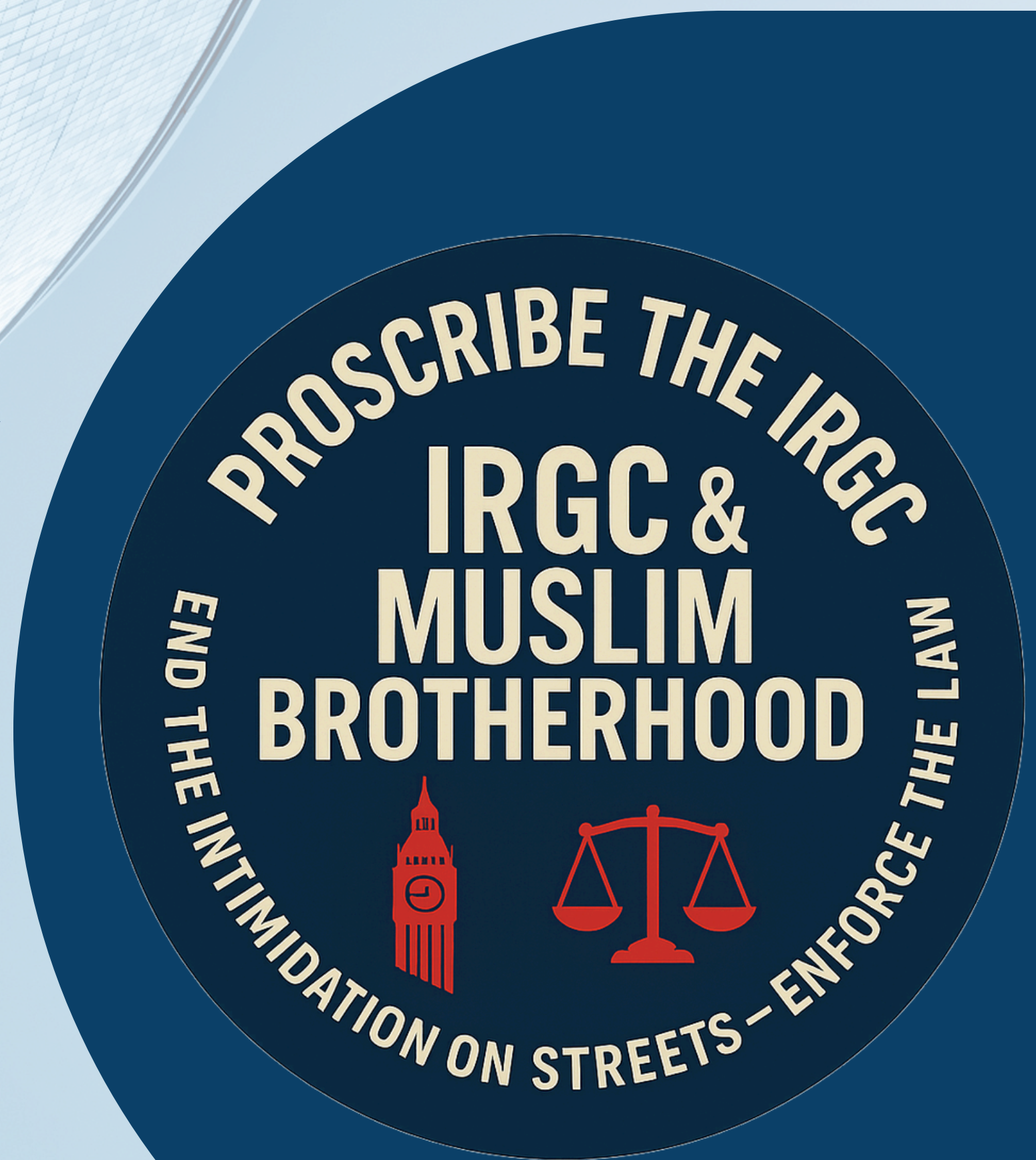


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# PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

Proscribe the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)



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## Foreword

Victory should stiffen a nation's resolve, not soften its judgement. With Hamas defeated and the hostages home, Britain has run out of excuses for euphemism. What remains is the enabling architecture—the financiers, trainers and propagandists abroad; the ideological scaffolding and mobilisation networks here—that made the violence possible and would happily reproduce it under a different banner. Parliament has already given the Government the means to deal with such organisations. It is time to use them.

