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MEDIA STATEMENT

Racism and Sexism by Metropolitan Police Officers is Appalling — but Not New

Muslim Women's Network UK (MWN UK) is appalled, though sadly not surprised, by the findings of the BBC Panorama investigation into the Metropolitan Police, which exposed sickening examples of misogyny, racism, anti-Semitism anti-Muslim and anti-migrant abuse among serving officers. Such behaviour is not new — it is a long-standing, entrenched problem that continues to obstruct social justice. Conviction rates for rape, domestic abuse, and hate crimes remain woefully low.

Muslim women who face multiple barriers to accessing justice experience hate crime, racism, and gender-based violence but hesitate to report incidents, fearing they will not be believed, protected, or treated fairly — or worse, that they will themselves be viewed with suspicion. The Panorama revelations sadly confirm that these fears are justified. Officers were recorded making vile racist and sexist remarks, mocking victims of rape and domestic abuse, and referring to migrants and Muslims in dehumanising and violent terms. Some were even found to have assaulted people in custody while using discriminatory language that shatters public trust.

MWN UK CEO, Baroness Shaista Gohir, said: *"This is not the result of a few 'bad apples' — it reflects an ingrained culture within policing that tolerates prejudice, mocks the vulnerable, and fails those most in need of protection. These revelations will only deepen mistrust and further deter Muslims and other marginalised groups from reporting hate crime and abuse. Discovering that some police officers themselves have dismissed domestic abuse and rape allegations while simultaneously expressing anti-Muslim hatred sends a chilling message: women and minoritised communities cannot rely on the police for safety."*

Women and minority communities have long been aware of discriminatory behaviour within the police — the Panorama investigation has merely provided the evidence to prove it. The conduct uncovered represents a gross betrayal of public trust. The scale and gravity of these revelations make it clear that urgent and decisive action is needed to address institutional misogyny, racism, and anti-Muslim hostility within the Metropolitan Police. It is, however, sadly unlikely that such prejudice is limited to the Met. Police forces across the UK must now carry out their own independent reviews and investigations to expose and eliminate toxic cultures, ensure whistleblowers and witnesses feel safe to come forward, and begin the long process of rebuilding trust with the communities they serve.

Victims of racism and anti-Muslim hostility can contact Muslim Safety Net www.muslimsafetynet.org.uk

Additional Information

- Media enquiries can be directed to: contact@mwnuk.co.uk or 0121 2369000
- Muslim Women's Network UK is a national charity: <https://www.mwnuk.co.uk>