

News story

Hizballah banned in the UK

Order proscribing Hizballah, Ansaroul Islam and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin came into force at midnight.

From: [Home Office](#) and [The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP](#)

Published 1 March 2019



An [order laid in Parliament](#) on Monday (25 February) to proscribe the terrorist organisations Hizballah, Ansaroul Islam and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM) has now come into effect, following debates in the Houses of Parliament.

Under the Terrorism Act 2000, being a member – or inviting support for – these groups will be a criminal offence, carrying a sentence of up to 10 years' imprisonment.

All 3 groups have been assessed as being concerned in terrorism.

[Announcing his decision on Monday](#), Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

My priority as Home Secretary is to protect the British people. As part of this, we identify and ban any terrorist organisation which threatens our safety and security, whatever their motivations or ideology which is why I am taking action against several organisations today.

Hizballah is continuing in its attempts to destabilise the fragile situation in the Middle East – and we are no longer able to distinguish between their already banned military wing and the political party. Because of this, I have taken the decision to proscribe the group in its entirety.

Decisions about whether to proscribe a particular organisation are taken after extensive consideration and in light of a full assessment of available information.

There are now [77 international terrorist organisations](#) proscribed under the terrorism Act 2000, alongside 14 organisations connected to Northern Ireland proscribed under separate legislation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hizballah-banned-in-the-uk>

News story

Hizballah to be banned alongside other terrorist organisations

Hizballah, Ansaroul Islam and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM) are set to be banned following their proscription as terrorist organisations.

From: [Home Office](#) and [The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP](#)

Published 25 February 2019



A draft order, laid in Parliament today, will proscribe Hizballah in its entirety alongside Ansaroul Islam and JNIM who operate in the Sahel region in Africa.

Subject to Parliament's approval, from Friday when the order comes into effect, being a member, or inviting support for Hizballah, Ansaroul Islam and JNIM will be a criminal offence, carrying a sentence of up to 10 years' imprisonment.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

My priority as Home Secretary is to protect the British people. As part of this, we identify and ban any terrorist organisation which threatens our safety and security, whatever their motivations or ideology which is why I am taking action against several organisations today.

Hizballah is continuing in its attempts to destabilise the fragile situation in the Middle East – and we are no longer able to distinguish between their already banned military wing and the political party. Because of this, I have taken the decision to proscribe the group in its entirety.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

We are staunch supporters of a stable and prosperous Lebanon. We cannot however be complacent when it comes to terrorism – it is clear the distinction between Hizballah’s military and political wings does not exist, and by proscribing Hizballah in all its forms, the government is sending a clear signal that its destabilising activities in the region are totally unacceptable and detrimental to the UK’s national security.

This does not change our ongoing commitment to Lebanon, with whom we have a broad and strong relationship.

All three groups have been assessed as being currently concerned in terrorism.

Hizballah’s External Security Organisation and its military wing including the Jihad Council were already proscribed in 2001 and 2008 respectively.

The government has taken the decision to proscribe Hizballah in its entirety on the basis that it is no longer tenable to distinguish between the military and political wings of Hizballah.

Hizballah was established during the Lebanese civil war and is committed to armed resistance to the state of Israel. It continues to amass weapons in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions, putting the security of the region at risk. Its involvement in the Syrian war since 2012 continues to prolong the conflict and the regime’s brutal and violent repression of the Syrian people.

Ansaroul Islam seeks to impose its own strict Salafist Sharia law in northern Burkina Faso and are known to target other ethnic groups in the region leading to substantial internal displacement of people. In December 2016, the group claimed responsibility for an attack on an army outpost in Burkina Faso which killed at least 12 soldiers.

JNIM was established in March 2017 as a federation of Al Qa’ida aligned groups in Mali and aims to impose a strict Salafist interpretation of Sharia law in the Sahel region and has claimed responsibility for several attacks in the region in which people were killed.

Furthermore, a separate order laid in Parliament today will proscribe:

- the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Front (DHKC), the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party (DHKP) and the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Front/Armed Propaganda Units (DHKC/SPB) as aliases of the Revolutionary Peoples’ Liberation Party—Front (Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi) (DHKP-C) which is already proscribed
- Jaysh Khalid Bin Walid (JKbW) (JKW), Jaysh Khalid bin al-Walid (KBW) and Khalid ibn-Walid Army (KBWA) as aliases of Daesh

These changes will come into force from tomorrow (Tuesday 26 February).

Decisions about proscribing or extending the proscription of a particular organisation are taken after extensive consideration and in light of a full assessment of available information.

There are currently [74 international terrorist organisations](#) proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000, alongside 14 organisations connected to Northern Ireland proscribed under separate legislation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hizballah-to-be-banned-alongside-other-terrorist-organisations>

Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations

Hizballah (Party of God) - Proscribed March 2019

Hizballah is committed to armed resistance to the state of Israel and aims to seize all Palestinian territories and Jerusalem from Israel. It supports terrorism in Iraq and the Palestinian territories.

Hizballah was established during the Lebanese civil war and in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Hizballah is committed to armed resistance to the state of Israel and aims to seize all Palestinian territories and Jerusalem from Israel. It supports terrorism in Iraq and the Palestinian territories. Hizballah continues to amass an arsenal of weapons in Lebanon, in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions 1701 and 1559, putting the security of the region at risk. Its involvement in the Syrian civil war, since 2012, continues to prolong the conflict and the regime's brutal and violent repression of the Syrian people - violating the Lebanese government's policy of disassociation from regional conflicts, increasingly destabilising the region's long-term stability.

Hizballah, as a political entity in Lebanon has won votes in legitimate elections and forms part of the Lebanese government. It has the largest non-state military force in the country.

The UK government proscribed Hizballah's External Security Organisation in 2001. In 2008, the proscription was extended to include the whole of Hizballah's military apparatus, namely the Jihad Council and all the units reporting to it.

Hizballah itself has publicly denied a distinction between its military and political wings. The group in its entirety is assessed to be concerned in terrorism.

The US, Canada, the Netherlands, Israel, the Gulf Co-operation Council and Bahrain also designate the group in its entirety as a terrorist organisation

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2019 No. 406

**PREVENTION AND
SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM**

**The Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed
Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019**

Made - - - - 28th February 2019

Coming into force in accordance with article 1

The Secretary of State makes the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3(3) of the Terrorism Act 2000(1).

The Secretary of State believes that the organisations to be added to Schedule 2 to that Act(2) by article 2 of this Order are concerned in terrorism.

In accordance with section 123(4)(a) of that Act, a draft of this Order was laid before Parliament and approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.

Citation and commencement

1. This Order may be cited as the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019 and comes into force on the day after the day on which it is made.

Proscribed organisations

2.—(1) Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000 (proscribed organisations) is amended as follows.

(2) For “The military wing of Hizballah, including the Jihad Council and all units reporting to it (including the Hizballah External Security Organisation)” substitute “Hizballah (Party of God)”.

(3) After the entry for Liwa al-Thawra, insert the following entries—

“Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM) (Nusrat al-Islam) (Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen) (NIM), including Ansar al-Dine (AAD), Macina Liberation Front (MLF), al-Murabitun, al-Qa’ida in the Maghreb and az-Zallaqa

Ansaroul Islam (Ansar ul Islam) (Ansaroul Islam Lil Irchad Wal Jihad)”.

(1) 2000 c. 11; relevant amendments to section 3 were made by sections 21 and 22 of the Terrorism Act 2006 (c. 11).
(2) Schedule 2 has been amended by S.I. 2001/1261, 2002/2724, 2005/2892, 2006/2016, 2007/2184, 2008/1645, 2008/1931, 2010/611, 2011/108, 2012/1771, 2012/2937, 2013/1746, 2013/3172, 2014/927, 2014/1624, 2014/3189, 2015/55, 2015/959, 2016/391, 2016/770, 2016/1238 and 2017/1325.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

28th February 2019

Sajid Javid
Secretary of State
Home Office

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

Part 2 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (c. 11) makes provision about proscribed organisations (including setting out offences in relation to such organisations in sections 11 to 13). An organisation is proscribed if it is listed in Schedule 2 to that Act or, in most cases, if it operates under the same name as an organisation so listed (section 3(1)).

This Order adds three organisations to the list in that Schedule. Paragraph (2) of article 2 substitutes the name of an entire organisation for the name of the part of that organisation previously listed, so that the organisation is proscribed in its entirety. Paragraph (3) adds two organisations to the list in Schedule 2 as new entries.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE TERRORISM ACT 2000 (PROSCRIBED ORGANISATIONS) (AMENDMENT)
ORDER 2019

2019 No. 406

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Home Office and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
- 1.2 This memorandum contains information for the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments.

2. Purpose of the instrument

- 2.1 This Order adds three groups to the list of proscribed organisations in Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000 (“the Act”).
- 2.2 “Hizballah (Party of God)” is added to the list in substitution for the existing entry for “The military wing of Hizballah, including the Jihad Council and all units reporting to it (including the Hizballah External Security Organisation)”. This will extend the proscription of Hizballah to cover the group in its entirety. “Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM) (Nusrat al-Islam) (Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen) (NIM), including (Ansar al-Dine) (AAD), (Macina Liberation Front) (MLF), (al-Murabitun), (al-Qa’ida in the Maghreb) (az-Zallaqa)” and “Ansaroul Islam (Ansar ul Islam) (Ansaroul Islam Lil Irchad Wal Jihad)” are added to the list as new entries.

3. Matters of special interest to Parliament

Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

- 3.1 This Order comes into force on the day after it is made. Although the 21 day convention does not apply to affirmative instruments, an instrument which imposes duties that are significantly more onerous than before should not usually be brought into force earlier than 21 days after it is made. This is such an instrument, as it has the effect of applying the offences in sections 11 to 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT) to the three organisations. However any significant delay between the laying and coming into force of the instrument would alert the organisations to their impending proscription and may result in pre-emptive action by the organisations’ members designed to circumvent the provisions of TACT and/or the criminal law.

