

Evidence for Policing and Crime Bill Committee

May 2025

Summary:

1. [Diaspora Alliance](#) is a new Jewish-led, international organisation that builds solidarity and coalitions with other diasporic and minority communities with whom we share common values and who face overlapping threats. We are committed to explaining and opposing antisemitism and collaborating with other groups confronting racism, authoritarianism, and ethnonationalism. We likewise oppose any instrumentalisation of antisemitism which creates confusion and mistrust, disrupts collaboration between groups, and weakens global solidarity with struggles for human rights, not least in relation to Palestine. We are currently operating in the US, UK, Germany and in the international policy arena.
2. Diaspora Alliance works with researchers, scholars, and practitioners to identify and develop policies for addressing antisemitism at the municipal, regional, state, and transnational level. Such policies aim to counter existing legislation and programmes that prioritise punitive measures over transformative ones, or those that target pro-Palestinian speech or social movements (e.g. mask bans at protests) in the name of Jewish safety.
3. Diaspora Alliance is concerned that the amendment giving police increased powers to restrict demonstration and protest routes in the vicinity of places of worship will have an adverse effect on the rights to protest. We believe that justifying this amendment under the guise of security for Jewish communities is neither an evidence based approach to combatting antisemitism and risks positioning the fight against antisemitism in competition with protecting civil liberties. This could have a detrimental impact of Jewish and all other minoritised communities in the UK.
4. Diaspora Alliance believes this amendment should be withdrawn

Threat to freedom of expression and assembly:

5. Members of religious congregations have the right to freely worship. All citizens should have the right to protest. Both rights should be protected. Legal provisions rightly already exist to protect religious sites from violence and actions where the purpose is to intimidate. No one should feel unable to attend religious services for fear of intimidation or violence.
6. As an organisation committed to both opposing antisemitism and its politicisation it is concerning that attempts to combat antisemitism are being misused to advance repressive politics and portray progressive human rights organisations and/or demonstrations as threats to freedom and democracy. In particular we are concerned as to how it may be misused to restrict civil liberties, including the right to protest.
7. DA is concerned that this amendment, which is justified as being needed for the safety and wellbeing of Jewish communities, is being used as a smokescreen to restrict civil liberties, including the right to protest. The police should not be given any further powers powers to ban or restrict the route of demonstrations.
8. We disagree that demonstrations or protests held in the vicinity of places of worship are inherently a threat or obstruction to religious practice. It is our view that current legislation and equalities provisions are sufficient for protecting places of worship and those who attend religious activities.
9. When antisemitism is politicised, such as to silence and restrict rights to protest, it has the opposite effect of protecting Jewish communities. It generates skepticism as to the extent and impact of antisemitism or a tool for political repression. It also generates confusion as to how to conceive and combat antisemitism, jeopardising Jewish safety by making it more difficult to identify and respond when it arises.

|Diaspora)))/Alliance

10. If the Government wants to better protect Jewish citizens and residents of the United Kingdom from antisemitism, it should prioritise ensuring that Equalities legislation is fit for purpose so that the rights of minorities continue to be upheld by public bodies. The Government should also commit to improving public education on how anti-Jewish racism operates and how best to respond when it arises.

Conclusion:

11. There are a range of different perspectives amongst Jewish communities in London (and across the UK) with regard to the current incursion into Gaza, and the Palestine demonstrations here in the in UK. More generally, it is important to note that many Jewish people attend the Palestine solidarity demonstrations, and do not feel intimidated or unsafe in these spaces.
12. Whilst there has been some opposition to Palestine organising by some institutional and mainstream Jewish organisations across the Europe, recent research conducted by the Jewish Policy Research Institute, for example, found that ‘...the majority of Jews in the UK support the rights of students to hold pro-Palestinian demonstrations (figure 21).’
13. We urge the Committee when considering this amendment, to be aware of these nuances so as to adopt an evidence based, rights based approach when conceiving of, and combatting antisemitism.
14. We recommend the Government withdraw this amendment.

Contact:

Emily Hilton, Policy Director
Diaspora Alliance UK
ehilton@diasporaalliance.co
www.diasporaalliance.co