Section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000 is clear: the Home Secretary may proscribe any organisation “concerned in terrorism”—those who commit it, prepare for it, promote or encourage it, or otherwise concern themselves in it. The statutory definition of terrorism captures serious violence and the intimidation of the public to advance a political, religious or ideological cause, whether in the UK or overseas. This is not an ornamental power. It was drafted for precisely the hybrid threats we face: state-linked actors exporting terror through proxies; transnational movements that preach moderation in English while licensing violence elsewhere.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is the state-directed engine of Iran's external violence. It trains, funds and equips proxies; it orchestrates intimidation and plots against dissidents and communities in the West; it has brought its menace to British streets by proxy and by presence. The Muslim Brotherhood provides the doctrinal and organisational ecosystem that normalises violence, cultivates fronts and fellow-travellers, and slips between registers to evade accountability—one message for Western consumption, another for mobilisation. To leave either outside the proscribed list is to indulge a legal fiction that benefits only the agile and the unscrupulous.

Proscription is not theatre. It converts moral clarity into enforceable law. Once an organisation is listed, inviting support, arranging or addressing meetings to support it, and displaying its symbols in a manner that arouses reasonable suspicion of support become criminal offences. Police gain a usable edge on the pavement; prosecutors gain charging pathways that do not depend on contortions; universities discharging the Prevent duty can refuse platforms and societies without the fog of “context”; trustees can meet their obligations without being gamed by fronts and aliases; broadcasters can treat exposure as a matter of compliance, not controversy. Sanctions freeze money; proscription prevents mobilisation. Together they deny finance, legitimacy and physical space.

Nor is this a leap into the dark. The regime carries due-process safeguards: applications for deproscription, independent review by the Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission, and judicial oversight. The parliamentary procedure is affirmative: Ministers must make their case; both Houses must approve; scrutiny is real. In return, the country receives something invaluable—predictable boundaries that protect both minorities and freedoms. Equal protection follows as a matter of course: the same standard that shields synagogues on Saturday shields mosques on Friday. Free expression remains robust; what ends is the choreography of menace and the laundering of terror's aesthetics as “activism”.

Some will urge continued “engagement” with the Brotherhood and bespoke work-arounds for the IRGC on the grounds of statehood. We have tried ambiguity. It has produced opacity at home, impunity abroad, and a public square in which the loudest test the line and the most vulnerable make themselves small. A serious state does not ask minorities to bargain for their safety on the pavement; it supplies that safety as a matter of course, by drawing red lines—and keeping them.

This briefing therefore makes a straightforward demand commensurate with the moment. Lay the orders to proscribe the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood. Align guidance across policing, prosecution, universities, charities and broadcasting so that the law is not merely declared but used. Replace drift with direction, posture with outcomes, and euphemism with enforceable clarity. Hamas's defeat has removed the last respectable alibi for inaction. Finish the work at home.

### **The statutory test:**

Under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT), the Home Secretary may proscribe any organisation if she reasonably believes it is “concerned in terrorism”—that is, involved in committing, preparing for, promoting or encouraging terrorism, or otherwise concerned in terrorism. “Terrorism” itself is defined in section 1 TACT and captures serious violence against people, serious damage to property, endangering life, creating serious risks to public health or safety, or serious interference with electronic systems, to influence a government or intimidate the public for a political, religious or ideological cause. The definition applies inside and outside the UK.

In practice, proscription is a ministerial decision taken on the basis of open-source and classified material (from JTAC, MI5 and other partners) that the group’s current or planned activity meets the section 3 threshold. Home Office guidance sets out the factors the Secretary of State ordinarily considers, including the nature and scale of the organisation’s activities, its presence or support networks in the UK, the threat to UK nationals or interests overseas, and the utility of proscription in disrupting terrorism and signalling the UK’s stance internationally. The instrument is made by Statutory Instrument under the affirmative procedure and requires approval by both Houses. Parliament has repeatedly affirmed both the breadth and utility of the regime, and the list is updated frequently to reflect the threat picture.

Once an organisation is proscribed, a suite of criminal offences and disruption tools is engaged:

- Membership (s.11 TACT): It is an offence to belong or profess to belong to the organisation.
- Support (s.12): It is an offence to invite support for it, arrange or address meetings to support it, or otherwise give it practical assistance.
- Display (s.13): It is an offence to display flags, symbols or other articles in a way that arouses reasonable suspicion of support.
- Terrorist financing (ss.15–19A): Fund-raising, use or possession of money or property for terrorist purposes, and related arrangements are criminalised; proscription simplifies asset disruption and helps trigger financial sanctions under UK autonomous terrorism regulations.

