



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

Media Statement

19 July 2022

AFIC is deeply saddened over the death of wrongly detained Yusuf Zahab, our prayers and condolences go to his family. We strongly urge the federal government to bring the remaining victims home – Now

“For over three years, AFIC has been pleading with the Australian federal government to bring the stranded Australian victims of ISIS back from the Syrian “refugee camps”. The previous government promised that they would be brought back once covid becomes more manageable. We have now managed covid and have a new government, but alas, our fellow Australians remain stranded.” Said AFIC president Dr Rateb Jneid.

“I am dismayed by the hypocrisy of Western governments. We at AFIC are sympathetic to the war ravaged people of Ukraine, but we are deeply disenchanted with the double standards of our governments that quickly pour hundreds of millions to arm the citizens of the European country and resettle tens of thousands of their refugees while at the same time, neglecting our sovereign duty to rescue our citizens who are caught up in a conflict that is not their own in a foreign land without adequate food or protection. This negligence will remain a national shame upon us, especially knowing that their captors have been pleading with the Australian government to repatriate them. We must urgently bring them home and allow them to resettle.” Said Dr Jneid.

“AFIC, the national peak organisation representing Australian Muslims and employing, through member societies, tens of Imams around Australia, is ready to help in the resettlement and in the provision of spiritual support and counselling to these stranded Australians. We urge in the strongest possible terms, our Australian government, to bring them all home now.” Said Dr Jneid.

“I am very sad and heartbroken to see the best nation on earth, my beloved Australia, continuing to neglect the plight of our stranded women and children in Syria. The most recent tragedy could have been prevented if our political leaders had exercised equal respect for these citizens as they do for others. I pray to Allah to rest the soul of our dear son Yusuf and to console his family and loved ones. I call upon and urge our government to immediately repatriate these stranded Australian women and children and I am personally ready with all the Imams in AFIC’s National Sharia Board to spend time with them and give them the necessary spiritual support when they return to Australia.” Said the Most Eminent Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari, National Grand Mufti of Australia.

“I will be sending a letter directly to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Home Affairs to convey our deepest concern and find ways to expedite the repatriation of these stranded Australian women and children.” Said Dr Jneid.

Authorised :

Dr Rateb Jneid
President, AFIC

The Most Eminent Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari
National Grand Mufti of Australia

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils

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



Sydney (Head Office): 932 Bourke Street, Zetland, NSW 2017

Melbourne: 66-68 Jeffcott Street, West Melbourne VIC 3003

Canberra: 21/41 Liardet Street, Weston ACT 2611

Perth: 17 Mercantile Way, Malaga WA 6090

W: afic.com.au **E:** admin@afic.com.au **PH:** (02) 9319 6733