



**23 Feb 2024**

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Grooming victim Shamima Begum should be allowed to return to the UK**

Muslim Women's Network UK (MWN UK) is disappointed that Shamima Begum has lost her citizenship appeal once again. She was a 15 year old child when she was groomed online, which should have been taken into account by the government. We are concerned that the public and media reaction to her case, shaped by her gender, ethnicity and faith, were a significant contributory factor into the government's initial decision to strip her of her British citizenship, which has rendered her stateless.

National security has evidently been given priority over other considerations. We are alarmed at the lack of mechanisms available to the courts to scrutinise the government's assessments and decisions regarding the levels of threat posed by Shamima Begum. Only when the full details of the scale of the national security risk she presents is considered alongside her human rights and the fact she was a child who was groomed, sexually exploited and trafficked, can justice be delivered. Decisions in such complex and unique cases must involve a careful balance between national security, legal considerations and ethical concerns.

**Additional Information**

- Media enquiries can be directed to: [contact@mwnuk.co.uk](mailto:contact@mwnuk.co.uk) or 0121 2369000
- Muslim Women's Network UK is a national charity and more information can be found on the website: [www.mwnuk.co.uk](http://www.mwnuk.co.uk)
- MWN Helpline (national specialist faith and culturally sensitive helpline) can be contacted on: Tel: 0800 999 5786 / Email: [info@mwnhelpline.co.uk](mailto:info@mwnhelpline.co.uk) / Text: 07415 206 936 and further information can be found at: [www.mwnhelpline.co.uk](http://www.mwnhelpline.co.uk)