

Civil Service guidance directed officials to website that likened homosexuality to 'a scourge'

Civil service guidance directed officials to a website on which homosexuality is described as a “scourge” and “western modernity” likened to a “disease”, [The Telegraph](#) can disclose.

A document drawn up by the [civil service's Muslim Network](#) and distributed to officials across Whitehall as “official” guidance cited Islam21c as a useful source of information.

The website also published an analysis of Hamas's Oct 7 terror attack on Israelis, which stated that “the good news coming from the region makes us optimistic”.



Sheikh Haitham Al-Haddad

The analysis was written by Haitham al-Haddad, (*him again – obviously he doesn't object to Western medicine to treat his recent cancer*) a Saudi-born preacher whose views were described by Dame Sara Khan as “misogynistic, racist and

homophobic”, in comments published on the official government website while she was counter-extremism commissioner in 2018.

Despite this, Islam21c was listed as one of several resources in a bibliography in the guidance distributed to officials, with a link to a page on the website offering advice on “what to do when not fasting”.

Other, uncontentious, resources in the same list included the BBC website and an online version of the Quran. (*Uncontentious is, of course, a matter of opinion*)

...The National Secular Society said it was “alarming” that officials were being directed to the Islam21c website, describing some of its content as “hardline” and “homophobic”.

In a statement, Islam21c said: “We unequivocally reject the baseless claims of our content containing extremism or homophobia, which not only lack any substance but also unjustly tarnish the reputation and mission of Islam21c.”

A page on the website dated September 2014 describes the site as “the flagship website of MRDF (Muslim Research & Development Foundation) which operates as a non-profit UK registered charity [sic] 1119977 under the guidance of Sheikh (Dr) Haitham Al Haddad”.

Dr al-Haddad no longer has “direct involvement in the charity”. MRDF said it “is not Islam21c nor does it have any ownership or operational ties with the website.”

(An) article, entitled “Israel declares war on Gaza: a call for Muslim unity and action”, appears from its listing on Google to have been originally published on Oct 7 but is now dated Jan 23.

It reports the declaration by Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, that “we are at war” after what the article describes as “an unprecedented multi-pronged attack by Hamas”.

An “analysis” by Dr al-Haddad within the article states: “This is an urgent and important call upon all Muslims around the

world, particularly those in Europe, to make dua [prayers] for our oppressed brothers and sisters in Palestine ... Palestinians – particularly in Gaza – are defending themselves. They have initiated a new tactic to counter the illegal occupation and, alhamdulillah, they are doing well. That's why we need your dua to support them, my dear brothers and sisters.

"In addition, we urge you to stay updated with the news and think of various ways to support them, whether politically or through lobbying and media exposure. Be prepared for mass demonstrations to support them. Organisations working to support Muslims globally should mobilise and be ready.

"The good news coming from the region makes us optimistic, as Allah has promised victory to those who are oppressed around the world. Our dua – and yours – is much needed."

Dr al-Haddad issued a similar statement in a video on his YouTube account on Oct 7, in which he also hailed the "good news".

A Charity Commission spokesman said: "We are aware of potential concerns about content on a website said to be associated with a registered charity. We are assessing information to inform whether or not this is a matter for the Commission."