

The logo for the Sheku Bayoh Inquiry, featuring the text "SHEKU BAYOH INQUIRY" in white, bold, uppercase letters on a dark purple rectangular background.

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2 **TRANSCRIPT OF THE SHEKU BAYOH INQUIRY**3 **Tuesday 10 May 2022**

4 (10.01 am)

5 Introductory remarks by LORD BRACADALE

6 LORD BRACADALE: Good morning. Let us begin this hearing by

7 standing, if you're able to do so, and observing

8 a minute's silence in memory of Sheku Bayoh.

9 (A minute's silence was observed)

10 Thank you. Welcome to this first evidential hearing

11 in the Sheku Bayoh Inquiry.

12 I wish to extend a special welcome to Mrs Aminata

13 Bayoh, Mr Bayoh's mother, who has travelled from

14 Sierra Leone where she lives to attend the Inquiry. She

15 is sitting at the table with her daughters.

16 I am accompanied by my Assessors, Raju Bhatt and

17 Michael Fuller. I introduced the Assessors at the

18 preliminary hearing and there are further details about

1 each of them on the website. I and the Inquiry team
2 have already benefited greatly from the combined
3 expertise and experience of the Assessors, whose
4 assistance on a range of issues has been invaluable. As
5 we move into the evidential hearings, I expect that
6 support only to increase.

7 The Terms of Reference of the Inquiry are extensive
8 and require me to address a number of issues. In order
9 to manage the progress of the Inquiry, it will be
10 divided into a number of evidential hearings, of which
11 this is the first. The evidence in the first hearing
12 will primarily focus on the events of 3 May 2015 leading
13 to the death of Sheku Bayoh.

14 I continue to be determined that the Inquiry should
15 be conducted in an independent and impartial manner. In
16 order to fulfil the commitment of transparency and
17 openness, and to allow maximum access by the public and
18 the press, the hearings will be broadcast on the
19 Inquiry's YouTube channel and will be available, along
20 with the transcript of evidence, on the Inquiry's
21 website.

22 I intend that during the evidential hearings, the

1 Inquiry should sit on Tuesday to Friday each week,
2 between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm with a mid-morning break
3 and a break for lunch between 1.00 and 2.00.

4 If particular legal or administrative issues require
5 to be addressed, it may be that the Inquiry will sit on
6 a Monday to deal with these issues.

7 The general rule is that witnesses will be examined
8 by Counsel to the Inquiry. In some circumstances,
9 counsel for core participants may, with my permission,
10 ask questions.

11 Tomorrow we shall begin hearing opening statements
12 from Senior Counsel to the Inquiry and the legal
13 representatives of the core participants. But I have
14 set today aside for a different purpose. Every aspect
15 of this Inquiry derives from the sudden, unexpected and
16 untimely death of Sheku Bayoh who died on 3 May 2015,
17 aged 31 years. On a number of occasions I have said
18 that I want the families of Sheku Bayoh to be at the
19 heart of the Inquiry. As part of that commitment, I am
20 allocating this first day of the hearing to family
21 members to allow them an opportunity to communicate to
22 the Inquiry and the public the person Sheku Bayoh was,

1 what he meant to each of them, and the impact on each of
2 them of his death.

3 This is not their evidence to the Inquiry. I would
4 expect certain members of the family to give evidence in
5 hearing 3 in relation to what happened after the death
6 and in the course of the investigation into it, but the
7 focus of today is on Sheku Bayoh himself and what he
8 meant to those he left behind.

9 With professional assistance, family members have
10 participated in making a video as a tribute to the life
11 of Sheku Bayoh and their memories of him, so first, two
12 of Mr Bayoh's sisters, Ms Kosna Bayoh and
13 Mrs Adama Jalloh will address the Inquiry, then the
14 video will be played. That will be followed by a short
15 break, then Mr Bayoh's sister Mrs Kadi Johnson will
16 address the Inquiry, and that will be followed by
17 Mr Aamer Anwar who will address the Inquiry on behalf of
18 Collette Bell who was Mr Bayoh's partner at the time of
19 his death and the mother of one of his children.

20 So Ms Kosna Bayoh, may I ask you to address the
21 Inquiry now.

22 Commemoration of Sheku Bayoh by his family and friends

1 MS KOSNA BAYOH: Good morning. Good morning, everyone.

2 May I take this opportunity to thank all of those
3 present here today, as well as the many who cannot come
4 in, but are watching the live stream. Well, I thank you
5 for your support with the Bayoh family during this
6 difficult time.

