of the Federation of Islamic Organisations of Europe (FIOE)<sup>99</sup> and has been the director<sup>100</sup> of Islamic Relief Worldwide, an organisation suspected to have links to Hamas.<sup>101</sup> He also signed a petition in 2004 in support of waging jihad on British and American troops in Iraq.<sup>102</sup>

The MAB organised for and welcomed Anwar al-Awlaki to carry out a lecture tour in Britain in 2002.<sup>103</sup> While the MAB claims that it invited al-Awlaki “before he became notorious as an Al Qaeda ideologue”,<sup>104</sup> he was at the time “fleeing an FBI inquiry in the US in the wake of his involvement with three of the September 11 hijackers”.<sup>105</sup> The MAB also hosted former member Dr Azzam Tamimi in May 2014,<sup>106</sup> who has said “I have a great honor [sic.] to be close to Hamas,”<sup>107</sup> and has previously attempted to justify suicide bombing.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> ‘Radical Islam on UK Campuses’, *The Centre for Social Cohesion*, 2010, available at: [www.henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RADICAL-ISLAM-ON-CMAPUS.pdf](http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RADICAL-ISLAM-ON-CMAPUS.pdf). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>95</sup> Screenshots of event invitations archived.

<sup>96</sup> ‘European Parliament Helps Muslim Brotherhood Establish New Interfaith Group’, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch*, 13 January 2013, available at: [www.globalmbwatch.com/2013/01/13/european-parliament-helps-muslim-brotherhood-establish-new-interfaith-group/](http://www.globalmbwatch.com/2013/01/13/european-parliament-helps-muslim-brotherhood-establish-new-interfaith-group/). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>97</sup> ‘List sent to terror chief aligns peaceful Muslim groups with terrorist ideology’, *The Guardian*, 4 August 2010.

<sup>98</sup> ‘New MAB President Issues First Statements’, *The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch*, 31 March 2008, available at: [www.globalmbwatch.com/2008/03/31/new-mab-president-issues-first-statements/](http://www.globalmbwatch.com/2008/03/31/new-mab-president-issues-first-statements/). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>99</sup> Maréchal, B. (ed.), ‘The Muslim Brothers in Europe: Roots and Discourse’, *Muslim Minorities*, Vol. 8, available at: [books.google.co.uk/books?id=xBqjTnMvKIC&pg=PA318&lpg=PA318&dq=al+rawi+president+of+federation+of+islamic+organisations+of+europe&source=bl&ots=mcB08rL6oI&sig=IHjqtUJ0yp3S0C8tWLkvySap3i0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=rqsaVLuMMcKI7Aeek4GgDw&ved=0CCEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=al%20rawi%20president%20of%20federation%20of%20islamic%20organisations%20of%20europe&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=xBqjTnMvKIC&pg=PA318&lpg=PA318&dq=al+rawi+president+of+federation+of+islamic+organisations+of+europe&source=bl&ots=mcB08rL6oI&sig=IHjqtUJ0yp3S0C8tWLkvySap3i0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=rqsaVLuMMcKI7Aeek4GgDw&ved=0CCEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=al%20rawi%20president%20of%20federation%20of%20islamic%20organisations%20of%20europe&f=false). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>100</sup> ‘Islamic Relief Worldwide’, *Companies in the UK*, available at: [www.companiesintheuk.co.uk/directors/islamic-relief-worldwide](http://www.companiesintheuk.co.uk/directors/islamic-relief-worldwide). Last visited: 23 October 2014.

<sup>101</sup> ‘British national arrested for assisting Hamas’, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 May 2006, available at: [web.archive.org/web/20130120194747/http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Terrorism+and+Islamic+Fundamentalism-/British-national-arrested-for-assisting-Hamas+29-May-2006.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/20130120194747/http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Terrorism+and+Islamic+Fundamentalism-/British-national-arrested-for-assisting-Hamas+29-May-2006.htm). Last visited: 24 October 2014.