Matters relevant to Standing Orders Nos. 83P and 83T of the Standing Orders of the House of Commons relating to Public Business (English Votes for English Laws)

- 3.2 The territorial application of this instrument includes Scotland and Northern Ireland.

4. Extent and Territorial Application

- 4.1 The territorial extent of this instrument is the whole of the United Kingdom.
- 4.2 The territorial application of this instrument is the whole of the United Kingdom.

5. European Convention on Human Rights

5.1 The Home Secretary Sajid Javid has made the following statement regarding Human Rights:

“In my view the provisions of the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019 are compatible with the Convention rights.”

6. Legislative Context

6.1 Section 3 of the Act provides a power to proscribe, by order, an organisation which commits or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for, promotes or encourages terrorism or is otherwise concerned in terrorism. Section 21 of the Terrorism Act 2006 amended the grounds for proscription in section 3 of the Act to include organisations which unlawfully glorify the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism. Section 3 also allows the Secretary of State, by order, to remove an organisation from the list of proscribed organisations in Schedule 2 to the Act, or amend the Schedule in some other way. Twenty two orders have been laid previously, in 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 (2), 2010, 2011, 2012 (2), 2013 (2), 2014 (3), 2015 (2), 2016 (3) and 2017.

6.2 The Secretary of State has regard to several factors in deciding, as a matter of discretion, whether or not to proscribe an organisation. These are:

- the nature and scale of the organisation’s activities;
- the specific threat that it poses to the UK;
- the specific threat that it poses to British nationals overseas;
- the extent of the organisation’s presence in the UK; and
- the need to support international partners in the fight against terrorism.

6.3 An organisation is proscribed in the UK as soon as the Order comes into force. It is a criminal offence for a person to belong to, or invite support for, a proscribed organisation. It is also a criminal offence to arrange a meeting to support a proscribed organisation; or to wear clothing or carry articles in public which arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation.

6.4 A proscribed organisation, or any person affected by the proscription of the organisation, may apply to the Secretary of State for deproscription and, if the Secretary of State refuses that application, the applicant may appeal to the Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission.

7. Policy background

What is being done and why?

7.1 The Home Secretary has decided to exercise the proscription power in section 3 of the Act in respect of the following organisations.

7.2 Hizballah was established during the Lebanese civil war and in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Hizballah is committed to armed resistance to the state of Israel and aims to seize all Palestinian territories and Jerusalem from Israel. It supports terrorism in Iraq and the Palestinian territories. Hizballah continues to amass an arsenal of weapons in Lebanon, in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions 1701 and 1559, putting the security of the region at risk. Its involvement in the Syrian civil war, since 2012, continues to prolong the conflict and the regime’s

brutal and violent repression of the Syrian people - violating the Lebanese government's policy of disassociation from regional conflicts, and increasingly destabilising and undermining the region's long-term stability.

- 7.3 Hizballah, as a political entity in Lebanon, has won votes in legitimate elections and forms part of the Lebanese Government. It has the largest non-state military force in the country.
- 7.4 The UK Government proscribed Hizballah's External Security Organisation in 2001. In 2008, the proscription was extended to include the whole of Hizballah's military apparatus, namely the Jihad Council and all the units reporting to it.
- 7.5 Hizballah itself has publicly denied a distinction between its military and political wings. The group in its entirety is assessed to be concerned in terrorism.
- 7.6 The US, Canada, Netherlands, Israel, Gulf Co-operation Council and Bahrain also designate the group in its entirety as a terrorist organisation.
- 7.7 Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM) was established in March 2017, as a federation of AQ-aligned groups in Mali, including AQ-M Sahel Branch (AQ-MSB), Ansar al-Dine (AAD), Macina Liberation Front (MLF) and al-Murabitun. JNIM's area of operations encompasses northern and central Mali, northern Burkina Faso and western Niger (the western Sahel region). JNIM aims to eradicate state and Western presence from these areas, and to institute governance in accordance with a strict Salafist interpretation of Sharia law. Attacks on Western interests, in the region and across wider the wider West Africa, are one means by which JNIM seeks to achieve these goals. Kidnap of Western nationals for ransom purposes remains a lucrative source of income for the group.
- 7.8 JNIM attacks are typically claimed via az-Zallaqa the group's media foundation, examples include:
 - 18 June 2017 - firearms and IED attack on Le Campement Resort in Bamako, in which three civilians and two military personnel were killed;
 - 2 March 2018 - VBIED (Car bomb) and firearms attack on the French Embassy and Burkinabe Chief of Defence HQ in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso;
 - 14 April 2018 - VBIED and firearms attack on BARKHANE (anti-insurgent operation) and United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) camp in Timbuktu, Mali;
 - 22 April 2018 - indirect fire attack on BARKHANE and MINUSMA camp in Timbuktu, Mali;
 - 28 June 2018 -VBIED attack on the G5 Sahel Force HQ at Sevare, Mopti region, Sahel;
 - 29 July 2018 - VBIED attack on the Malian Army and BARKHANE convoy in the Gao region, Mali on fire attack on BARKHANE and MINUSMA camp at Aguelhok, Kidal region, Mali.
- 7.9 Ansaroul Islam's overarching aim is to establish dominance over the historic Fulani kingdom of Djelgoodji (northern Burkina Faso and central Mali) and the implementation of its own strict Salafi Sharia. The group announced its existence on 16 December 2016 and claimed responsibility for an attack on an army outpost in Nassoumboa (Burkina Faso) which killed at least 12 soldiers. Ansaroul Islam seeks to

eradicate Burkinabe state presence from the country's northern regions including through attacks on government interests, such as: police stations, schools and civic officials; and through catalysing the departure of others from the region. Typical methodologies include small arms fire and IEDs. Further, the predominantly Fulani, Ansaroul Islam frequently target other ethnic groups leading to substantial internal displacement of persons.

- 7.10 Ansaroul Islam is highly likely supported by the federation of Al Qa'ida groups in Mali, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM). Ansaroul Islam is designated as a terrorist by the US.

8. European Union (Withdrawal) Act/Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union

- 8.1 This instrument does not relate to withdrawal from the European Union / trigger the statement requirements under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act.

9. Consolidation

- 9.1 The Government does not assess that there is any need for consolidation measures.

10. Consultation outcome

- 10.1 No consultation has been undertaken in connection with this instrument.

11. Guidance

- 11.1 No guidance is necessary in connection with this instrument.

12. Impact

- 12.1 There is no, or no significant, impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.
12.2 There is no, or no significant, impact on the public sector.
12.3 An Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument.

13. Regulating small business

- 13.1 The legislation does not apply to activities that are undertaken by small businesses.

14. Monitoring & review

- 14.1 If a proscribed organisation, or any person affected by the proscription of the organisation, applies to the Secretary of State for deproscription, the proscription of the organisation will be reviewed.

15. Contact

- 15.1 The CT Pursue Unit at the Home Office can answer any queries regarding the instrument and can be contacted at the Home Office, 5th Floor, Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF, Telephone: 020 7035 4848.
15.2 The Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, can confirm that this Explanatory Memorandum meets the required standard.

Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism

Volume 655: debated on Tuesday 26 February 2019

FEB

26

2019

7.17pm

[The Secretary of State for the Home Department](#)
(Sajid Javid)

I beg to move,

That the draft Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019, which was laid before this House on 25 February, be approved.

The UK has often felt the sharp pain of terrorism in recent years. Tragically, British families have lost loved ones in Manchester and London, in Tunisia, in France and in Spain. As Home Secretary, I am determined to do all I can to stop this happening again, to protect the lives and liberty of our citizens wherever they are in the world and to preserve the international rule of law.

Proscription is a vital tool to help us to disrupt terrorist networks and those who support them. The loss of 30 British lives in Sousse in 2015 shows the importance of international co-operation. Terrorism is a global threat and we must work closely with other countries to tackle it. We cannot and we will not ignore acts of terror that are committed overseas. To do so would make us all less secure. We must send a strong message to our citizens and the world that we will never condone terrorism, and that the warped ideologies of these ruthless groups have absolutely no place in our society.

[Robert Halfon](#)
(Harlow) (Con)

I strongly welcome this order from the Home Secretary, who is standing up for what is morally right for our country and standing up against terrorism. The banning of Hezbollah is not before time. What happens if these groups rebadge themselves under a different name, and what action would he take?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I welcome my right hon. Friend's support. To answer his question, that is something that we monitor with the help of Home Office officials. If that does happen, we will bring a relevant order to Parliament, as we did recently with another terrorist group that had previously been proscribed. It is something that we try to stay on top of and make sure that there is no way for these terrorist groups to dodge proscription by the UK Government.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I give way to the hon. Member for North Antrim (Ian Paisley).

[Ian Paisley](#)
[\(North Antrim\) \(DUP\)](#)

I congratulate the Secretary of State on the motion that he is bringing to the House tonight. Of course, Members on this Bench need no lecture about the history of Irish terrorism. We have three plaques to Members who were murdered from Northern Ireland or by Irish terrorists. However, with regards to the specific action tonight, will the Secretary of State be prepared to extend this motion to include members of the Muslim Brotherhood?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I can tell the hon. Gentleman that a number of groups are already proscribed—well over 70—including, of course, a number of terrorist groups related to Northern Ireland terrorism. He mentioned a specific group. All I would say is that we keep the whole area of terrorism and groups, and which ones are active, under review. Should we feel that we need to come back to Parliament with a further order, we would not hesitate in doing that.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I give way to my hon. Friend the Member for Brigg and Goole (Andrew Percy).

