



ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2002 – JUNE 2003

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	PROJECTS.....	3
2.1	Islam Awareness Project	3
	Literature and Corporate Focus	3
	Public Events	3
2.2	Media & Popular Culture Watch.....	5
	Proactive Media Work.....	6
2.3	Muslim Equality Casework Project.....	8
	Community Campaigns.....	9
2.4	Policy Research & Lobbying.....	12
3.0	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	18
4.0	OPERATIONAL MATTERS	19
4.1	Legal Matters.....	19
4.2	Financial Matters.....	19
4.3	Telecommunications & IT.....	19
4.4	Premises Management.....	21
4.5	Personnel & Payroll Issues.....	21
5.0	EXECUTIVE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL CO-ORDINATION	22
5.1	Internal Co-ordination & Management	22
6.0	CONCLUSION	22

ANNUAL REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Annual Report provides an overview of achievements measured against agreed strategic and operational management plans in each of FAIR's core project areas, namely, Islam Awareness Project, Media & Popular Culture Watch, Muslim Equality Casework Project, Institutional Discrimination Project and Policy Research & Lobbying Project.

2.0 PROJECTS

2.1 Islam Awareness Project

Details of work undertaken in this project area is listed below.

Literature and Corporate Focus

Islamophobia Training/Resource Pack – Research to compile material for this pack was undertaken with a view to campaigning and lobbying for change, and in order to raise awareness of Islamophobia at all levels on behalf of the Muslim community in Britain. The pack was designed for use by both groups and individuals, and was completed in September 2002.

Information Cards – FAIR produced a series of eight information cards about Islam, British Muslims and Islamophobia. Completed in February 2003, the and are now available on the FAIR website.

FAIR Calendars & Greeting Cards – As part of our marketing and publicity initiative, we produced FAIR Calendars for 2003, designed and printed by Andalusian Arts. .

Public Events

Forgotten Debt Lecture' Why the West can't hate Islam' – As part of our Islam Awareness project, FAIR sponsored this event with City Circle. The event held on 15 May, 2003 attracted approximately 1000 attendees. In addition to the main speaker, Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, other talks were given Habib Ali al-Jufri and Peter Sanders.

Festival - Best of British Islam - The Festival, jointly organised with ArRum, Khayaal and Iman celebrated the depth and diversity of Islam and Muslims in Britain. The Festival took place at ArRum during the Spring and Summer of 2002. It consisted of 100 individual events and hosted over 200 of Britain's finest artists such as Ali Omar Ermes and Sorayah Said, intellectuals and

community representatives. The Festival aimed to celebrate the richness and diversity of Islam, and the contributions of Muslims to British identity and society.

Muslims of Europe Conference – Jointly organised by al-Khoei Foundation, FAIR, and the Muslim College. The Muslims of Europe conference took place between 25th – 26th January 2003 at the al-Khoei Foundation in London. The event aimed to bring together practitioners, academics and policy makers for two stimulating days of lectures and discussions exploring common issues affecting the Muslims of Europe. The effort to dig beyond the usual rhetoric was reflected in the range of themes selected for discussion. Themes included; Security, Law and Discrimination, Prisons, and the Emerging Identities of Muslim Youth in Europe. This was followed up with sessions looking at the Media, Views from Europe and Abroad, and Imams. The conference ended with an Interfaith panel discussion chaired by HRH Prince el-Hassan bin Talal.

Asylum and Migration Lecture: Lessons of Madinah – FAIR, along with Q-News, An-Nisa Society, Amal Trust and City Circle organised a one day event on 8 February 2003 to address issues relating to asylum and migration from an Islamic perspective. The event was chaired by Sheikh Zaki Badawi, Principal of The Muslim College and Chair of FAIR's Trustees, and featured Sheikh Hasan Le-Gai Eaton, Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad and Hamza Yusuf.

Workshops

As part of FAIR's Islam Awareness Project, a series of workshops were devised and facilitated by FAIR with the aim of raising awareness of Islamophobia. A list of the workshops FAIR facilitated is provided below:

- Crossing Borders Workshop – *Crossing Borders* conference organised by the 1990 Trust.
- Islamophobia Workshop – *Justice or Just Us* conference organised by BRAIN (Black Racial Attacks Independent Network).

