

## Justice Committee

### Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill

#### Written submission from Amer Jamil

I have been asked by the Scottish Government to share my views on proposals to criminalise forced marriage. My own work in the area has been awareness work in the Muslim Community <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-17908548> and also dealing with victims in my capacity as a Family Support Consultant for Unity Family Services [www.unityfamily.co.uk](http://www.unityfamily.co.uk) - the following are my thoughts:

- It makes sense to have a consistent policy across the UK.
- In my experience victims reluctant to use a FMPO, are reluctant whether it is a civil or criminal matter. Many want a solution without getting police involved, unless its becomes absolutely desperate for them.
- There will be some obvious resistance to the legislation from those organisations who wished to retain breaching of a FMPO as a purely civil matter. I think as the breach of the FMPO order is already criminal here, there may be less resistance to it becoming criminal than in England, where it is still purely civil.
- Legislation will not solve FM, just as legislation has not eradicated domestic abuse. However, legislation does put out a moral message that FM is totally unacceptable and the Government is getting serious in dealing with it by making it a criminal offence. The hope would be that it would deter some.
- Whether it will make an effect in reality to people in using the legislation is difficult to predict.

Here is an article I wrote last year on the topic:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/shaykh-amer-jamil-act-to-help-victims-of-forced-marriage-1-2671733>

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