

Prime Minister Boris Johnson  
10 Downing Street  
SW1A 2AA

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

We are a broad coalition of individuals united on this vitally important issue. We write to you with a solemn petition for an independent public inquiry into the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the UK's BAME communities.

We welcome the NHS' Race Observatory proposal and Professor Dr Kevin Fenton's appointment to lead a scientific review of COVID-19 deaths pertaining to BAME frontline staff, particularly those in the NHS, and the broader population in the UK.

While this data-led review is important from a public health perspective, an independent public inquiry would have a broader scope. It would provide a comprehensive exploration of all possible contributing factors that could explain the outsized effect Covid-19 has on BAME communities, killing up to four times as many as white people in some groups. It is doubtful that the review's current scope can provide the critical answers needed, it should examine the following points:

- 1. The cultural and systemic treatment of BAME staff by their employers as part of their duty of care and in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.**
- 2. The level of exposure to COVID-19 by BAME staff in the NHS, Care Sector and all key workers across public and private sectors.**
- 3. The level of preparedness and emergency planning within central and local government in response to how they factored the needs and requirements of BAME communities in line with Public Sector Equalities Duty.**
- 4. Examination of the level of funding and investment on public health, physical and social infrastructure in local authority areas where there is a significant BAME population and where there is a disproportionate death rate linked to COVID-19.**
- 5. The impact of the government's COVID-19 emergency powers and social distancing policy on BAME communities.**

Only an independent public inquiry will provide the answers we need. Such an inquiry is essential for all, especially for those who have lost loved ones as a result of the pandemic.

COVID-19 is clearly now one of the biggest issues in post-war history, directing a spotlight on race and health inequalities. Over the last forty years, there has been a precedent of similar inquiries such as: the Scarman Report on the Brixton Riots, the MacPherson Report on the murder of Stephen Lawrence, The Victoria Climbié inquiry on safeguarding, the Zahid Mubarek inquiry and the recent Windrush Scandal Lessons Learned Review.

By instigating such an inquiry, the government will provide an opportunity for a range of stakeholders to submit evidence through a transparent process. This would help to restore public confidence amongst the UK's BAME communities. An inquiry will provide key findings and offer clear recommendations for systemic or transformational change around the role of the public sector and race equality in Britain.

**As signatories, we ask you to support our call for an independent public inquiry to address the points we raise in this letter.**

<b>Afua Adom</b>	Broadcaster & Journalist
<b>Afua Hirsch</b>	Writer & Broadcaster
<b>Akram Khan</b>	Dancer & Choreographer
<b>Andrew Fairbairn</b>	CEO, Sponsors for Educational Opportunity
<b>Andy Gregg</b>	CEO, Race on the Agenda
<b>Asma Khan</b>	Chef
<b>Ayesha Hazarika MBE</b>	Commentator & Comedian
<b>Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE</b>	Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon
<b>Bishop Claion Grandison</b>	New Testament Church of God
<b>Bonnie Greer OBE</b>	Writer & Broadcaster
<b>Caroline Criado Perez</b>	Author
<b>Clenton Farquharson MBE</b>	Think Local, Act Personal
<b>Colenzo Jarrett-Thorpe</b>	Unite the Union - National Official for Health & Social Care
<b>David Weaver</b>	Coalition of Race Equality Organisations
<b>Deborah Coles</b>	Executive Director, INQUEST
<b>Deeba Syed</b>	Sexual Harassment Lawyer
<b>Dominic Scott</b>	Managing Director, Alexander Hall
<b>Dr Barbara Lipietz</b>	Associate Professor, Co-Chair UCL Sustainable Cities
<b>Dr David Muir</b>	Snr Lecturer Public Theology, Roehampton Uni
<b>Dr Elizabeth Henry</b>	National Adviser, Race & Ethnicity, Archbishops' Council, C of E
<b>Dr Kailash Chand GP</b>	Vice President, BMA
<b>Dr Martin Edobor GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>Dr Onkar Sahota GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>Dr Patrick Roach</b>	General Secretary, NASWUT
<b>Dr Rebecca Amissah, MD</b>	NHS Doctor
<b>Dr Shola Mos-Shogbamimu</b>	Lawyer & Political & Women's Rights Activist
<b>Dr Sonia Adesara</b>	Accident & Emergency NHS Doctor
<b>Elizabeth Uviebinené</b>	Co Author Stay in Your Lines; Financial Times
<b>Emma Obanye</b>	Co-Founder, Mindful Team
<b>Farooq Chaudhry OBE</b>	International Dance Producer
<b>Femi Oyeniran</b>	Actor, Director
<b>Fevzi Hussein</b>	GMB Union Race Chair
<b>Harun Khan</b>	Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain
<b>Jamie Scott</b>	NHS Staff Nurse
<b>Jermaine Jackman</b>	Singer

