

THE INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FAITH COMMUNITIES FORUM

at 2.30pm on Wednesday 2 December 2020

by Zoom

Co-Moderators: The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark; and Mr Malcolm Deboo.

Present: Mr Moin Azmi (Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board); Mr Keith Bishop (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints); the Revd Philip Brooks (The United Reformed Church in the UK); Minister David Bruton (Spiritualists' National Union); Ms Siriol Davies (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland/Churches Together in England); Major Samuel Edgar (Salvation Army); Ms Frances Hume (Interfaith Scotland); Ms Prudence Jones (Pagan Federation); Mr Hassan Joudi (Muslim Council of Britain); Mr Rajnish Kashyap (Hindu Council (UK)); Ms Sabira Lakha (World Ahlul-Bayt Islamic League); the Revd Dr Reynaldo Leao-Nato (Methodist Church in Britain); Mr John Marder (Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK)); Mr Dapo Ogunrinde (Council of African and Afro-Caribbean Churches (UK)); Ms Smita Oza (BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha UK); Mrs Trupti Patel (Hindu Forum of Britain); Mr Neil Pitchford (Druid Network); Venerable Bogoda Seelawimala (Sri Lankan Sangha Sabha of GB); Dr Natubhai Shah MBE (Jain Network); Mr Vinay Shah (Institute of Jainology and FCF Moderator); Mr Anthony Silkoff (Board of Deputies of British Jews); Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Network of Sikh Organisations (UK)); Professor Dr Paul Weller (Inter Faith Working Group of the Baptist Union of Great Britain); Mr Karl Wightman (National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is); and Lynda Williams (Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations).

Observer: Mr Narendra Waghela (IFN Co-Chair membership categories other than NFCRB).

Apologies: The Buddhist Society; and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK).

Moderator apologies: Mr Mohinder Singh Chana; and Dr Vinaya Sharma.

In attendance: Mr Ashley Beck; Mrs Hannah Cassidy; Dr Harriet Crabtree; and Dr David Hampshire (Inter Faith Network for the UK).

Mr Colin Bloom (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) [for Agenda Item 4]

FCF ToRs and nature of minutes

A copy of the Terms of Reference of the Faith Communities Forum of IFN (FCF) is at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/about/governance>.

The minutes of the main sessions of the meeting of the FCF are made available beyond the FCF on the basis agreed by it in May 2017. The minutes follow FCF's agreed style: namely, points made by individuals are noted in the minutes and have the status of views of the individual who is present on behalf of their member organisation; any points agreed by the meeting are clearly identified as such. Comments are unattributed except where

from the Chair or where the Executive Director or another staff member has been asked to give input or to provide a point of information, or in particular contexts where the contributor has explicitly asked that their identity be noted. Within FCF meetings there is a chance for all bodies to contribute. Contributors carry responsibility for the accuracy of their contributions. Views expressed by contributors are not endorsed by IFN.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and apologies

1. Bishop Jonathan Clark, in the chair, welcomed those present.
2. A period of silence was observed, keeping in mind all those working for inter faith understanding and cooperation and also those suffering at this time, in particular in the context of COVID-19.
3. Bishop Clark said that his fellow Co-Moderator, Malcolm Deboo, had asked him to chair the whole meeting, as he was only able to join the meeting by telephone.
4. He explained, for the benefit of new members, that the Faith Communities Forum was a forum for member bodies of IFN in the category of national faith community representative body. It was a forum for discussion of current issues of interest and concern rather than a decision or statement making body. It enabled sharing of views and good practice and networking.
5. Screenshots of the meeting might be used by IFN on social media. Anyone wishing not to be included within these, should indicate. In keeping with the FCF's decision about the nature of minutes, apart from IFN matters, the relevant section of the minutes would be available to the public (unless the FCF request a closed session). Minutes would, as usual, summarise points, and these would be unattributed except for a general reference to a faith community where the community of the speaker was relevant to understanding the point.
6. Apologies were noted.

