

Statement from Farah Naz, aunt of Zara Aleena

2 December 2025

This Inquiry began because of the abduction and murder of Sarah Everard — a crime committed not by a stranger, but by a serving police officer. Sarah's death marked a profound rupture in public trust and exposed deep failures in policing culture, vetting, supervision and accountability. It demanded not just answers, but change.

My niece, Zara Aleena, was walking home. That is all she was doing. Her death, like Sarah's, was preventable. It occurred because warnings were missed, risks were overlooked, and systems intended to safeguard the public did not function as they should. Zara's case reflects the wider patterns identified so clearly in this report: systemic failure rather than isolated tragedy.

Zara was not defined by violence. She was a 35-year-old law graduate with conviction, compassion and a belief that justice should protect human dignity. She cared for her family and community, and she was at the beginning of a promising legal career — one grounded in fairness and service.

I am grateful that this report approaches these issues with rigour, honesty and humanity. I am also thankful that the Inquiry chose to reflect Zara's story with care, and to respect my request not to name the man responsible. These decisions matter. They reflect an understanding that how we document harm shapes how we move forward — whose voices are amplified, and whose are no longer given unnecessary attention.

Importantly, this report not only examines the specific failures surrounding Sarah and Zara, but addresses the wider structures, cultural patterns and operational weaknesses that place women and girls at risk in public space. It is wide-ranging, deeply considered and necessary.

I am also encouraged to see support for exploring a Good Samaritan Law for the UK, to ensure that when someone is at risk or in danger, there is a clear expectation to act — to seek help, report, or intervene where safe to do so. I hope this recommendation is taken seriously and progresses with the urgency and commitment these cases demand.

But acknowledgment alone is not enough. Reports must become reform. Reform must become implementation. And implementation must be measured, transparent and accountable

Sarah's death exposed a system compromised from within. Zara's death shows that the gaps persisted — with fatal consequences.

My hope — and my expectation — is that this report becomes a catalyst for meaningful, lasting change: a system where women's safety is not assumed but ensured; where risk is taken seriously; and where public confidence is rebuilt not through rhetoric, but through action.

Sarah deserved safety. Zara deserved safety. Every woman deserves safety. Justice cannot only respond after harm — it must prevent harm.