[Andrew Percy](#)
[\(Brigg and Goole\) \(Con\)](#)

I congratulate the Home Secretary on this excellent move. Let us be clear about Hezbollah: it is a group that promotes Jew hate. It promotes murder and it will never, in any circumstances, recognise the only democratic state in the middle east. In that context, does my right hon. Friend share my surprise and confusion over why the Opposition Front Benchers cannot support the proscription of a group that promotes murder and racism?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I very much understand everything that my hon. Friend said, and I obviously cannot speak for the views of the official Opposition. They will get an opportunity in a moment to set out their views, and the public will be able to draw their own conclusions.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I will give way one more time, to my right hon. Friend the Member for Preseli Pembrokeshire (Stephen Crabb), then I will make some progress and give way again later.

[Stephen Crabb](#)
[\(Preseli Pembrokeshire\) \(Con\)](#)

I strongly commend my right hon. Friend and praise him for the action that he is taking this evening. He spoke about the powerful message that this sends about this Government's view on terrorism, but does he agree that this is not just about sending the important message that there is no safe space for terror groups on British soil, but about the practical impact of the measure in front of us tonight, which is to shut down fundraising activities and ensure that support for terror in this country is closed down?

[Sajid Javid](#)

My right hon. Friend is absolutely right. The whole point of proscription, why it was set out in the Terrorism Act 2000—since then, successive Governments have come to this Dispatch Box and recommended that a number of organisations be proscribed—and this process is that it has real practical action on the ground, for example, not just to stop people being members of the organisations that are proscribed, but to stop them supporting them in any way, including giving them any kind of publicity or oxygen for their vile means.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I will make some progress and give way in a moment.

This is why I am laying this order to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety and crack down on several other terror organisations. Subject to the will of Parliament, this order will make membership of any part of Hezbollah a criminal offence in the UK. It will give police the power to tackle those who fly its gun-emblazoned flag on our streets, inflaming community tensions. It will give us

[Toggle showing location of Column 282](#)

more power to disrupt the activity of an organisation who are committed to armed combat, who violently oppose the Israeli people, who destabilised a fragile middle east, who helped to prolong the brutal Syrian conflict, and whose attacks have reached into Europe. We will not hesitate to proscribe groups where they pose a terrorist threat.

[Zac Goldsmith](#)
[\(Richmond Park\) \(Con\)](#)

I strongly support the decision that my right hon. Friend has taken. The statement that I have seen from the Opposition makes a distinction between the political and military wings of Hezbollah and demands proof that the so-called political wing falls foul of proscription criteria. Will he confirm that Hezbollah itself makes no such distinction, which is entirely plastic and artificial? They are one and the same.

[Sajid Javid](#)

I shall come to my hon. Friend's important point in a moment. It is fair to say that Hezbollah itself laughs at that distinction—it mocks it. It does not understand why some countries continue to make this artificial distinction. My hon. Friend has raised an important point.

[Mr Ivan Lewis](#)
[\(Bury South\) \(Ind\)](#)

I congratulate the Home Secretary on this decision. Does he agree with me that it is one thing to engage with terrorists in an attempt to get them to renounce violence and pursue entirely political aims, and quite another to engage with them to show solidarity with them and support for them? Does he agree that, on occasions such as this, hon. Members who have done that in the past should take every opportunity they can to apologise, not hide?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I very much agree with the hon. Gentleman, whom I thank for his support for the order and his passionate words. He is absolutely right: if there are hon. Members—perhaps there are—who in the past have thought of Hezbollah in a positive light, today is a fresh opportunity for them to demonstrate that they stand against terrorism in all its forms, whether Hezbollah or any of the other organisations that I will be proscribing today.

[John Howell](#)
[\(Henley\) \(Con\)](#)

Is it not the truth that there is not the slightest shred of evidence, after decades of European and British contact, that Hezbollah has in any way moderated? It is still one, official group.

[Sajid Javid](#)

My hon. Friend makes an important point about the evidence, some of which I will come to in respect of the groups we are recommending for proscription today. It is quite clear from open source reporting that Hezbollah has been involved, for example, on the side of the Syrian regime in the Syrian conflict. That has led to countless deaths, and it continues to do so in that most horrid conflict.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I want to make some progress; I will give way in a moment.

The proscription order before the House today is the 23rd under the Terrorism Act 2000. If agreed by the House and the other place, it will ban three groups that I deem a threat to this country. First, there is Hezbollah, also known as “the party of God”. The order extends the proscription of Hezbollah’s military wing to cover the group in its entirety. There have long been calls to ban the whole group, with the distinction between the two factions derided as smoke and mirrors. Hezbollah itself has laughed off the suggestion that there is a difference. I have carefully considered the evidence and I am satisfied that they are one and the same, with the entire organisation being linked to terrorism.

As I am sure hon. Members are aware, Hezbollah is committed to armed resistance to the state of Israel. It has the largest non-state military force in Lebanon. As the House will appreciate, I cannot go into the details of current intelligence, but I can say that Hezbollah has been reported in many open sources as being linked to or claiming responsibility for many atrocities. These include a suicide bomb attack on a Buenos Aires Jewish community centre in 1994 that left 85 people dead and hundreds injured. The bloodshed came just two years after an attack on the Israeli embassy in that same city, which killed 29 people. Hezbollah’s involvement in the Syrian war since 2012 continues to prolong the conflict and the brutal repression of the Syrian people. In 2016, it helped besiege Aleppo, stopping humanitarian aid reaching parts of the city for six months, putting thousands at risk of mass starvation. Its actions continue to destabilise the fragile middle east.

[Dr Matthew Offord](#)
[\(Hendon\) \(Con\)](#)

May I say to my right hon. Friend how pleased my constituents are tonight as they hear this news? May I ask him to confirm that at the annual Al-Quds rally we will not see the flags of this antisemitic organisation continue to be paraded on the streets of London?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I thank my hon. Friend for his words. What I can confirm is that if this order is passed by Parliament tonight, it will be a criminal offence for anyone, in public, to wear any clothing or carry any articles, including flags, which will arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or a supporter of a proscribed organisation.

[Mr Philip Hollobone](#)
[\(Kettering\) \(Con\)](#)

I congratulate the Home Secretary on overcoming the nonsense about there being separate military and political wings. Hezbollah itself has said:

“We don’t have a military wing and a political one; we don’t have Hezbollah on one hand and the resistance party on the other...Every element of Hezbollah, from commanders to members...is in the service of the resistance”.

I congratulate the Home Secretary on laying this order tonight.

[Sajid Javid](#)

I thank my hon. Friend. Again, he has highlighted the fallacy about different wings in an organisation which has only one wing, and that is a wing of terrorism.

[Tom Tugendhat](#)
[\(Tonbridge and Malling\) \(Con\)](#)

My right hon. Friend is absolutely right. Al-Muqawama—the resistance in Lebanon—is indeed entirely part of the single organisation. Does he agree, however, that what this organisation has done, with the backing of Iran in Syria—and not just in areas of the middle east but with Syrian support in places such as Argentina, which he has already cited—is spread antisemitism, and spread the repression of ideas and liberty, all over the world? This is an act of resistance that my right hon. Friend is right to take in the UK, but he is also joining the Dutch and other European countries that have taken this action already. Will he encourage more countries to follow suit?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I very much agree with my hon. Friend. As he says, other countries have taken the action that we are proposing, and I shall mention a couple of them in a moment. However, I hope that others, including our allies across the world, are listening, and that those that still maintain the distinction between a military and a political wing will listen carefully and perhaps be encouraged to take the action that we are taking.

[Gavin Robinson](#)
[\(Belfast East\) \(DUP\)](#)

May I build on that point? The Home Secretary will recognise the importance of the Five Eyes organisation. I know that the United States and Canada have already made the decision that we are making tonight, but there is still work to be done with our allies in Australia and New Zealand. Will the Home Secretary engage specifically with our Five Eyes partners to ensure that there is a uniform approach and a collective will to fight against Hezbollah?

[Sajid Javid](#)

The hon. Gentleman has mentioned our closest allies when it comes to matters of security and intelligence. He will know that there is a strong and regular dialogue and conversation with all our friends in the Five Eyes alliance. I hope that those that have not proscribed Hezbollah fully are listening carefully. I intend to raise the matter in the Five Country Ministerial, which I will chair and host in the UK later this year.

[Steve Double](#)
[\(St Austell and Newquay\) \(Con\)](#)

I welcome the Home Secretary's announcement and commend him for his clear leadership and decisive action on this matter, which is long overdue. Does he agree that that action sends a clear message to the Jewish communities throughout our country that there is no place in this nation for antisemitism and antisemitic organisations?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I could not agree more with my hon. Friend. Sadly, as I mentioned earlier, Hezbollah has identified as one of its biggest targets the state of Israel and its people. It has long had a hatred of people who are of the Jewish faith. That is, of course, absolutely unacceptable, and we hope that today's action will not just send a strong signal, but will help by denigrating this group and making it weaker in terms of support from anyone who might be based in the UK. We hope that it will help to protect our friends in Israel, and give comfort to Jews across the world. Several hon. Members rose—

[Sajid Javid](#)

I will make some progress, but I will give way in a moment.

The extent of Hezbollah's entire involvement in terror has long been debated in this House. The UK Government first proscribed Hezbollah's external security organisation in 2001. In 2008 this was extended to include the entire military wing, the so-called Jihad council, and all units operating under it. We took that further by designating Hezbollah's military wing under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010, and the European Union followed suit in 2013 after six people were murdered in the Bulgarian bus attack. The USA, Canada, the Netherlands, Bahrain and the Gulf Co-operation Council already proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organisation.

This Government have continued to call on Hezbollah to end its armed status; it has not listened. Indeed, its behaviour has escalated; the distinction between its political and military wings is now untenable. It is right that we act now to proscribe this entire organisation.

[Stewart Malcolm McDonald](#)
[\(Glasgow South\) \(SNP\)](#)

If we have learned anything from the new Labour years it is that proscribing clerics or individual organisations in and of themselves is not enough; it should be part of a wider strategy with allies. So given that we have just had the joint EU-Arab League summit, how many of our allies at that summit intend to follow the Government's lead?