Agenda Item 2: COVID-19 matters

- a) Current restrictions and b) Places of worship and communal worship
7. Bishop Clark drew attention to the information in the Background Note.
8. In response to a question about whether IFN had been sent any reflections on the current restrictions, Dr Harriet Crabtree said that a few phone conversations had indicated that there was concern about the restriction on worshipping communally in England. Bishop Clark said that he had understood from a meeting earlier in the day that the UK Government was not likely to be reintroducing restrictions on communal worship in the future in England.
9. In discussion the following points and questions were raised:
 - The Council of State in France had made a judgement that it had found the French State's restrictions on places of worship to have been disproportionate. The French Government was reflecting on its approach.
 - The head of the Serbian Orthodox Church had recently died after attending a funeral of a bishop who had died from COVID-19.

- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had recently circulated some guidance about chanting and singing in England. Dr Crabtree said that IFN had circulated MHCLG's most recent general guidance. The information on chanting and singing could be shared with the meeting if people had not received that separately. [This was not requested]
- In Scotland the restrictions were dependent on the Tier level. Glasgow was in Tier 4. That Tier did not allow carol singing because people might gather. Only professional choirs were allowed to sing indoors and according to the Scottish Government there was only one professional church choir in Scotland. Weddings were limited to 20 people and worship services were limited to 20 people wearing face coverings. Interfaith Scotland had been attending the fortnightly meetings with the Scottish Government, which had been good at engaging with Scottish faith communities. It had been planning to allow only individual prayer but had listened to requests for communal worship, which had then been allowed.
- The United Reformed Church had a presence in Wales and Scotland as well as in England. In its experience, faith community consultation by the devolved Governments had been much more inclusive than that by the UK Government.

c) 'Building back'

10. In discussion the following points and questions were raised:

- The reflections on the Kruger Report from the perspective of the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church had been given verbally at the last FCF meeting, and this had therefore not been sent in writing in response to the request. Dr Crabtree noted that these had been included in the minutes of that meeting.
- The former Prime Minister, David Cameron had suggested something similar in 2009 with the 'Big Society' idea that faith communities should work with Government. There had been concern at that time that it might seem like 'getting social security on the cheap'. The Pagan Federation would be glad to see national and local government looking kindly on, for example, charity fundraising activities. Some Pagan groups had had trouble doing plays and dancing to raise money in pubs, because of some over-strict legislation. It would be helpful if the Government would look more generously at what faith communities were doing.

11. Dr Harriet Crabtree said that Mr Kruger had been speaking to a wide range of groups. She had been present at two Zoom meetings at which he had spoken: of a group of charity infrastructure CEOs and an Equally Ours meeting. There seemed to be some recurring questions about the nature of an 'offer' to faith communities of the kind described in the report, particularly given the context of the financial impact on faith communities of COVID-19. Questions were also reflecting that faith communities had different structures and different resources which needed to be taken into account, as did different patterns of engagement and social issues in each nation of the UK. It was not clear yet how Government would be engaging with the report, nor how it might relate to the review being carried out by Colin Bloom into the Government's engagement with faith groups in England. One was a picture of how Government and faith communities might work together and the other was about the Government's pattern of engagement, but there was likely to be some overlap. Mr Kruger's focus was also on England. Different nations of the UK had different patterns of engagement and this was another factor that made response complicated. Bishop Clark said that had illustrated how people might have found it

difficult knowing how exactly to respond. It was also difficult to respond from a particular local context to something that was quite general.