Youth & Students Focus

FAIR / FOSIS National Student Campaign - Jointly organised with FOSIS, this was the last of three seminars that took place on university campuses titled 'Islamophobia – the xenophobia of our times'. The seminar heard presentations from Chris Allen from FAIR, and Sufyan Gent from the Islamic Foundation. FAIR assisted FOSIS with background information on their campaign and participated in events at Oxford, York, Nottingham, Manchester, LSE, Liverpool, Sheffield and Bradford. FAIR was also represented at the National Union of Students' annual conference on racism.

2.2 Media & Popular Culture Watch

Media Monitoring

Daily News Digest (DND) - The scope of the DND has been broadened, covering over 35 different sources which include national, regional and local newspapers. The DND encourages feedback from our subscribers to respond to articles appropriately with the aim of increasing community participation.

Observer Discussion Forum: Islam in the Media – As part of our Media Monitoring project, FAIR, along with other Muslim organisations, took an active part in discussion groups set up by the Observer on 'Islam in the Media'. The purpose of the discussion group was to extend the debate around the coverage of Islam in the media, with regular pieces on the Observer website. After the first commentary piece, the following paragraph was reported

“This is the first in an Observer series of online commentaries, seeking to extend and deepen debates around Islam in Britain, in association with a new Islam in the media discussion group coordinated by Observer home affairs editor Martin Bright. The group seeks to deepen dialogue between Muslims in Britain and the mainstream media.”

Media Response

Channel 4 British and Muslim Season - Further to commissioning three individual reviews of the Channel 4 Season and an open invitation for comments from subscribers. The final report on the Season is now complete and available. Officers made a presentation on the final report to Paul Bolt, Director of the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC) and Andrea Millwood-Hargreave, Director of Research at the BSC. The presentation was well received and the ensuing discussions resulted in the following agreements:

- BSC to keep FAIR informed and involved, where appropriate, with the setting up of the new media watch-dog, OFCOM.
- BSC to consult and involve FAIR in its conference on Equality and Diversity to be held towards end of this year.
- BSC to broker a seminar on Islamophobia for top media chiefs
- BSC to write a cover letter for FAIR's direct submission to Channel 4.

The Guardian's 'Islam in Britain' season – FAIR devised and distributed grassroots/community poll to gauge response to the season, and compiled a written response to the Guardian.

BBC Ramadhan series of programmes – Provided background notes for the programmes on stereotypes of Muslims throughout history to the present day for BBC Manchester.

General Requests

FAIR continue to speaking with journalists in the UK to provide information relating to Islam, and any media coverage being done on Islam and the Muslim community in Britain. A list of some of the media requests we have dealt with are listed below:

- April, BBC called to enquire whether Islamophobic attacks had increased since the escalation of events in Palestine, for general information on Islamophobia, and what was being done to combat it.
- April, BBC Drama team contacted FAIR to discuss a drama series being produced looking into the rise of the far right. The drama is still undergoing production, and is due to be set amongst the mixed communities of East London. BBC Drama team were interested in talking with FAIR about the current political situation and the impact on British Muslims since the tragic events of September 11.
- May, a freelance writer working with the BBC contacted FAIR to discuss the rise of the far-right.
- May, the Guardian contacted us for information on Islamophobic attacks in the UK post September 11th.
- June, BBC World Service contacted us to request an interview for World Service Program.
- July, an independent film production company contacted us with reference to a drama feature film that was being produced on the Muslim Community in Britain post September 11th. The film production company was seeking to speak to a range of people about their experiences as Muslims, and to inquire more about the Northern riots that took place in 2001.

Proactive Media Work

Media Pack - We have produced a media pack to supplement our campaign on Equality and Diversity. The pack has received positive endorsements from various key public figures. Comments include:

“The rise of anti-Muslim feeling across Europe and support for the far right has only reinforced the need for the calm, informed debate that FAIR is promoting. British Muslims should be central to the Government’s forward agenda on social cohesion and equality and it is vital that their voice is heard. FAIR’s proposals for stronger legal protection for Muslims are sound - the Government’s proposals woefully inadequate - but FAIR recognises that the law is only one part of the action we need if we are to address Islamophobia effectively”.

Sarah Spencer, Director, Citizenship and Governance Programme, IPPR and Commissioner, Commission for Racial Equality.

Media Pack 'FAIR Justice for All Campaign – We also produced a Media Pack for the Fair Justice for All Campaign. We drafted the initial paper which they then used.

Media Appearances & Interviews

FAIR has made media appearances and taken part in interviews on areas relating to current issues affecting Muslims in Britain and the rise of Islamophobia. These media interviews and appearances have been with Carlton TV on Ramadhan, Channel 4 News, BBC Radio WM, BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio London, BBC Radio Berkshire, BBC Asian Network, and Radio Ramadhan in Birmingham, Glasgow & London.