[Sajid Javid](#)

The hon. Gentleman is absolutely correct that just proscribing a terrorist group is of course not enough; it is part of the toolbox or toolkit that we have to fight terrorism, and there are many

other tools we can employ. For example, measures are taken through legislation, such as the recent Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019, to try in other ways to fight terrorism.

The hon. Gentleman asked what other countries, especially at the recent summit, may have followed suit: as I mentioned, the Gulf Co-operation Council, which has many members, has long proscribed Hezbollah in its entirety, and Bahrain has proscribed Hezbollah as well. And I am sure that through today's action many countries will be interested to know how and why we are taking this action, and we work closely with allies so perhaps they will follow suit.

[James Morris](#)
[\(Halesowen and Rowley Regis\) \(Con\)](#)

I welcome my right hon. Friend's decision on Hezbollah, but does he agree that we need to redouble our efforts to cut off sources of financial supply to groups like Hezbollah, which are to do with money laundering and so on, by working with our allies like the US?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I very much agree with my hon. Friend, and that is why for example under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010 we have taken action against Hezbollah and other proscribed terrorist organisations, and we are always looking to see what more we can do in terms of going after assets and those who help with fundraising. We try to do this work together with our allies, which gives us a much greater chance of success in cutting off financing.

[Crispin Blunt](#)
[\(Reigate\) \(Con\)](#)

It is only 13 months since our right hon. Friend the Minister for Security and Economic Crime was in this House having a rather more difficult time of making the opposite arguments around the proscription of this organisation, and I would be extremely interested to know what has changed in the course of the last 13 months, other than my right hon. Friend becoming Secretary of State, for the Government to change their position.

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[Sajid Javid](#)

That is a good question, and my hon. Friend knows that we will keep under constant review the different terrorist organisations and groups, particularly ones we have proscribed some part of before, and we would look at both secret intelligence and there would be more open source information. For example, my hon. Friend asks what has changed: in terms of open source information it is evident that Hezbollah has got more involved in and drawn into the Syrian conflict, and is responsible for the death and injury of countless innocent civilians.

We will also look at advice from officials. There is a proscription group of officials made up from across Government Departments, not just from the Home Office, but including for example the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and we would listen to their excellent advice. They have made it very clear that Hezbollah is clearly a candidate for proscription because it meets all the tests set out in the Terrorism Act 2000.

[Sir Edward Davey](#)
[\(Kingston and Surbiton\) \(LD\)](#)

I am grateful to the Home Secretary for his detailed answer to the question from the hon. Member for Reigate (Crispin Blunt) about what has changed. In terms of the political changes, is his decision related to the problems of Government formation in Lebanon, where Hezbollah Ministers are having problems trying to form a Government with the Prime Minister? Has that been part of the right hon. Gentleman's decision making?

[Sajid Javid](#)

The short answer to the right hon. Gentleman's question is no. For a number of years, the UK Government have had a long-standing policy of no contact with Hezbollah and, in a way, that has made this decision more straightforward in terms of any potential impact on Lebanon. Our ties with the Lebanese Government and our support for Lebanon through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development are strong. There has been a need to ensure that those arrangements are compliant with this order, but they remain largely untouched and our relationship with the legitimate Government of Lebanon will remain.

[Bob Blackman](#)
[\(Harrow East\) \(Con\)](#)

I commend my right hon. Friend for the decision that he is taking and bringing to the House. My Jewish constituents will warmly welcome the decision, but actually, so will the Christian refugees from Lebanon who have also been targeted and attacked by Hezbollah. We should not forget those individuals. My hon. Friend the Member for Hendon (Dr Offord) mentioned the al-Quds marches in this country. One of the challenges for the police is that they say they cannot interfere because people claim that the Hezbollah flags they are carrying relate to the political wing of the group. Will my right hon. Friend's decision ensure that the police will be able to take action against the people parading those flags? Will he also ensure that we freeze all the assets of Hezbollah in the UK and encourage our allies to do the same?

[Sajid Javid](#)

To answer my hon. Friend's last question first, we have already taken steps to freeze the assets of terrorist groups, and we will continue to ensure that that always remains the case. On his first point, he is right to point out that Hezbollah's victims have been of many different faiths. There have been Jewish and Christian victims, and many Muslims have been murdered by Hezbollah as well. When it comes to displaying flags, clothing or any item that might be connected with Hezbollah or any other proscribed terrorist organisation, that will be a criminal offence from now on. This will give the police and the Crown Prosecution Service the ability to act in a way that they have been prevented from doing up to now.

[Theresa Villiers](#)
[\(Chipping Barnet\) \(Con\)](#)

When the House debated this issue a few months ago, every Back Bencher advocated the full proscription of Hezbollah and it was deeply regrettable that, at that stage, neither Front Bench did so. I welcome the Government's change of heart, but does my right hon. Friend share my deep regret that it is not shared by those on the Opposition Front Bench?

[Sajid Javid](#)

I welcome my right hon. Friend's support, but I will reserve my judgment on the Opposition. I will wait to hear the shadow Minister's thoughts. However, some Members might already have seen a press release from the official Opposition which suggests that they are against the proscription of Hezbollah. I am sure that is actually not the case, and that the shadow Minister will tell us that that must be some kind of typo and that they are absolutely committed to fighting terrorism because they know that that is what the British people want. In that regard, it would be wise for the Opposition to note that ever since the Terrorism Act 2000, no proscription order that has been brought to this Dispatch Box by any Government, Labour or Conservative, has ever been opposed by the official Opposition. They have supported the banning of every organisation that has been suggested. If it actually turns out that the Labour party objects to the banning of Hezbollah, that will be a first in this Parliament, and the British people will judge that for themselves.

Secondly, the order will proscribe Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, which is also known as JNIM, its aliases Nusrat al-Islam and Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen and its media arm, known as az-Zallaqa. JNIM was established in March 2017 as a federation of al-Qaeda aligned groups in Mali. It aims to eradicate government and the western presence from the western Sahel region, including parts of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. In their place, it wants to impose a strict Salafist interpretation of sharia law. To that end, it attacks western interests across the region and kidnaps western nationals to raise ransom money. Three civilians and two military personnel were killed in a 2017 attack on a tourist hotspot in Mali. Az-Zallaqa then proudly announces the atrocities and claims responsibility. JNIM is already designated by the US and the UN, and I have no hesitation in doing the same.

Finally, the order will ban Ansaroul Islam and its alias Ansaroul Islam Lil Irchad Wal Jihad. The group wants to take control of the Fulani kingdom of Djelgoodji in Burkina Faso and Mali and to impose its own strict interpretation of sharia law. It announced its existence in 2016 by claiming responsibility for an attack on an army outpost in Burkina Faso that killed at least 12 soldiers. Its methods include attacks on police stations, schools and public officials. The predominantly Fulani organisation often targets other ethnic groups, leading to mass displacement. Ansaroul Islam is already designated as a terror group by the US, and it is highly likely that it is supported by JNIM. Given its murderous actions, it is only right that we outlaw it in the UK.

[Sir Edward Davey](#)

The Home Secretary is right to proscribe the two organisations operating in Africa, but is he aware that Lord Anderson of Ipswich, the former independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said that

“at least 14 of the 74 organisations proscribed... are not concerned in terrorism and therefore do not meet the minimum statutory condition for proscription.” —[\[Official Report, House of Lords, 17 December 2018; Vol. 794, c. 1642.\]](#)

and did the Home Secretary consider de-proscribing organisations that no longer meet that criterion?

[Sajid Javid](#)

As I mentioned earlier, we keep under review not just which organisations need to be proscribed, but which organisations may need to be removed. Organisations have been removed in the past, and organisations are not added every year, but we keep the matter constantly under review.

I have no doubt all three proscriptions are in the national interest. Under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000, I have the power to proscribe an organisation if I believe it is concerned in terrorism. Currently, 74 international terrorist organisations are proscribed under the Act, alongside 14 connected to Northern Ireland that are proscribed under separate legislation. I only exercise the power after thoroughly reviewing all the available evidence. I consult colleagues across Government, intelligence agencies and law enforcement, and the cross-Government proscription review group supports me in the decision-making process.

Once proscribed, an organisation is outlawed and unable to operate in the UK. It becomes a criminal offence to be a member, to support it or to encourage the support of others. Proscription makes it harder for a banned group to fundraise and recruit, and its assets can become subject to seizure as terrorist property. Those linked to such groups may be excluded from the UK using immigration powers. Once a group is proscribed, it is also an offence to display its symbols in public and to brandish them on flags and clothes to indicate or encourage support. Earlier this month, Parliament passed the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019, which strengthens these powers by also making it an offence to publish an image of such an item and extends extra-territorial jurisdiction so that UK nationals and residents can be prosecuted in our courts for doing so overseas. This will help us further bear down on online propaganda and terrorist grooming, enabling us to act when a foreign fighter uses social media to reach back to the UK to build support for their terrorist organisation.

I take this opportunity to update the House on another order, which I laid yesterday. The order came into effect today and it outlaws aliases of two already proscribed organisations: Daesh and the Revolutionary People’s Liberation party. We will not allow these or any other groups to continue to operate merely by changing their name. Banning these aliases will leave those groups with nowhere left to hide.

I have outlined the terrorist threat posed by these groups. To ignore this would be to fail in our duty to protect our citizens and our allies. It can only be right that we add them to the list of proscribed organisations. The time has come to act, and I will not flinch from doing so. Subject

to the agreement of this House and the other place, the draft Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019 will come into effect on Friday 1 March.

7.50pm

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)
[\(Torfaen\) \(Lab\)](#)

I am grateful to the Home Secretary for his remarks, and I thank him for the letter he sent to my right hon. Friend the Member for Hackney North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott), the shadow Home Secretary, setting out his decision. I welcome his remarks about the banning of aliases in addition to principal names.