7 As you may all know, our brother Sheku died in the
8 streets of Kirkcaldy on 3 May 2015. Seven years since
9 we lost our brother, the pain is still there. It has
10 been a long journey, but we are grateful for finally
11 being here today.

12 We the family put together a short video for
13 everyone to find out who Sheku was and how he was much
14 loved by us and his family and all those who had the
15 privilege to meet him.

16 You will also see the impact of Sheku no longer
17 being here. I miss him so much and we will carry on to
18 make his legacy live on. Thank you.

19 LORD BRACADALE: Thank you.

20 Mrs Jalloh.

21 MS ADAMA JALLOH: Sheku was a fun-loving, cheeky boy, but
22 one thing that was unquestionable is the love that he

1 had for his family. No doubt he was a mummy's boy.

2 LORD BRACADALE: We will adjourn.

3 (10.10 am)

4 (Short Break)

5

6 (10.13 am)

7 LORD BRACADALE: Mrs Johnson, I think you are going to take

8 it up from there, are you? Thank you.

9 MS KADIJARTU JOHNSON: Thank you, this is Adama's statement.

10 Sheku was a fun-loving, cheeky boy. One thing was
11 unquestionable, in that he loved his family. No doubt
12 he was a mummy's boy. Adama was the third child of my
13 mother. I wish I was -- sorry, and my mother wished
14 I was a boy as she had longed for a son, but surprise,
15 surprise, it was another girl. There was no turning
16 back. I believed my mother prayed like she has never
17 prayed before, and on 30 September 1983, a bouncing baby
18 boy was welcomed into the Bayoh family.

19 Our family was now complete. Sheku grew up from
20 a bouncing baby boy to a cheeky toddler, to a fun-loving
21 teenager and became a gentle man. Nothing mattered to
22 Sheku when he was with his two sons. They were his

1 world. He had a loving partner, loving friends and
2 family.

3 There was never a dull moment when Sheku was around.
4 As you watch this video, you will see an insight of our
5 dear brother. Thank you.

6 (Video played)

7 LORD BRACADALE: Thank you. We will take a break now for
8 15 minutes.

9 (10.42 am)

10 (Short Break)

11 (11.16 am)

12 LORD BRACADALE: Now, Mrs Johnson.

13 MS KADIJARTU JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you for taking time
14 to watch this video of our dear brother Sheku. As you
15 can see, a piece of our family has been taken away.
16 I have my daughters here present today, Tara, Latifah,
17 Zara, who are in the other room. During our short break
18 I had to go through to console them. That just shows
19 the impact of losing an uncle.

20 A piece will always be missing in his friends'
21 lives. The only son in a family who should have carried
22 the Bayoh name is no more.

1 Because of the joy, love and freedom I experienced
2 in Scotland, I told my little brother at the age of 17
3 to join me. I thought it will be a safer place for
4 a young black man to grow up than London was. I did not
5 know my brother's life would be cut short at the age of
6 31.

7 When Sheku moved to Scotland he had no problem
8 settling in and quickly made friends, who until this day
9 fight on his behalf for justice. Sheku's two sons have
10 been robbed of a father. Sheku will never see them grow
11 up. They are growing up fast with lots of questions
12 that their mothers do not know the answers to. For
13 seven years we have suffered heartbreak, anger and
14 disappointment through this journey as we fight for
15 justice.

16 Following my brother's death, so much was said about
17 him, some was good and some tried to smear his
18 character. We appreciate over the course of this
19 Public Inquiry we are likely to hear good and bad, but
20 I urge you, however long this Inquiry takes, to always
21 remember Sheku was a kind, loving, friendly man who
22 would help anyone who needs it.

1 He was a man who loved his two boys and lived for
2 them. Since his death, we lost so much. Our lives
3 changed. But our loss is nothing compared to the loss
4 of our brother. I can only imagine the pain my mother
5 goes through, who is sat here today heartbroken, but
6 I commend her as she always pull herself together for us
7 three girls.

8 No one deserves to go through what we are going
9 through. No parent should ever have to suffer the loss
10 of a child. It makes me sad, and you, the Inquiry, may
11 not want to hear this, but I don't feel safe any more in
12 Scotland. I feel nervous and worried for my children.
13 I fear for the safety of my nieces and nephews. Why
14 should I have to feel this way? Scotland is a place
15 I loved and I always gave back. These children were
16 born in Scotland. This is all they know. Why should we
17 not have the privilege to enjoy Scotland like any other
18 white person?