2.3 Muslim Equality Casework Project

As part of monitoring and identifying specific incidences of Islamophobic discrimination, harassment and violence, significant projects FAIR has undertaken are listed below:

Casework Management

Desecration of Muslim Body – On 17th January 2003, a 70 year-old devout Muslim sister passed away in Hillingdon Hospital. When the family went to view the body the following day at the hospital mortuary they were devastated to see that the body had been deliberately desecrated. Someone had placed un-cooked pieces of bacon on her corpse. Over 3 months later, the family of the late sister, were dealing with a local investigation that was seriously mismanaged and negligent. This left the family with no alternative but to declare their loss of confidence in the investigation and to demand for the Race and Violent Crimes Task Force Unit (DCC4) of New Scotland Yard to take charge of the investigation.

The following list provides information on the serious complaints the family has had about the existing local police investigation:

- No crime reference number provided, family were told that the desecration might not be considered as a criminal offence.
- Statements were not taken from the family.
- The family were not kept updated on the progress of the investigation.
- Communication, when forthcoming from the local police investigation, has been insensitive and has not addressed the family's concerns.
- Lack of progress despite the increasing time of investigation, the police have yet to identify a suspect.

FAIR has been deeply shocked and saddened by the vindictive and specifically Islamophobic nature of the crime as it reveals a motivation of specific religious hatred. The Islamophobic nature of the attack is particularly concerning in the context of recent crimes against the Muslim community such as the desecration of Muslim graves in Leicester in early April and the vandalism of the mosque in Portsmouth in March. The explicit Islamophobic nature of this crime has wider implications for the Muslim community at large and their relations with authorities.

FAIR has liaised with lawyers and New Scotland Yard and actively campaigned on behalf of the family to encourage support from the Muslim community. We have sent out news releases, and pushed for community action by strongly urging individuals to write to New Scotland Yard demanding an investigation by the Race and Violent Crimes Task Force Unit (DCC4) into the desecration of the body.

As a result of concerted lobbying by FAIR, co-ordinated with other Muslim groups, the investigation has finally been taken up by DCC4 at NSY. FAIR will continue to support the family through the ongoing investigations.

Muslim sisters v. French Consulate – FAIR undertook this case on behalf of two Muslim sisters who, at the time, were residing in the UK and were experiencing difficulties with the renewal of their passports. In both cases the applications had been refused by the French Consul on the grounds that a passport photograph without a head covering was ‘unacceptable’. FAIR wrote to the French Consul on behalf of the victims highlighting the infringement this had on their freedom of travel, and general restriction of their movements within society. FAIR stressed that this was in contravention of their religious freedoms under both the French constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights. We also made the French Consul aware that similar cases in the United States had been satisfactorily resolved with the French Consul in the past, and that the French Consul in London resolves this without any further distress to the ladies concerned. This case was referred by FAIR to the leading discrimination lawyer Imran Khan who has now taken up the case.

Girl v School - For background information on this case please refer to Monthly Management Report (MMR), March 2002. The aggrieved had been allowed back into school after agreeing to make adjustments to her hijab. After a month of relative calm, however, the problem flared up again with the school authorities raising further objections to her Islamic dress. It was suggested that this case should be used as a test case to explore the law in this area. We forwarded a brief of the case to a human rights lawyer to give us an opinion on the legal merits of the case. The case was resolved, and the school reached an agreement with the student concerned.

Mr & Mrs X - This case involved an English revert couple in Penrith, Wales facing harassment and abuse from their neighbours. They were the only Muslims in the area and had suffered harassment and abuse on almost a daily basis since 1994. Since the abuse had become much worse, the couple contacted FAIR. We wrote a letter of support to their Housing Association and requested the couple to be moved to safer accommodation.

White revert victim of knife attack - This victim was targeted by Combat 18 after the events of 11th September and turned to FAIR for help in seeking safer accommodation. As well as providing victim support to the family, FAIR compiled a dossier of the attacks and threats that took place and compelled the police to give greater attention to this case. Since then, the family have been moved to safer accommodation and FAIR have assisted in finding family’s children places at local schools.

Community Campaigns

Equity Campaign ‘Community Development Programme’ – The project idea emerged from various discussions with our voluntary advisors around FAIR’s Equity campaign, and ways of increasing Muslim representation and participation in mainstream public life. Over the past two years FAIR has built up extensive contacts with various government departments, policy making and/or influencing organisation, and other NGOs and civil organisations.