<b>Jonzi D</b>	Breakin' Convention
<b>Joy Warmington</b>	BRAP
<b>Kahiye Alim</b>	Director, Council of Somali Organisations
<b>Katrina Ffrench</b>	Chief Executive, StopWatch UK
<b>Kike Oniwinde</b>	Founder BYP Network
<b>Konnie Huq</b>	Broadcaster
<b>Kwame Kwei – Armah OBE</b>	Artistic Director Young Vic
<b>Malorie Blackman OBE</b>	Author
<b>Matt Henry MBE</b>	Singer and Actor
<b>Marion Wadibia</b>	CEO, Naz Project
<b>Marvin Rees</b>	Mayor of Bristol
<b>Mete Coban MBE</b>	CEO and Founder My Life, My Say
<b>Michael Afilaka</b>	Sport Scientist & Performance Coach
<b>Michael Hamilton</b>	Director, The Ubele Initiative
<b>Patricia Hamzahee FRSA</b>	Founder, Integriti Capital
<b>Patrick Vernon OBE</b>	Social Commentator & Campaigner
<b>Phil Wang</b>	Comedian
<b>Priscilla Nwiko</b>	TV Presenter/Producer
<b>Professor Anthony Reddie</b>	Director, Oxford Centre for Religion & Culture, Oxford Uni.
<b>Professor JS Bamrah CBE</b>	Consultant Psychiatrist
<b>Rehana Azam</b>	National Secretary GMB Union
<b>Renee Hunt</b>	Director Group Digital Platforms, Sky
<b>Reverend Ben Atkins</b>	Parish of Canning Town, Saint Matthias Church
<b>Rianna Raymond-Williams</b>	Journalist & Founder, Shine Aloud UK
<b>Right Reverend Christopher Chessun</b>	Bishop of Southwark
<b>Right Reverend Peter Hill</b>	Bishop of Barking
<b>Right Reverend Paul Bayes</b>	Bishop of Liverpool
<b>Roger McKenzie</b>	Assistant General Secretary, Unison
<b>Rokhsana Fiaz OBE</b>	Mayor of Newham
<b>Sachini Imbuldeniya</b>	Creative Director
<b>Saiqa Naz</b>	Mental Health Practitioner
<b>Saloum N'jie</b>	Film Director
<b>Sam Smethers</b>	Director, Fawcett Society
<b>Sarbjit Grainger</b>	Director, Asian Women's Resource Centre
<b>Sharmaine Lovegrove</b>	Publisher
<b>Sharon Grant OBE</b>	Director, Bernie Grant Arts Centre
<b>Shaun Escoffery</b>	West End Actor and Musician

<b>Shavanah Taj</b>	General Secretary Wales, TUC
<b>Sonia Winifred</b>	Psychodynamic Psychotherapist
<b>Suki Fuller</b>	Founder, Miribue
<b>Sunder Katwala</b>	Director, British Future
<b>Susie Symes</b>	Chair, Museum of Immigration & Diversity
<b>Tanita Tikaram</b>	Musician
<b>Taranjit Chana</b>	GMB Union Race Secretary
<b>The Very Reverend Rogers Govender</b>	Dean, Manchester Cathedral
<b>Tracey Lazard</b>	CEO, Inclusion London
<b>Vivienne Hayes MBE</b>	CEO, Women's Resource Centre
<b>Yvonne Field</b>	Managing Director, The Ubele Initiative