

Proscribing the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood: A Westminster Policy Briefing

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Foreword

There are moments when the language of caution becomes indistinguishable from the language of evasion. This is one such moment. For too long, Britain has indulged a comforting fiction: that extremist movements which profess patience rather than immediacy, rhetoric rather than rifles, pose a lesser threat to the health of a liberal society. It is a delusion sustained by euphemism, reinforced by bureaucratic inertia, and defended - often loudly - by those who mistake moral relativism for sophistication.

This briefing dispenses with that indulgence.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Muslim Brotherhood are frequently presented as belonging to different moral universes: one a uniformed arm of a hostile state, the other a supposedly “non-violent” social movement operating within civil society. This distinction has been politically convenient, but intellectually indefensible. Both are animated by a totalising ideology that rejects pluralism, disdains democratic accountability, and treats the liberal state not as a legitimate home but as terrain to be contested, infiltrated, and ultimately overcome.

The habit of explaining away such movements by reference to culture, grievance, or foreign policy missteps has become a substitute for analysis. Worse still, it has allowed British institutions - charities, universities, community organisations, even regulatory bodies - to be treated as neutral spaces, rather than as arenas in which ideas compete and power is accumulated. The result has been a slow erosion of vigilance, masked by a vocabulary of “engagement” and “dialogue” that too often functions as a one-way concession.

This paper confronts a further evasion: the idea that hatred of Israel is merely another foreign policy disagreement. In reality, it has become the ideological meeting point at which Islamist extremism and segments of the Western radical Left clasp hands. Under the banner of anti-Zionism, ideas once regarded as disreputable - collective guilt, conspiratorial thinking, the moral exemption of violence - are laundered into respectability. The Jewish state is not criticised; it is demonised, and through that demonisation, a broader hostility to liberal democracy is smuggled into public life.

None of this is abstract. The consequences are visible on Britain’s streets, campuses, and court dockets. They are evident in the intimidation of dissidents, the radicalisation of youth, the corrosion of social trust, and the audacity with which foreign state actors now operate on British soil. A society that cannot draw distinctions between dissent and subversion, or between tolerance and self-abdication, will eventually find itself unable to defend either.

The argument for proscription advanced here is not a call for censorship, nor an assault on religious freedom. It is a demand for intellectual honesty and legal consistency. The

state has not only the right but the obligation to defend itself against movements that exploit its freedoms in order to abolish them. To pretend otherwise is not liberalism; it is negligence masquerading as virtue.

This briefing does not ask the reader to panic. It asks the reader to think - clearly, unsentimentally, and without the comfort of false distinctions. If it succeeds in restoring seriousness to a debate long disfigured by timidity and bad faith, it will have served its purpose.

By David Abrahams Stroll - Former VP Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)

Executive Summary

The IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood are best understood not as rival species of extremism, but as variations of the same ideological project. Western commentary has

too often treated the Sunni-Shia divide as the organising principle of Islamist politics and, in doing so, has missed the more consequential reality: beneath the surface antagonisms lies a strategic convergence between Iran's revolutionary Shiism and Sunni political Islamism. Both seek to subordinate the nation-state to a transnational religious ideology; both treat liberal democracy as a temporary inconvenience; both pursue influence through a blend of intimidation, infiltration, propaganda, and - where useful - violence. The sectarian story, in this reading, has served radicals well: it offers the street a theatre of difference while obscuring the deeper affinities that allow parallel ambitions and occasional cooperation to proceed with limited scrutiny.¹

That convergence becomes clearest when one examines the role played by hatred of Israel. Hostility to the Jewish state functions as an ideological solvent: it dissolves internal contradictions, creates a shared vocabulary across Islamist factions, and furnishes an emotionally potent cause capable of mobilising audiences far beyond the Middle East. Crucially, this anti-Israel frame also travels exceptionally well in the West, where it can be repackaged as "anti-imperialism" or "anti-colonialism" and thereby gain legitimacy in spaces that would otherwise reject overt religious extremism. In parts of Britain's political left, anti-Israel sentiment has at times operated as a proxy for older antisemitic instincts - newly dressed in the language of rights and liberation - making it easier for extremists to find sympathetic amplification, or at least indulgence, so long as their hostility is directed at Israel. The effect is not merely rhetorical. It shapes coalitions, normalises extremist talking points, and helps create a permissive environment in which groups with anti-democratic objectives can present themselves as moral actors.²

The national security implications for the United Kingdom are therefore neither theoretical nor distant. Both the IRGC and Muslim Brotherhood-linked networks have the capacity to radicalise individuals and to harden communal divides, whether through direct indoctrination, the creation of closed ideological ecosystems, or the cultivation of a "siege mentality" that frames integration as betrayal and pluralism as oppression. The IRGC presents an especially acute threat because it operates as a state-backed security and coercive apparatus, linked to hostile activity abroad and intimidation campaigns directed at dissidents beyond Iran's borders.³ The Brotherhood's threat is often less spectacular but no less corrosive: its strength lies in gradualism, institutional entryism, and the long-term reshaping of social norms through influence over charities, community structures, and religious platforms. Taken together, these dynamics can

¹ We Believe in Israel (WBII), *Proscribing the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood: A Westminster Policy Briefing* (London: We Believe in Israel, 2025), PDF, https://assets.nationbuilder.com/webelieveinisrael/pages/6488/attachments/original/1760614316/Muslim_Brotherhood_IRGC_-3.pdf

² International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *Iran's Networks of Influence in the Middle East* (London: IISS, 2018), PDF, <https://www.iiss.org/globalassets/media-library---content--migration/files/publications---free-files/strategic-dossier/iran-dossier/irans-networks-of-influence-in-the-middle-east.pdf>

³ HM Government, *Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings* (London: Prime Minister's Office/Cabinet Office/Home Office/FCO, December 17, 2015), PDF, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a8076bfe5274a2e8ab504ab/53163_Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_-_PRINT.pdf

undermine social cohesion, compromise civic space, and create conditions in which extremist subcultures become harder to identify and disrupt.

