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The Rt. Hon. Stephen Timms MP  
House of Commons,  
London SW1A 0AA.

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

Dear Stephen,

I have read your letter printed in The Independent today, in response to the article by Christina Patterson, "Let's keep 'faith' out of politics," with some interest and appreciation and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for arguing in defence of the benign role of religion in our public life and politics.

You are quite right in stating that religion can not and should not be reduced to views espoused by the few that occupy extreme, or minority, positions in whichever faith tradition. British Muslims have long argued for Islam not to be identified with the provocative antics of Islam4UK or Muslims Against Crusades.

The benign role religion has played in world history is irrefutable and our political history would be the poorer if for the absence of faith-based campaigning and social activism.

You write that "*Faith is a source of crucial values: responsibility, solidarity, patience, compassion, truthfulness*" and that our modern politics is urgently in need of these.

We couldn't agree more and as we address the causes and consequences of the recent riots in London and elsewhere in the UK, and ruminate on how to rebuild trust in our communities and with our institutions, our politicians would do well to reflect on the values and virtuous conduct inspired by faith.

Thank you for your contribution.

Yours sincerely,

Mohammed Asif  
CEO