Agenda Item 3: Inter Faith Week 2020

12. Bishop Clark thanked IFN staff for their work on enabling Inter Faith Week to take place this year in a different way and thanked FCF members for all their support and participation.
13. Dr Harriet Crabtree said that it had been a very positive week, with many more activities and types of activities than had been anticipated in the circumstances. A number of hospitals and hospices had engaged for the first time, and some had spoken very movingly in videos about the challenges they were facing in the context of COVID-19. Chaplaincies had played a growing role and schools had also taken part. There had been a strong pattern of engagement overall with new and interesting ways of taking part. Many events had focused on faith communities and COVID-19. As well as this, there had been lots of celebratory events about faith communities living and working well together.
14. Many people and organisations had taken part for the first time. It was likely there would be over 600 activities in total. Previously IFN had itemised all activities held during the week by the same organisation, but this year they had been listed jointly in the case, for example, of schools. Even if they had been listed separately, however, activities would probably still be approximately 15% to 20% lower than the previous year. However, the social media reach was much higher. Online activities had the capacity to involve people in much higher numbers. There had also been a lot of social media posts highlighting the Week, which had not been classed as activities. For example, there had been a tweet from the North Wales Police with a striking photo of one of their police officers and words about the Week.
15. Dr Crabtree thanked FCF members for their work to encourage their places of worship and communities to take part and also to enable a wide spread of messages from faith leaders for the Week. The messages had been widely shared and it was clear from a number of social media posts that it had been encouraging to members within the different communities to see their own leaders' messages – as well as encouraging from the perspective of those from other backgrounds. For example, the Methodist Church message had been picked up by numerous local Methodist groups and the Hindu Forum of Britain had been encouraging local mandirs.
16. Ms Frances Hume said that 68 events had taken place for Scottish Interfaith Week. There had, however, been a much greater reach, with people from all over the world joining in with activities. Quite a few of the online events were available on YouTube and the links could be found on the Scottish Interfaith Week website. There had been a lot of creative activities including drumming, drawing, cookery and creative writing. There had also been events looking at the bigger issues such as COVID-19, climate change and building back better. There had also been dialogue events on the theme of 'connecting' which had been the theme for Scottish Interfaith Week this year. It had been a very positive experience. Interfaith Scotland staff had been able to attend more events than usual as there had not been a need to travel.
17. In discussion the following points and questions were raised:

- Inter Faith Week was about different communities living together in harmony. Had there been any emphasis in the activities and events on exploring commonalities between faiths? The ethical commonalities were far greater than the differences. Differences should also be explored. Dr Crabtree said that a number of the activities held, especially those involving schools and young people, had picked up on this. Local authorities had also picked this up in different ways. Often the language was of looking for common values. Inter Faith Week did not necessarily afford the opportunity for in-depth comparison and identification, but the thrust of these issues had been reflected in quite a few events.
 - The Board of Deputies of British Jews had held two online events for Inter Faith Week. One was on the topic of religious freedom internationally, with a speaker from the Baha'i community, a speaker from the Uyghur community talking about the situation for Uyghur Muslims in China, a Jewish speaker talking about the situation for Jewish people in the wider Middle East and a speaker from Christian Solidarity Worldwide. The other was an inter faith conversation between people of colour. This was chaired by Stephen Bush and included presentations by a Jew of colour, a Black Christian pastor and a Somali Muslim. Recordings of both events were still available on Flickr, Facebook and YouTube.
 - The London Buddhist Vihara had organised an inter faith event of prayers and chanting for Inter Faith Week. The aim was to develop collective awareness of love and compassion for those who were isolated and anxious. Spiritual belief and faith were important to many. Seven faiths had been represented and IFN's Executive Director had also contributed. It had been much appreciated by all.
18. Later in the meeting, under Any Other Business, Dr Crabtree said that the former Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, had died the day before Inter Faith Week had begun. People had recollected him in different contexts during the Week. Lord Sacks had been a good friend to IFN and had encouraged inter faith engagement across the board. Dr Atalla Siddiqui, one of the pioneers of Christian Muslim dialogue in Britain, had also died during the Week. They had both had important messages about living well together and standing up against those who wanted to tear the world apart.

Mr Colin Bloom joined the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Government engagement with faith communities

19. Bishop Clark welcomed Mr Colin Bloom, UK Government's Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. He would be presenting on his recently issued consultation on Government's Engagement with faith communities in England.
20. Mr Colin Bloom thanked IFN for inviting him to speak to the meeting. He offered the following points:
- He had been appointed a year ago to conduct an independent review into how Government engaged with faith communities. Nobody had had any idea then that there would be a dreadful pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, he had pivoted some of the work he was doing on the Review to help set up roundtables for Government to engage with faith communities in their communications and engagement strategy. He had also got to see first hand both some weaknesses in Government engagement with places of worship and faith communities but also how magnificent and generous faith leaders were in responding to some of the restrictions placed upon them as well as how they dealt with broader challenges

in society. Since September he had returned to working on the Review. It was due to be published before next Summer.

