

LOUISE ELLMAN MP  
LABOUR/CO-OPERATIVE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR LIVERPOOL RIVERSIDE



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office,  
2 Marsham Street,  
London,  
SW1P 4DF

21<sup>st</sup> June 2017

Dear Home Secretary

I am writing to express my deep concern at activities which occurred at the Al Quds demonstration in London last Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> June.

As you will no doubt have been informed, a number of demonstrators were carrying Hezbollah flags.

Hezbollah is not only deeply anti-Semitic – its Secretary General having previously declared: *“If all Jews gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of doing after them worldwide”*, while Robert Wistrich devotes a chapter of his history of anti-Semitism, *A Lethal Obsession*, to Hezbollah. Its ‘military wing’ is proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000.

Under Section 13 of that Act: *“A person in a public place commits an offence if he wears an item of clothing, or wears, carries or displays an article, in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that he is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation”*.

According to media reports, the Metropolitan Police Service, have taken the view that those carrying the flags were supporting Hezbollah’s ‘political wing’ which is not proscribed. Indeed, I have been told that some demonstrators attached stickers to their flags to exploit this totally artificial distinction. It also appears that the organisers of the march, the Islamic Human Rights Commission, actually encouraged participants to bring Hezbollah flags, again exploiting this distinction.

This is a dangerous game of semantics, one which Hezbollah itself does not play. Its Deputy Secretary General, Naim Qassem, stated in 2009 that the *“same leadership that directs the parliamentary and government work also leads jihad actions in the struggle against Israel”*. In 2012, he further stated: *“We don’t have a*

LOUISE ELLMAN MP  
LABOUR/CO-OPERATIVE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR LIVERPOOL RIVERSIDE



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

*military wing and a political one; we don't have Hezbollah on one hand and the resistance party on the other." He continued: "Every element of Hezbollah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, are in the service of the resistance and we have nothing but the resistance as a priority."*

I understand that not only Israel, but the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council have proscribed both the military and political wings of Hezbollah.

I have written to Sadiq Khan requesting he ask the Met to urgently review its policing of this event. In particular, its decision to allow a march, as opposed to a static demonstration; its interpretation of the Section 13 of the Terrorism Act; and whether offences constituting hate speech were committed by any speakers at the event. I am also writing to the Chair of the Charity Commission asking for an examination as to whether the IHRC has breached its guidelines.

I am concerned that the Mayor and the Metropolitan Police Service are constrained in their attempts to deal with this issue by the current status of Hezbollah. I am, therefore, calling upon you to take steps to ensure that Hezbollah in its entirety is proscribed in this country.

For flags of a terrorist organisation to be openly flying in the streets of central London barely two weeks after the terrible events at London Bridge, and following those in Manchester, Westminster Bridge and subsequently at Finsbury Park, is simply unacceptable.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Louise'.

**Louise Ellman MP**  
**Vice Chair, Labour Friends of Israel**