



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

AFIC is highly concerned about the “Jihad” Rhetoric in today’s headlines

Media Statement

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AFIC understands that we must always be vigilant and commends our security agencies for their ongoing, but quiet, watchfulness. Australia’s security is not served by inflammatory headlines or by marginalising or creating suspicion about Australian minorities.

“I urge Home Affairs Minister Clare O’Neil to avoid making any statements that create suspicion or apprehension among Australians when she addresses the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee youth summit”. Said AFIC President Dr Rateb Jneid.

“We do firmly abhor the screening of beheading videos period; we abhor it even the more when it is shown to impressionable children. Injecting, as a justification for reopening the debate, a story of doubtful currency does not help keep society safe. Although the story speaks of the potential effects of the clip, it says nothing about the extreme graphic violence in movies and video games that are advertised in the same publications.” Said Dr Jneid.

“The media ties COVID lockdowns and bullying into the topic; COVID lockdowns were tough on all Australians, these lockdowns nurtured mental health challenges for all, I find it ludicrous for headlines to twist these into a "Jihadi" fear.” Said Dr Jneid.

“Bullying in schools and in all closed settings is real and does impact on people, I urge governments to please address this without the sensationalism of the fear of "Jihad". Teachers in all schools face tremendous challenges, from being forced to enable questionable lifestyle choices to the ever-increasing reporting requirements. Our education system needs an urgent overhaul to focus more on teacher-retention and student behaviour management, this can be done without the sensationalism associated with the word "Jihad".” Said Dr Jneid.

“For Arabic speakers, "Jihad" is a reference to striving and exerting positive effort. We know of both Muslim and Christian Arabs naming their sons "Jihad", neither of them do so with the thought of violence on their minds, they pick this name because they want their child to live up to the ideals of hard work and the exertion of effort.” Said Dr Jneid.

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Australian Federation of Islamic Councils

*The peak body for Australian Muslims representing
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