



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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**Hezbollah: Campaign for it to be Banned in the UK**

Thank you for contacting me about the proscription of Hezbollah.

Proscription is an important part of the Government's strategy to disrupt the activities of terrorist groups and those who provide support to them. Under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000, the Home Secretary has the power to proscribe an organisation if it is believed to be concerned in terrorism. If the statutory test is met, the Home Secretary may then exercise the discretion to proscribe the organisation, taking into account a number of factors in considering whether to exercise that discretion. These include the nature and scale of an organisation's activities and the need to support other members of the international community in tackling terrorism.

Hezbollah's beliefs are outrageous, disgusting, and should be condemned at every opportunity. 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.

The proscription of Hezbollah in its entirety is kept under review, but the Government's current position is to maintain a balance. Countries such as Australia and New Zealand, as well as the EU, take a similar view. 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 police already 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. Not proscribing Hezbollah in no way prevents the police or the Crown Prosecution Service from taking action against different types of incitement.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Whittaker'.

Craig Whittaker MP