



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

Media Statement

18 March 2022

AFIC condemns the Marginalization of Muslim Females by Indian Court on its Unconstitutional Decision to Ban Hijab from Schools and calls for international condemnation on this violation of Human Rights

In a nation long known for the horrific practice of female infanticide, the Indian government has resorted to a new form of female oppression by denying Muslim women and girls the right to wear the scarf while pursuing a formal education. The Indian government cannot claim to support girls' education and livelihood if it does not ensure an inclusive space for girls to exercise their religious right to cover their hair and be free of intimidation, coercion and harassment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees the freedom to express one's own religion or beliefs and not be subject to discrimination. This is not the case in India.

"The Indian Court's decision to outwardly discriminate against Muslim females only fans the flames of the extremism of right-wing fascist groups that are growing exponentially in India. We ask for peace and tolerance of all faith groups. This decision needs to be overturned immediately. The international community must take strong steps to impress on India to change its present repressive course. I am very afraid for minorities in India. The Hijab ban is another failure of Indian politics," said AFIC president **Dr. Rateb Jneid**.

International human rights expert and founder of Genocide Watch, *Gregory Stanton*, has recently warned about the potential for genocide as a result of rising hate speech and violence targeting minorities. AFIC also notes that India's Permanent Representative to the UN, TS Tirmuti, also wished to pushback on any Islamophobia before the UN in his concern about the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. For reasons outlined, AFIC requests that all progressive Hindus speak out against the extremist views being adopted and for other minority groups in India and around the world to take a stand in the face of these regressive measures.

Authorised by:

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*The peak body for Australian Muslims representing
State and Territory Islamic Councils and Societies*



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