

Ms Jacqueline Totterdell
Chief Executive Officer
St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Blackshaw Road
Tooting
London
SW17 0QT

3 August 2023

Dear Ms Totterdell,

RE Mr Suliman Gani

I am writing regarding a meeting between one of your Trust chaplains and the Taliban Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In the attached picture published on [Facebook](#) on July 28 2023 , Mr Suliman Gani (right), a [Muslim chaplain](#) at St George's University Hospital, is seen posing with [Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi](#) (center right), the Taliban Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Facebook post by Hamid Mahmood (centre left) appears to be sympathetic to the Minister, stating:

"I found His excellency, the Foreign Minister Mawlawi Muttaqi, to be a towering figure, a principled, yet very humble man accompanied with a warm ascetic aura that takes one into its embrace."

The post includes a translated quote from the Minister himself:

"We are always happy to receive people as guests here because of the immense propaganda that the media portrays againts [sic] us ... We have adopted a foreign policy that seeks to positively work with all nations to counter propaganda."

The post finishes:

"Following the meeting we prayed salat al-Asr together in congregation and departed."

For the avoidance of doubt, I also attach additional Facebook posts placing Mr Gani in Kabul at the time of the meeting.

As you will be aware, the Taliban is hostile to [LGBT](#) and [women's rights](#). Mr Muttaqi has been [described as](#) "a key figure in the Taliban's ideological projects" and [as](#) more "extreme on social issues than most of the Taliban". He is subject to [economic and travel sanctions](#) by the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee.



A 2022 House of Commons report [said](#) of the Taliban government:

“Most Cabinet appointees are subject to UN sanctions and the Haqqani Network, which holds considerable influence, is a designated terrorist organisation in the US, UK and the EU ... The failure of the Taliban to meet its commitments on inclusive government, the rights of women and girls and its relationship with foreign militant groups and terrorist networks, has meant that no country, to date, has awarded its de facto government with full diplomatic recognition.”

Mr Gani has [previously described](#) homosexuality as “unnatural”. He would advise a gay person who came to him to “think about the consequence of your action, how harmful it is for yourself and the society at large”.

You will be aware that the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy’s [code of conduct](#) requires chaplains to “uphold the reputation of healthcare chaplaincy” and to “act with integrity”.

The meeting casts serious doubt on Mr Gani’s judgement and raises grave questions about his suitability to work as an NHS chaplain at public expense.

I welcome your thoughts on this matter.

With best wishes,

Dr Alejandro Sanchez
Campaigns Officer
National Secular Society