For these reasons, the policy conclusion is unavoidable. The UK should move decisively towards the proscription of both the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood, not as a symbolic gesture, but as a matter of national security and democratic self-preservation. Proscription should be paired with a practical package of measures: modernising legal tools to deal with state-linked extremist entities; tightening financial scrutiny and enforcement to disrupt funding streams; strengthening the capacity of regulators and oversight bodies - particularly where charities and educational ecosystems are at risk of capture; and aligning with international partners to reduce safe havens and deny legitimacy to extremist networks. The objective is not merely to punish wrongdoing after the fact, but to remove the operational space that allows extremist organisations - whether violent or “non-violent” in presentation - to entrench themselves, cultivate influence, and erode democratic resilience over time.

Introduction

Senior officials and policymakers in the United Kingdom face a complex challenge from Islamist extremist organisations that, on the surface, appear divided by sectarian identity. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), an elite wing of Iran’s Shia theocracy, and the Muslim Brotherhood, a Sunni Islamist movement with global reach, might seem to represent opposing camps of the Muslim world. In reality, they operate from a shared ideological and strategic foundation that transcends sectarianism. Both seek to reshape the Middle East (and indeed the world) according to an Islamist vision, undermine Western influence, and erode the liberal democratic values that underpin British society. Each has developed sophisticated tactics to penetrate and weaken open societies from within.

This policy briefing contends that the Sunni–Shia divide between the Brotherhood and the IRGC has been overplayed – at times even deliberately exaggerated by the actors themselves – as a form of strategic distraction. By fixating on internecine Sunni vs. Shia conflicts, Western analysts and governments risk missing the quiet coordination and parallel agendas that Islamists pursue against their common adversaries. The IRGC and MB have, for instance, found common cause in virulent *antizionism* and anti-Western sentiment, even as they profess mutual theological contempt. Understanding this convergence is critical: it unmask how radicals maneuver covertly toward power while observers remain preoccupied with sectarian theatre.

The briefing further examines how hatred of Israel functions as both a unifying rallying cry across diverse extremist factions and a convenient outlet for antisemitism in the West. Islamists have weaponised the Israeli–Palestinian conflict to build unlikely coalitions – even drawing in elements of the British far-left who view antizionism as a badge of progressive politics. This alliance of convenience has provided cover and

legitimacy to extremist groups, effectively exploiting democratic society's tolerance to advance an intolerant agenda.⁴

Finally, the briefing details the threats posed to UK national security by the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood. These threats range from the radicalisation of British Muslim youth and the funding of terrorism, to subversive activities that destabilise diaspora communities and infiltrate schools, charities and mosques. In highlighting these risks, the report underscores why proscription – the banning of both organisations – is not only justified but urgently needed. It concludes with actionable recommendations for HM Government and Parliament, aligning with a Tony Blair Institute for Global Change-style approach: evidence-driven, bold in confronting extremist ideology, and creative in deploying the full suite of legislative, diplomatic, and financial instruments to protect national security and social cohesion.

A Shared Ideological Foundation Beyond Sectarianism

Despite their ostensible sectarian differences, the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood operate from a common ideological and strategic framework. Both are rooted in revolutionary Islamist ideologies that prioritise religious law over secular governance, promote jihad (whether by arms or social activism) as a means to achieve political ends, and view the West – as well as liberal Muslim dissidents – as enemies of their vision. Analysts have noted that the ideology of Iran's ruling regime (and its IRGC vanguard) and that of Sunni Islamist movements like the Brotherhood have “far more similarities than differences.” In other words, Shia Iran's velayat-e faqih (guardianship of the jurist) and Sunni Islamism's caliphate dreams are two sides of the same coin, each seeking to establish a theocratic order antithetical to pluralistic democracy.⁵

Both the IRGC and MB trace intellectual lineage to 20th-century Islamist thought that is remarkably interconnected. The Muslim Brotherhood's founding thinkers, such as Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb, laid out principles of *Islamist revolution* that have inspired generations of extremists – Sunni and Shia alike. Indeed, even the Islamist regime in Iran drew from Sunni Islamist concepts: the Brotherhood “has had a profound influence on the belief system that fuels ... the Islamic Republic of Iran”. Sayyid Qutb's writings, which framed secular societies (even Muslim-majority ones) as a state of ignorant jahiliyya, needing purification through an Islamist vanguard, resonated with Ayatollah Khomeini's revolutionary message in 1979. The result is that Iran's IRGC and the Brotherhood share core strategic goals – establishing an Islamic state governed by

⁴ Board of Deputies of British Jews, written evidence submitted to UK Parliament committees, October 7, 2025, PDF, <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/142968/pdf/>

⁵ HM Government, *Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings* (London: Prime Minister's Office/Cabinet Office/Home Office/FCO, December 17, 2015), PDF, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a8076bfe5274a2e8ab504ab/53163_Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_-_PRINT.pdf

their interpretation of Sharia – even if they differ on who should lead it or how it should be implemented.⁶

Far from being in perpetual conflict, these actors have demonstrated a willingness to cooperate tactically when it suits their interests. The Counter Extremism Project observes that “their similarities far outweigh their differences” and that long-term goals have spurred various forms of Sunni–Shia collaboration, such as coordination between Iran and the Brotherhood against common rivals. For example, Tehran’s Shia regime has provided material support to Hamas, the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, united by a shared commitment to Israel’s destruction. Iran’s IRGC Quds Force (its external arm) has armed and funded Hamas for years, even as Hamas is avowedly Sunni – a partnership born of strategic alignment against Israel rather than sectarian affinity. Likewise, Iran and Brotherhood-aligned actors have at times found common cause against pro-Western Sunni regimes; Tehran’s enmity toward Gulf states like Saudi Arabia overlaps with the Brotherhood’s opposition to those same states, producing a marriage of convenience in regional conflicts.⁷

There is historical precedent for covert cooperation that belies sectarian narratives. During the 1990s Bosnian war, IRGC operatives and Sunni mujahideen fighters (including Al-Qaeda members) were, by their own account, fighting “side by side” in support of Bosnian Muslims. A retired IRGC general later openly bragged that Al-Qaeda fighters “learned from us” as the IRGC helped train Sunni jihadists in Bosnia. This little-known episode underscores that radicals will readily cross sectarian lines when a mutual objective – in this case, confronting the West and its allies – is at stake. While the Syrian civil war saw IRGC-backed Shia militias and Sunni jihadists bloodily opposed, even that conflict revealed a broader truth: both sides fed off a narrative of holy war and anti-Western conspiracy. As one analyst put it, the “lines between Shia and Sunni fundamentalism” are sharp in rhetoric yet both subscribe to an ideology of Islamist militancy challenging the global status quo.⁸

