



# INDEPENDENT INQUIRY CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

## NOTICE OF DETERMINATION CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION

1. On 2 May 2019 the Inquiry invited anyone who wished to be designated a core participant in the investigation into Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings to make an application to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 13 June 2019.
2. On 11 June 2019 an application was made by the **Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses** (the 'CCJW') for core participant status in this investigation. This notice sets out my determination of the application.
3. The Inquiry has published a [definition of scope](#) of investigation and an [update note](#) which provides further information about the themes that will be examined and structure of the investigation. This investigation will be thematic in nature and examine the nature and adequacy of current child protection policies, practices and procedures within religious organisations and settings within England and Wales.
4. Applications for core participant status are considered under Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 which provides:

*(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether –*

*a. The person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*

*b. The person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*

*c. The person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on –*



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- a. *the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- b. *the end of the inquiry.*

5. In determining the application, the matters listed in Rule 5(2) must be considered, but the list is not exhaustive and I may also take into account other relevant matters.
6. The application states that all congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in Britain adhere to the global child protection policy '*Jehovah's Witnesses' Scripturally Based Position on Child Protection*' (the 'Policy') and that the Policy is further explained in the May 2019 study edition of the Watchtower magazine. Congregations seek legal and spiritual advice on implementation of the Policy from the Britain Branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses (the 'Britain Branch'). Since 2011 the CCJW has been used by the Britain Branch to communicate religious guidance to Jehovah's Witnesses in Britain.
7. The application is made on two grounds: firstly, that given its role in providing guidance and direction on the Policy, the Britain Branch plays a direct and significant role and has a significant interest in relation to the matters to which the investigation relates; secondly, that given its central role in relation to the Policy, it is possible that the Britain Branch may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the investigation or in any subsequent report by the Inquiry. The CCJW is representative of the Britain Branch.
8. Having regard to the provisions of Rule 5(2), I am satisfied that the Britain Branch and the CCJW have played a direct or significant role in relation to the matters under investigation and/or have a significant interest in the matters under investigation. Further, I am satisfied that the Britain Branch and the CCJW may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the Inquiry proceedings or in any report. I therefore designate the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses as a core participant in the Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings investigation in its own right and as representative of the Britain Branch.



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9. Applications for designation as the recognised legal representative of a core participant are governed by Rules 6 and 7 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provide as follows:

*6(1) Where -*

- (a) a core participant, other than a core participant referred to in rule 7; or*
- (b) any other person required or permitted to give evidence or produce documents during the course of the inquiry,*  
*has appointed a qualified lawyer to act on that person's behalf, the chairman must designate that lawyer as that person's recognised legal representative in respect of the inquiry proceedings.*

*7(1) This rule applies where there are two or more core participants, each of whom seeks to be legally represented, and the chairman considers that -*

- (a) their interests in the outcome of the inquiry are similar;*
- (b) the facts they are likely to rely on in the course of the inquiry are similar; and*
- (c) it is fair and proper for them to be jointly represented.*

*(2) The chairman must direct that those core participants shall be represented by a single recognised legal representative, and the chairman may designate a qualified lawyer for that purpose.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (4), any designation must be agreed by the core participants in question.*

*(4) If no agreement on a designation is forthcoming within a reasonable period, the chairman may designate an appropriate lawyer who, in his opinion, has sufficient knowledge and experience to act in this capacity.*

10. I am satisfied that the CCJW has appointed Simon Achonu of the CCJW's Legal Department as its qualified lawyer in relation to this investigation. I therefore designate Mr Achonu as the CCJW's recognised legal representative in accordance with Rule 6(1) as I am required by that rule to do.



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11. Directions will be given for receipt of applications for an award under section 40(1)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005 for expenses to be incurred in respect of legal representation at the forthcoming preliminary hearing. Such applications by core participants will be determined in accordance with the Inquiry's Costs Protocol on Legal Representation at Public Expense.

**Professor Alexis Jay OBE**  
**Chair, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**

**5 July 2019**