

Speech: Home Secretary speech at London Central Mosque

As-salaam-a-laikum.

“Hello brother” – the words spoken by one of the first victims slaughtered in Christchurch.

Gunned down as he welcomed the terrorist who marched towards the Al Noor Mosque.

Words of love, not hate, that show the kindness and the compassion of Islam.

How Muslims open their arms to others, even in the most darkest of hours.

Two simple words that deliver a heart-breaking message of hope.

Giving courage to us all as we mourn this devastating loss.

This gunman sought to divide us, but he was embraced.

Met with the spirit of Islamic welcome that has seen us all join together today.

A spirit that we must embrace now more than ever as we unite against those who want tear us apart.

Sadly, this is not the first attack that we have borne.

The horrific events in New Zealand – like the atrocities we have suffered in the UK – are an attack on the values that unite us all.

On our freedom to worship as we choose – or even not to worship at all.

My heart goes out to all the families of all those killed, and to all those hurt and all those very much praying for their loved ones.

The victims are our children, our parents, our friends. We share the agony of their loss.

From the darkness of the 2017 attacks came one glimmer of hope.

Communities across the UK united in their grief and support.

And that strength has been shown again this weekend.

Our churches, our synagogues, our temples, our gurdwaras our mosques – they have rung out with prayers for Christchurch.

We have come together today to share our pain.

To show that no faith, no race, no community will ever be alone.

No brother left unwelcomed.

The events that unite us are beyond tragic, but together we represent what is truly great about Britain.

An open and welcoming country, that finds strength in its diversity.

Where the Chief Rabbi and the Archbishop of Canterbury stand side by side in a mosque full of Imams from across the UK.

In front of an audience of determined young people, of every faith and none.

Where we all unite against hate and we say – not in my name.

Where we refuse to let terrorists triumph.

And where we – like that brave grandfather at the door of Al Noor Mosque – will never, ever, let the forces of hate divide us.

Thank you.