



**Department for
Communities and
Local Government**

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP

*Secretary of State for Communities and Local
Government*

**Department for Communities and Local
Government**

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Dear colleague,

Like you I have been dismayed by the recent criminal attacks on Mosques in Tipton and Walsall, as well as the arson attacks on a Mosque in Muswell Hill and an Islamic school in Chislehurst. When I or Baroness Warsi have spoken to the leaders in those communities, we have been impressed by their resilience. They told us of their resolve to keep going and how much support they had received from the wider community. This practical expression of support, by people of other faiths and none, clearly shows that we won't let extremists from any community divide us. These are attacks on all of us and in our most challenging moments we find greater unity with each other.

As the Home Secretary writes in the press today the Police are doing everything in their power to bring those responsible to justice. People who incite hatred or carry out cowardly attacks will be caught. Let us be clear: bomb making is an act of terrorism: those who seek to murder and maim should expect the full force of the British law to find and punish them.

The Police are working with local partners to help British Muslim communities feel safe - advising them on security measures; increasing patrols and community engagement where necessary, and ensuring effective policing of EDL demonstrations.

And we are tackling the hatred that fuels the extremism behind these attacks. Anti Muslim hatred, like all forms of hate, is abhorrent and Government is committed to the same level of prevention, protection and support for all. Everyone has a right to live free from targeted abuse. My Department's role in stamping out hatred focuses on anti-semitism and anti-Muslim hatred, as part of the government hate crime strategy 'Challenge it, Report it, Stop It' published in January 2012. This strategy includes an action plan that focuses on preventing hate crime by challenging attitudes and behaviours that foster hatred; increasing reporting and building victim's confidence in the justice system and improving responses.

We are working across Government, and with community and faith leaders, to investigate what more Government can do to tackle hatred via our support for the DCLG-chaired Anti Muslim Hatred Working Group. This was established to consider what more Government and others can do to prevent and tackle anti-Muslim hatred and take forward proposals to do so.

We also sponsor and support a range of projects aimed at inspiring young people to

challenge prejudice and discrimination and help learn lessons from the past to create a safer future. We are, for instance, using the commemoration of World War One to highlight the role played by British soldiers from diverse backgrounds, including those soldiers from a Muslim background.

We have seed funded the Tell MAMA service, to increase reporting of anti-Muslim hatred and enable us to measure the incidence of attacks. We also part fund True Vision, alongside the Ministry of Justice, to enable victims of all kinds of hate crime to report attacks.

We fund Holocaust Memorial Day to promote and raise awareness of acts of genocide, and for the first time this year we funded an event on the 11th July to commemorate the genocide in Srebrenica.

Our work on anti-Muslim hatred is now more important than ever before. We remain committed to tackling it and all other forms of hatred and extremism.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Pickles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue ink flourish at the end of the word "Pickles".

RT HON ERIC PICKLES MP