



## **Countering Anti-Muslim Sentiment**

The Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV) and the Muslim Legal Network (MLN) jointly called on the Australian Muslim Community to contact their elected representatives to ask that they to take steps to counter anti-Muslim sentiment in Australia.

In a statement, ICV President Hyder Gulam said:

"Australians have generally been appalled at the offensive, discriminatory and divisive utterance by a number of our Members of Parliament against Muslims and Islam<sup>1</sup>.

Islamic values encompass those fundamental precepts like democracy, rule of law, tolerance, the sanctity of human life, the right to live in peace, respect for human rights, equality of men and women, the equality of people of all races and ethnicities, the shared responsibility of society and the affluent for those less fortunate and disadvantaged and the protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations. "

MLN President, Fatima Dennaoui said:

"We are all aware that Muslim migration to Australia has brought many benefits to our nation, including a skilled work force. However, there are some challenges that have made it difficult for some Muslims to feel part of a wider national collective. Part of that is the perception that Australian society does not respect individuality with respect to religious practice, be it through woeful and bias media reporting, and statements by certain Members of Parliament.

It is important that Members of Parliament unite the Australian community rather than divide it. It is time Parliament came out clearly in favour of Australian diversity, multiculturalism and pluralism. The politics of fear must be rejected.

We must applaud those Members of Parliament who have spoken about in support of multiculturalism and rejected divisive leadership and these individuals".

Immediate actions that you can do:

1) Contact your elected representatives, through the Parliaments of Australia and Victoria websites:

- Commonwealth Senate: <http://www.apf.gov.au/senate/senators/contacts/los.pdf>

<sup>1</sup> Senator Cory Bernardi as cited in <http://www.news.com.au/national/liberal-mps-warn-of-islam-danger/story-e6frfkw9-1226002547569#ixzz1IDzzEuWW>:

"I, for one, don't want to eat meat butchered in the name of an ideology that is mired in sixth century brutality and is anathema to my own values...".

- Commonwealth Representatives (Lower House): <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/memlist.pdf>
- Victoria Senate: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members/council>
- Victoria Representatives (Lower House): <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members/assembly>

On the webpages noted above, find the local member who represents your electorate (both State and Federal) including the respective senate representative. You will find the mailing address, phone and email address.

You may also contact the relevant Parliamentary Switchboard (have information about your post code and suburb ready) at:

- Parliament of Australia - 02 6277 7111;
- Parliament of Victoria - 03 9651 8911.

Call your elected representative to counter anti-Muslim sentiment in Australia.

2) Put your mobile phone to good use. Call your friends and family members and ensure that they contact their elected officials. Act as a facilitator for your friends and family to help them express their feelings to their Members of Parliament.

For more information, contact the ICV per the details listed above, or email the Muslim Legal Network at [muslim.legal.network@gmail.com] or visit the website: <http://www.muslimlegalnetwork.com/>