- The Review had four main columns:
 1. The first column was to ask whether or not faith was a good thing for society. He assumed that most FCF members would agree that it was, but he needed to evidence that in the Review.
 2. The second column was to consider how Government engaged with faith communities. As COVID-19 and the lockdown had demonstrated, Government could do better in how it engaged with places of worship and faith communities. The Review was looking not just through the lens of COVID-19, but also at prison chaplaincy, education, issues within the Ministry of Defence and other areas where Government and its agencies engaged with faith. It was looking at how well they engaged with faith and whether there was religious and faith literacy within Government.
 3. The third column was to look at where harm might be being done through religious practice. He hoped that some of the recommendations he would be making could begin to address some of those harms. The Review was not looking in depth at Antisemitism or Islamophobia or FGM or child sexual abuse, although he would comment on them. This was mainly because there were other Government reviews about these that were either already taking place or were about to start. He was keen to explore other areas where harm existed within faith. He did not want the third column to be the main source of activity or comment about the Review. The first two columns should form the main part.
 4. The fourth column would be his recommendations. There were likely to be 20 to 25 recommendations to Government across all Departments about how it could engage better.
- The evidence for the Review came from 4 areas: pre-existing relationships and networks; the call for evidence aimed at individuals; corporate responses to the call for evidence; and existing academic studies/surveys/previous reports, for example reviews carried out by Dame Louise Casey.
- The call for evidence online, which was aimed at individuals, was currently live. It would be helpful if as many people as possible could respond. The online form had subsections depending on the answers given. Not every question needed to be answered. There had been thousands of responses so far. He was particularly keen to hear from more women, as they currently represented less than 50% of the responses. He was also keen to hear from Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and other smaller communities, from which there were currently fewer responses. However, he was keen to hear from everyone, not matter their gender or faith.
- Corporate responses to the call for evidence were being held in interview style rather than by completing the online form. For example, the previous day he had spoken with Mr Karl Wightman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the UK. He hoped that all the corporate interviews could be undertaken in the following few weeks. He would then begin writing his report in January with a view to publishing it before the summer.

21. Bishop Clark thanked Mr Bloom for his presentation and invited questions and comments. In discussion the following questions and comments were raised. Responses from Mr Bloom are in italics.

- Faith community engagement was clearly a good thing. It had, however, deteriorated over the years and now hardly existed. In relation to the Sikh community, for example, officials found it complicated. They often did not know

who to speak with to represent the community and therefore called roundtable meetings where opinions and ideas went round in circles without progress. There was an example of a lack of religious literacy in the Review form itself. The question in the online form about denominations included 3 Sikh groupings: Amritdhari (the equivalent of a baptised Sikh), Nihang (who could also be Amritdhari) and Ramgarhia. The groupings related to previous, old-fashioned associations with occupation or trade and were not to do with religious observance. This cast some doubt on the literacy of the form creator. *The form included some examples of denominations but the list was not meant to be exhaustive. The question had a free text box for completion. Hopefully these examples did not cast doubt on the rest of the Call for Evidence. It was designed for individuals to have their say and was intended to be both qualitative and quantitative. Addressing the lack of faith literacy would be central to recommendations. More was needed in Government, in the media and everywhere.*

- It was concerning that Spiritualism was not reflected in the online form. It was, however, understood that it was impossible to cover everyone. Internal statistics of the Spiritualists' National Union showed that most of their social media posts 'reach' was 80% women and 20% men, so the SNU might be able to encourage more women to respond. The call for evidence would be promoted throughout the SNU membership in hope that their voices could be heard. *He apologised that Spiritualism was not included. He would be happy to speak separately about engaging with the Spiritualist community in Britain.*
- Were there any findings that MPs had a good understanding of what the faith communities in their constituencies were doing? *Many MPs did have a huge understanding of who and what was in their constituencies. However, there was still much to do in terms of faith literacy with Parliamentarians. Dame Casey had previously said that MPs were good at doing 'saris and samosas' but that their understanding could be superficial. MPs were responding to the call for evidence as well. Some MPs, such as Stephen Timms, Chair of All Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society, had enormous experience and a genuine understanding of faith communities.*
- The Review was a very important piece of work, which was welcomed. COVID-19 had taught the Muslim community a lot. Members of the community were from diverse backgrounds and countries. They did not have as strong a structure in terms of other faith communities for the purposes of consulting and communicating. There was not much time before the Review deadline to gather information and respond. It was a challenge to bring evidence together but the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board was trying to assist. It had been noted earlier that Islamophobia and Antisemitism would not be considered in-depth. There was also no mention of the Review covering radicalisation or terrorism. A lot of work had already been done on this. Were these going to be included? And were there any other focal points on the third column to consider when responding? *The call for evidence had been put out on 13 November and would end on 11 December. The point about Anti-Muslim hatred issues was well made. These were covered in the Review but not in detail because he understood that the Government would be announcing soon what it would be doing to review this important subject. Radicalisation and terrorism were also touched on in the Review but were not a major part of it. He was interested in 'religious nationalism', which was apparent in many faiths, so there was some reference to extremism but this did not go so far as terrorism. He had personally been overwhelmed by the tremendous generosity and warmth shown by many British Islamic leaders by*