Sectarian differences, in fact, have been skillfully manipulated as a smokescreen. The IRGC’s own training manuals propagate a grand conspiracy theory that pits a “[Sunni] Arab-Zionist-Western axis” against Shia Islam. By blaming Western powers and Jews for creating Sunni extremism (a claim the IRGC makes about Al-Qaeda and ISIS being Western inventions), Iran’s regime simultaneously fuels sectarian paranoia while deflecting blame. This narrative serves two purposes: it distracts observers (Western and Muslim alike) from Iran’s outreach to Sunni militants, and it legitimises the IRGC’s

⁶ William E. Shepard, “Sayyid Qutb’s Doctrine of ‘Jāhiliyya,’” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35, no. 4 (November 2003): 521–545, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3879862>

⁷ Counter Extremism Project, “The Muslim Brotherhood’s Influence on Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Iran,” accessed January 13, 2026, <https://www.counterextremism.com/content/muslim-brotherhood%E2%80%99s-influence-al-qaeda-isis-and-iran>

⁸ F. Gregory Gause III, *Beyond Sectarianism: The New Middle East Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, July 2014), PDF (arguing that regional conflict dynamics are often driven by geopolitics and regime interests rather than sectarian theology alone, providing context for cross-sectarian “marriages of convenience”), <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/english-pdf-1.pdf>

expansion of influence under the pretext of “defending Shia Islam.” On the other side, the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates often downplay their Sunni identity when operating in the West, preferring to present themselves simply as “Muslim” community representatives. This deliberate opacity (the Brotherhood is “habitually secretive”) makes it harder for outsiders to pin down the group’s true allegiances. In truth, both the IRGC and MB ultimately reject the nation-state system and envision a transnational Islamic realm or a Caliphate – for the IRGC, an “axis of resistance” led by Tehran; for the Brotherhood, a resurrected Caliphate – putting them on a strategic collision course with the West and with secular governments in the Muslim world alike.⁹

Sectarianism is not the immutable barrier it appears to be. Rather, Islamist extremists exploit it as circumstance dictates: at times waging sectarian conflict to rally their base, at other times putting aside doctrinal differences to jointly undermine common foes. Western policymakers must recognise this chameleon-like strategy. The IRGC and the Brotherhood, for all their theological disagreements, are “ultimately bound together by their shared ideology and their vision for an Islamic state”. A policy approach that isolates one while ignoring the other risks being outflanked by the very cooperation and ideological cross-pollination that this section has outlined. Any effective proscription strategy should therefore address the broader Islamist extremist ecosystem rather than treating Shia and Sunni extremism as unrelated threats.¹⁰

Anti-Israel Hatred – Unifier and Distraction

One of the most potent bonds between disparate extremist groups – and between those groups and segments of opinion in the West – is a shared hatred of Israel. Anti-Israel sentiment (often framed as opposition to “Zionism”) has long been the meeting ground for Islamists of all stripes. It provides a common lexicon of grievance and struggle that transcends internal divides. The IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood both place hostility toward Israel at the very core of their identities, using it as a unifying cause that can rally Sunni and Shia militants together and also as a populist banner to win support internationally.¹¹

For the IRGC, enmity to Israel is not just incidental but existential. The IRGC’s Quds Force – tellingly named after the Arabic word for Jerusalem – was established with the “primary and official objective to ‘liberate’ Jerusalem through the destruction of the state of Israel.” Iran’s supreme leader and IRGC commanders routinely call Israel a cancer to be “erased from the global political map”. Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood’s slogan since the time of Hassan al-Banna has included the phrase “*Jihad is our way*”, and its

⁹ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, “*Political Islam, and the Muslim Brotherhood Review*,” para. 45 (Committee conclusion: “We have found the Muslim Brotherhood to be a secretive organisation, but not a secret one”), <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmfa/118/11807.htm>

¹⁰ F. Gregory Gause III, *Beyond Sectarianism: The New Middle East Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, July 2014), PDF, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/english-pdf-1.pdf>

¹¹ Yale Law School, Avalon Project, “The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas),” August 18, 1988 (primary-source text evidencing Hamas’s foundational ideological framing and hostility toward Israel), https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp

Palestinian branch (Hamas) explicitly commits to Israel's annihilation in its charter. Indeed, Hamas identifies itself as the Brotherhood's Palestinian chapter, and despite nominal Brotherhood moderation elsewhere, it has never shied away from violence against Israelis. This ideological centrality of antizionism means that when IRGC operatives support Hamas with rockets and funding, they do so in perfect consonance with both organisations' core mission. Sunni MB adherents cheering a Hamas attack and Shia IRGC officers supplying the means are part of the same grand narrative: a holy war against the Jewish state.¹²

Hatred of Israel also serves as a convenient distraction mechanism vis-à-vis the West. It allows extremist actors to couch their aggression in terms that resonate with global audiences, especially within Western civil society. In Europe and Britain in particular, criticism of Israel can sometimes be a socially acceptable outlet for sentiments that would otherwise be considered bigoted. antizionism, when it "denies the Jewish people alone a right to self-determination" and obsessively demonises the world's only Jewish state, often crosses the line into antisemitism. Yet it is frequently defended in left-wing and academic circles as a legitimate political stance. Islamist groups have proven adept at leveraging this blurred line. They present themselves as champions of the Palestinian cause, knowing that this garners sympathy (or at least hesitancy to condemn them) in the West.¹³

This dynamic has been particularly pronounced on the British political Left. Over the past decade, the UK has seen a surge of what has been termed "*antisemitic antizionism*," especially within far-left activism. The Board of Deputies of British Jews – the community's main representative body – testified in Parliament that far-left and Islamist antisemitism now "converge on antisemitic anti-Zionist ideas," a trend catalysed by recent conflicts in the Middle East. In practice, this means that certain hard-left factions and Muslim Brotherhood-aligned groups echo each other's slogans about Israel. For example, the chant "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" – effectively calling for Israel's elimination – has been heard at demonstrations organised by far-left activists *and* by pro-Islamist organisations. Each side finds the other useful: Islamists gain respectability by allying with non-Muslim progressives, while far-left activists satisfy an anti-imperialist instinct (and, in some cases, latent antisemitic impulses) by targeting Israel. As the Board of Deputies noted, left-wing intellectuals and movements have increasingly expressed not only the view that Israel should not exist, but even "admiration for...the actions of Hamas [and] Hezbollah". In other words, hatred of Israel has become so potent a motivator that it leads some in Britain to *endorse terrorist violence* or excuse the extremism of groups like the IRGC and MB, so long as it is framed as "resistance."