I make it clear from the outset that the Opposition will not be opposing the motion before the House tonight but, as I am sure the Home Secretary would appreciate and fully expect, I will be scrutinising his decisions. Section 3(5) of the Terrorism Act 2000 sets out the parameters of what is deemed to be an organisation concerned in terrorism, which are that it

“commits or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for terrorism, promotes or encourages terrorism, or is otherwise concerned in terrorism.”

I will touch briefly on each of the organisations mentioned by the Home Secretary.

First, from the information provided by the Home Secretary, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin—otherwise referred to as JNIM—was established in March 2017 as a federation of al-Qaeda-aligned groups and has operations in northern and central Mali, northern Burkina Faso and western Niger. It has claimed responsibility, as he set out, for a number of atrocities from 18 June 2017 to 29 June 2018.

Secondly, Ansaroul Islam announced its existence in December 2016, and its overarching aim is to establish dominance in northern Burkina Faso and central Mali. It has claimed responsibility for an appalling attack on an army outpost in Burkina Faso that killed at least 12 soldiers. The Home Secretary was clear in his letter that Ansaroul Islam seeks to eradicate the Burkinabe state presence from Burkina Faso’s northern regions.

Thirdly, the Home Secretary has indicated that Hezbollah will now be proscribed in its entirety. Indeed, he gave a brief history. The then Labour Government proscribed its external security organisation in 2001, and its military apparatus was proscribed in 2008.

The Home Secretary rightly said that these orders have never been opposed by any Opposition, and the order will not be opposed tonight. I told the House last year:

“The Opposition absolutely condemn the violence, and we continue to support the proscription of the military wing of Hezbollah, which has been the Government’s position.”—[\[Official Report, 25 January 2018; Vol. 635, c. 506.\]](#)

I was clear in that condemnation then, and I am again now.

[Theresa Villiers](#)

Does the Labour Front Bench support the proscription of Hezbollah in its entirety?

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I have just set out the position: we are not opposing the motion. What I am seeking to do is to scrutinise the Government's position, which is perfectly reasonable.

[Anna Soubry](#)
[\(Broxtowe\) \(Ind\)](#)

Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I will make some progress, but I will come back to the right hon. Lady.

The Home Secretary stated in his letter to the shadow Home Secretary:

“Hizballah, as a political entity in Lebanon has won votes in legitimate elections and forms part of the Lebanese Government. It has the largest non-state military force in the country.”

In last January's debate, the Security Minister said:

“We believe that the best way to weaken Hezbollah in the region and further afield is to have a strong state of Lebanon. The stronger the state of Lebanon, which represents multi-faith groups, has a democracy and Speakers of Parliament and recognises the individual religious minorities in the country, the weaker Hezbollah will be. It is not in our interests to have a weak, fractured Lebanon.” —[\[Official Report, 25 January 2018; Vol. 635, c. 512.\]](#)

He is of course correct about that.

I totally appreciate the strong views on this matter, and it has previously been the view of the Foreign Office for many years that the proscription of the political wing, which is part of the elected Lebanese Government, would make it difficult to maintain normal diplomatic relations with Lebanon or to work with the Government there on humanitarian issues, including those facing Syrian refugees in part of the country controlled by Hezbollah. The Home Secretary said in his remarks about ongoing diplomatic engagement with the Government of Lebanon that he would be looking at whether it is compliant with the order. I would appreciate him setting out in more detail how that engagement is to continue.

[Joan Ryan](#)
[\(Enfield North\) \(Ind\)](#)

I just wanted to say to Opposition Front Benchers that British officials can still meet their Lebanese counterparts. As the Home Secretary will perhaps confirm a little later, the explanatory notes to the Terrorism Act 2000 clarify that the arrangement of “genuinely benign meetings” with proscribed groups is permitted. Such meetings are interpreted as those at which the terrorist activities of the group are not promoted or encouraged, for example, a meeting designed to encourage a designated group to engage in a peace process. I think that covers the point that the hon. Gentleman has just made.

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I am very grateful for the intervention and I am sure the Home Secretary will come back to that in due course. The reason I raised the issue of proscription—

[Robert Halfon](#)

rose—

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I will finish the point and then come back to the right hon. Gentleman.

We have to make decisions based on clear evidence. I raise that because of course it is for the Home Secretary, on this as with any other proscription decisions of any Government, to demonstrate that their objective, impartial decision is driven by new and clear evidence. I am sure he will be keen to set out that evidence to the House. May I just return to the point made by the by the right hon. Member for Enfield North (Joan Ryan)? The Security Minister was very clear when we debated this 13 months ago that his concern was that full proscription

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could lead to a weak and fractured Lebanon. Clearly that cannot be the assessment of the Home Secretary now and it would be useful for the whole House if he were to set out why he thinks that judgment of the Security Minister has changed from last year.

[Robert Halfon](#)

rose—

[Dr Offord](#)

rose—

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I promised the right hon. Member for Harlow (Robert Halfon) that I would give way to him.

[Robert Halfon](#)

Let me just quote what the “Labour spokesman” said, according to today’s newspapers:

“Ministers have not yet provided any clear evidence to suggest”

that there should be a change to proscribing Hezbollah. They then go on to say:

“Decisions on the proscription of organisations as terror groups are supposed to be made on the advice of civil servants based on clear evidence that those organisations fall foul... The Home Secretary must therefore now demonstrate that this decision was taken in an objective and impartial way, and driven by clear and new evidence, not by his leadership ambitions.”

Is that not the wrong way to treat something as serious as this, by turning it into something about party politics? Given that the hon. Gentleman has heard the evidence in the opening speech by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, surely he should get up at the Dispatch Box to say that we are right to ban this terrorist organisation from our country.

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I just say to the right hon. Gentleman that I am simply asking what has changed, which is not an unreasonable question. Much of the evidence that has been put forward today we heard 13 months ago, and very concerning it is too. However, I am just asking the direct question: what has changed? I do not see it as unreasonable to provide scrutiny of the decision being taken. I will be clear to the Home Secretary—

[Dr Offord](#)

rose—

[Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

I am going to complete this. Throughout my time in this role, I have worked with the Government. I worked with them on the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019, and I think that our working together has enhanced the security of our citizens. What I am doing here at the Dispatch Box today is to scrutinise this decision carefully and hold the Home Secretary to account, which I believe is the role of a responsible Opposition. *[Interruption.]*

[Madam Deputy Speaker](#)
[\(Dame Eleanor Laing\)](#)

Oh, I beg the hon. Gentleman’s pardon. My goodness, I thought he was giving way but I am very pleased that he has concluded. There will be a limit on Back-Bench speeches of three minutes.

7.59pm

[Stephen Crabb](#)
[\(Preseli Pembrokeshire\) \(Con\)](#)

I will be brief, Madam Deputy Speaker, not least because all the main arguments and points have been covered. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary was incredibly generous in taking interventions and we have had a good debate and discussion so far. I shall also be brief because

you have asked us to be, Madam Deputy Speaker, and that is the rule under which we are operating this evening.

I join everyone else in praising the Home Secretary for the action he is taking. It is typically strong and clear-sighted of him and it is a powerful demonstration of the values that he brings to the important office that he holds. It is also an important demonstration of the Government's values in action. The Home Secretary has worked closely with the Foreign Secretary and other ministerial colleagues to bring us to this point.

I listened with great interest to the remarks from the Opposition Front Bench spokesman, the hon. Member for Torfaen (Nick Thomas-Symonds), whom I know well. He is intelligent and fair-minded, but I was concerned because, although he is absolutely right that he has a duty to scrutinise, to ask the difficult questions and to ask about the evidence, we did not hear from him a message saying that the Opposition support the action that we are about to take to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety. It is one thing to say, "We're not going to oppose it because these measures are never opposed by the Opposition," and to say, "We have a duty to scrutinise," but we want to hear from the Opposition that they actively support this important measure.

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary covered in some detail the history of the proscription of Hezbollah, its military operations and military wing. Numerous colleagues have made the point that many Government Members, and some Opposition Members, never regarded the distinction between a military wing of Hezbollah and a civilian wing as being anything other than an artificial construct, so we strongly welcome the decision that has finally been taken to ban Hezbollah in its entirety.

The Home Secretary said earlier that Hezbollah laughs at us when we in this House and in the Government try to make the point that there is some distinction. As Hezbollah's deputy secretary-general Sheikh Naim Qassem himself stated in October 2012:

"We don't have a military wing and a political one; we don't have Hezbollah on one hand and the resistance party on the other... Every element of Hezbollah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, is in the service of the resistance, and we have nothing but the resistance as a priority."

Members will know exactly what Hezbollah means when it talks about resistance: it means Jew hating and Israel hating. Tonight, the Government and this House are taking action to ban Hezbollah in its entirety and to stand up against that kind of vile rhetoric.

8.02pm

[Joanna Cherry](#)
[\(Edinburgh South West\) \(SNP\)](#)

It is clear that Hezbollah is an organisation that has been intimately involved in terrorist attacks and the killing of civilians, which should of course be met with unequivocal condemnation from the international community and this House. As others have said, in the 2006 war Hezbollah fired thousands of rockets, indiscriminately and at times deliberately, at civilian areas in northern Israel, killing at least 39 civilians, according to Human Rights Watch. In the conflict in Syria, we

have seen Hezbollah forces fight alongside Assad's Syrian Government groups, and we all know the terrible atrocities of which they have been guilty. Of course, these events take place in a growing climate of antisemitism around the world, which the SNP condemns utterly and unequivocally. We entirely condemn the violent actions of Hezbollah in Israel and Syria. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the Israel-Palestine situation—many of us, including myself, hold serious concerns about human rights violations in the occupied territories and the Gaza strip—and notwithstanding any concerns, they should never be used as any kind of purported justification for attacks on the people of Israel or Jewish people around the world or, indeed, for abuse against them. The SNP and the Scottish Government have consistently condemned obstacles to progress in the peace process—not only indiscriminate rocket attacks on Israel but the continued expansion of illegal settlements in the occupied territories.