dealing with the restrictions imposed, particularly during Ramadan and Eid. This would be reflected in his report. Hindus, Sikhs and other faith leaders had also responded generously.

- Gaps in Government engagement had been evident in the Places of Worship Taskforce. This had not had any representation, for example, from the Muslim Council of Britain, nor the Free Churches. Had the Government noted that? [Point from a Free Church member]. *This was a good point. The Taskforce was originally going to include just 3 or 4 with the main focus and the detail being at the roundtables. Representation was always very difficult. Where a faith community had a clear structure, for example the Catholic Church, it was easier to know who the leadership were to be consulted, but not all faith communities had such structures. The make-up of the Taskforce was always likely to be criticised because of the nature of it. The more granular roundtables had perhaps been more useful. FaithAction had been tasked by the Government to consult and engage with different community groups and places of worship up and down the country to ensure their views were represented at the Taskforce's meetings.*
- Hindu Council (UK) and the Hindu Forum of Britain were encouraging members to respond to the call for evidence. There had been some quality responses submitted, but it was a struggle to get many individuals to take part. Many of those who had responded had noted that the online survey framework had its limitations. *The encouragement to the British Hindu community to respond was appreciated. There were inevitably limitations to any such review.*
- Religious literacy needed to be tackled in the corporate world as well. *Greater religious literacy was needed in Government and everywhere.*
- It was good that the call for evidence was an open consultation so that congregation members / lay people could respond. In the question in the online form about religious identity Pagan was listed at the end after Atheist and Humanist. When the Office for National Statistics had first used the religion question in the Census there had been some misattribution of Pagan as being non-religious as distinct from religious traditions. It was hoped that the listing in the online form did not reflect that. *The point was well taken. He was not sure why Pagan appeared where it did in the list but could ask.*
- There was a section in the online form about Key Definitions which included some proposed definitions. This had important and profound practical outworkings. About 20 years ago when research had been done on legislation on religious discrimination, there had been a lot of debate about definition. Some had argued that it was not possible to address the issue in law without having tight definitions. Caution was needed. It was to be hoped that the definitions were only to be seen as provisional working definitions. *The definitions being proposed were not dictionary definitions. They were, rather, proposed working definitions for Government, which would be useful for civil servants across different Departments, in engaging with faith, belief and religion. The definitions would not please everyone. Theologians might have comments on them, but they were aimed at civil servants.*
- The timeframe was quite short and many places of worship were engaged in reopening for congregational worship. However, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) would be trying to mobilise as many people as possible to submit responses. It would be holding a webinar in a few days' time about the call for evidence and to encourage responses. *It was hoped that the reopening of places of worship would be successful.*
- It was understood that the Review covered England. It might be good, as part of the Review, to look at how Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland engaged with

faith groups. The inter faith linking bodies of the devolved nations (Interfaith Scotland, Inter Faith Council for Wales and Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum) were able to have representatives at meetings of the Faith Communities Forum. *Yes, the Review was about engagement with faith groups in England. Faith engagement matters were devolved. Similar reviews might happen in other nations. He would be happy for the Review to provide a model for comparable exploration of engagement.*

- Representatives of inter faith linking bodies in the devolved nations had offered feedback at FCF meetings on the engagement of their Governments with faith groups. There could helpfully be two-way learning between England and the devolved nations on engagement.
- Perhaps ‘Pagan’ had been included at the end of the list because the community had become part of the inter faith community more laterally. It was interesting to see the suggested definitions, in particular around ‘religions of practice’. Paganism was a religion of practice, rather than belief being a qualifying condition for becoming a Pagan. There had been some discussion about whether to put a definition on the Pagan Federation website. These views would be incorporated into individual Pagan responses.

