Update: Fla. pastor formally banned from U.K.

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LONDON (RNS) A Florida pastor who sparked fury when he threatened to burn a pile of Qurans on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks has been officially banned from Britain for preaching religious extremism.

The British government announced Thursday (Jan. 20) that it had issued the exclusion order against Pastor Terry Jones, who had been invited to address an anti-Islam demonstration in February.

The Gainesville preacher triggered uproar last September when he announced plans to burn copies of the Quran; he later withdrew the threat, but that didn't result in a change of course for the British government.

"The government opposes extremism in all its forms," Britain's Home Office said, "which is why we have excluded Pastor Terry Jones from the U.K."

Hours after the ban was announced, the British Press Association quoted Jones as describing the decision as "very unfair," insisting that "I have no intention of doing anything against British law."

But the Home Office said "numerous comments made by Pastor Jones are evidence of his unacceptable behavior. Coming to the U.K. is a privilege, not a right, and we are not willing to allow entry to those whose presence is not conducive to the public good."

The February rally that Jones had been invited to attend is one of a "series of demonstrations against the expansion of Islam and the construction of mosques here," organizers at the group England Is Ours said on their website.

An invitation to Jones last year from the right-wing English Defense League was withdrawn by the EDL before Jones's planned arrival.