

# Al-Muntada

Of the Iraqi Association

[www.iraqiasociation.org](http://www.iraqiasociation.org)

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ASSOCIATION**

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## Together we can deliver peace and unity

On behalf of the Iraqi community, we strongly condemn the appalling cowardly attack in Woolwich, south east London. Our members are shocked and saddened by this event. We send our deepest sympathy to the family, relatives and friends of Lee Rigby. This is an attack not just on one British citizen but an attack on all of us as a nation regardless of race, religion etc.

One Society  
Many Cultures



This is not a time for blame, but rather a time to stand together in solidarity and support. We call on the whole community to redouble their efforts to work for peace, love, understanding and hope.

We urge everyone to not let this incident lead to tensions between communities and let the criminals succeed in their objectives. It is important that we all stand together united against such criminal act and strongly condemn it.

Those who join extremist groups are clearly suffering from massive deficiencies in religious knowledge and are often politically gullible. Once again religious leaders, community representatives and ordinary believers - must speak out loud and clear in condemning what is done in their name by the extremists. It is vital to forge a genuine partnership with those in mosques and other organisations who have already shown an extraordinary unity and zeal to fight the menace of extremism.

It is unfortunate that the backlash is spreading fear among our community members, unfortunately, we have had reports of ugly incidents. The brain full of hate individuals behind such attacks wish to polarise and tear apart our society for their own sick ends. They should be isolated as criminals and subject to the full force of the law.

## Launch of BMER advice network for West London

The West London BMER Advice Network is launched to assist minority ethnic and refugee residents living or working in the six boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hounslow, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hammersmith & Fulham.

Its major role will be to see that local BMER people can call on good quality advice services that are appropriate to their particular cultural background. There is a special emphasis on providing legal advice, developing strong partnerships between West London's BMER organisations and across the advice sector ensuring that policy makers, local authorities, the providers of statutory services and funding bodies have a clear view of the diverse communities in the six boroughs.

At a critical time for BMER communities and their support groups due to a mixture of funding cuts and loss of premises the new Advice Network will play a significant role in bringing together and strengthening the communities by sharing and disseminating advice, experience and expertise.

The Network will be launched formally on Thursday June 27th 2013 at the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice, Acton. The Centre's chief executive officer Misak Ohanian will serve as the Advice Network's first chair.

Explaining the need for the Network Misak Ohanian said:

"In the current funding and economic climate when there is so much change taking place with the benefits system, legal aid, NHS, it is imperative that BMER groups cooperate even closer and use this as an opportunity to shape the future of advice provision in West London while at the same time safeguarding the statutory rights of their communities/clients."

The founding members of the Network have extensive experience of collaboration and partnership work over many years as active members within the London Boroughs Grant Scheme Refugee Working Party (1987), West London Renewal SRB 6 Project (2000-6), Evelyn Oldfield Unit (1994), Refugee Forums (1996-),

BMER Advice Network (BAN 2006-), Advice Forums (2001-).

The founding members of the Advice Network are:

- The Centre for Armenian Information and Advice (Ealing),
- The Bosnia and Herzegovina Community Advice Centre (Brent),
- Iraqi Association (Hammersmith & Fulham),
- The East European Advice Centre (Hammersmith & Fulham),
- The Iranian Association (Hammersmith),
- Havelock Family Centre (Ealing)

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We are  
looking  
for volunteers



Would you like to join  
Iraqi Association  
volunteers team? Do you want  
to make a difference? Do you  
have a few hours a week?  
Email [info@iraqiasociation.org](mailto:info@iraqiasociation.org)

# My name is Fiona, I live in Oxford and I am 73.



I used to be a social worker in Courts hearing Civil Proceedings. Since retiring, I have done A-Level French, Lived in France for a year and developed a passion for cycling. I am seldom happier than when cycling in France on my Brompton, which folds away and becomes 'hand luggage' on cross-channel ferries and in Eurostar. I have a passion, too, for worldwide equality. Sickened by individualistic materialism, I consider that no-one should have to live in poverty. In particular, I believe that every child has the right to a good childhood.