Bradford & FAIR Justice Campaign - In July 2001, Bradford became the latest in a number of northern towns to have experienced civil disorder on its streets. Following the disturbances, the Asian Muslim community in Bradford sought reconciliation with the wider community by encouraging those involved in the disturbances to hand themselves over to the police. The move was successful and many of the individuals that were wanted by the police came forward of their own accord. Since then, the majority of those involved in the riots have been sentenced. However, from thereon, the situation in Bradford deteriorated.

One year on, Bradford saw the formation of the Fair Justice for All Campaign. The Fair Justice for All Campaign emerged to provide a support network to both those sentenced and their families; to challenge the sentencing; seek a judicial review; and bring about a public inquiry. This was the basis of the entire campaign, including the legal challenge headed by Imran Khan Lawyers through the Court of Appeal. Yet despite the Campaign's legitimacy and its inherently peaceful nature, the Home Secretary, David Blunkett described those imprisoned as 'whining maniacs' and the campaigners themselves as 'bleeding heart liberals'.

What happened in between and since is what initiated FAIR to commission its investigative report, *Fair Justice: the Bradford disturbances, the sentencing and the impact*. In supporting the Fair Justice for All Campaign at every level, FAIR's report asks, and indeed attempts to answer, many of those issues that the official governmental reports have repeatedly overlooked. The report analyses the precedents and suggested causes of the disturbances; the events of 7th July 2001; its aftermath, sentencing and consequential impact on the future of all Bradford's communities.

The Bradford Report was published in March 2003. There was no official launch due to the international political climate. The report was sent to all the relevant government agencies, departments, policy makers, community organisations and the media. Overall, the report was very well received. The only negative feedback we received was from a letter sent by Ted Cattle. Further information on Ted Cattle's letter can be provided by a member of the FAIR team.

Subsequent to the Bradford Report, FAIR were invited to a meeting organised by Bradford Local Council on May 12, 2003, to exchange information and perspectives on the riots. All those present from the Bradford side have been involved in local initiatives since before and after the riots in 2001 and have also worked with the Fair Justice for All Campaign. All present found the meeting highly informative and productive. FAIR expressed an interest in lending support in anyway we could to the projects that benefit the communities. It was unanimously agreed that dialogue should be maintained and between FAIR and Bradford council and for all parties to think about ideas for constructive partnership.

In addition to the proactive community campaign work, as part of the Bradford & Fair Justice Campaign FAIR organised public meetings and the Campaign's launch in Bradford, FAIR submitted an article for Q News as part of this liaison between FAIR and Fair Justice, and carried out extensive consultation with Bradford City Council, West Yorkshire Police and Bradford Community Cohesion Unit.

The Bradford Report and Fair Justice Campaign cuts across all of FAIR's project areas.

Oldham visit by the Home Office - FAIR were contacted by the Home Office in April to recommend some contacts for a visit by the Metropolitan Police to Oldham to develop an initiative to explore ways of working together with Muslims in the northern towns. FAIR passed on names and numbers of contacts in Oldham to enable the delegation visiting Oldham to listen to the concerns of the Muslim community.

Campaign Work - As part of our campaign on Equality and Diversity we undertook a grassroots campaign in May 2002. This involved distributing 35,000 grassroots packs, writing to 1,000 imams and community leaders and holding three seminars in Birmingham, London and Manchester

The purpose of the seminars was to raise awareness amongst local communities of the urgent need for Muslims to campaign for comprehensive protection against religious discrimination in the UK.

2.4 Policy Research & Lobbying

FAIR aims to formulate policies and advise relevant agencies on tackling Islamophobic and Muslim alienating trends in society. To verify findings from our analyses and to cover new ground, we also commission properly conducted research. Listed below is the work we have carried out under this project.

Project Infrastructure

Monitoring Mechanism – As part of the Policy Research & Lobbying work, FAIR has set up a Monitoring Mechanism with the aim of monitoring legal and policy developments in order to be able to respond appropriately on key issues surrounding Islamophobia, religious discrimination and general issues concerning Muslims within the constantly changing and evolving political climate.

