

# **British Muslim leaders denounce bombings, face backlash: "Not in the Name of Islam"**

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Despite Muslim denunciations of the July 7 bomb attacks in London, a number of British towns and cities have been targeted in an apparent backlash. Mosques in two areas of London as well as in Leeds, Telford, Bristol, Birkenhead and Norwich were attacked in the aftermath.

In a letter sent July 11 to Britain's imams, ulema and mosque officials, Sir Iqbal Sacranie, the recently knighted secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain, said they had been informed that police throughout Britain had been alerted to the possibility of attacks on mosques and on institutions of other faiths.

Five people were arrested for trying to bomb a Sikh temple in southeast London.

Many Muslim leaders were quick to denounce the July 7 attacks as being totally contrary to the spirit of Islam and have called on British Muslims to cooperate in bringing the perpetrators to justice.

The news on July 13 that the bombings were probably the work of young British Muslims from Leeds and Dewsbury, Yorkshire, was received with "anguish, shock and horror" by Sacranie.

Reiterating the "absolute commitment and resolve" of British Muslims to help the police bring to justice all involved in this crime of mass murder, Sacranie said in a statement: "We are determined to work together with all concerned to prevent such an atrocity ever happening again."

Likewise, U.S.-based Muslim American organizations have stepped up efforts to assure non-Muslims that they condemn terrorist goals and cooperate with law enforcement agencies on the local and national levels.

The Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) had already launched in May an online petition drive, called “Not in the Name of Islam,” to disassociate the religion from the violent acts of a few Muslims. After the London bombings, CAIR also bought television time for public service announcements.

In Los Angeles, leaders with the Muslim Public Affairs Council pledged to help U.S. Muslims threatened or attacked to report hate crimes to law officials. Speakers at a July 8 press conference included Imam Muzammil Siddiqi, chairman of the Council of Islamic Jurisprudence of North America, and Bishop Murray D. Finck of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Pacifica Synod, based in Orange County.