My next cycle ride in France, in June, will be along a low traffic route from Dieppe to Versailles: 120 miles. I would not normally undertake such a long journey by bike, but I want to try to achieve this in order to raise money for needy children. Please consider sponsoring me, in order to support two very worthwhile charities.

## (1) The Iraqi Association (Charity Number 1101109)

This Iraqi-run, non-sectarian organisation cares for some of the many children in Baghdad whose lives have been shattered as a result of the Iraq wars and more recent sectarian violence. Most of these children have lost one if not both parents and have been living on the streets, where they can easily fall prey to exploitation. Some have been physically injured and all have been traumatised. Even now, children are still being injured by the millions of cluster bomb-lets and

landmines which lie around.

The Iraqi Association provides medical treatment for child casualties. It also provides food, shelter, clothing, schooling and emotional support for those who arrive at its resource centre in the Al-Thawra district of the city.

Wherever possible, the centre's workers reunite children with surviving relatives, and give these families practical help.

## (2) The Bhopal Medical Appeal (Charity Number 1117526)

Many people will remember that, in December 1984, a cloud of gas leaked from a factory in Bhopal, India. This gas immediately killed thousands of people and created decades of suffering for survivors and their children. More than 100,000 people are chronically sick, and because the water which people have to use is polluted by toxic waste left at the factory, second and third generation of children are born with complex birth defects.

The Bhopal Medical Appeal funds two clinics: the Sambhavna Clinic and the Chinghari Children's Centre.

The Sambhavna Clinic has helped thousands of poisoned people with their pioneering combination of western & Ayurvedic treatments. The Chinghari Children's Centre provides physiotherapy, speech therapy, education and training in social skills, and opportunities for play. Many of them suffer from malnutrition because their parents are too ill to work. So each child is served a nutritious lunch for over 250 disabled children every day.

These are the only two clinics in Bhopal where those affected by the gas disaster and water contamination can receive free health care.

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As I am well into my seventies, please do not expect a Sir Bradley Wiggins type performance as I set out on my bike towards Versailles. Normally I cycle at 8mph, so as I can't realistically expect to cover more than 25 miles a day, the journey should take 5 days.

Would it be greedy to suggest that sponsors should pay 10p per mile? This would add up to 12 pounds if I complete the trip. If I don't then the mathematics involved in scaling down shouldn't be too challenging! Needless to say, whatever you give will be much appreciated, and will have a positive impact on many children.

I shall pay my own expenses. Your kind support would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to sponsor me, please contact Iraqi Association on 0207 023 2650 or email [info@iraqiassociation.org](mailto:info@iraqiassociation.org), Or donate on <http://www.justgiving.com/Fiona-Mackey>



## The Pavilion of Iraq at the 55th International Art Exhibition

La Biennale DI Venezia in 2013 will host a group exhibition curated by Jonathan Watkins comprising works by eleven contemporary Iraqi artists resident in Iraq. Working across a wide range of media, including photography, drawing, painting, video, installation, sculpture, and textiles, they represent two generations of artists from across the country and were selected after many studio visits, other meetings and much careful thinking.

The exhibition will be held at Ca' Dandolo, a 16th century building that has not been used as a pavilion before during a Venice Biennale. It will insinuate Iraq into this first floor apartment, creating a salon atmosphere and interactive space where visitors can sit, read and learn about Iraqi culture and drink tea. For more information email: [Sophie@pelhamcommunications.com](mailto:Sophie@pelhamcommunications.com)  
Iraq Pavilion CA' Dandolo, Grand Canal, Venice.



## IRAQI ASSOCIATION (IA)

The Iraqi Association is a non-profit organisation that exists to enable Iraqis to settle and integrate in this country with rights to express their cultural identities. Our work aimed at Iraqis, by providing volunteerism, advice, public health support, counselling, training, employment guidance, information

services, and organising cultural events. It is also our mission to raise awareness about relevant events in Iraq and the integration process in this country."

### Our Aims and Methods:

We provide the following services to our clients regardless of their race, ethnic origin, language,

and gender, religious or political background.

- Face-to-face support session
- Group empowerment session
- Workshop advice session
- Training session
- Outreach work
- Client-led information