

Windrush Lessons Learned Review: NGO joint statement

The nation was shocked and appalled when the Windrush scandal hit the news in 2018. Rightly so, for what happened was the destruction of the lives of black Britons as a direct result of a Government policy.

The Windrush Lessons Learned Review puts beyond any doubt what we have said all along: that the scandal was not an isolated mistake, but the inevitable result of Home Office policies aimed at creating a Hostile Environment for people unable to easily prove their right to be in the country. To this day the elements of institutional racism and policies responsible for the scandal, including the Hostile Environment, continue to tear lives apart.

Justice for the Windrush Generation will not be fully served until the Hostile Environment is scrapped and the attitudes which drove its creation are rooted out.

The Review shows that the Home Office culture of disregard for people's human rights and humanity and disbelief of their testimony and that of experts is pervasive from ministerial level down.

When he ordered this Review, then Home Secretary Sajid Javid said that what happened with the Windrush scandal must 'never again happen to any group of people'. Yet still now, every day, many marginalised people, including asylum seekers, are disbelieved, dismissed, detained and even removed to places where they may not be safe.

Nothing can truly atone for what happened to the Windrush generation. But just as the scandal marked a turning point in public understanding of the human impact of Home Office policy, so this Review must mark a turning point in Government leadership on immigration, if Britain is to believe in its own capacity for humanity, decency and fairness.

Signed:

Asylum Matters

Black Cultural Archives

Center for Migration Advice and Research

Freedom from Torture

Helen Bamber Foundation

Human Rights Watch

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

Jesuit Refugee Service UK

Liberty

Medical Justice

McKenzie Beute and Pope Immigration Practitioners

Muslim Council of Britain

Peter Tatchell Foundation

Pastor Clive Foster, Pilgrim Church Nottingham

Preston Windrush Generation and Descendants UK

Rabbi Danny Rich

Refugee Action

Refugee Council

Runnymede Trust

Survivors Speak OUT

UK Lesbian & Gay Immigration Group (UKLGIG)

Patrick Vernon

Welsh Refugee Council

Windrush Action

Bishop Dr Desmond Jadoo & Charlie Williams, Windrush Movement (UK)