19 Once again, on behalf of myself and my husband, my
20 dear mother, my sisters, Collette, Sheku's two boys, his
21 friends and the rest of the Bayoh family, I want to
22 thank all those who have supported our family. We are

1 on a long journey. I hope you will continue to support
2 the cause of justice in Scotland and the rest of the
3 United Kingdom. Thank you.

4 LORD BRACADALE: Thank you, Mrs Johnson.

5 I am now going to ask Mr Anwar to address the
6 Inquiry on behalf of Collette Bell. Mr Anwar.

7 MR ANWAR: Thank you, your Lordship.

8 Before I start reading the statement on behalf of
9 Collette Bell, I want to pay tribute to the family of
10 Sheku Bayoh. This Public Inquiry would never have
11 happened had it not been for their courage and the
12 perseverance of Sheku's loved ones who have refused to
13 walk away, have refused to be silenced, bullied or
14 patronised. This Inquiry is a testament to their desire
15 to seek the truth and to ensure that Sheku is never
16 forgotten.

17 The statement I'm now making on behalf of
18 Collette Bell. Collette was the partner of Sheku Bayoh
19 and the mother of Sheku's youngest child, Isaac, who was
20 only three months old when his father died in police
21 custody.

22 I will speak mostly in the third party but also

1 sometimes in Collette's own words. Those listening to
2 Collette's words should know that Sheku was called Shek
3 by Collette. Collette is grateful to the Inquiry for
4 giving her the opportunity of hearing her words today.

5 Collette met Sheku whilst on a night out
6 in September 2012. She truly believes it was love at
7 first sight and Shek used to say it was like Cupid had
8 shot him. It was easy to fall for Shek as he
9 was loving, genuine, charismatic and had a larger than
10 life personality. He was down to earth, grounded and so
11 popular with everyone he met. Even if he was in a rush,
12 he would always stop and chat.

13 Shek had a passion for music and rapping. He also
14 enjoyed keeping himself healthy and going to the gym.
15 He was a lot of fun and lived life to the fullest but
16 more than anything, he was a family man. He would do
17 anything for his friends and family and they meant the
18 world to him. From the moment that Collette met Shek,
19 they became inseparable, spending most of their time
20 together. Their relationship was fast-tracked from
21 their meeting in September and Collette moved in with
22 Sheku in January 2013, but Collette said they were just

1 madly in love and it seemed like the natural
2 progression. Collette says she will always be grateful
3 for the many happy memories of the time they had
4 together, of their holidays and the nights away. It was
5 during a holiday to Cornwall that they spoke about their
6 future and the thought of retiring to Cornwall as it was
7 so beautiful. They both dreamt of growing old together
8 with their children and their grandchildren visiting
9 them. They would speak about their future a lot and
10 especially about getting married and what their big day
11 would be like. Shek loved the idea of having a full
12 weekend of celebrations but it would also have been
13 a celebration of his culture and his religion with
14 a blessing by an imam and the wearing of traditional
15 clothing. Collette was in no doubt they could see
16 a future together.

17 As a partner, Shek was incredibly loving and
18 thoughtful. Collette would always have fresh flowers in
19 the house as he bought her flowers every week with no
20 reason required. Every morning she would wake up to him
21 having prepared her coffee. He was always so supportive
22 and affectionate and they had a beautiful relationship

1 filled with deep love for each other.

2 Shek always used to laugh and say he was unique, he
3 was one of a kind. There was never a truer word spoken
4 as he was the best partner and perfect gentleman to
5 Collette and others. One of the things Collette loved
6 most of all was seeing Sheku being a father. Collette
7 loved seeing the relationship Sheku had with his oldest
8 son Tyler. Sheku was such a caring, fun and doting
9 father. Their bond was beautiful and it only made
10 Collette love him more and she was in no doubt that she
11 would want Sheku as a father to her children.

12 In February 2014, all of Collette's dreams came true
13 when they found out she was expecting. Unfortunately
14 this pregnancy was not meant to be. However, it made
15 the couple realise just how much they would like a baby.
16 Collette believed she was so lucky to fall pregnant
17 again quickly, and in January 2015, they welcomed Isaac
18 into the world. Just when Collette thought she couldn't
19 love Shek any more, seeing him as a dad to their son was
20 breathtaking. He was such a hands-on dad and always
21 wanted the best for his boys. His boys were his pride
22 and joy.

1 They were only just beginning the rest of their
2 lives together when Shek was cruelly taken from
3 Collette. She said it is so hard to think of the many
4 possibilities, not to mention the empty space left in
5 her life with not having Shek. Each day only gets
6 harder for Isaac as he grows up not having Shek around.
7 He often asks how daddy died and why he had to go to
8 heaven.

