

Rt Hon Keir Starmer MP  
Prime Minister's Office  
10 Downing Street, London  
SW1A 2AA

**Monday 5th August 2024**

*Sent via email*

Dear Prime Minister,

The unprecedented levels of racist rioting across the UK over the last few days is utterly deplorable.

It is devastating that the tragic crime committed in Southport continues to be associated with ongoing violence against people of colour. It is contemptuous of the grief experienced by the families and of the Southport communities affected.

It is clear that this eruption of violent racism has long been simmering under the surface. What is happening is the direct result of years of normalised racism and Islamophobia, enabled by mainstream politicians and the British media. Many of us warned of these outcomes during the election period which saw an intensification of Islamophobia, and anti-migrant narratives.

We are particularly concerned that certain sections of the media and political elite have chosen to take the ongoing violence as an opportunity to entertain debates about 'legitimate grievances', 'integration' and immigration. Muslim communities and people of colour should never have to justify their level of integration in order to claim basic protection from criminal acts, and it is incredulous that we should have those debates in the midst of this unprovoked and sustained violence. To blame the victims of this violence is an insult to people of colour across the country.

The Islamophobia, racism and anti-migrant violence we have witnessed on the streets of the UK represents the rot that has become normalised as part of our politics. The new Labour government must take this opportunity to reset the direction of travel and foster zero tolerance for far-right, racist and anti-migrant narratives.

As organisations that work on racial justice and Islamophobia, we say that it is the government's responsibility to take command of the narrative and show leadership. An emergency Cobra meeting is insufficient, this is a national emergency and Parliament should be recalled to effect a national, coordinated political response which gets to the root of this violence.

The government must acknowledge that challenging the far right is not simply a question of online misinformation, or increased police surveillance but involves a wholesale shift in our political culture, language and policies. It is urgent that Parliament is recalled to address the scale of this crisis, and ensure that all people and communities of colour are protected.

Yours sincerely,

Shabna Begum, Runnymede Trust  
Action for Race Equality  
Amnesty International UK

Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance  
Association of Visitors to Immigration  
Detainees (AVID)

Beyond Detention  
Big Leaf Foundation  
Black Equity Organisation  
Black South West Network  
BME National  
Boaz Trust  
Bristol Law Centre  
CARAS  
Caribbean & African Health Network  
(CAHN)  
Children's Rights Alliance for England  
Chilypep  
Choose Love  
City of Sanctuary UK  
Discrimination Law Association  
End Violence Against Women Coalition  
Equality Act Review  
Europa  
Every Child Protected Against Trafficking  
(ECPAT UK)  
forRefugees  
Freedom from Torture  
Friends, Families and Travellers  
Gazelle Professional Services  
GIPSIL  
Good Chance Theatre  
Govan Community Project  
Greater Manchester Ethnic Communities  
Network and Manchester BME Network  
HEAL Collective  
HIAS + JCORE  
Hibiscus  
HOPE not Hate  
Humanity Harmony Opportunity  
Humans for Rights Network  
Immigration Law Practitioners' Association  
(ILPA)  
Inclusive North  
INQUEST  
Islamic Society of Britain

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants  
(JCWI)  
Just for Kids Law  
Migrant Democracy Project  
Migrant Voice  
Migrants Organise  
Migrants' Rights Network  
Music Action International  
Muslim Council of Britain  
NHS BME Network  
Nigeria Community Association  
North East Law Centre  
Open Rights group  
Operation Black Vote  
Our Second Home  
Pennine Oak's  
POMOC  
Positive Action in Housing  
Praxis  
Prevent Watch  
Race Equality Foundation  
Race Equality Network  
Rainbow Migration  
RefuAid  
Refugee Action  
Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and  
London (RAMFEL)  
Refugee Women Connect  
S-REP  
Safe Passage International  
Southeast and East Asian Centre  
(SEEAC)  
Student Action for Refugees (STAR)  
Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel  
Swindon City of Sanctuary  
The William Gomes Podcast  
Together with Migrant Children  
Traveller Movement  
UK ISLAMIC MISSION  
Voices in Exile  
War on Want  
Waterloo Community Counselling

**RUNNYMED**