



Amy Nicholls [REDACTED]

Fwd: IICSA CPIROS - FAO Amy Nicholls - submissions regarding virtual hearing1 message

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From: **Richard Scorer** [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 31 Mar 2020 at 07:33
Subject: IICSA CPIROS - FAO Amy Nicholls - submissions regarding virtual hearing
To: Solicitors - <solicitors@iicsa.org.uk>
Cc: Rebecca Milburn [REDACTED], Kim Harrison [REDACTED]

IICSA CHILD PROTECTION IN RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS AND SETTINGS**SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF CLIENTS REPRESENTED BY SLATER & GORDON**

1. These submissions are made on behalf of the 7 clients represented by Slater & Gordon namely Migdal Emunah; Southall Black Sisters; Sadia Hameed; Lloyd Evans; Dr Lisa Oakley; Yasmin Rehman; and the Interfaith Alliance.
 2. Two of our clients (Lloyd Evans and Interfaith Alliance) have expressed a wish for these hearings to be adjourned until after the pandemic. They fear that it will not be possible to conduct these hearings effectively on a virtual basis and that if these hearings proceed at this stage, what in reality will happen will be a limited access hearing (access limited for both core participants and the general public) with the likelihood of technological problems disrupting proceedings and survivors who are giving evidence being put in the invidious position of giving their evidence with the ever-present risk of any inadvertent slip revealing their identity; not conditions in which survivors (and potentially other witnesses) will be able to speak freely.
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3. Others of our clients accept that virtual hearings could potentially provide a workaround in the current environment but wish to stress the following points:

- Should the hearings be rescheduled to new dates to be conducted on a virtual basis, they should be given as much notice as possible of the new dates. All of our clients are busy professionals and many have packed diaries, and are experiencing additional pressures and demands as a result of the pandemic. For example Dr Lisa Oakley, a university academic, in addition to her normal workload is currently having to deal with the rewriting and reorganisation of university teaching materials and schedules as well as chairing the Jonathan Fletcher review for 31:8. Pragna Patel as director of SBS is currently dealing with the urgent reconfiguration of service delivery and has a number of virtual speaking commitments over the next few weeks and months. When these hearings were originally scheduled for 16-27 March, our clients had many months' notice and were able to reserve dates in their diaries well in advance. Our clients therefore ask for as much notice as possible for any rescheduled hearings so as to avoid clashes with existing commitments and demands.
- All of our clients are concerned at the risk of technological problems and disruption during the hearings and some may be unfamiliar with whatever equipment is utilised. They and we plead that ample opportunity be provided for practice sessions/ rehearsals in use of the equipment so as to minimise the risk of disruption during the hearings themselves.

Slater & Gordon

31.3.2020

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