¹² "Muslim Brotherhood Statement on Operation Al-Aqsa Flood," *Ikhwan* (official Muslim Brotherhood platform), October 7, 2023 (the Brotherhood "blesses"/praises the operation launched that day), <https://ikhwan.site/p-222692>

¹³ House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, *Antisemitism in the UK: Tenth Report of Session 2016–17* (London: House of Commons, October 2016), especially the Committee's discussion of the IHRA working definition and the need for clarity about when discourse about Israel becomes antisemitic, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/136/136.pdf>

For the IRGC and Tehran's clerical regime, this Western susceptibility is a gift. Iranian officials and media consistently label Israel as a racist, apartheid state, casting Iran's own expansionism as a righteous anti-colonial struggle. This framing finds a willing audience in parts of the West. Similarly, Muslim Brotherhood-linked activists in the UK often lead pro-Palestinian campaigns that double as platforms for Islamist ideology. They reframe Islamist goals in the language of human rights and anti-colonialism, thus attracting support well beyond their core base. British university campuses have seen events where speakers with Brotherhood sympathies champion the Palestinian cause, at times creating hostile environments for Jewish students or Israeli speakers. The antisemitism crisis within the UK Labour Party in recent years also illustrated this convergence: individuals who were influenced by far-left and pro-Brotherhood ideas propagated tropes that conflated Zionism with all manner of global ills, often veering into conspiracy theories about Jewish control – rhetoric not far removed from the Islamists' own propaganda.¹⁴

It is important to stress that anti-Israel agitation serves as a *distraction* in several ways. First, it distracts Western publics from the true nature of these extremist organisations. If public discourse fixates on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, there is less attention on, say, the Brotherhood's campaign to subvert European societies from within, or the IRGC's terror plots in London. The anger directed at Israel can act as a pressure valve: it gives vent to frustrations that might otherwise crystallise into scrutiny of local extremist networks. Second, it distracts from intra-Muslim repression and failures. Both Iran's regime and the Brotherhood have poor human-rights records and governance failures when in power. By keeping the spotlight on Israel, they channel the grievances of their followers outward, uniting them against a foreign enemy and away from questioning their leaders' authority. As one scholar observed, Islamist ideologues deliberately exaggerate external enemies to cultivate a siege mentality – this not only radicalises their base but also excuses any action taken in “self-defense,” including terrorism. Hatred of Israel is the easiest rallying banner for this purpose.¹⁵

In Britain today, the synthesis of Islamist and far-left antizionism poses a challenge for policymakers. It has muddied the waters of public debate, making it more difficult to build consensus against proscribing groups like the Muslim Brotherhood or IRGC proxies. Some activists will claim that moves against these organisations are merely attempts to silence “critics of Israel” or are driven by Islamophobia. This briefing's position, however, is clear: legitimate criticism of any government (Israel included) must be safeguarded, but antisemitism-tinged extremism hiding behind antizionism must be exposed and rejected. The UK's recent experience after the 7 October 2023 Hamas

¹⁴ Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (Israel), “The organizations leading the pro-Hamas demonstrations in Britain since the outbreak of Operation Iron Swords” (describing the principal UK organisations involved in pro-Hamas demonstrations and identifying, inter alia, the Muslim Association of Britain and associated networks), December 19, 2023, <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/the-organizations-leading-the-pro-hamas-demonstrations-in-britain-since-the-outbreak-of-operation-iron-swords/>

¹⁵ HM Government (Cabinet Office; Home Office; Foreign & Commonwealth Office), *Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings* (London: HM Government, 17 December 2015), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a8076bfe5274a2e8ab504ab/53163_Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_-_PRINT.pdf

attacks, when antisemitic incidents spiked and protesters in British cities flew the flags of Hamas and Hezbollah, has been a wake-up call. It showed how quickly the unifying hatred of Israel can translate into real-world threats to social peace and security – from harassment of Jewish communities to the glorification of terrorist organisations on UK streets.¹⁶

Anti-Israel hatred is the ideological glue that binds the IRGC and Muslim Brotherhood despite their schisms, and it is a Trojan horse that smuggles their extremist agenda into mainstream acceptability, particularly among certain Western circles. To effectively counter these groups, British officials must also tackle the narratives that empower them – chief among them the manipulation of the Israel–Palestine conflict. As long as chanting anti-Zionist slogans provides cover for extremist actors, efforts to proscribe those actors will face politicised pushback. Therefore, a comprehensive approach will require not just legal bans, but also public diplomacy and education to separate valid discourse on Middle East policy from the poisonous antisemitism and apologia for violence that the IRGC, the Brotherhood, and their fellow travellers promote.

