

Security Minister statement on antisemitic attacks

20.4.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

The Security Minister gave an oral statement to the House of Commons on 20 April responding to recent antisemitic attacks.

With permission, I will make a statement about the appalling incidents over recent days targeting British Jews and opponents of the Iranian regime.

I will begin with the facts.

Counter Terrorism Policing have confirmed that they are investigating a series of arson attacks and incidents that have occurred in London over recent days.

These include an arson attack at a synagogue in Finchley on Wednesday 15 April, a suspected arson attack targeting a premises in Hendon linked to a Jewish charity on Friday 17 April, a suspected arson attack targeting a synagogue in Harrow on the evening of Saturday 18 April and a further incident in the early hours of yesterday morning outside a residential premises in Finchley and opposite a synagogue.

These events follow the arson attack on a volunteer-led ambulances run by the Jewish community in Golders Green on 23 March.

Last week there was also an attempted arson attack on a Persian language media organisation that has previously been the target of serious threats linked to the Iranian regime and their proxies. Eight arrests have now been made in connection with that incident, and four people have been charged.

Madame Deputy Speaker, Jewish communities across the UK will be distressed and dismayed by these abhorrent attacks.

I know that I speak for Honourable Members right across the House when I say that there is no place in British life for antisemitism.

Attacks on British Jews are an attack on all of us, and we will do whatever it takes to stop the cowards and thugs who seek to intimidate our Jewish communities.

The police response over the weekend has been decisive. 15 arrests have already been made. In addition, a range of capabilities have been deployed to deter potential attackers and to reassure communities.

Over the weekend, the Metropolitan Police significantly increased the number of officers in and around North West London.

Uniformed and plain clothed officers have maintained a strong presence around Barnet, and additional stop and search powers have been introduced across the borough.

Response vehicles and Counter Terrorism Policing resources have been deployed alongside local policing to respond to potential threats.

To ensure the police response is a sustainable one, the Government has already committed an additional £5 million for this financial year to support the deployment of specialist officers across the country to support vulnerable communities under Project Servator. That is in addition to the record £73.4 million annual funding for protective security at Jewish, Muslim and other faith sites.

This morning, I visited Finchley Reform Synagogue, with the Deputy Commissioner and the local member of this house. I met community leaders and saw first-hand the strengthened police presence and the resilience of those affected. I reaffirmed our commitment to protect all those targeted.

The Government's commitment to supporting British Jews is an enduring one. We are taking firm steps to root out antisemitism wherever it appears across public life – from our public services to our universities, charities and beyond.

We are backing up our words with action: this includes launching an urgent review of antisemitism within the NHS, introducing mandatory training, and investing £7 million to tackle antisemitism in schools, colleges and universities. This is a whole of society effort, grounded in close engagement with Jewish communities.

We are determined to tackle the issues that have a daily impact on the lives of our Jewish communities.

An amendment to existing powers will allow the police to deal with repeat protests by taking into account the cumulative effect of protest activity.

And the Home Secretary has asked Lord Macdonald to undertake a review of public order laws, to ensure people can go about their lives without the fear of intimidation.

The Government has also set out its vision for a fair, tolerant and decent country, with the recent publication of 'Protecting What Matters', our action plan to tackle threats to social cohesion, and counter the scourge of extremism.

The plan makes significant spending commitments, including £800 million to expand the Pride in Place Programme to 40 new neighbourhoods.

Plus, new investment in community resilience, schools linking, and local media.

This vital effort requires us to work collectively across Government and with operational partners, and will be driven by my Rt Hon Friend the Communities Secretary.

Furthermore, we are actively protecting Persian language media organisations at risk. This includes tailored security advice and cyber protection through to armed police protection where necessary.

We have already seen a number of charges and convictions of those seeking to harm journalists in the UK. Through implementation of the National Security Act and through other means, we are making the United Kingdom an even harder operating target for hostile actors.

Madame Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members will be aware that a group calling itself Ashab al-Yamin – the Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right – has claimed responsibility for a number of these incidents. It has also claimed responsibility for attacks across Europe over recent months targeting Jewish and Israeli interests.

I am aware of public speculation linking that group to the Iranian state.

Given that police investigations are ongoing, it would not be appropriate to comment on who may ultimately be behind these specific incidents. More generally, we have and will continue to hold Iran to account for its hostile acts.

But let me be absolutely clear: whether linked to Iran or to any other source, we will never tolerate hostile activity on British soil. Alongside the police and our world leading security and intelligence agencies, we will do what is necessary to keep our citizens safe.

And for those criminal proxies who are used by states to do their dirty work, we will continue to ensure that their actions are met with the full weight of the law, as we saw with the conviction of the Chechen born Austrian national in 2023, who was imprisoned for conducting surveillance on Iran International's UK headquarters.

We have already seen the first convictions under the National Security Act for assisting a foreign intelligence service, including that of Dylan Earl who in October received a sentence of 17 years for masterminding an arson campaign for Russia's Wagner Group.

For anyone tempted by offers of financial reward from foreign states to conduct hostile acts against the UK, my advice and my message is unambiguous: you will be discovered, and the consequences will be severe. Turning a blind eye or pleading ignorance is no defence.

Madame Deputy Speaker, antisemitism has existed in its many poisonous forms for centuries.

But there is no doubt we find ourselves at a critical juncture, as fellow members of our society feel forced in some cases to live a smaller Jewish life.

Our response must be unflinching.

And I assure the House that under this Government it always will be.

We will work relentlessly to ensure antisemites and those who threaten the Jewish community here have nowhere to hide.

And to show British Jews that we stand with them, and will do everything in our power to keep them safe.

I commend this statement to the House.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/security-minister-statement-on-antisemitic-attacks>