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## Press Release

8 March 2005.

### **GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO CONTINUED PRACTICE OF HALAL**

The London Central Mosque Trust & the Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC) today welcomed the Government's Final Response to the Farm Animal Welfare Council's Report on the Welfare of Animals at Slaughter, in particular its strong commitment to respect the right of the Muslim community to continue the practice of Halal slaughter of animals for food in the UK.

The Government's Final Response retracts its previous acceptance of FAWC's assertions about the subjective experience of animals during Halal slaughter, which state: "on balance, animals (especially cattle) slaughtered without pre-stunning are likely to experience very significant pain and distress". In addition, the Government now acknowledges the scientific evidence that we submitted which demonstrates that Halal is a humane method of animal slaughter for food. FAWC chose to ignore this evidence in their original report.

Dr Ahmed Al Dubayan ICC Director General commented: "We are pleased that the Government has recognized and understood our concerns. The Government's response means that the Muslim community can continue freely to practice the religious humane method of animal slaughter for food in this country. The ICC has been working with the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and other Muslim organizations for the past 18 months to protect the Halal method of slaughter from the potential impact of FAWC's imprecise and biased report and the Government is to be commended for the consideration it has shown towards the Muslim Community following the publication of its draft response last year."

Dr Yunes Teinaz, Chartered Environmental Health practitioner and Advisor to the ICC Director General said: "ICC has led the Muslim Community's response to the controversial FAWC Report, published in June 2003, which recommended to Government to repeal the right of the Muslim Community to practice the Halal slaughter, the Muslim religious humane method of animal slaughter for food. Since submitting a formal response to the Government, ICC has continued to lobby Government to ensure that the case of the UK Muslim Community was heard and understood. The Muslim community organizations work is not yet complete. We believe that the Halal method should be clearly acknowledged as a humane method of animal slaughter for food."

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### **Notes to the editors:**

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The rules governing animal welfare at slaughter are set down in the EU [Directive 93/119/EC](#) on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing. The Directive is implemented in Great Britain by the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 as amended (WASK). Both the EU and domestic legislation requires animals to be stunned before slaughter, but exempts religious slaughter for Jews and Muslims from this requirement. Schedule 12 of WASK sets out the detailed requirements for slaughtering by a religious method. All of the relevant legislation can be found on the Defra website <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/farmed/slaughter.htm>

The link to the Government's response document for Reference [http://defraweb/animalh/welfare/farmed/final\\_response.pdf](http://defraweb/animalh/welfare/farmed/final_response.pdf) .