Threats to UK National Security

The activities of the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood are not abstract concerns confined to the Middle East; they manifest in clear and present dangers to the safety, cohesion, and values of the United Kingdom. These threats range from direct involvement in terrorism to subtler forms of societal subversion. The following are key areas in which the IRGC and the MB (and their affiliates) endanger UK national security:

1. Radicalisation of Youth and Recruitment of Extremists: Both organisations target young minds as part of a long-term strategy to grow their influence. The IRGC, through a network of ideological centres in the UK, has worked to radicalise young British Shia and recruit loyalists, spreading anti-Western and antisemitic propaganda in the process. British security sources have uncovered instances of IRGC operatives using online platforms and even addressing UK-based student groups directly: in one 2020 incident, a senior IRGC commander gave an Instagram-live lecture to British Muslim students, urging them to “*raise the flag of the Islamic Revolution*” and see themselves as “*holy warriors*” in an ideological battle. He explicitly framed UK university campuses as a “battlefront” for Iran’s Islamist mission, telling students they have “*a global mission, a civilisational mission*” to prepare for an Islamic future. Such indoctrination attempts mirror the IRGC’s domestic training, which places heavy emphasis on ideological fidelity and martyrdom.¹⁷

¹⁶ UK Parliament, *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (London: House of Commons, March 2007), 18–19,

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7cdd5740f0b65b3de0ba09/7059.pdf>

¹⁷ United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI), written evidence to the UK Parliament, *Home Affairs Committee* (inquiry: “Terrorism in the UK”), para. 7 (on IRGC “network of ideological centres in the UK” radicalising young people and spreading anti-Western and antisemitic propaganda), published 2024, <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/142694/html/>

The Muslim Brotherhood, for its part, focuses on *gradualist* radicalisation – a slower process of indoctrinating youth into Islamist thought. In Britain, Brotherhood-linked groups have established or influenced youth organisations, student societies, and community centres that provide a pipeline into extremism. MB literature and ideas are often the first step in a conveyor belt leading to jihadism. For example, multiple high-profile terrorists (including Al-Qaeda’s Osama bin Laden and ISIS’s Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi) were involved with the Brotherhood or its ideology in their formative years before graduating to violent groups. While the Brotherhood officially disavows violence in the West, it propagates a narrative of civilisational war, grievance, and separatism that cultivates *the same pool of angry, alienated youth from which violent extremists recruit*. In the UK’s context, concerns have been raised that Brotherhood-affiliated Islamic societies on campuses or youth charities encourage a worldview that is hostile to integration – fostering an identity in perpetual opposition to “decadent” Western culture. This can be a stepping stone to radicalisation. Britain’s Prevent strategy (aimed at preventing extremism) has noted how non-violent Islamist extremism creates the climate for terrorism. Indeed, the 2015 official review of the Brotherhood found that “individuals closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK have supported suicide bombing and other attacks in Israel by Hamas,” indicating acceptance – even encouragement – of terrorism under certain guises. Such attitudes can ripple out to radicalise impressionable young people.¹⁸

2. Funding and Support for Extremist Networks: Financial flows and material support from or facilitated by these organisations sustain global terrorist violence that endangers UK interests and citizens. The IRGC is the prime financier and arms supplier for groups like Hezbollah (already a proscribed terrorist organisation in Britain) and Hamas. By fueling these extremist proxies, the IRGC indirectly threatens UK security – Hezbollah, for instance, has been linked to plots on European soil, and its operatives have stockpiled explosives in places as far afield as London. Moreover, IRGC operatives have themselves been caught conducting or plotting terror attacks and assassinations abroad. MI5 has directly linked the IRGC to at least 20 foiled terror plots in the UK since 2022, including attempts to murder or kidnap Iranian dissidents on British soil. This remarkable figure (20 plots in under two years) underscores the IRGC’s role as *a state-backed terror agency*. Its “support” for extremist networks is not confined to handing money to distant militants – it extends to actively running operations on UK territory, in blatant violation of UK sovereignty and security.¹⁹

¹⁸ Lorenzo Vidino, *The Muslim Brotherhood in the United Kingdom* (Washington, DC: Program on Extremism, George Washington University, 2015), 12 (identifying a “third layer” of UK organisations with founders or milieus tied to the Brotherhood, including **FOSIS** and major charities; useful for your “youth organisations, student societies, and community centres” point),

<https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/downloads/MB%20in%20the%20UK.pdf>

¹⁹ UK Parliament, House of Commons, “Iranian State Threats,” statement by the Minister for Security (Dan Jarvis), *Hansard*, 4 March 2025 (noting Iran’s support to Hamas and Hezbollah; and that MI5 “since the start of 2022” responded to “20 Iran-backed plots” posing potentially lethal threats in the UK; also specifying Iranian intelligence services include the IRGC and MOIS),

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2025-03-04/debates/72131BAE-1691-4A8C-A1B3-A3B77BB7CE/F8/IranianStateThreats>

The Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with terrorist financing is more shadowy but still of great concern. The Brotherhood operates a global web of charities and businesses, some of which have been implicated in funding militants. In the UK, several charities with Brotherhood ties have come under scrutiny from the Charity Commission for funneling funds to Hamas or other extremists. A notable example is the Union of Good (Ittilaf al-Khayr), an umbrella of charities which was led by Brotherhood figures and which the US Treasury designated for funding Hamas. British charities linked to this network (such as Interpal in the past) became channels for "humanitarian aid" that was diverted or used to legitimise Hamas control in Palestinian areas. Although operating in a legal grey zone, such financial support ultimately bolsters terrorist organisations proscribed by the UK. The Brotherhood's own financial strength in Europe, including the UK, relies on donations (zakāt and otherwise) and significant contributions from state backers like Qatar. Qatar has been documented funding large mosque projects and institutions in Britain in partnership with Brotherhood networks. This foreign patronage not only gives the Brotherhood financial clout but can indirectly aid the spread of extremist ideas, some of which valorise or excuse violence. British authorities must consider that money is a weapon: funds raised on UK soil under charitable pretenses can end up as bullets and bombs in conflict zones, or as stipends for radical preachers recruiting the next generation of terrorists.

