

Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice

Rt.Hon. David Lammy MP

david.lammy.mp@parliament.uk

Attorney General for England and Wales

Rt.Hon. Lord Hermer KC

correspondence@attorneygeneral.gov.uk

President of the Law Society

Mr Mark Evans

president@lawsociety.org.uk

25 November 2025

Dear Lord Chancellor, Dear Attorney General, Dear Mr Evans,

Re: Fahad Ansari, Rule of Law, and Protection of the Role of Lawyers

1. We write to express our concern about the unacceptable attacks on our colleague Fahad Ansari as a result of him being identified with his clients and/or his clients' cause, and to call upon you to publicly defend the role of lawyers generally and him in particular.
2. Mr Ansari is a practising solicitor with almost 16 years of post-qualification experience, who is well-known for his practice in national security and human rights cases. He has litigated national security cases to the highest level, including the recent Supreme Court appeal in *N3 v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2025] 2 WLR 386.
3. In April 2025, Mr Ansari filed an application for deproscription on behalf of his client, pursuant to his client's right and the procedure created by Part II of the Terrorism Act 2000. The right to apply for deproscription – and the procedure for such an application – was created by Parliament. The legislation grants groups – who the Secretary of State for the Home Department has previously concluded were 'concerned in terrorism' and been added by her to a list of 'proscribed organisations' – the right to apply for their removal from that list, and to appeal any refusal by the Secretary of State of such an application.

4. Advising and assisting clients with exercising their legal rights and following legal procedures is an inherent part of the role of lawyers, and an indispensable component of the rule of law. If people are unable to understand and exercise their rights – because lawyers are unable or unwilling to advise and assist them to do so – they become meaningless paper propositions. In the case of Part II of the Terrorism Act 2000, any exercise of the right to apply for deproscription – and appeal any refusal of such an application – will inherently involve groups who, at least according to the Secretary of State, were ‘*concerned in terrorism*’. The rule of law requires that all such groups are able to understand and exercise their rights under said legislation. It follows that the rule of law requires legal professionals, such as Mr Ansari, to be able to provide that advice and assistance unimpeded and without suffering any adverse consequences.
5. Unfortunately, Mr Ansari has suffered significant adverse consequences as a result of having provided exactly such advice and assistance to such a group. The Shadow Lord Chancellor, Robert Jenrick, publicly criticised him for his work on the application and called on the Solicitors Regulation Authority (“SRA”) to strike him off. The Shadow Attorney General sought to identify him with his client. He was further attacked in the media on numerous occasions, including on GB News by a TV presenter who – after having identified the location of his offices – suggested someone should be sent round to his offices to ‘*double check that everything really is above board over there*’. His offices were inundated with threats of violence and death, often in racial terms, to such an extent that the company his firm had employed to answer telephone calls terminated the contract, citing the unprecedented levels of abuse and threats.
6. In addition to these public attacks on his character and such threats to his life, Mr Ansari suffered numerous further adverse consequences as a result of having provided said advice and assistance, including being the subject of numerous vexatious – and often public – complaints to his regulator, primarily on account of his work for the proscribed organisation. Mr Ansari has publicly described how that regulator in correspondence to him as part of its investigation has asked him whether his acting for the proscribed organisation in the application under Part II of the Terrorism Act 2000 brought the integrity of the profession into disrepute, and whether it constituted an offence under section 12 of that Act. The SRA also suggested to Mr Ansari that by bringing the application for the proscribed group, he was circumventing the sanctions in place against that organisation because if the application were to succeed, the group would no longer be proscribed and therefore able to raise funds in the UK. Such questions undermine the very basis of the right to legal representation and it is chilling for the regulator to investigate an Officer of the Senior Courts in this manner.

