



Muslim Research & Development Foundation

PRESS RELEASE

29th October 2018

The Times Newspaper: Inaccurate assertions & statements

On 8th October 2018, the Times Newspaper published several articles mentioning Dr Haitham Al-Haddad and his relationship with The Muslim Research & Development Foundation (MRDF). The articles mentioned the work MRDF does and several quotes from 'right-wing' organisations and government appointed experts on so-called radicalisation. The Times went further and quoted some of these sources as credible 'Muslim' representatives.

Over the past decade Muslim organisations and Muslims in general have not only had their reputations maligned but have lived with media fabrications without consequence. In the climate of hate and Islamophobia you would have expected this from the tabloid press but now the Times has decided it needs to attack those working for the betterment of the British Muslim Community.

In August 2017, the Times published a frontpage story in which it claimed that a Christian child was forced into Muslim foster care. The words used were 'White Christian Child' and the article pointed to the child being placed with two Muslim households by Tower Hamlets council. The Times then followed with another story claiming the attention it had bought to the case had resulted in the child being moved. Tower Hamlets Council forwarded a complaint to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) and their ruling was upheld, IPSO found that almost the entire story was incorrect. The full ruling can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7dcdwwe>.

The reporter was the well known right-wing agitator Andrew Norfolk. This is the reporter who the Times used to write about Dr. Haitham Al-Haddad, MRDF and several reputable British charities who provide valuable services to the community.

The Times, with the help of Mr. Norfolk decided to publish material which was not only factually incorrect but more decisively, determined by quotes from right-wing think tanks and government appointed 'Muslim' representatives.

MRDF has been working for over 10 years in providing both guidance and education in building and educating the British Muslim community. MRDF has carried out hundreds of educational programs and leadership building initiatives throughout the UK benefitting thousands. MRDF has provided Muslims throughout the country with guidance on matters affecting every aspect of their daily life and existence.

The Times decided to mislead and misinform the British public about the status of both the charity and its relationship with Dr. Haitham Al-Haddad. MRDF has worked hard over the last decade to protect those most vulnerable from the attacks on their faith and their position as British Muslims. To speak ill of a charity which has provided so much benefit to the British Muslim community through disregard of how the community works and how it has been constantly maligned by a wider political agenda is tantamount to duplicity.

MRDF is resolute in carrying on fulfilling its charitable objectives in the face of the hate and right-wing political agendas that it has encountered. MRDF will not waver due to the political aspirations of those who use identity politics as a means to forward their political ambitions. MRDF will carry on working tirelessly to help the British Muslim community have the tools and confidence it needs to flourish despite the hate and Islamophobia it encounters.

MRDF will pursue all avenues towards safeguarding its good name and standing in the community and will make sure its beneficiaries are safe from those who want to deny them the services MRDF was established for. MRDF will carry on working with its partner organisations to build the British Muslim community so that it can flourish and be a beacon of hope and unity for all in the United Kingdom.

The articles in question were all published on 8th October 2018 and written by Andrew Norfolk, the titles were:

'Amazon scheme supports Islamic extremists', 'Charities let into Amazon scheme despite warnings' & 'Haitham al-Haddad: Adulterous western women'.

MRDF is presently working to not only have the articles corrected and retracted but most importantly to make a stance against Islamophobia and right-wing hatred and hysteria in the United Kingdom. MRDF is presently in contact with the Charity Commission regarding the articles and will further appeal through the correct regulatory channels to take more sure the allegations and factual irregularities found in the Times articles are retracted and not repeated.

At a time when studies have found media reporting about Muslim communities contributes to an atmosphere of rising hostility towards the Islamic faith, we believe it imperative we all come together and say enough is enough.

Finally, MRDF would like to thank those who sent messages of support from the general public and the British Muslim community. We know it is hard for many to come out and put their heads above the parapet but together we will make sure hate does not prevail in our society, especially with the values we all uphold in a free, democratic society.

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www.MRDF.co.uk

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