

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

7th June 2018

Jew Consultant,

RE: AL QUDS DAY MARCH AND HEZBOLLAH.

Thank you for contacting me recently about the Al Quds Day March and Hezbollah; your comments upon which I read with interest.

Peaceful protest is a vital part of our democratic society. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to gather together and to demonstrate their views, however uncomfortable or repugnant those can be to the majority of people. However they must do so within the law. Protesters' rights need to be balanced with the rights of others to go about their business without fear of intimidation or serious disruption to the community. Rights to peaceful protest do not extend to violent or threatening behaviour, and the police have the necessary powers to deal with such acts.

Hezbollah's beliefs are outrageous, disgusting, and should be condemned at every opportunity. As I have set out previously, I deplore the group in its entirety. The UK Government has long held the view that elements of Hezbollah have been involved in conducting and supporting terrorism and, as a result, proscribed Hezbollah's External Security Organisation in 2001, and in 2008 proscription was extended to include the whole of Hezbollah's military apparatus, namely the Jihad Council and all the units reporting to it. Hezbollah's military wing is also designated in the UK under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010. Funds or economic resources owned, held or controlled by Hezbollah's military wing in the UK therefore can, and will, be frozen.

A decision to proscribe an organisation is done on the recommendations submitted by law enforcement agencies, security services here and intelligence services overseas. However it is crucial that we constantly monitor these groups and individuals involved in them, and review the use of proscription as a means to take action where we see fit. The proscription of Hezbollah in its entirety is kept under review, but the Government's current position is to maintain a balance. A similar view is taken by countries such as New Zealand, Australia, as well as those in the European Union.

In addition, the police have comprehensive powers, including under the Public Order Act 1986, to take action against individuals under criminal law, regardless of whether an organisation is proscribed. As set out in previous correspondence, not proscribing Hezbollah in no way prevents the police or the Crown Prosecution Service from taking action against different types of incitement.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.



with best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom'.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**