We have set up a web-based monitoring mechanism that direct us to relevant European and UK bodies, and helps us to monitor the current political and legal developments both at a national and European level. Our objective in setting up the web-based monitoring mechanisms is three-fold:

1. To be aware of Directives and Framework decisions being made at the European Union level, with a view to being prepared when these Directives and decisions are being discussed and debated at the national level.
2. To be aware of forthcoming legislation and bills going through the Houses, that will be affecting the Muslim community and / or in general faith-communities in the UK.
3. To stay abreast of issues being discussed by other policy think tanks, grassroots organisations and academics.

Grassroots Campaigns

Rights Cards – FAIR produced a series of Rights Cards last year for the Muslim community to inform them of their rights in the event of undergoing stop and search by the police. The Rights Cards were placed on the FAIR website, and covered:

1. Stop and search of individuals
2. Stop and search of cars
3. Rights at the police station
4. Contact from MI5
5. Contact from Special Branch

We have worked with Sadiq Khan from Christian Fisher Khan law firm to update and the Rights Cards. In addition to informing about ones rights, the revised cards have contact numbers so that people can be directed to experts rather than general practitioner lawyers.

Avebury Bill Campaign: Protection Against Religious Offences – In January 2002, Lord Avebury introduced a Religious Offences Bill in the House of Lords, the Bill sought to create a new offence relating to the incitement of religious hatred. Following the backlash against the Muslim community in the wake of 11th September, legislation was sought to address this anomaly in the law. Although this new legislation succeeded in affording protection against harassment, violence and criminal damage to property motivated by religious hatred it failed in retaining the provisions on incitement.

The campaign aimed to gather support from the Muslim community by writing to local MPs and to the Select Committee on Religious Affairs. To encourage participation in the letter writing campaign we provided templates, and examples of anti-Islamic BNP literature which were made available on the FAIR website.

FAIR Equity Campaign: Religious Discrimination in the UK– Last year FAIR produced the pack '*Getting a Fair Deal for British Muslim - Time to Make a Difference*'. The pack which was a letter writing campaign, aimed to highlight the shortfall between the UK's legal obligations to provide protection against religious discrimination, and the level of protection provided in the UK compared with provisions in other EU countries. The pack focused on how the lack of adequate legal protection affected one minority faith community in particular, the Muslim community. FAIR sought to analyse the Government's proposals to extend anti-discrimination legislation, as required by EU Framework Directives.

The pack was prepared in Arabic, Bengali, English and Urdu with the aim of reaching as many members of the Muslim community as possible. The pack was printed and distributed nationwide by Muslim Directory (MD).

To encourage response and in order to make a strong impact, we provided letter templates which the Muslim community could use for writing to their local MPs and the Prime Minister. In addition to this, the pack also provided a list of MPs.

Conferences, Roundtables, and Seminars

Roundtable – Project on 'Islamophobia and the experiences of Muslim women in Britain' – As part of this on-going project, FAIR organised a roundtable on 28 May 2003. The roundtable was attended by the FAIR team, An-Nisa, Q News, and Islamic Foundation.

Our preliminary research has shown that Muslim women are increasingly seeing their Islamic values and principles and their religious adherence as a dominant factor in terms of self-identification. As a result we are proposing a project that will not only address the key issue of Islamophobia and its impact on Muslim women but also convey the way in which their Muslim identity finds expression their lives and their interaction with wider society.

This roundtable discussion was part of FAIR's research project on '*Islamophobia and the experiences of Muslim women in Britain*'. The discussions were an integral part of the consultative process,

where knowledge and expertise from participants was invaluable in strengthening the ideas and themes we aim to explore.

Listed below are some of the themes that were discussed in the roundtable and form part of our on-going research:

- Misconceptions and stereotypes
- socio-economic problems including social exclusion, discrimination in the workplace, health, education
- The consequences of Islamophobia
- Experience of Women converts

The outcome of the roundtable discussion has shown that the report must bring tangible benefits to all concerned. The report will be used as information for community organisation working with Muslim women and dealing with the issues of concerning them.

British-German Forum 2003: 'Securing Our Future' – Sponsored by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, FAIR will be taking part in this year's British German Forum with a view to engaging in dialogue and debates with MPs and policy makers from the United Kingdom and Federal Republic of Germany.

UN Working Group – As part of the follow-up to the World Conference the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has organized regional expert seminars - thematically entitled "Implementation of the Durban Programme of Action: An exchange of Ideas on How to Move Forward." The issue(s) of Islamophobia/anti-Arabism sentiment will most likely be treated as a topic in the seminar for Western Europe which is planned for the end of the year. To this end the OCHCR has invited preliminary indications as to what aspects the topic might cover.