3. Destabilisation of Diaspora Communities and Social Cohesion: The IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood both engage in activities that sow discord and division within Britain's diverse society. Iran's IRGC has targeted the UK-based Iranian diaspora, especially activists, journalists, and refugees who oppose the Tehran regime. As noted above, Iranian operatives have surveilled and planned attacks on dissidents in London. In February 2023, the Persian-language TV channel *Iran International* was forced to relocate its operations from London after British authorities revealed credible IRGC threats to its journalists. This amounts to an intimidation campaign on UK soil, aimed at silencing voices of freedom. By exporting fear and possibly violence into the Iranian diaspora community, the IRGC seeks to extend the oppression Iranians face at home into the UK, undermining Britain's role as a safe haven. Additionally, the IRGC's propaganda arms spread sectarian narratives among Shia Muslim circles in the UK, potentially exacerbating tensions with Sunni communities or encouraging a ghettoised mindset among British Shia who are told to view themselves as part of Iran's global "resistance" rather than integrated British citizens.²⁰

The Muslim Brotherhood's influence, while subtler, has also raised concerns about social cohesion. Brotherhood-derived ideology often inculcates a sense of separation from non-Muslim society – a perception that Western countries are inherently hostile to Islam and that true believers must keep their distance. In France, a recent government report concluded that the Brotherhood's activities posed a "threat to national cohesion" by spreading "*Islamist separatism*" – creating parallel social structures and loyalty networks that compete with the state's integration efforts. In the UK, a similar pattern

²⁰ Jason Deans, "UK-based Iranian TV channel moves to US after threats from Tehran," *The Guardian*, 18 February 2023 (reporting the London-to-Washington move and the assessment that threats made it no longer possible to protect staff and the public), <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2023/feb/18/uk-iranian-tv-channel-moves-us-threats-tehran>.

has been observed: Brotherhood-linked organisations work to “slowly and imperceptibly re-organise society...so that the acceptance of an Islamic state...becomes widespread”, as one analysis put it(citing the Brotherhood’s own stated methodology). This social re-engineering is carried out by providing cradle-to-grave services within a closed community – from faith schools and youth clubs to sharia-compliant financial services and counselling – deliberately minimizing interaction with broader society. The net effect is to hinder integration of Muslim minorities, foster a degree of insularity, and sometimes to “foster hatred among religious communities” by portraying non-Islamist Muslims, secular authorities, or other faith groups as morally inferior or oppressive. Such enclavism can breed radical sentiment and also provoke mistrust or backlash from the wider public, straining the fabric of a multi-ethnic Britain.

Furthermore, sectarian and ideological rifts within UK Muslim communities can be aggravated. The Brotherhood’s presence may marginalise more moderate or secular Muslim voices in community representation, leading to resentment. Its hardline stance on issues (for instance, staunch social conservatism, or Sunni-centric religious interpretations) can also alienate minority Muslim sects. For example, British Shia or Ahmadi Muslims have occasionally faced hostility from Sunni extremists; while the Brotherhood is not typically sectarian in the UK context, its ideology contributes to an atmosphere where *only one strain of politicised Islam is considered authentic*. The result is a less cohesive Muslim community internally, and one more at odds with national norms, which aligns with the Brotherhood’s aims but not with British values of pluralism.

4. Influence over Educational and Religious Institutions: Both the IRGC and MB seek to leverage institutions of education and worship as vehicles for spreading their ideology. In the UK, this has been a sensitive area, as it concerns the heart of societal integration: schools, universities, and mosques.

The IRGC, through its soft-power proxies, has tried to make inroads in British religious institutions that cater to Shia Muslims. A prominent case is the Islamic Centre of England (ICE) in London, a charity-run mosque and cultural centre effectively supervised by representatives of Iran’s supreme leader. In 2020, the ICE drew criticism for hosting a vigil glorifying IRGC General Qassem Soleimani (after he was killed by a US strike), with the director reportedly hailing him as a “martyr” – an incident that prompted a Charity Commission investigation due to concerns that the charity was praising a figure associated with terrorism. Beyond such high-profile incidents, IRGC influence can seep in through the curriculum of weekend religious classes, the guest speakers invited, and the messaging to congregants. Anti-Western and antisemitic narratives have indeed been spread; for example, IRGC-linked preachers have propagated conspiracy theories in the UK like the outrageous claim that Jews “created homosexuality” and that a war against Zionists and Jews is imminent. Such hateful myths not only radicalise those who accept them but also corrode interfaith relations and promote prejudice.²¹

²¹ The Charity Commission, “Regulator orders reform to governance at Islamic Centre of England,” press release, May 16, 2025 (noting the charity’s governance changes, including removal of a requirement in its

The Brotherhood's influence on educational and religious spheres in Britain has been noted for decades. Mosques associated with Brotherhood-affiliated figures or trustees have at times become hubs for recruiting and propagating MB's Islamist outlook. The *Muslim Association of Britain (MAB)* – identified by authorities as a Brotherhood-dominated group – has been involved in running mosques and community centres. Under the guise of ordinary religious programming, these institutions can introduce worshippers to politicised interpretations of Islam. In schools, the influence has been more controversial. The 2014 “Trojan Horse” scandal in Birmingham (where Islamists infiltrated school governing bodies to impose hardline practices) was not directly attributed to the Brotherhood as an organisation; however, it exemplified the pattern of Islamist entryism in education that the Brotherhood has long championed. Brotherhood literature emphasises starting with youth education to instill the values of an Islamic system. Indeed, Brotherhood-inspired groups in the UK have established supplementary schools and curricula. There have been cases of textbooks in Islamic schools (some linked to MB-leaning networks) containing intolerant material. A French report in 2025 highlighted how the Brotherhood's strategy includes influencing schools and even placing sympathetic candidates into local politics to indirectly shape educational and cultural policy. A similar risk exists in the UK, where local councils and school boards could be targeted for influence by individuals following an MB agenda.

Universities are another front: student Islamic societies have occasionally been led by activists from MB-influenced circles, who invite radical speakers or promote divisive rhetoric on campus. The Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS) in the past was accused of hosting extremist preachers and was mentioned in context of MB influence by researchers like Lorenzo Vidino. The effect can be to turn some campuses into echo chambers of Islamist thought, inhibiting open debate and, in worst cases, allowing extremist recruiters to operate. British authorities remain vigilant; nonetheless, the Brotherhood's very *modus operandi* is to operate behind innocuous front organisations, meaning its educational influence is exerted subtly and often outside the spotlight.

