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Dear Home Secretary,

We have read in an article by Paul Goodman, on the Conservative Home website, that your alleged intervention in a Civil Service Fast Stream careers evening to have been jointly hosted with FOSIS (the Federation of Students' Islamic Societies) on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October, resulted in the event's cancellation. We hope the allegation is not true.

It would appear that the contention lies with criticisms levelled at FOSIS in the new Prevent strategy, specifically paragraph 10.78 which states:

*"We judge that FOSIS has not always fully challenged terrorist and extremist ideology within the higher and further education sectors. FOSIS needs to give clearer leadership to their affiliated societies in this area."*

With regards to Prevent more generally, we are concerned that Lord Carlile, given his previous capacity as independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, saw fit to provide a supportive foreword to the 2011 Henry Jackson Society (HJS) report, 'Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections', a report first published by the Centre for Social Cohesion. Douglas Murray, the director of the Centre, is now Associate Director of the HJS under whose auspices the second edition was published.

This is of course the same Douglas Murray who in his Pim Fortuyn memorial lecture in 2006 argued that, "*All immigration into Europe from Muslim countries must stop*" and that "*Conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board: Europe must look like a less attractive proposition.*" We ask you, Home Secretary, to consider the kind of message that Lord Carlile's supportive foreword to the HJS report sends to British Muslims.

With respect to FOSIS, while we cannot claim to speak on its behalf or on the work that it does with university Islamic Societies, it would seem to us that the decision to cancel an event intended to increase the prospect and number of applications to the Civil Service Fast Stream from British Muslim graduates is a very unfortunate one.

Though the Prevent strategy draws upon "*several examples of students engaging in terrorism or related activities while members of university societies affiliated to FOSIS,*" it clearly states that the means of addressing this challenge is through strengthening the engagement of FOSIS with the National Union of Students and other bodies.

Indeed, the Prevent Strategy goes on to argue that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills "*does give FOSIS advice and guidance on how to improve their ability to communicate to their members,*" in order to equip the organisation with the means of tackling the problem of radicalisation on university campuses where any such cases arise.

It is also worth noting the critical contributions of Universities UK and the Caldicott Inquiry on, what is argued to be, wrongful suppositions on the role of university Islamic societies, and university campuses in general, in the radicalisation process.

It is precisely arguments in support of guidance and good practice sharing that is needed to develop the competency of key stakeholders, like FOSIS, in challenging the threat of radicalisation.

Revoking the careers evening event that was to be jointly hosted by the Cabinet Office and FOSIS is not only to neglect the important role FOSIS can and should play, it is a step in the wrong direction for a Civil Service desiring to improve recruitment from minority communities.

Yours sincerely,

Shenaz Bunglawala