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Thank you for your correspondence of 9 February on behalf of several of your constituents about Daryush Valizadeh, also known as Roosh V, and his organisation Return Of Kings. I am replying as the Minister for Preventing Abuse, Exploitation and Crime.

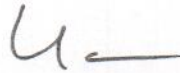
The Government is committed to protecting women and girls from sexual violence and rape, and has made supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence a key priority. Recent coverage of so called 'pick-up artists' like Mr Valizadeh, who blame women for rape and propagate sexual violence and harmful attitudes towards women, illustrates the importance of engaging with men, and developing and deploying powerful counter-narratives.

We have condemned Mr Valizadeh's comments and indeed condemn in the strongest terms anyone who condones rape and sexual violence or suggests that responsibility for stopping rape and sexual violence rests with the victims. Responsibility for rape and sexual violence always unequivocally rests with the perpetrator of these serious crimes.

I would like to reassure your constituents that the Government takes a robust stance against individuals whose presence in this country would not be conducive to the public good. However, it is not Government policy to comment on whether an organisation is, or is not, under consideration for proscription. The Home Secretary's decision to proscribe an organisation must be based on a belief that it is concerned in terrorism as defined in the Terrorism Act 2000.

Your constituents may be interested to know that our refreshed Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy will be published shortly and will set out the range of work we are driving forward to realise our ambitious vision of eliminating violence against women and girls.

I would like to thank your constituents for raising their concerns, and trust that this clarifies the Government's position.



Karen Bradley MP