5. Direct Security Threats and Terror Plots: While the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK has not itself carried out terrorist attacks, its members and splinter factions have been linked to violence abroad and at home. Some individuals associated with MB-organised circles have gone on to join jihadist groups or plot terrorism (as noted, MB ideology was a gateway for several ISIS and Al-Qaeda terrorists). British intelligence services must treat the Brotherhood's local networks as potential incubators for “home-grown” extremism – not all those exposed will radicalise, of course, but the risk is evident. Meanwhile, the IRGC undeniably poses an active terrorist threat in the UK. As referenced, MI5 disclosed a surge in Iranian plots, including plans to kidnap or kill British nationals, in recent years. In just one example from late 2023, UK police arrested individuals, including Iranian nationals, for an alleged IRGC-directed plan to attack a Jewish target – reportedly the Israeli Embassy in London. MI5's Director-General Ken McCallum warned that Iranian regime operations present “potentially lethal threats to

governing document for a trustee to be the official UK religious representative of Iran's Supreme Leader), <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-orders-reform-to-governance-at-islamic-centre-of-england>

British nationals and UK residents”. The IRGC’s pattern of brazen activity on British soil, ranging from surveillance of journalists to attempts at assassination, is more typical of a hostile intelligence service than a conventional military unit. It calls for an extraordinary response. Tolerating this state-sponsored terrorism without the strongest countermeasures would endanger British lives and undermine the rule of law.²²

In synthesising these points, it becomes clear that the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood represent a dual-headed threat. One head – the IRGC – is overtly violent, powered by a state, and willing to spill blood on UK streets to further Tehran’s revolutionary agenda. The other head – the Brotherhood – operates more insidiously, embedding itself within civil society to advance an extremist vision over the long term, a vision that erosively undermines the foundations of liberal democracy. Both ultimately feed into the ecosystem that produces terrorism, antisemitism, and social strife. The United Kingdom’s national security strategy must therefore address *both dimensions* in tandem. The next section of this briefing will outline policy recommendations to do exactly that, principally by proscribing these organisations and deploying a range of tools to neutralise their activities.

Conclusion

The evidence and analysis set out in this briefing point to a single, sobering conclusion: the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Muslim Brotherhood should be understood as complementary elements of the same Islamist project, not as isolated or purely sectarian threats. They differ in method, tempo, and branding, but converge on a shared ambition to subordinate civic life to a transnational ideological order, weaken liberal democratic norms, and exploit the openness of Western societies to entrench influence. The IRGC represents the sharp edge of that project - state-backed coercion, intimidation, and external operations - while the Brotherhood represents its slow-burning counterpart: gradualist social penetration, institutional entryism, and the cultivation of closed ideological ecosystems. Taken together, they corrode the foundations of social cohesion and create permissive conditions in which radicalisation, antisemitism, and political violence can flourish.

British policymakers must therefore resist the comforting fiction that these threats can be managed through piecemeal interventions or by treating them as unrelated phenomena. Sectarian antagonisms have too often served as a distraction from the more consequential reality: operational coordination, ideological cross-pollination, and the strategic use of anti-Israel agitation to mainstream extremist narratives and to build coalitions of convenience inside Western public life. The United Kingdom cannot afford a posture that is reactive - responding only after plots are disrupted, communities intimidated, or institutions compromised. The task is preventative and structural: to deny

²² Dan Jarvis, “Protecting national security,” GOV.UK (oral statement), 4 March 2025 (Government statement mirroring the MI5 “20 Iran-backed plots” formulation and threat characterisation), <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/protecting-national-security>

hostile actors the civic space, legitimacy, and infrastructure they require to operate over the long term.

The imperative now is for HM Government and Parliament to act with both resolve and strategic clarity. Proscription - properly framed as a national security measure rather than a political gesture - would mark a decisive step towards constraining operational networks, deterring facilitation, and signalling that Britain will not serve as a permissive environment for state-sponsored coercion or “non-violent” extremist ecosystems. Yet proscription alone is not sufficient. It must be matched by a coordinated package of legal, regulatory, financial, diplomatic, and community-facing measures capable of disrupting funding streams, strengthening institutional resilience (particularly in the charity and education sectors), and protecting diaspora communities and civic space from intimidation and infiltration. Implemented in concert, the recommendations that follow are designed not merely to punish wrongdoing after the fact, but to prevent extremist organisations - whether overtly violent or tactically incremental - from embedding themselves within the fabric of British public life.

Policy Recommendations

Proscribe the IRGC in its Entirety under UK Terrorism Legislation

Without further delay, the Home Secretary should lay an order to add the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to the list of proscribed organisations (as the United States did in 2019). The IRGC meets the statutory criteria, given its long record of terrorist activity, assassination plots and facilitation of violent militias. Proscription will criminalise membership or support, empower law enforcement to disrupt IRGC fronts, and send a clear diplomatic signal that Iran's state-backed terrorism will not be tolerated. Notably, this move would not shut the door to diplomacy with Iran on legitimate state matters; it would simply align the UK's stance with the reality that the IRGC functions as a terrorist actor. As seen after Britain's banning of Hezbollah, diplomatic engagement can continue at the state level even as a violent sub-state arm is proscribed.

Proscribe the Muslim Brotherhood (and/or Key Affiliates) as a Terrorist or Extremist Organisation

The Government should initiate the process to designate the Muslim Brotherhood under terrorism laws, or at minimum proscribe its most dangerous branches and aliases. This would follow the lead of allies like Egypt, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, which have already listed the MB as a terrorist group. The case in the UK rests on the Brotherhood's role in inciting and glorifying violence (e.g., support for Hamas terror attacks), its creation of an environment conducive to radicalisation, and its secretive, subversive operations that aim to undermine democracy. Given legal thresholds, an alternative could be to amend UK law to allow proscription of extremist organisations that are not classical terrorist groups but whose activities intentionally create a permissive environment for terrorism. This would square with the updated definition of extremism and capture the Brotherhood's insidious threat. In parallel, officials should evaluate Brotherhood-linked UK groups (such as the Muslim Association of Britain and others identified in the 2015 review) – if evidence shows continued extremist conduct, those groups should be banned or dissolved.

Develop a New “State-Linked Threats” Legal Framework

The IRGC's status as an official arm of a foreign state highlights a gap in current counterterrorism law. The Government should follow through on the independent review by the Home Office's terror legislation reviewer on how to adapt proscription mechanisms to state actors. This could involve new legislation to label certain state entities (like the IRGC) or their proxies as hostile and subject to the same penalties as terrorist organisations. Such a framework might include provisions for designating “*hostile state proxy*” groups, allowing more agile action against organisations that straddle the line between state power and terrorist actor.

