

Hazel Blears MP

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Race, Faith and Cohesion Directorate
Communities and Local Government

"Thank you very much for your invitation to Hazel Blears MP to speak at your conference. I am sorry that we are not able to send anyone to the event tomorrow, which looks like it will be a useful and productive session, at an important time.

As I said on the phone, we have been greatly heartened by the response across communities in the last week or so, and would like offer our strong support (if only in this case over email!) to those working with local communities to build resilience against violent extremism. Your voices speak louder than ours.

You may be interested to know that in a press statement today, our Secretary of State said:-

"Once again the true strength and character of our society has been shown - with a calm response reflecting the breadth and courage of our communities in the face of the recent attempted bombings.

"I have been pleased to see the strength of responses condemning the actions of terrorists and encouraging communities to work together with the police. This builds on the strong consensus we have seen following 7/7 and since, with individuals and groups uniting to stand up to those who seek to undermine our society.

"With the threat of terror we face the way forward lies in celebrating the values we all share. We must therefore work together and make the most of the wide range of strengths throughout our communities."

I hope you agree that this shows our strong support for your work, and I'd add our best wishes for your conference tomorrow. I'd be interested to hear of any follow up that ensues from the event.

Best regards,
Ed Whiting
Race, Faith and Cohesion Directorate
Communities and Local Government