7. Neither the Lord Chancellor, nor the Attorney General, nor the Law Society, have at any point approached Mr Ansari to enquire about his safety and wellbeing, nor spoken out in defence of his work as a lawyer. We consider this failure a shocking and shameful dereliction of the duty of the Lord Chancellor, the Attorney General and the Law Society to defend the rule of law, and to defend lawyers in their role of upholding the rule of law.
8. The UK has signed the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer. This Convention requires parties to ensure that lawyers can both offer and provide legal advice, assistance and representation, and inform the public about matters relating to the cases of their clients. Crucially, the Convention also requires parties to ensure that lawyers do not suffer adverse consequences as a result of being identified with their clients or their clients' cause.
9. The attacks on Mr Ansari detailed above reflect an egregious failure of the UK to comply with its duties under this new Convention. Regardless of those past failures, however, the recent escalation of the attacks on Mr Ansari – now by North Wales Police and set out below – are unacceptable, and, we insist, require a public intervention from your offices.
10. In August, whilst returning from his native Ireland with his wife and four children, including his neurodivergent son, and *en route* to his holiday destination in Wales, Mr Ansari was targeted, stopped, detained, questioned and had his work mobile telephone seized and the contents downloaded by North Wales Police, pursuant to powers under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000. This was despite Mr. Ansari explaining that he was a solicitor and that the phone contained sensitive, privileged information relating to his clients and casework. During the questioning, Mr Ansari was told he had been targeted for the stop and he was asked specifically about the client whom he had advised and assisted with the deproscription application, as well as his political views on Palestine. He was also asked about the ages of his children. After he hesitated to provide this information, the interviewing officer told him that he had their passports anyways so could ascertain it for himself. After his device was seized, police used his mobile telephone to attempt to remotely access his (teenage) daughter's mobile telephone.
11. These acts have been challenged by Mr Ansari in judicial review proceedings. In defending that claim, North Wales Police have refused to provide any reason for their actions. Following a hearing of an application for interim relief, in which Chamberlain J rejected the legality of their refusal to provide any reason, North Wales Police will now provide their reason in secret, closed material

proceedings, pursuant to s.6 of the Justice and Security Act 2013. In other words, neither Mr Ansari, his lawyers nor the public will know what the alleged reasons were for his stop nor will he be able to challenge that reason, creating an even greater cloud of suspicion over him.

12. Mr Ansari is a man of good character. Until the stop in Wales, he had never been invited for interview by police, let alone arrested (or convicted) for any criminal offence. As noted, he is a solicitor specialised in national security and human rights cases, including in the Special Immigration Appeal Commission. He became a solicitor – and thus officer of the Senior Courts – following his training at Fisher Meredith and Birnberg Peirce and Partners, both notably reputable firms. He was educated at University College Dublin, DePaul University (Chicago) and the National University of Ireland (Galway), earning a Bachelor of Civil Law and Master of Law in International Human Rights Law. He has long assisted charities in a voluntary capacity, and many consider him a pillar of the Muslim community.
13. Mr Ansari maintains an active social media profile, including on x.com where he has over 15,000 followers. He uses these platforms to exercise his freedom of expression, including on political matters, as is his right. The signatories of this letter take no position on his political views or the way he expresses them. Some of us may hold different opinions or might have expressed them differently ourselves, but that is precisely the nature of a free and open society. We recognise that freedom of expression protects a broad range of opinions, including those that some may consider to be controversial or unpopular. Those issues, however, are entirely separate from Mr Ansari's work as a lawyer. Any attempt to conflate his personal political expression with his professional duties risks undermining both the independence of lawyers and the rule of law itself.
14. In the hearing of the aforementioned application for interim relief (earlier this month), counsel for North Wales Police submitted, in open court, that there was a distinction between a solicitor and a solicitor acting for proscribed organisations, with it being reasonable to explore the legitimate political beliefs of the latter – during stops authorised under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 – to determine if they crossed the line from strongly held views to support for terrorism. Such claims are irreconcilable with the new Convention, and the role of lawyers in upholding the rule of law. We recognised that the attacks on Mr Ansari will not end with him, and any of us might be next for representing clients who are perceived by some to be criminal, unsavoury, or undeserving of humanity.

15. We call upon you to publicly come to the defence of lawyers representing their clients – any clients – and in particular Mr Ansari. Your duty to protect the rule of law demands it.

Yours faithfully,

King's Counsel

1. Lord John Hendy KC, Old Square Chambers
2. Liz Davies KC, Garden Court Chambers
3. Michael Mansfield KC, Nexus Chambers
4. Rajiv Menon KC, Garden Court Chambers
5. Sultana Tafadar KC, No5 Barristers' Chambers
6. Pete Weatherby KC, Garden Court North Chambers

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12. Abed Choudhury, Director, IHRC Legal
13. Enny Choudhury, Legal Director, Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)
14. Gary Daly, Co-Chair, Socialist Lawyers Association of Ireland
15. Shamik Dutta, Partner, Bhatt Murphy
16. John Finucane MP, Partner, Finucane Toner
17. Rhona Friedman, Managing Director, Commons Law CIC
18. Paul Heron, Founder, Public Interest Law Centre
19. Daniel Holder, Director, Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
20. Saghir Hussain, Director, HMA Solicitors
21. Ayesha Khan, Director, Legal Action for Peace
22. Attiq Malik, Senior Partner, Liberty Law Solicitors
23. Sabeella Mallik, Partner, Thames Hill Solicitors
24. Jhangir Mahmood, Director, Bishop, Lloyd & Jackson Solicitors
25. Wasif Mahmood, Director, Five Pillars Law Limited
26. Gary McIndoe, Managing Partner, Latitude Law