Coordinate with Allies on Diplomatic Isolation of IRGC and MB Networks

The UK should use its diplomatic weight to build a coalition against these groups. With respect to Iran, Britain can work with the US, Canada, and hopefully the EU (some of whose members are considering similar moves) to *multilaterally* sanction and isolate the IRGC – for example, pushing for an EU-wide terror listing of the IRGC. At the UN, British diplomats should continue to hold Iran accountable for its violations of international law on UK soil and support measures that condemn state-sponsored terrorism. Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood, the UK should engage in quiet dialogue with partners in the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Gulf states) as well as allies like France and Germany who have significant MB presence. Sharing intelligence on MB activities, and perhaps convening an international working group on non-violent Islamist extremism, could lay groundwork for a more unified approach. Pressure should be applied to states like Qatar and Turkey, which have harboured or supported MB figures, to cease any financial or political backing for the Brotherhood's activities that undermine other countries' security. This may involve leveraging the UK's strong trade and defence ties with those states – making clear that support for Islamist extremists is a red line in relationships.

Strengthen Financial Sanctions and Scrutiny

1. Use the UK's robust financial regulatory system to choke off funding for the IRGC and MB. This includes:
 - Expanding targeted sanctions to cover a broader range of IRGC-owned entities and front companies, making it harder for Tehran's operatives to do business in or via London. Asset freezes should extend to IRGC commanders and financiers (many are already sanctioned) and could be buttressed by using anti-money-laundering laws against banks or exchanges that facilitate IRGC transactions.
 - In the domestic sphere, empower the Charity Commission and financial intelligence units to intensify oversight of charities and NGOs with potential MB links. Where investigations find misuse of charitable funds (for instance, money funneled to extremist causes or abroad to suspect recipients), those charities should be shut and trustees held to account. Consideration might be given to requiring greater transparency of overseas funding for UK religious and educational institutions – mirroring steps taken in France's anti-separatism law – so that massive donations from state actors like Qatar can be scrutinised for influence-buying.
 - Launch a review of Islamist finance in the UK, possibly led by the National Security Adviser or Treasury, to map out the Brotherhood's financial infrastructure. This could lead to designating specific organisations or informal money networks for sanctions, especially if they tie into terrorist financing (e.g., any UK entities proven to be part of Hamas's fundraising network should be shut or banned).

2. **Bolster Domestic Security and Intelligence Operations:** Ensure MI5, Counter-Terrorism Policing, and relevant agencies have the necessary political backing and resources to monitor and disrupt IRGC and MB activities. This may involve:
 - Increasing surveillance on suspected IRGC agents and their local contacts; using the new National Security Act 2023, which criminalises assisting foreign intelligence, as done recently when charging IRGC-linked suspects in the UK.
 - Expanding the scope of PREVENT and other counter-radicalisation programmes to explicitly include Shia-oriented extremism (often overlooked) alongside Sunni extremism. Training community officers and schools to recognise IRGC propaganda or recruitment attempts, for example.
 - Tasking the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) to produce regular assessments on Islamist *influence operations* (not just terror plots) to inform policymakers of the scale of MB infiltration in communities and institutions.
 - Considering the use of Temporary Exclusion Orders or citizenship revocation for dual nationals deeply involved with IRGC or MB terrorist activities, subject to due process, to prevent those individuals from returning to harm the UK.
3. **Empower Communities and Counter-Narratives:** While hard security measures are vital, the battle against these extremist entities is also ideological. The UK government should:
 - Support and platform credible Muslim voices — scholars, activists, community leaders — who champion a vision of Islam that is compatible with British civic life and who reject the IRGC and Brotherhood's extremist interpretations. Community-led programmes that refute Islamist propaganda should receive funding (for instance, projects that educate youth on the dangers of conspiracy theories and political Islamism, using testimonies of former extremists).
 - Work with educational authorities to update curricula or guidance where needed: Schools, for example, should be prepared to tackle contentious issues like the Middle East conflict with nuance, so that students are less susceptible to one-sided extremist narratives. Initiatives like model interfaith programmes and student exchange involving British Muslims and Jews could be expanded to build resilience against hateful messaging.
 - Expand the remit of Ofcom and online regulators to clamp down on extremist content online, including IRGC-backed and MB-backed channels that spread hate or disinformation. Given that much radicalisation now occurs online, continuing to press social media companies to remove terrorist material (such as IRGC Quds Force propaganda or MB extremist preacher videos) is essential.
 - Inoculate the broader public against the deceptively “respectable” fronts of the Brotherhood. This might include government guidance to local councils on vetting partners (so that groups with extremist links aren't

inadvertently invited onto advisory boards or given public grants), and briefings for universities about the background of organisations like MAB or FOSIS. Transparency about the Brotherhood's modus operandi – for instance, publicising the findings of the 2015 review more widely – can reduce the space for it to operate in the shadows.

4. **Legislative Action on Extremism and Foreign Influence:** Encourage Parliament to revive discussions on a statutory definition of “Extremist Activity” and consider legislation that would allow for banning groups that undermine democratic institutions or social cohesion, even if they stop short of terrorist violence. A carefully crafted law, with judicial oversight, could target entities like the Brotherhood that are “possible indicators of extremism”. Additionally, push forward a UK Foreign Agents Registration scheme, requiring individuals or organisations acting on behalf of foreign powers (such as Iran, in the IRGC's case) to register and be transparent. This would deter covert influence and make it easier to prosecute unregistered agents working for the IRGC or even propagandists on a foreign payroll.

Each of these recommendations reinforces the others. Taken together, they outline a comprehensive strategy for the UK to move decisively toward proscription of the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood and to tackle the full spectrum of challenges they pose. Britain has long been a bulwark of freedom and the rule of law; it must now demonstrate that those who abuse our freedoms to spread hate, and those who plot violence on our streets, will meet the unwavering justice of a confident democracy. Proscribing these organisations is not just a symbolic act – it is a necessary step to protect our national security, uphold our values, and deny extremist actors the ability to operate with impunity. The threats are urgent, but with resolve and clear-sighted policy, the UK can rise to meet them, safeguarding its citizens and its principles now and for the generations to come.