Youth, Gender, Trans-national Identities and Islamophobia: Brussels Conference – In May 2003, FAIR participated in the above-mentioned conference coordinated by the University of Bradford. The conference was funded by the European Union under the Fifth Framework programme. The main objective of the conference was to explore the extent to which young Muslims, brought up and educated in the European Union were influenced by the idea of Islam in relation to the process and meaning of 'identity construction', and to explore the role of Islam within this.

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs & International Trade (Committee): Canadian High Commission – In February 2003 the Committee decided to undertake a longer-terms study exploring Canada's relations with the Muslim world. The purpose of this study was to examine relations between Canada and Muslim communities and countries around the world. The study was set within the context of on-going debates about the importance of cultural and religious values in international politics, and to develop a set of concrete recommendations for Canadian foreign policy in this area.

On 13 May, 2003, as part of the on-going research being carried out by the Committee, FAIR and the Muslim College were invited to participate at the Canadian High Commission to discuss these issues with MPs from Canada's Liberal Party. Some of the central themes and questions discussed included:

1. Historical and theological aspects of Islam important for non-Muslims to understand.
2. Elements of Islamic thought that related most directly to key themes as: the relationship between religion and politics; democracy; human rights, extremism and violence.
3. The Israel-Palestine dispute and its implications for the Muslim world.
4. Canada's relations with countries with Muslim majorities.
5. Areas Canada should be particularly aware of in order to strengthen its relations with countries of the Muslim world.

The Prague Society Conference - In October 2002, FAIR and the Al-Khoei Foundation participated in the Symposium entitled *Living in a Multicultural Society: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Europe*. The Symposium was devoted to political, cultural and educational issues. Overall feedback on symposium was positive, enabling FAIR to take part in and meet other participants to discuss and promote greater understanding of current issues affecting Muslims in Europe.

IPPR Conference – Following on from the Government's recent consultation paper, the IPPR held a conference on 15th May to inform policy and legislation on equality and diversity. The conference heard papers from the six discrimination strands in the presence of Barbara Roche MP, Cabinet Office Minister. FAIR were asked to represent and present a paper on the faith strand. The paper was well received and the Minister has now asked us for a private meeting to discuss the issues further. The IPPR has also commissioned an important piece of research on the future of equality and diversity and so far FAIR has played a significant role in this initiative.

London Civic Forum (LFC) Policy Commission – On 8th May, the LFC organised a small policy seminar on legal protection of faith communities. FAIR were asked to present a paper on the concerns of the Muslim community. The paper was once again well received and is to be considered by the policy makers in the GLA family.

EUMC Report and Conference – On 24th May, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) launched the *EUMC Report on Islamophobia in the EU after September 11th*, which was co-authored by Chris Allen. Mr. Allen subsequently attended an EUMC Conference in Vienna from 24th -27th June, where he represented FAIR and Birmingham University and presented a paper on 'A Critical Appraisal of Comparability of Data Collection Process and Methodologies on Islamophobia'.

This report is available on the FAIR website.

Research and Written Submissions

Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 Review – FAIR has submitted a written response, to the Committee of Privy Counsellors charged with reviewing the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, from a Muslim community perspective, on the operation of the ATCSA 2001 since it came into force in December 2001. The response has been constructed with a view to assessing both the effectiveness of the Act and the general perceptions and feelings towards it within the Muslim community. Numerous legal experts were heavily consulted in the drafting of this response.

Further to the written submission, FAIR has been invited to submit further oral evidence and undergo questioning by the ATCSA Review committee on June 19, 2003. The presentation team consists of FAIR, Christian Khan Solicitors, Arani and Co, and Imran Khan and Partners. The team will be using case examples to present further evidence to the Committee

Article 13 - Employment Equality Legislation, Jan 2003 – Article of the EC Treaty allows the EU to tackle discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability or age. FAIR submitted a response to this Article with the sole intention to review and highlight perceived weaknesses in the proposed legislation, to suggest appropriate remedies and contribute to the overall strengthening of its provisions. Our appraisal of the Regulations revealed a number of deficiencies, to which we proposed supplementary solutions and where need be, the omission of superfluous and or counter-productive provisions.

House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences Bill, Nov 2002 – FAIR presented extensive oral and written evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee. The response, which was in three parts, outlined the Muslim position on the issue of legislative protection against blasphemy, the introduction of new legislation to outlaw incitement to religious hatred, and responses to other important issues that were placed under the heading of ‘other religious offences’.