9 Collette dreads the day that she will have to try
10 and explain to Isaac the truth surrounding his father's
11 death. Collette says she has made it her priority for
12 Isaac to know and remember his dad. Shek was a well
13 loved man in the community and his death has impacted on
14 so many. Shek lived by the mantra of "you only live
15 once, live your life to the fullest, you don't know
16 God's plan and tomorrow is never as promised so make the
17 most of every day". Collette is glad that Sheku lived
18 by this mantra. He was thankful for all he had, the
19 life he was blessed with, and was always optimistic
20 about his future. Shek had started going to college to
21 further his career and become a gas engineer. He had so
22 much to look forward to. Collette said Shek always

1 dreamed of being famous for his rapping and she said
2 Shek would always say "Watch this space, one day I will
3 be famous and my name will be in lights". He was right,
4 but it should have been for his music and never because
5 of his death and the struggle for justice.

6 Collette said it was so hard to try and put into
7 words what she felt. For her there will never be enough
8 words to explain how amazing Sheku was and how much she
9 loved him. Collette was left devastated by his death,
10 but has built herself back up from the shell she became,
11 stronger each day, wanting to fight for Sheku but also
12 to be there for their son Isaac.

13 As the years have passed by, Collette says she has
14 grown tired of the excuses, the lies, the arrogance and
15 the false hope she was given. Collette has been angered
16 by the attempts to turn Sheku into a monster, knowing he
17 was unable to answer for himself, whilst those who loved
18 him were expected to keep silence. The past seven years
19 without Shek has been difficult and heartbreaking. His
20 loss was hard enough without the pain of waiting for
21 what followed, which once again left her heartbroken.
22 Collette often wonders how many families over the years

1 have suffered in silence, how many more will have to go
2 through similar ordeals before things improve. The pain
3 of losing Shek will never go away. It breaks Collette's
4 heart that Isaac missed out on the future they should
5 have had together as a family.

6 Today it will be seven years and seven days since
7 Shek was taken from Collette and she does not have the
8 strength to be here today, but hopes to speak to the
9 Inquiry herself soon, rather than through her lawyer.
10 But there is a warning: for those powers who thought
11 patronising Collette, trying to fool her, making broken
12 promises and believing that the passage of time would
13 fracture her desire for justice, she states Sheku will
14 not be forgotten. She will never stop loving and
15 remembering Sheku and today and in the months ahead she
16 does not want empty words of condolences and promises,
17 she wants you, the Inquiry, to uncover the truth hidden
18 for so long.

19 Over the years, Collette reached her limit and had
20 to look after herself so she could take care of Isaac
21 and rebuild her life as Shek would have wanted, but that
22 does not mean she is any less determined. She still

1 yearns for justice for her Sheku, that is the very least
2 this Inquiry owes to her son Isaac. Collette felt naive
3 as she was hopeful that this Inquiry would have been
4 over long before Isaac was at school. It is extremely
5 hard to keep all of the circumstances of Shek's death
6 and this Inquiry from Isaac and it gets harder the older
7 he is becoming.

8 Collette says that she keeps Sheku's memory alive
9 for Isaac because she wants him to know Sheku from the
10 stories and the memories she has of him, not what is in
11 the papers or spoken about in the playground.

12 To conclude in her own words Collette wishes to say
13 today:

14 "Having the Inquiry going on for so long will make
15 life difficult as you never get any closure. It's with
16 you day and night. When it comes to the surface it just
17 brings dread, especially when all I experienced
18 previously was disappointment after disappointment.
19 I can't help but suspect there was a hope that people
20 would stop caring about injustice and that we would
21 simply give up. It is now our time our questions were
22 answered. No family should ever have to go through the

1 burden of losing a loved one in police custody. We
2 should never have had to rely on our own efforts to make
3 sure the full facts about Sheku's death were known.
4 I really hope this Public Inquiry fights for the truth
5 and fulfils the promises made to our family and to my
6 son, giving him a legacy where he can be proud of his
7 father."

8 Thank you.

9 LORD BRACADALE: Thank you, Mr Anwar. Well, both in the
10 video and in the addresses we have heard moving tributes
11 to Sheku Bayoh from members of his family and his
12 friends, as well as powerful expressions of the impact
13 of his death on them.

14 The Inquiry will now adjourn and sit tomorrow
15 morning at 10 o'clock.

16 (11.30 am)

17 (The Inquiry adjourned until Wednesday,

18 11 May 2022 at 10.00 am)

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