As others have alluded to, there was a detailed debate on the topic of the proscription—the full proscription—of Hezbollah in this House on 25 January last year. I had the benefit of reading that debate earlier today and discussing it with my hon. Friend the Member for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (Stuart C. McDonald) who spoke in it. Very serious concern was raised by Members across the House about the statements and beliefs of Hezbollah as a whole, its antisemitism, and its avowed desire for the destruction of the state of Israel. As I have already said, those concerns are shared by the Scottish National party.

My only purpose in speaking today is to elicit from the Home Secretary precisely what has changed since 25 January last year when the Minister for Security and Economic Crime spoke so eloquently about the history of the proscription of the military wing. He went on to say that, although the proscription of Hezbollah in its entirety was kept under review, the Government at that stage wished to maintain a balance. As was pointed out by my hon. Friend in the debate on 25 January last year, other countries have also sought to maintain that balance, including two members of the Five Eyes and the European Union. In response to the question from my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow South (Stewart Malcolm McDonald), I was not sure that the Home Secretary was able to elicit whether any other countries have changed their position.

As the hon. Member for Torfaen (Nick Thomas-Symonds) said, it is the role of the Opposition to ask questions and to scrutinise. I am not interested in defending Hezbollah—of course I am not—and I have made my party's condemnation of its activities crystal clear. I simply wish to elicit from the Home Secretary what specifically has led to the Government's change of mind since 25 January 2018 so that I might better understand this decision today. I am also concerned that the Home Secretary should clarify for us what specific arrangements he has put in place to make sure that diplomatic channels are kept open—not with Hezbollah, but with the Lebanese Government and Lebanese parliamentarians—in order to maintain stability in Lebanon. I also seek from the Home Secretary a confirmation, which I am sure that he will give me, of the Government's commitment to use their influence to help revitalise the peace process in the middle east and to find a way to break the terrible political deadlock there and start to move towards bringing an end to the conflict.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Madam Deputy Speaker](#)
[\(Dame Eleanor Laing\)](#)

Order. I am going to do something very unusual. The Front-Bench speakers have taken far less time than I anticipated, so, with apologies to the right hon. Member for Preseli Pembrokeshire (Stephen Crabb), I will raise the time limit to five minutes.

8.07pm

[Crispin Blunt](#)
[\(Reigate\) \(Con\)](#)

That makes me the lucky recipient, as I am following my right hon. Friend the Member for Preseli Pembrokeshire (Stephen Crabb).

Plainly, how we deal with Hezbollah has been matter of careful consideration for a long time. I do not think that anyone is in any doubt that the previous position—this differentiation between the military and the political wing—was, as has been made crystal clear by a number of contributions here, a piece of constructive ambiguity. It was exactly that. There were, of course, reasons why the Government created that constructive ambiguity. Those considerations that, until now, have dictated the scale of proscription of Hezbollah should not be lost as we go forward.

Hezbollah is, of course, an important part of the Government coalition in the Lebanon. I think that it provides 13 out of the 68 Members of Parliament in the governing coalition. There are important development objectives, particularly in the south of Lebanon where Hezbollah has the core of its support from the poorer Shi'a communities in the Lebanon. Many of those development projects will be delivered with the assistance of the local authorities and the local councils that are elected there. It will be very difficult for officials from the Department for International Development to deliver those projects in the way that they have been if they suddenly find that they have to identify which local officials are flying a Hezbollah badge to get elected, which is largely necessary in that part of Lebanon given Hezbollah's political popularity—that is the case whether we like it or not. Our aid programme to that part of Lebanon is extremely important. In particular, the assistance that we have given to Lebanon in dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis means that it would possibly be damaging to British interests if we allowed this proscription to affect the effective delivery of that assistance.

[Mike Gapes](#)
[\(Ilford South\) \(Ind\)](#)

The argument that we should not proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety, to help development projects in Lebanon seems a little bit tenuous. Is the hon. Gentleman arguing that to maintain those development projects in Lebanon, we have to allow an organisation to parade on the streets of our capital city with its terrorist symbol of a gun and to intimidate and threaten the Jewish community and others in our country?

[Crispin Blunt](#)

No, of course not. I am saying that the considerations that will have led to the United Kingdom's policy until now—until we make this change tonight—ought to be taken into account. Some of the practical implications of trying to deliver much-needed development assistance, particularly in southern Lebanon to assist with the tidal wave of refugees that have come into Lebanon, displaced by the Syrian crisis, will cause complexity in the delivery of those aid programmes. We need to take that into consideration and we have to work out how we are going to do so. It has nothing to do with waving flags in the United Kingdom. All I am saying is that there were reasons for our policy until today, and I would not want those reasons to be lost in this consideration. We want to make sure that we do not cripple the co-operative schemes where they exist. I have already referred to the programmes in the south of the country and the municipalities that will contain people elected under the Hezbollah party label.

Of course, the stability of Lebanon is also an extremely important consideration. Anyone who pretends that they understand the politics of Lebanon will almost immediately be demonstrated not to understand it. It is immensely difficult to get under the surface of this. Some of that complexity is known to me from the visits I have made to Lebanon. Perhaps the most impressive one was in 2006, immediately in the wake of the Israeli attack on Lebanon and the destruction of much of its infrastructure. The driver who was assigned to me and two other parliamentary colleagues at the time was a Hezbollah supporter, but his drink of choice was vodka and his occupation of choice was clubbing. That does go to suggest that it is not quite the same religiously motivated organisation all the way through.

Hezbollah has been seen by the Lebanese Shi'a population as being their most effective representative. The history of terrorism that has been associated with it means that we are going to pass this measure. However, we have to engage with the practical reality that Hezbollah does have at the moment, regrettable though that may be, a very significant amount of the popular support in Lebanon. We are going to continue to need to find a way to make sure that that popular support is engaged in the stability of Lebanon, which is also a key British interest.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Madam Deputy Speaker](#)
[\(Dame Eleanor Laing\)](#)

Order. We are back on to four minutes.

8.13pm

[Dame Louise Ellman](#)
[\(Liverpool, Riverside\) \(Lab/Co-op\)](#)

I congratulate the Home Secretary on bringing this much-needed measure before the House tonight. I am extremely concerned that my hon. Friend the Member for Torfaen (Nick Thomas-Symonds) was unable to give proper, full support to the banning of this terrorist organisation, Hezbollah, in its entirety. Hezbollah is not our friend, and today was a good opportunity to say so.

Terrorism affects our whole society. Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation acting throughout the world. We have heard examples of it causing death and destruction, with the death of 85 people in a community centre in Argentina, and hundreds of thousands of people, including children, killed or facing starvation in Syria because of its activities. I would like to concentrate on the activities of Hezbollah here in this country and ask Members to think about what happens every single year on the streets of London on al-Quds day—the day designated by the late Ayatollah Khomeini to call for the destruction of Israel.

The Hezbollah terrorist flag is flown on the streets of London, because of our current legislation. If the flag, with its upturned rifle, has a sticker on it saying, “We are supporting the political wing of Hezbollah,” it is able to be flown without challenge. I went to see the Metropolitan police last year after that happened, and they followed up with a letter to me, which said:

“As Parliament has chosen not to proscribe the whole of Hizballah, being a member or supporter of the wider non-proscribed organisation is lawful, and those supporters can rightfully protest”.

I was told clearly that if the whole organisation were proscribed, those flags could not be flown. Is the Home Secretary sure that this order does not contain any loopholes that will allow that terrorist flag to be flown on the streets of London? It would be appalling if it could be.

I very much welcome the step that the Home Secretary is taking, and I hope that it will have the full support of all Members. Terrorism is abhorrent. Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation. To suggest that it has two separate wings is a fallacy. It is wrong for Hezbollah to operate, kill and maim people and propagate terrorism throughout the world, and that includes what happens here in this country.

[Robert Halfon](#)

I thank the hon. Lady for standing up for an honourable Labour tradition of opposing terrorism. Is she aware of the opinion poll conducted by ComRes for the *Jewish News* that suggested that something like 80% of the public are in favour of banning Hezbollah?

[Dame Louise Ellman](#)

I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his comment. I am aware of that important opinion poll. It is a timely reminder that, while Hezbollah specifically targets Jewish people and Jewish organisations, it affects our whole society. When we consider this issue, we should look at how the terrorist organisation Hezbollah affects our whole society. That is why it is right for the Home Secretary to bring this order before us, and I hope that it is supported by everybody here.

8.17pm

[Dr Matthew Offord
\(Hendon\) \(Con\)](#)

The decision to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety is long overdue, and I congratulate the Home Secretary on taking this action. I first called for its proscription after I attended a demonstration outside No. 10, when the Prime Minister of Israel was visiting, and I not only heard antisemitic abuse but saw the flying of the Hezbollah flag. I pointed that out to the gold commander and

demonstrated to him that it was a criminal offence under the Terrorism Act 2000. He assured me that he had not only recorded the individuals but that action would be taken later, as his immediate priority was to keep the two factions apart. However, I later found out that the Metropolitan police would not be taking any action because of a Queen's counsel opinion that there are two wings of the party and therefore no offence had been committed.

I have continued to attend the annual alternative al-Quds rally each year, where I have witnessed further acts of intimidation and inflammatory actions by people waving the flag. In addition, I was proud to present to Parliament a petition of 1,000 constituents, and I helped to deliver to No. 10 a petition from the Israel-Britain Alliance, which is run by Michael McCann, calling for the proscription of Hezbollah.

It was a great disappointment back on 25 January last year when Labour Front Benchers and the Government said that they did not wish to go down this route. I am sure that Members will remember that debate and the defence given on both sides, but it is worth mentioning the different positions that the Government and the Labour Opposition took. Any Member here who voted against the Terrorism Act 2000, or indeed the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2001, is really stretching the bounds of credibility if they come along tonight and say that they actually support this change, when they clearly voted against the legislation.