<sup>102</sup> ‘British Muslim says troops are fair target’, *The Sunday Times*, 31 October 2004, available at:

[www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk\\_news/article127432.ece](http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/article127432.ece). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>103</sup> ‘Al-Qaeda leader’s tour of Britain revealed’, *The Telegraph*, 5 November 2010, available at: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8113977/Al-Qaeda-leaders-tour-of-Britain-revealed.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8113977/Al-Qaeda-leaders-tour-of-Britain-revealed.html). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>104</sup> ‘Times Newspaper publishes correction of article about the Muslim Association of Britain’, *Muslim Association of Britain*, 20 October 2014, available at: [www.mabonline.net/times-correction-83.htm](http://www.mabonline.net/times-correction-83.htm). Last visited: 3 November 2014.

<sup>105</sup> ‘Al-Qaeda leader’s tour of Britain revealed’, *The Telegraph*, 5 November 2010. See also: ‘Anwar al-Awlaki: terror plots linked to Yemen-based cleric’, *The Telegraph*, 21 December 2010, available at: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8215788/Anwar-al-Awlaki-terror-plots-linked-to-Yemen-based-cleric.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8215788/Anwar-al-Awlaki-terror-plots-linked-to-Yemen-based-cleric.html). Last visited: 3 November 2014.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Muslim Association of Britain’, *Facebook*, available at: [www.facebook.com/MuslimAssociationBritain/photos/a.593594500683208.1073741826.169915406384455/721993561176634/?type=1&theater](https://www.facebook.com/MuslimAssociationBritain/photos/a.593594500683208.1073741826.169915406384455/721993561176634/?type=1&theater). Last visited: 18 September 2014 (screenshot archived).

<sup>107</sup> ‘Controversial Palestinian academic hails “martyrdom” U.K. event’, *Haaretz*, 28 February 2012, available at: [www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/controversial-palestinian-academic-hails-martyrdom-u-k-event-1.415421](http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/controversial-palestinian-academic-hails-martyrdom-u-k-event-1.415421). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

<sup>108</sup> ‘Al-Qaeda leader’s tour of Britain revealed’, *The Telegraph*, 5 November 2010.

The group's official Facebook page regularly posts quotes by extremist cleric, Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi.<sup>109</sup> The group has given control of the running of Finsbury Park mosque<sup>110</sup> to people such as Mohammad Sawalha, a known extremist sympathiser.<sup>111</sup>

## Conclusion

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The accusation against HSBC of 'Islamophobia' is the most recent example of Islamist extremists and their sympathisers exploiting legitimate grievances in order to deflect opposition. HSBC may not have disclosed the reasons behind its decision but, in the context of some of these groups' past activities, they appear somewhat self-evident. Banks will understandably want to distance themselves from intolerance and extremism, whether violent or non-violent. Further in-depth investigations by other banks will help to ensure that the financial sources behind extremism are curtailed.

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<sup>109</sup> 'Muslim Association of Britain', *Facebook*.

<sup>110</sup> 'The battle for the mosque', *BBC News*, 7 February 2006.

<sup>111</sup> 'Muslim group: some MPs are the wrong kind of Muslim', *The Telegraph*, 27 April 2010, available at: [www.blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/andrewgilligan/100036641/muslim-group-some-mps-are-the-wrong-kind-of-muslim/](http://www.blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/andrewgilligan/100036641/muslim-group-some-mps-are-the-wrong-kind-of-muslim/). Last visited: 18 September 2014.

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## About the Author

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## About the Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism

The Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism (CRT) at The Henry Jackson Society provides top-quality, in-depth research and delivers targeted, tangible and impactful activities to combat the threats from radical ideologies and terrorism at home and abroad.



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The Henry Jackson Society is a think tank and policy-shaping force that fights for the principles and alliances which keep societies free - working across borders and party lines to combat extremism, advance democracy and real human rights, and make a stand in an increasingly uncertain world.