These offences materially strengthen public-order policing and campus/charity regulation. Police can act pre-emptively at demonstrations when proscribed branding or chants indicate support; CPS charging under ss.11–13 is available where evidential thresholds are met. Universities discharging the Prevent duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) may lawfully deny platforms or recognition to affiliated societies that would risk committing TACT offences. Charity trustees are under a legal obligation to prevent links to proscribed groups; failures can prompt regulatory action and loss of status. Broadcasters and platforms must avoid content likely to incite crime or disorder; proscription provides a clear legal line for compliance and takedown decisions. Proscription also assists immigration and naturalisation decision-making (suitability grounds), licensing decisions by local authorities, and international cooperation with allies operating analogous lists.

The regime incorporates due process. Any person affected (including the organisation itself) may apply to the Home Secretary for deproscription under section 4 TACT; refusals may be appealed to the Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission (POAC), with onward appeal on a point of law to the Court of Appeal. Closed-material procedures protect sensitive intelligence while preserving an independent check on ministerial decisions.

In short: the legal threshold is clear and present; the mechanism is tried and tested; and the operational gains—from criminal liability and asset disruption to unambiguous guidance for police, universities, charities and media—are immediate. Proscription is the proportionate tool Parliament designed to address organisations that promote, enable or normalise terrorism; both the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood meet that test.

## **Why the IRGC should be proscribed**

The IRGC is the engine of Iran's external violence and repression—including plots and intimidation on UK soil—acting directly and through proxies. Government and parliamentary sources have set this out in unambiguous terms:

- Ministers and the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation describe the IRGC as central to hostile state activity and have considered new legal routes to capture state-linked entities—explicitly citing the IRGC as an example. The Reviewer also outlined offences mirroring the Terrorism Act model for state threats.
- The UK has sanctioned the IRGC in its entirety and placed Iran on the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS)—recognising the scale of covert influence and intimidation. Enhanced-tier guidance for Iran is now live; failure to register carries up to five years' imprisonment.

The Intelligence and Security Committee reports Iran's threat to the UK as on a par with Russia's, including assassination and kidnap plots, cyber operations and targeting of Jewish/Israeli interests here. Arrests under the National Security Act confirm operational reality. Proscription would align the terrorism toolkit with the state-threat toolkit.

## **Conclusion:**

The IRGC meets the s.3 TACT test by promoting and facilitating terrorism via its Quds Force network and proxies; its activities already trigger UK sanctions and enhanced FIRS controls. Proscription will criminalise open support/branding, simplify disruption of front bodies, and close gaps between state-threat and terrorism powers.

## **Why the Muslim Brotherhood should be proscribed**

The Government's own Jenkins Review (2015) concluded that the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology admits the "political utility of violence," records a history of involvement in and endorsement of violent acts (including against British and Jewish targets), and practises systematic double-speak—a moderate register for Western audiences alongside harder-line Arabic messaging. The review also highlighted links to Hamas (already proscribed in the UK) and an opaque domestic footprint spanning membership, fundraising and educational activity. Ministers stopped short of proscription in 2015 but accepted that elements of the Brotherhood's doctrine and methods are inimical to UK values and security. Subsequent events—its continuing rhetorical alignment with proscribed actors, the persistence of UK-facing fundraising and campaigning structures, and recurrent campus agitation that normalises or excuses violence—have not rebutted those core findings. If anything, they have underlined the movement's capacity to operate through diffuse fronts, rebrandings and affiliate networks that exploit regulatory grey zones while maintaining ideological continuity.

Operationally, proscription would:

- Criminalise inviting support for the Brotherhood (and its UK-facing aliases and successor entities) at rallies, on campuses and online, enabling timely CPS charging under TACT.
- Enable police to act swiftly against branding, fundraising conduits and event platforms that arouse a reasonable suspicion of support, simplifying seizure, dispersal and evidence capture.
- Clarify duties for charities, universities and councils when considering platforms, grants and recognition, reducing litigation risk by anchoring decisions in Parliament's designation and aligning with Prevent and trustee obligations; it would also assist immigration, licensing and counter-terror finance decisions by providing a clear legal status for due-diligence checks.

## **Conclusion:**

The Brotherhood's doctrine, global record and UK-linked activity satisfy the "promotion/encouragement" limb of the s.3 Terrorism Act 2000 test. Proscription would replace today's ambiguity—whose costs to public order and social cohesion are well documented—with a clear, enforceable boundary.