More importantly, as I am sure many Members will remember—the Home Secretary will not, because he was not Home Secretary at the time—there was the infamous briefing note that Labour Front Benchers gave their Members instructing them not to vote for proscription. The rationale for this was clear: it was, they claimed, a threat to the middle east peace process. The note said:

“Full proscription could be a move against dialogue and meaningful peace negotiations in the Middle East.”

It is worth asking Labour Front Benchers why that position has changed.

I am also concerned with my own Front Benchers, but on this occasion their decision is welcome, and I am not going to question their reasons for doing it. The Government have taken a decision to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety on the basis that it is no longer tenable to distinguish between the military and the political wings of the organisation, and I welcome that decision. What it actually does is to send out a strong message. By proscribing Hezbollah, the Conservative Government are demonstrating their commitment to anti-extremism and their fight against antisemitism, and it constrains the ability of Hezbollah to operate in the UK. Most of all, it protects community cohesion, and for that, Home Secretary, I salute you.

8.21pm

[Graham P. Jones](#)
[\(Hyndburn\) \(Lab\)](#)

I want to speak very briefly about Hezbollah's role in Yemen and the human catastrophe it is involved in. There is a clear link between Ansar Allah and Hezbollah in that they are both

supported and funded by the Iranian Government in this proxy war. Since the war broke out, the Houthis—Ansar Allah—have unseated the legitimate Government, with the help of Hezbollah in training, expertise, weapons and munitions.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah publicly backed the Houthis—Ansar Allah, or the Partisans of God—in a speech on 29 June 2018, saying:

“I, and all my brothers and the resistance in the world...should bow in tribute to those fighters”.

Let us not forget what Ansar Allah’s motto is and what it supports:

“Death to America, Death to Israel, A curse upon the Jews”.

Let us be absolutely clear what it stands for. Furthermore, Hezbollah and Ansar Allah met last August in Beirut. The meeting consisted of Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah and the spokesperson for Ansar Allah—the Partisans of God—Mohammed Abdul Salam.

In this conflict, Hezbollah fighters have been killed on the battlefield in Yemen, and I think this is further testament of its role in this conflict. It is a terrible conflict, which is exacting a huge price on the people of Yemen, and Hezbollah is part of that problem. A lot of this is coming in from an Iranian ship, Saviz, which is moored in the Bab el-Mandeb straits, and it is supported by the Iranian Government.

will finish with one conclusion. When the peace talks took place in Stockholm, one of the conditions that Ansar Allah asked for in relation to the prisoner transfer was for the injured Hezbollah fighters to be transferred safely to Oman. That was one of the conditions, and it tells us everything we need to know about Hezbollah’s role in the war in Yemen.

8.23pm

[Joan Ryan](#)
[\(Enfield North\) \(Ind\)](#)

May I unequivocally welcome today’s announcement from the Home Secretary? I pay tribute to all those in this House and beyond who have worked long and hard to achieve this result. I would like to thank the cross-party Back-Bench coalition that supported me in the debate I led on this topic in January 2018, despite opposition from both Government and Opposition Front Benchers. In particular, I wish to thank my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, Riverside (Dame Louise Ellman) for her sterling efforts to ensure proscription and end the annual travesty of the flags of an antisemitic terror group being paraded on the streets of London.

As the Community Security Trust rightly argued last year, the artificial division between Hezbollah’s so-called military and political wings, one that Hezbollah itself denies, was highly damaging to social cohesion and community relations. It is thus very disappointing, but I am afraid not surprising, to hear the words of the Opposition Front Bencher today. I hear that the Opposition are not opposing the order, but I really think they should be supporting it. However, I thank the hon. Member for Torfaen (Nick Thomas-Symonds) for the listening ear he gave when we met after last year’s debate.

Today's step is not simply a blow against terrorism and antisemitism; it furthers the cause of peace. Let us be clear that Hezbollah has no desire to be part of any meaningful dialogue or peace process in the middle east. Opposition Front Benchers do not need to take my word for it, because Hezbollah has repeatedly and consistently made its aims and intentions very clear. It vehemently opposed the Oslo peace process and has fought any normalisation of relations between Israel and Arab countries. In its founding manifesto in 1985, Hezbollah says of Israel:

“Our struggle will end only when this entity is obliterated. We recognise no treaty with it, no cease-fire, and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated.”

On numerous occasions, most notably in 1993, 1996 and 2006, Hezbollah has sought to provoke conflicts with Israel, and it is readying itself for war once again. It now has an estimated 120,000 to 150,000 rockets and missiles—an arsenal larger than that of many states—and an army of 45,000 fighters. At the end of last year, in a further violation of UN Security Council resolution 1701, a number of cross-border terror tunnels were discovered. It is all part of Hezbollah's plan of attack, called “Conquering the Galilee”, to launch assaults inside Israeli cities and towns, which Hassan Nasrallah publicly boasted about only last month.

It is not just the people of Israel to whom Hezbollah poses a direct threat; it is heavily implicated in the war crimes of Iran and the Assad regime in Syria, having participated in battles in Aleppo and the killing of more than 1,000 civilians in the Ghouta district in the eastern suburbs of Damascus. It has destabilised Lebanon, bringing conflict to its people and murdering its political opponents, and it has conspired with its Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps masters to attack western, Israeli and Jewish targets throughout the middle east, Europe and South America.

I know that this is not the direct responsibility of the Home Secretary, but I now urge the Government to do more to work with our allies and friends in the region to counter the pernicious influence of Iran, the barely hidden hand behind Hezbollah and the source of so much of the violence, sectarianism and terror that plagues the middle east.

8.27pm

[Sir Edward Davey](#)
[\(Kingston and Surbiton\) \(LD\)](#)

I pay tribute to my right hon. Friend the Member for Enfield North (Joan Ryan), who has led this campaign and sought to bring this issue to light, and who I think deserves huge credit for the measure before the House tonight. It is very important that the Home Secretary is proscribing Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin. It is important to recognise the impact that JNIM has had, in terrorist actions in Mali, Burkina Faso and elsewhere in the region. We should worry about that, and he is right to proscribe it.

Of course, the debate is about the change being made on Hezbollah. Everyone, I think, across the House is concerned about Hezbollah. It has had 30 years of terrorist attacks. Moreover, we have seen in the rhetoric of its leaders, particularly Hassan Nasrallah, a completely abhorrent antisemitic vein. For example, he has said:

“The Jews are a cancer which is liable to spread at any moment... If they all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.”

It is an organisation that everyone should repudiate.

I therefore think that it is right that the Government have kept the proscription of the political wing of Hezbollah under review and sought to bring this measure to the House tonight. However, like the hon. and learned Member for Edinburgh South West (Joanna Cherry), I also think that it is right that we probe the Government on why the change has been made, because Opposition parties have had to listen to the Government and follow them. The Security Minister told the House relatively recently:

“Their military wings are proscribed, but as Hezbollah forms part of the Government in Lebanon and Hamas plays an active role in its part of the region as a member of a Government, the proscription applies only to the military wing.”—[[Official Report, 19 December 2017; Vol. 633, c. 1008.](#)]

When I intervened—other Members have questioned the Home Secretary on this point—we wanted to know why there has been a change. That is a reasonable request, because all Opposition parties have followed the Government’s position before and obviously we are keen to maintain unity on such measures. That is why these questions are so important. The hon. and learned Member for Edinburgh South West asked those questions, as did the hon. Member for Reigate (Crispin Blunt).

On 31 January this year, after nine months, the Government of Lebanon formed. In the new Government of Lebanon the Health Ministry is, I believe, held by a Member of Parliament from Hezbollah and the Ministry of Finance has an ally linked to Hezbollah. It is therefore not unreasonable to ask the Home Secretary, given what the Government were saying in this House last year and the year before, what has changed in that political assessment. It is very important that the Home Secretary shares with the House the change in their analysis. If he wants to take the whole House with him, and keep the House and the country together on these moves, he needs to be clearer in that position.

On the process of proscription, in my intervention on the Home Secretary I made the point that the list of proscribed organisations is getting longer and longer. Time moves on and the former independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, Lord Anderson, made it clear that he thinks it needs to be updated and some organisations removed. I hope we can have a bit more from the Home Secretary, if he replies to the debate, on whether he will keep it under review and remove organisations. That is not helpful, given that there are very severe penalties for people who link to such organisations. If organisations should not be proscribed, people should not be in danger of being imprisoned.

Several hon. Members rose—

[Madam Deputy Speaker](#)
[\(Dame Eleanor Laing\)](#)

Order. We have to reduce the time limit to three minutes.

8.31pm

[Mike Gapes](#)
[\(Ilford South\) \(Ind\)](#)

I took part briefly in the debate in January a year ago, which was secured by my right hon. Friend the Member for Enfield North (Joan Ryan). It was very clear at that time that the Government were uncomfortable with the existing position. The Labour Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, had come out very strongly to call for a total ban on Hezbollah—not just the military, but the political wing—following the flags on demonstrations in the centre of London and the slogans that were chanted which were clearly threatening and intimidatory towards British citizens. It seems to me astonishing that the Labour Front Bench is unable to recognise and support the clear call by the Mayor of our capital city that there should be a total ban on Hezbollah.

When we had a Labour Government in this country, we were tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. It may be that today we are soft on terrorism and soft on the causes of terrorism. One of the causes of terrorism is that we do not confront and challenge the ideologies that drive it. Whether it is terrorism that comes out of hatred of other communities in the United Kingdom or whether it comes out of a warped distortion of a faith, there are, globally, different terrorist organisations and they have to be challenged, confronted and dealt with. People in this country, as well as in other countries, have to be protected. We are facing a real challenge if we do not recognise the need to have tough but fair security measures for our community as a whole. In Britain today, there are people who are afraid because we are allowing terrorist organisations and their supporters to parade, threaten and challenge.

