

## **Islamophobia Conference 2018: Islamophobia and Silencing Criticism of Israel**

### **Concept note**

A perennial concern has been the demonisation of pro-Palestinian activism by the state, its institutions and some individual actors that permeates political discourse and policy in the United Kingdom. This concern is exacerbated by anti-Muslim narratives utilised by Zionist organisation and thinking, exemplified in the ever increasing 'Islamophobia network' and its links between Zionism, pro-Israel organisations and advocates and far-right racist organisations and movements in Europe and North America, including the UK.

Given the racist nature of Zionism, the marriage between the far-right and Zionist activists was inevitable. Pro-Israel advocates see an overlap between their hatred of the Arabs whom they wish to displace in Palestine with the far-right's hatred of Muslims. It is why you see EDL members attend pro-Israel events to deny the right of Palestinian self-determination and why you can see Zionist Federation placards flown at events where far-right racists shout "Allah is a Peado" and "Muslims rape our children". This partnership focuses on silencing any criticism of Israel.

This year's workshop and conference will explore this relationship, how it is impacting pro-Palestine activism and discuss how we push back against those who wish to use xenophobia and racism, including and especially Islamophobia, to silence political criticism of Israel.