FAIR lobbied extensively around the Religious Offences Bill. We ran an extensive letter writing campaign to encourage support for the Bill – further to the written submission FAIR were invited to present oral evidence to the Religious Offences Select Committee.

The report on the evidence collected during the consultation period was published last week, including FAIR’s written and oral submissions.

National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR) ‘Building a National Plan Against Racism’

The formulation of this document was the response by FAIR to the request made by the 1990 Trust to its position paper entitled, “The National Action Plan and Religious Discrimination”, itself a response to the UK Government’s own document, “Building a National Plan Against Racism” (NAPAR). The FAIR paper welcomed the invitation made by the 1990 Trust and the recognition made in its position paper that Islamophobia was “the most qualitatively significant discrimination” in the current climate. FAIR’s paper also called for the need to incorporate discrimination based upon markers of religion with other, more traditional forms of racism. FAIR insisted that the Government honours its commitment to the national recommendations and

actions arising from the World Conference Against Racism in Durban 2001. The paper also discussed various aspects of religious discrimination in depth.

Employment Status in Relation to Statutory Employment Rights, Nov 2002 - This paper was a Muslim response to the Government "Discussion Document on Employment Status in Relation to Statutory Employment Rights", published in July 2002. It was a joint response between FAIR, the Muslim College, and the Al-Khoei Foundation. The Government's discussion paper sought views on the proposed extension of some statutory employment rights, to certain groups who were currently excluded such as clergy and by extension, 'ministers' of other religions. For the purposes of this response in particular, the case of Imams was specifically considered and as such this response was put together in consultation with number of Imams, Muslim professionals and Muslim organizations throughout the UK.

Education Policy Paper – Further to a roundtable discussion amongst specialists and academics in the Muslim education, a consultation draft of a policy paper on Muslims and Education has been jointly produced by FAIR, AMSS, FED and the Al-Khoei Foundation. The paper is currently being considered by the core working group.

Office of National Statistics (ONS) – FAIR has carried out extensive research and responded to the ONS preliminary report on Religion and Ethnicity. Listed below are titles of the papers FAIR has submitted.

- *Ethnicity and Identity Scoping Report*
- *Multi-source Topic Report on Religion*

Open Society Institute: EU Accession Monitoring Programme – The EU Accession Monitoring Programme of the Open Society Institute produced the first draft of a report on the situation of Muslims in the UK as part of a larger series looking at minority protection in the EU. FAIR were interviewed. The report was launched Foreign Policy Centre in July 2002.

3.0 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Since March 2002 there have been significant changes to the top tiers of FAIR's organisational structure with appointments of suitable and credible individuals, and the resignation of two of FAIR's Trustees. Appointments and resignations for 2002 - 2003 are listed below:

Board of Trustees – Dr Zaki Badawi (Chair), Yusuf Islam, Khalida Khan, Yousif Al-Khoei, Adeela Rashid, Omar Megerisi, Dr. Anas al-Shaikh-Ali, Ahmed Al-Rawi, Mrs Batool Al-Toma, and Mr. Rumman Ahmad

Board of Advisors – Mr. Ahmed Versi, Mr. Deepa Korea, Dr. Ghayasuddin Siddiqui, Dr. Majid Katme, Dr. Musharraf Hussain, Fadi Ismail, Fuad Nahdi, Gareth Peirce, Imam M. Imam, Iqbal Asaria, Mahmud Al-Rashid, Merryll-Wyn Davies, Prof. Tariq Modood MBE, Rev. Dr. John Bowden, Robin Richardson, Susannah Tarbush

Executive Team – We have a strong Executive Team consisting of the Director of Projects, two Project Managers, a Policy & Research Officer, and a Research & Policy Coordinator

Specialist Operational Experts/Advisors – In addition to the Board of Advisors, FAIR continues to benefit from the regular input of a large number of specialists and experts in a wide variety of fields, including policy & campaigns, and law and management.

Volunteers –FAIR continues to receive invaluable assistance from a large number of generalist volunteers. Over the reporting period we have continue to use a basic system for the recruitment and retention of volunteers to FAIR.

FAIR remains a small yet dynamic organisation which seeks to be proactive in its projects in order to make a significant impact in helping the Muslim community in Britain.

4.0 OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Since FAIR was founded, significant achievements have been made, however much more needs to be done for us to achieve our organisational goals.

