



14th October 2025

MEDIA STATEMENT

Muslim Women's Network UK clarifies position on charity run and calls out double standards in media coverage

The Muslim Women's Network UK (MWN UK) has issued a clarification regarding recent comments made by MWN UK CEO Baroness Shaista Gohir about the legality of a single-sex charity run. Having reviewed the Equality Act 2010, MWN UK acknowledges that single-sex charity runs are likely permissible within the law. However, we believe that event organisers could have taken practical steps to accommodate women and girls without compromising religious beliefs. For example, women could have participated by starting their run at a different time or in separate groups.

MWN UK CEO Baroness Shaista Gohir said: *"Such adjustments would have been straightforward and would have demonstrated a commitment to inclusion while avoiding the reinforcement of negative stereotypes about Muslims. It is worth noting that during the pilgrimage to Makkah, men and women are often in close proximity — far more so than would occur during a charity run."*

We are also concerned about the disproportionate media attention given to the event, which suggests that the reaction reflects a broader hostility towards Muslims rather than genuine concern for women's equality.

Baroness Shaista Gohir added: *"The level of scrutiny in this case appears to have less to do with advancing equality for Muslim women and more to do with an opportunity to be negative about Muslims. If the concern for women's rights were genuine, there would be equal focus on the widespread anti-Muslim abuse that Muslim women endure in today's hostile environment."*

This statement coincides with National Hate Crime Awareness Week, during which MWN UK will formally launch a new initiative, Muslim Safety Net (www.muslimsafetynet.org.uk) in parliament on the 15th October. The website went live on 1st October and the project provides a channel to report anti-Muslim abuse and discrimination, provides support to victims and promotes community safety. A national billboard campaign was also launched alongside the project in partnership with the JC Decaux Community Channel to raise awareness from 6th October to 16th November.

Anti-Muslim hate incidents can also be reported to our new service, Muslim Safety Net www.muslimsafetynet.org.uk / 0330 330 0288

Additional Information

1. For comments get in touch via – contact@mwnuke.co.uk / 0121 236 9000
2. Muslim Women's Network UK (MWN UK) is a registered charity (no.1155092)