We need to be very clear that the decision we take tonight has to be followed up by action to enforce what we are about to agree. It is no good Parliament legislating and then not enforcing it. The message has to go out to the Metropolitan police and it has to go out to local authorities. It has to go out to different institutions in our country that there is no place for terrorists, terrorist apologists or terrorist organisations in UK society.

8.34pm

[Wes Streeting](#)
[\(Ilford North\) \(Lab\)](#)

It is a genuine pleasure to follow my hon. Friend the Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes). He is still very much my friend and he is one of the most honourable people I have had the privilege to know. There is a long and proud tradition—a strong, proud social democratic tradition—in the Labour party of confronting and facing down murderous, hateful ideology, and I deeply regret that that proud tradition has not found expression at the Opposition Front Bench Dispatch Box this evening. But it will find expression on the Back Benches: I am here to support the Government unequivocally and without hesitation, not simply because I have to go back to my constituency and look in the eye the people who sent me here, but because when I go home this evening, I have to be able to look at myself in the mirror, too.

There is no doubt about what the Government seek to ban and confront in the motion. Hezbollah makes no distinction between its political and military wings and it is farcical that this Government and this country, for too long, have drawn such a distinction. We have already heard the words of the deputy secretary general of Hezbollah, Naim Qassem, but let us hear some more. He said that

“the history of Jews has proven that, regardless of the Zionist proposal, they are people who are evil in their ideas”.

Hassan Nasrallah said

“God imprinted blasphemy on the Jews’ hearts”—

and:

“If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice, I do not say the Israeli.”

That is what we are up against—that sort of stomach-turning antisemitism. It is the sort of conduct, I am afraid, that in the Labour party gets you a reminder of conduct letter these days, but some of us will not be bystanders to Jew hatred.

Let us look at Hezbollah’s murderous terrorism—the slaughter of innocent people around the world. There is no doubt that Hezbollah is a violent, murderous, barbaric cult and of course, it is right that the Government have therefore taken this decision. It is not just about the operations that it has mounted in its own country.

[Ruth Smeeth](#)
[\(Stoke-on-Trent North\) \(Lab\)](#)

Does my hon. Friend agree that while this move sends a message to the world, it also sends a message to our communities about community cohesion, which is that words have consequences and that politics are as important as the military wing in tackling terrorism?

[Wes Streeting](#)

I wholeheartedly agree with my hon. Friend. It underpins why the decision that the Government are putting before us this evening is, if overdue, very strongly welcome.

[Will Quince](#)
[\(Colchester\) \(Con\)](#)

I listened very carefully to the words of the Opposition Front-Bench spokesman. Does the hon. Gentleman agree that not opposing the order is just not good enough? We cannot be neutral in the face of an antisemitic terrorist organisation.

[Wes Streeting](#)

I agree with the hon. Gentleman. I have not seen a parliamentary Labour party briefing on this topic, which is regrettable. It means that I do not know the lines to take, so I have just had to come up with my own. I say plainly, simply and unequivocally that it is not good enough simply to say, “We won’t be opposing.” We should be making it clear that we would troop through the Lobby and vote for the motion if there is a Division. That is what people across the country and in my constituency want to hear.

Finally, I welcome the fact that Hezbollah flags will not be flown on the streets of our capital city, and I strongly support the Mayor of London’s leadership on this issue, but let us not lose sight of what Hezbollah is doing right now in Syria. Syria Solidarity UK is quite right to say that it is not just about flag waving and what is going on here; we must not lose sight of what is happening in Syria, too. For as long as my constituents send me to this place, I will sit here proudly as a Labour MP from a strong social democratic tradition, standing up for the values that our party was founded to champion.

8.38pm

[Ian Paisley](#)
[\(North Antrim\) \(DUP\)](#)

At the outset, I commend the Home Secretary’s words and the way in which he introduced this matter to the House. Every time that he speaks, he grows in stature, both within this place and indeed across our nation. I commend him for the strong stand that he is taking on these matters. Indeed, when I walk into this Chamber each day, I walk under an arch that bears a memorial to three Members of this House who were murdered by the Provisional IRA. Robert Bradford, Airey Neave, and Ian Gow were murdered, of course, by its actions, but it was encouraged by the words of those who give succour to such people and those who would pay lip service and be apologists for those gangsters and terrorists. It is essential, therefore, that we send a strong message to the people who would give succour that there is no room for their words and that their words must also be condemned, and condemned thoroughly.

I appreciate the points being made across the House about Hezbollah, which was responsible for the deaths of 85 people in 1994, when it bombed a Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires. It remains a threat to Jewish communities around the world, launching deadly attacks against civilians in Israel and Bulgaria and planning attacks in other places such as Cyprus. I remember standing in a southern district of Israel holding the remains of a rocket fired by Hezbollah terrorists at schoolchildren. Think of the absolute hatred of these people! They fire at schoolchildren, who are going about their normal lives yet facing attack and threat.

Many have discussed the intentions of Hezbollah tonight. It is not about attacking Israel but world Jewry and an entire community. The organisation’s intentions were made clear in 1992, when it stated:

“The war is on until Israel ceases to exist and the last Jew in the world has been eliminated”.

The hatred behind those words! The absolute condemnation comes from their own mouths.

We entirely support the actions that have been taken, but I ask the Home Secretary to consider adding the Muslim Brotherhood to the list as well. On 7 December 2017, the then Foreign Secretary made it clear in this House that he was considering pushing for the proscription of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is essential that the Home Secretary looks at that organisation and sees whether it must also be proscribed. I believe that it should be. Organisations that encourage and mouth off terrorism and radicalise people should face the condemnation that Hezbollah is facing in the Chamber tonight.

8.41pm

[Jim Shannon](#)
[\(Strangford\) \(DUP\)](#)

I also welcome the Home Secretary's comments today and the action to recognise Hezbollah for what it is. That sends a strong message to the world and those who wish to do us harm that the UK Government abhor terrorism in any form.

As we all know, Hezbollah is a well funded, powerful organisation that has a history of targeting British interests, including well documented links to attacks on British forces in Iraq. It killed 85 people in Argentina and five Israeli tourists in Bulgaria. A Hezbollah operative with a forged British passport in Cyprus had eight tonnes of fertiliser, to be used to make bombs against Jewish and Israeli targets. According to the CIA, Hezbollah's secretary general Hassan Nasrallah has a history of being

“directly involved in many Hezbollah terrorist operations, including hostage taking, airline hijackings, and attacks against Lebanese rivals”.

I am therefore delighted that our country is now joining the US, Canada, the Netherlands, Israel and the Arab League in proscribing Hezbollah in full.

As well as being involved in international terrorism, Hezbollah plays a central role in the global drugs trade. There has been a wave of recent arrests in Europe of suspects linked to Hezbollah. Does the Home Secretary share my concern about the criminal activities in which Hezbollah operatives regularly engage, including drug dealing and money laundering? Will he confirm that proscription will restrict Hezbollah's ability to undertake such criminal activities in the UK? Is there a force directly tasked with addressing the issue?

Hezbollah has lost some 2,000 fighters in Syria. It has an arsenal of 150,000 rockets and 45,000 fighters, and it has said that its rockets can hit any part of Israel—even Tel Aviv. Does the Home Secretary agree that Hezbollah is one of the most destabilising forces in the region? Yesterday he stated that Hezbollah was continuing its attempts to destabilise the fragile situation in the middle east. We are no longer able to distinguish between its already banned military wing and its political party.

I thank the Home Secretary for making this decision. I think everyone in the House and the other place will support this motion, to make our people and our country safer. These are the sort of people who need to be put off the streets permanently.

8.44pm

[Sajid Javid](#)

A number of Members have spoken in support of the order, including my right hon. Friend the Member for Preseli Pembrokeshire (Stephen Crabb), my hon. Friends the Members for Reigate (Crispin Blunt) and for Hendon (Dr Offord), the hon. Members for Liverpool, Riverside (Dame Louise Ellman) and for Hyndburn (Graham P. Jones) and the right hon. Member for Enfield North (Joan Ryan), the right hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Sir Edward Davey), the two Ilfords—the hon. Members for Ilford South (Mike Gapes) and for Ilford North (Wes Streeting)—and the hon. Members for North Antrim (Ian Paisley) and for Strangford (Jim Shannon). The hon. Member for North Antrim also spoke passionately about the terrorism in Northern Ireland. I thank all those Members for their contributions.

I want to focus on two clear points. The hon. and learned Member for Edinburgh South West (Joanna Cherry) and the right hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton asked, “Why now?” I will give four reasons. First, there is secret intelligence. I think the House will understand why we cannot share it, but my right hon. Friend the Security Minister met the shadow Home Secretary earlier on Privy Council terms, and was able to share some of that information. There has been plenty of open-source information, especially in the last 12 months, in which there has been a step change in the activity of Hezbollah, particularly in Syria.

The proscription review group—a group of civil servants from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Home Office, the Department for International Development and others—makes an independent, objective assessment of the evidence that it has, and it has expressed the clear view that all these organisations, but in particular Hezbollah in its entirety, meet the definition of a terrorist organisation in the 2000 Act. Both the FCO and DFID have looked again at the work that they do in Lebanon. They are clear about the fact that they can continue that work, and support the legitimate Government of Lebanon and its people.

Finally, I want to give an opportunity to the shadow Minister, the hon. Member for Torfaen (Nick Thomas-Symonds), for whom I have a great deal of respect. He is normally very strong on these issues, but the House is still not clear about one point. Let me give him that opportunity now. Does the Labour party—the official Opposition—support the proscription of Hezbollah? Yes or no? The shadow Minister wishes not to take that opportunity. We can only infer that the answer is no, which is a great shame.

It is right that we ban all three terrorist organisations to ensure that they cannot build support in the UK. I commend the order to the House.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That the draft Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019, which was laid before this House on 25 February, be approved.

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<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-02-26/debates/41CC81FF-5CD8-43E6-8B0B-19A67B3E709F/PreventionAndSuppressionOfTerrorism>