## **Addressing common objections:**

### **“The IRGC is a state organ; proscription is for non-state groups.”**

Nothing in the Terrorism Act 2000 confines proscription to non-state actors. The statutory power is to designate any organisation “concerned in terrorism”—that includes bodies embedded within a state apparatus if they promote, prepare for, or otherwise facilitate terrorism. The IRGC, and in particular its Quds Force, operates as a hybrid: part military directorate, part expeditionary terror sponsor, with proxy relationships that deliberately blur the line between state action and deniable militancy. UK law was drafted to reach precisely this sort of arrangement. Proscribing the IRGC would not collapse diplomatic channels with Iran any more than proscribing Hezbollah or Hamas foreclosed diplomacy in the region; it would align the terrorism toolkit with an already acknowledged state-threat reality, give police and CPS clear charging routes when IRGC symbols and mobilisation appear here, and end the current anomaly whereby the UK sanctions the IRGC in full but leaves open domestic space for its propaganda, facilitation and intimidation.

### **“Policy engagement is better than banning the Brotherhood.”**

A decade of “engagement” has yielded opacity rather than transparency and has normalised a pattern of double-speak: moderation for Western audiences, harder-line messaging and justificatory frameworks for violence elsewhere. The Government’s own review catalogued that practice and identified the ideological permission structure that shades into terror. Proscription does not end outreach to law-abiding Muslim communities, nor does it criminalise orthodox religious life; it draws a bright, legal line around an organisation whose doctrine and praxis repeatedly cross into promotion and facilitation of violence. In doing so it actually protects mainstream civic-Islam partners by isolating an actor that exploits communal platforms, university spaces and charitable vehicles to launder ideology. Engagement works when boundaries are clear; where boundaries are gamed, the honest course is to set them in law.

### **“We already sanction the IRGC; why add proscription?”**

Sanctions constrain assets and travel; they do not by themselves criminalise support, membership claims, or the display of articles that arouse reasonable suspicion of support. Proscription switches on those offences, enabling frontline disruption of rallies, branding, fundraising and recruitment that sanctions leave untouched. It simplifies evidential pathways for CPS, gives universities and councils a firmer basis to deny platforms and grants, and equips the Charity Commission to intervene early where trustees risk entanglement. It also closes the credibility gap with key allies who already treat IRGC support as a criminal matter, reducing safe-haven incentives and grey-zone exploitation by propagandists who currently trade on the technical distinction between “sanctioned” and “terrorist.” In short: sanctions freeze; proscription prevents. Both are needed, and together they are coherent.



## **Bottom Line:**

Parliament already possesses the necessary legal architecture; the Government already holds ample evidence. The IRGC is the operational armature of Iran's external violence—organising, financing, training and directing proxies, while conducting intimidation and plots on UK soil. The Muslim Brotherhood supplies the ideological scaffolding and organisational ecosystem that legitimise and incubate violence, repeatedly blurring into the activity of proscribed entities. Using section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000 to proscribe both would end the present euphemism and create enforceable clarity across policing, prosecution, universities, charities, broadcasters and councils. It would convert what is now contested rhetoric into settled law: inviting support becomes a chargeable offence; branding and mobilisation become disruptable in real time; trustees, vice-chancellors and licensing officers gain an unambiguous statutory footing for refusal and removal.

Proscription would also align the UK's toolset with the threat as it is, not as we might prefer it to be. Sanctions freeze money; proscription prevents organised support. Together they deny these networks finance, legitimacy and physical space—on the pavement, on campus, and online. The message to allies and adversaries alike is that Britain draws and keeps its red lines: we defend robust debate, but not movements that promote or facilitate terror under the satin of activism. Equal protection follows as a matter of course—the same standard that shields synagogues on Saturday shields mosques on Friday—rebuilding trust where equivocation has eroded it. This is not a leap into the dark but a measured application of a tested regime, with due-process safeguards (deproscription via POAC) and democratic oversight (affirmative procedure; quarterly reporting on outcomes). It is also immediately practicable: orders can be laid now; operational circulars can follow within days; force-level reporting can make progress visible within a quarter. Proscription of the IRGC and the Muslim Brotherhood will replace ambiguity with law, align Britain with its closest partners, and demonstrate—in deeds rather than statements—that this country will not permit the infrastructure of terror, or its apologists, to operate behind our tolerance.

**For further information, or to receive the full report, please contact:**

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