



Council on American-Islamic Relations

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November 1, 2023

Chair Anderson Clayton
North Carolina Democratic Party
220 Hillsborough Street
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Chair Clayton:

We are writing on behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. It has recently come to our attention that Nazim Uddin, a member of your party, was reportedly subjected to Islamophobic and defamatory remarks by other members of your party. In March 2023, Mr. Uddin filed a grievance form with your party leadership. In October, more than seven months later, this grievance has not been resolved. **The period of time between the complaint's filing and now raises reasonable questions about the party's complaint resolution process. We are deeply concerned by the nature of these reports, if they are in fact true, as well as the delay in resolving this complaint, and urge you to take action to address this matter immediately.**

Our values center the belief that everyone deserves equal access to justice – or, in plainer terms, that they are granted their day in court. Mr. Uddin has been waiting for this day for over seven months. While we understand that procedures may have precluded your party from addressing this matter quickly, we worry that allowing such Islamophobic remarks, if they were in fact made, to be directed against a member of your party without further investigation may signal to Muslims in North Carolina, as well as across the country, that such discriminatory rhetoric is permissible. As your website states, your party “believes that our diversity is a source of our strength.” We ask you to reaffirm your commitment to diversity by addressing the alleged remarks within your party that, if true, do not reflect this belief.

According to files available to us, Mr. Uddin had authored resolutions as a member of your party in support of Palestinian human rights in 2022. These included a recognition of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948 -- an event commonly referred to as the “Nakba” -- and a call for an independent investigation surrounding the killing of the Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

At some time after these resolutions were proposed and before March 2023, Mr. Uddin was allegedly the subject of several anti-Muslim remarks by members of your party, chiefly Matthew Sadinsky, Paula Wolf, and Stephen Coen.

In a voice recording made available online, Mr. Sadinsky allegedly said, in reference to Mr. Uddin: “He’s a Nazi, and I don’t want to sound racist, but it wouldn’t surprise me if he were an Iranian spy sent to undermine American democracy.”

Ms. Wolf also reportedly engaged in a campaign to message several members of your party, allegedly claiming that Mr. Uddin's resolutions in 2022 were of a hateful nature in order to damage his opportunities to hold office within the party.

Finally, Mr. Coen reportedly wrote in a post on a public platform that Mr. Uddin’s support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement not only constitutes bias toward another group of people but also aligns him with nefarious international actors.

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We are troubled by the Islamophobic nature of the remarks reportedly made against Mr. Uddin. The alleged claim that Mr. Uddin may be an “Iranian spy” is not only unsubstantiated but also relies on a harmful post-9/11 stereotype that Muslims secretly harbor anti-American sentiment.

Moreover, the alleged claim that Mr. Uddin, a Bangladeshi American, is Iranian seems to rely on a problematic presumption that conflates all Muslims into one indistinguishable racial group, despite the vast and well-documented differences in language, culture, and religious practice between them.

As for Ms. Wolf and Mr. Coen’s alleged claims against Mr. Uddin’s resolutions and beliefs – namely, that they are of a hateful nature – are unsupported and defamatory. Multiple prominent human rights organizations such as [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#), along with the [United Nations](#), recognize the Nakba as the expulsion and forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes during the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Organizations like Amnesty International also [contend](#) that the BDS movement is a legitimate non-violent form of advocacy conducted with the explicit purpose of calling for an end to human rights violations against Palestinians. Moreover, the United States Department of Justice itself has [called](#) for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the killing of the Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

The alleged remarks regarding Mr. Uddin’s beliefs suggests that his non-controversial support of Palestinian human rights necessarily constitutes bias toward another group of people, which is not only unsupported but also relies on common anti-Muslim stereotypes.

Given that your party is currently attempting to mediate this dispute, we understand that members of your party have similarly found these remarks concerning and meriting further action. We believe that these remarks, if substantiated, merit at the very least an apology on behalf of Mr. Sadinsky, Ms. Wolf, and Mr. Coen. **We therefore request that you move to resolve Mr. Uddin’s concerns in an adequate and timely fashion, whether through mediation that satisfies Mr. Uddin’s complaint or a formal hearing before your party’s Council of Review.**

CAIR is a nationally recognized organization that has worked diligently to resolve such matters in the past. Just earlier this year, our leaders [worked](#) alongside a state representative in Texas to resolve prior Islamophobic remarks, which the representative then retracted. We are also committed to extending our services in this case to resolve Mr. Uddin’s complaint.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Corey Saylor
Research and Advocacy Director

CC: Lillian Badget, Interim Executive Director; Jonah Garson, First Vice Chair; Dr. Kimberly Hardy, Second Vice Chair; Elijah King, Third Vice Chair; Melvin Williams, Secretary

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