27. Chris McKendry, Founder and Managing Partner, Wilson Solicitors LLP
28. Sally McEwan, Director, OTB Legal
29. Piya Muqit, Executive Director, Asylum Aid
30. Declan Owens, CEO, Ecojustice Ireland
31. Gearóid Ó Cuinn, Founding Director, Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)
32. Ramzan Sharif, Director, Fountain Solicitors
33. Fariquain Shah, Director, Balaghi & Rose
34. Qays Sediqi, Director, Dayton Rayleigh Solicitors
35. Kevin Winters, Co-Founder, KRW Law
36. Liana Wood, Partner, Leigh Day

Other Barristers

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38. Ali Bandegani, Garden Court Chambers
39. Nick Bano, Garden Court Chambers
40. Ciara Bartlam, Garden Court North Chambers
41. Shahida Begum, Garden Court Chambers
42. Camila Zapata Besso, Doughty Street Chambers
43. Alex Burrett, One Pump Court Chambers
44. Rosalind Burgin, Garden Court North Chambers
45. Grace Capel, Doughty Street Chambers
46. Ethu Crorie, 12CP Barristers
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48. Maya Thomas Davis, Garden Court Chambers
49. Michael Engelhardt-Sprack, Garden Court Chambers
50. Josephine Fathers, Garden Court Chambers
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56. Zehrah Hassan, Garden Court Chambers
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58. Abida Huda, One Pump Court Chambers

59. Abdurahman Jafar, Chambers of A Jafar
60. Corin James Timson, Chambers of CJ Timson
61. Mikhil Karnik, Garden Court North Chambers
62. Forz Khan, Chambers of F Khan
63. Geeta Koska, One Pump Court Chambers
64. Raggi Kotak, One Pump Court Chambers
65. Alasdair Mackenzie, Doughty Street Chambers
66. Franck Magennis, Riverway to the Sea
67. Joseph Maggs (Pupil), One Pump Court Chambers
68. Margo Munro Kerr, One Pump Court Chambers
69. Philip McLeish, One Pump Court Chambers
70. Patrick McMorrow, One Pump Court Chambers
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73. Maryam Mir, Doughty Street Chambers
74. Angelina Nicolaou, One Pump Court Chambers
75. Ellen O'Neill
76. Jeremy Ogilvie-Harris, Cornerstone Barristers
77. Helen Peden, Garden Court North Chambers
78. Roshni Popli, One Pump Court Chambers
79. Jamie Presland, One Pump Court Chambers
80. Althea Radford, One Pump Court Chambers
81. David Renton, Garden Court Chambers
82. James Shaw, One Pump Court Chambers
83. Rudolph Spurling, One Pump Court Chambers
84. Camille Warren, Garden Court North Chambers

Other Solicitors

85. Isaac Abraham, Islington Law Centre
86. Afreen Akhtar, Clyde & Co
87. Mohammed Akunjee, Waterfords Solicitors
88. Zahra Ali, Hattin Solicitors
89. Tess Baker, Hodge Jones & Allen
90. Ruksana Begum

91. Ryan Bestford, Greater Manchester Immigration and Asylum Unit (GMIAU)
92. Jacobo Borrero, Hansen Palomares
93. Robyn Brett, Hodge Jones & Allen
94. Gary Duffy, KRW Law
95. Samuel Gardner, OTB Legal
96. Natalia Garcia, Fountain Solicitors
97. Taher Gulamhussein, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)
98. Ahmed Khan
99. Adeela Khan, Commons Law CIC
100. Oscar Leyens, Southwark Law Centre
101. Sunita Mall, Mills & Reeve LLP
102. Dearbhla Minogue, Global Legal Action Network
103. Faiza Mukith
104. Katie Nelson, Duncan Lewis Solicitors
105. Zoe Maria Nicola, LP Evans Solicitors & Advocates
106. Basma Sahib, Bindmans
107. Zishaan Saleem, Knights PLC
108. Luke Sheldon, GT Stewart Solicitors
109. Alison Stanley, Senior Consultant, Bindmans
110. Maria Thomas, Duncan Lewis Solicitors
111. Faysal Yaqoob, Fountain Solicitors

Legal Academics

112. Emeritus Professor Bill Bowring, Birkbeck College
113. Dr Brendan Ciarán Browne, Trinity College Dublin
114. Dr Deepa Govindarajan Driver, University of Reading
115. Dr Edel Hughes, University of Galway
116. Dr Mais Qandeel, University of Galway
117. Dr Illan Wall, University of Galway
118. Oscar Frandsen, SOAS University of London