22. Bishop Clark thanked Mr Bloom again for his presentation and for answering all the questions so openly and honestly. He encouraged FCF members to contribute to the Review.

23. Dr Crabtree said that the point about the usefulness of meetings with individual faith communities was well taken. It was, also useful for people to be able to hear each other and learn from one another and be part of a meeting such as the present one. In addition to the individual faith roundtables perhaps it would also be helpful to have one or two more opportunities for cross-faith engagement on particular issues of interest in the report? Mr Bloom thanked her for this point.

Mr Bloom left the meeting.

Agenda Item 5: Inter faith engagement of faith communities

24. Bishop Clark noted that some updates on this had been covered by the earlier item on Inter Faith Week. No further updates were offered.

Agenda Item 6: Other current issues of interest or concern to faith communities

25. Bishop Clark said that this Agenda Item offered an opportunity to raise current issues of interest or concern to faith communities in the UK. He noted that hate crime continued to be a concern. There had been a number of recent attacks, including on a Sikh boy in the Telford area, which had again focused attention on this. Faith and belief related bullying also continued to be a matter of concern.

26. Dr Crabtree said that more information on hate crime had been provided in the Background Note for the last FCF meeting. That had also reported that timing on the refreshing of MHCLG’s Hate Crime Action Plan had been altered due to the impact of COVID-19. The content of Scotland’s Hate Crime Bill continued to evolve, with amendments, for example, to ensure that a conviction for new offences of ‘stirring up’ hatred would only be possible where it was shown that someone intended

to stir up hatred through their actions or behaviour. It was planned that there would be further discussion on the issue of hate crime at the next meeting of the FCF.

27. Bishop Clark noted that the Law Commission had recently announced that it would be holding an online public event on 10 December about its 'Review of hate crime laws'. The event was targeted particularly at those it had not yet had an opportunity to meet with during the consultation period.
28. Members were invited to offer any reflections on hate crime or on other issues of interest or concern. In discussion the following points and questions were raised:
- The Hindu Forum of Britain had been giving regular evidence in regard to the development of Scotland's Hate Crime Bill, as had the Network of Sikh Organisations (UK).
 - There was a need to remember that hate crime could take place between faiths. Hindu young people often suffered as a result of this. The definition of a hate crime needed to change. Hate crimes could be anti-Hindu or anti-Sikh as well. Sometimes people thought that senior leaders in some faiths, such as the President of the Hindu Forum of Britain, were not as good as people of cloth in Abrahamic religions. A paper was being prepared which would include information on misunderstandings such as this.
Dr Crabtree said that the Background Note for the last FCF meeting had noted the important point made that hate crime affected people of all backgrounds, referencing, if she remembered correctly, Hindus and Sikhs¹. Although the highest percentage of those who were attacked were Muslim and Jewish, there was also, as that Note had mentioned, the continuing issue of what was sometimes referred to in shorthand as 'mistaken identity'. That was something that had been looked at and would no doubt be returned to.
 - The speaker commented on concern about engagement by a local inter faith organisation in Scotland with a member of the Hindu community. The Scottish Charity Regulator was looking into this.
 - The Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church had launched a campaign to tackle the issue of people getting into debt because of the impact of the current situation. Six million people had fallen behind on one or more household bills as a result of COVID-19. It was a campaign across faiths and across society. More information could be found on the JPIT website.

Action: Agenda for next FCF meeting to include further discussion on hate crime.

INTER FAITH NETWORK MATTERS SESSION

[Paragraphs 29 to 38]

Agenda Item 10: Any other business

39. A participant said that there had recently been a terrorist attack on the International Salvation Army in Indonesia. The Salvation Army building had been destroyed, the homes of half a dozen Salvationists had been burned and four had been killed. This

¹ The exact wording in the Background Note was "A concern that has in the past been raised by some FCF members from the Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities has been about how hate crimes are categorised when there is 'mistaken identity'."

had been a great shock. The thoughts and prayers of fellow FCF members would be appreciated. Bishop Clark said that the distress of the community was shared.

Agenda Item 11: Date of next meeting

40. Bishop Clark noted that a date for the next meeting would be circulated in due course.

21 December 2020