



**AGM Of the APPG for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
22 October 6pm in Room Q PCH**

Attendees

1. Welcome: Election of Officers; Apologies

Officers were elected as below.:

Siobhain McDonagh MP-Chair
Zac Goldsmith MP-Vice Chair
Sir Edward Davey MP-Vice Chair
Alison Thewliss MP-Vice Chair
Paul Scully MP- Vice Chair
Mike Gapes MP-Vice Chair
Lord Tope- Vice Chair
Seema Malhotra – Vice Chair
Tom Brake MP-Secretary
Virendra Sharma MP-Treasurer

1. Update on the APPG's current inquiry into the denial of freedom of religion and human rights violations of Ahmadi Muslims and other religious communities in Pakistan:

The key findings from the inquiry were noted and included how case studies and the evidence submitted reinforced the severity of persecution in Pakistan, how such extremism is overspilling into the UK, the issue of hate preachers from Pakistan coming to the UK and the prevalence and growing impact of media and internet in spreading hate.

Recommendations will target both Pakistan and the UK and highlight the need for urgent action. There is a continued pattern of targeting Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan such as the recently proposed Electronic Media Bill in Pakistan that would explicitly extend the anti-Ahmadi and Blasphemy laws to cover actions by individuals on social media.

In discussions it was agreed that the APPG would also raise the issue of any hate preacher coming to the UK so that immediate action was taken.

It was also agreed that a draft launch plan and media plan should be developed to maximise the impact of the report in the UK and internationally.

The launch is expected to be in December 2018/January 2019 and the APPG agreed to seek senior Ministerial attendance for the report. The report was significant in illustrating the link between persecution in Pakistan and the overspill of this into the UK and other countries. This would also be of significant interest to the EU and

other countries and will help engage them on this issue. should be used to leverage.

Points made by Sir Ed Davey MP advocated for the involvement of other countries and other UK and EU parliamentarians in the fight against extremism and persecution so that the Government of Pakistan feels more pressure to make changes, the Community updated MPs that Canada was now also getting involved in acting against persecution of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan. As well as the fact that the recent debate of Pakistan's involvement in GSP+ was greatly noticed by the Pakistan Government.

On hate crime Seema Malhotra queried how issues were raised and what further support was needed. They were advised that where a member experienced hate crime in the UK, they would inform the central team who would then reach out to the Home Office and Metropolitan Police and other relevant authorities. The APPG was keen to be support action on this to ensure such issues were taken seriously.

Tom Brake agreed that he would seek a further meeting with Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner to highlight the community's concerns

Siobhain McDonagh will also set up with the Commonwealth to brief them further on the issue of persecution and extremism.

2. Update on Pakistan:

The impact of the new Pakistan Government was discussed and it was noted that the situation for Ahmadis remains very bleak with them facing the same denial of human rights. Three Ahmadis remain on death row simply for removing a poster that incited hate and violence against Ahmadis. There is also a growing groundswell of anti-Ahmadi rhetoric from extremist clerics such actions have led to attacks on mosques.

Sir Ed Davey voiced his concerns that the situation in Pakistan could rapidly escalate unless something was done now in order to change persecution against the community. The APPG asked for further briefings and agreed to take action on this matter.

3. Urgent Issues in Thailand:

The new Immigration Police Chief has launched a crackdown on refugees and 46 Ahmadis have been put into detention centres despite them being under the UNHCR process and some having been granted refugee status. There is a serious risk of deportation back to Pakistan where their lives are directly under threat. The APPG agreed to take action on this issue and had written to the Foreign Minister and Thai Ambassador already. Further action to follow.

4. AOB: Thursday's Debate on International freedom of religion or belief day 2018:

The APPG agreed to speak at the debate to highlight the issue of the persecution of Ahmadi Muslims.