



NEWS RELEASE

19 June 2017

Finsbury Park attack - Statement from the Co-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK and Moderators of the IFN Faith Communities Forum

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the horrific terrorist attack in the early hours of this morning at Finsbury Park and with their families and all others involved.

The attack took place just outside Muslim Welfare House where, this weekend, a Great Get Together event was held, like other GGT events, “celebrating all that we hold in common”. That event, like the mosque open days, other cross-communal events at Muslim Welfare House and nearby Finsbury Park Mosque and active engagement in the Islington Faiths Forum, has highlighted the extensive work of those bodies to create positive links, as well as the good relations that others locally have with them.

Where terrorism seeks to wear the face of religion, or where innocent people connected to mosques or other places of worship are the subject of hatred and attack because of perceived links to terrorism, we must stand up for their safety and their right to live free from prejudice, suspicion and hatred.

We must continue to stand together, support each other and work together for the common good.

Earlier this year IFN, with Government, the Crown Prosecution Service, the National Police Chiefs Council and the National Fire Chiefs Council published short guidelines: *Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of our Faith Communities*. As we say in this “As faith communities we... have a role in responding to emergency situations and to inter-community tensions, both as individual communities and – very importantly – together. In our shared society we are deeply interconnected. An attack on one is an attack on all.”

We close, as we began, with thoughts and prayers for those affected and remember also all those killed, injured and bereaved in other recent attacks.

The Inter Faith Network Co-Chairs and Faith Communities Forum Moderators

Notes for editors

1. Press queries to Inter Faith Network: tel 020 7730 0410; email ifnet@interfaith.org.uk
2. The Inter Faith Network for the UK www.interfaith.org.uk was founded in 1987 to advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of the different faith communities in Britain and to promote good relations between people of different faiths in this country. It works with its member bodies and others to carry out these aims.
3. Member bodies of the Inter Faith Network include: national faith community representative bodies; national, regional and local inter faith bodies; and academic institutions and educational bodies concerned with inter faith issues. A list of member bodies can be found at <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/members>.
4. A copy of this statement can be found at <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/statements-and-messages> and a copy of IFN's statement making policy at https://www.interfaith.org.uk/uploads/Policy_on_making_of_statements.pdf
5. IFN's recently issued guidance, *Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of our Faith Communities* published in partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Home Office, the Crown Prosecution Service, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the National Fire Chiefs' Council can be found at: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/press-release-looking-after-one-another-the-safety-and-security-of-our-fait>
That document contains guidance on responding jointly to attacks on places of worship; working for calm at times of tension; and working to build on and strengthen existing good inter faith relations. It contains material about how and where to report hate incidents, cyber-attacks, and actual or suspected terrorist activity; where to find information on strengthening the security of buildings; and where to find information about working to build – and strengthen – good inter faith relations locally.
6. A note circulated by the Department for Communities and Local Government following the recent attack at Manchester Arena, entitled *Advice and Support for Community Leaders on Managing Tensions* can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/advice-and-support-for-community-leaders-on-managing-tensions>
7. Further information about the Great Get Together can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/the-great-get-together>