4.1 Legal Matters

Charity Commission Application – FAIR lodged an application with the Charity Commission (CC) for charitable status in January 2001. The process of gaining charitable status has been delayed for a number of reasons. Firstly, since 11th September, CC continues to be much more rigorous with application for charitable status from Muslim organisations. Secondly, FAIR needs to submit proposed changes to its Articles of Association; this can only be done once the Annual Trustees meeting has taken place. Finally, since FAIR submitted its application to gain charitable status CC has moved offices. We have written to CC requesting our case be kept open. FAIR will be sending the amended Articles of Association to CC by the end of June 2003 in order to conclude our application.

4.2 Financial Matters

Financial Procedures – Further to the Trustees meeting of 7 July, 2002, the Financial Procedures Manual which covers general policy, financial control structure, budget, banks, reports, income and expenditure, approval of invoices, financial controls, audit, insurance, confidentiality and grievances, has now been approved.

Monthly Accounts – The finances of FAIR are managed in house, with a qualified accountant from El Rahma lending his services. The accounts for 2001 have been audited and filed with Companies House.

Funding - FAIR has been generously funded up to now by El Rahma. Funding from El Rahma ran out 31st April 2003. Since then, FAIR has applied for Financial Assistance from El Rahma to cover our costs for the period May 2003 to December 2003.

4.3 Telecommunications & IT

The IT is managed in house with the kind assistance of an IT consultant from a commercial firm, TFX consulting. Our computers are networked and are secured behind a corporate firewall to deter hackers.

Databases - We have enlisted the help of volunteers to develop the FAIR central database and databases for miscellaneous media contacts, volunteer management and casework, some of which will be interfaced with the website.

Web-Page Developments – Downloadable items on the website include:

Reports on Islamophobia

- Islamophobia: a challenge for us all Feb 1997
- Addressing the challenge of Islamophobia Autumn 2001
- Islam in Britain Feb 1997
- The Nature of Islamophobia Feb 1997
- Comments from Professor Gordon Conway November 1997
- Islamophobia as a Form of Racism Autumn 2000
- "EUMC Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001"
- Elizabeth Poole: Media representation and British Muslims April 2000
- Dr Henzell-Thomas: The Language of Islamophobia Sept 2001
- C Allen: Islamophobia in the Media since September 11 Sept 2001
- Friends of Al-Aqsa: A perception of Islamophobia
- Muslims in Britain

Media Monitoring

- General Guide to Making Effective Complaints
- Complaints Procedures for Media Regulatory Bodies
- Letters to Editors
- Contact Details for Complaints

Campaigns

- Getting A Fair Deal for British Muslims
- Islam Awareness
- Hajj Pack
- Ramadan Pack

Legal and Policy Documents

- The Employment Status of Imams Submission
- ONS Religion Submission
- ATCSA 2001 - Home office submission
- ATCSA 2001 - Supplementary Submission
- ATCSA 2001 - Final Submission to Home Affairs Select Committee
- Secure Borders Safe Haven Submission
- Submission Document on CRE Code of Practice
- 'Towards Equality & Diversity' Submission
- Religious Offences Bill 2002 Submission

4.4 Premises Management

We are currently in the process of viewing other more cost-effective properties in the North West London area with the aim of providing written notice to vacate our current premises by end of July 2003.

4.5 Personnel & Payroll Issues

Work Experience Placement – We were approached by a student at North Westminster School who was seeking work experience as part of the school's work placement programme. The student, Abdul Karim, volunteered with FAIR in all our project areas for 2 weeks in August 2001. North Westminster School are keen to send more student to gain work experience at FAIR. We will start working with students wishing to gain work experience with FAIR once we have found permanent office space.

5.0 EXECUTIVE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL CO-ORDINATION

5.1 Internal Co-ordination & Management

Organisational Development Weekends

- *4th-5th May 'Governance and Strategic Management'*. This weekend was attended by five Trustees and all FAIR officers. The weekend was spent looking issues pertaining to organisational governance and strategic management, particularly matters relating to organisational structure and communication, prioritisation, allocation of financial and human resources and monitoring and evaluation.
- *8th-9th June*: The second of the three planned organisational development weekends looked at Corporate Infrastructure Building, Operational Management and Staff Development. Issues explored were FAIR House Rules – policy and procedures documents, operational management and project review systems, quality management systems and staff training programmes.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Over the last year there has been much progress made on building the infrastructure of the organisation: setting up systems, policies and procedures and capacity building for long term growth. We anticipate next year to be equally busy. We endeavour to further build on our external campaigns and projects, Inshallah.