

AFIC Welcomes calls for a Ceasefire



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

Wednesday 13th December, 2023

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC) welcomes the position of the Australian Government today, in voting for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza at the UN General Assembly.

Australia has demonstrated its alignment with common sense and the overwhelming international sentiment that lives, all lives, must be protected.

We note that the motion demands an immediate humanitarian ceasefire; that all parties comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, notably with regard to the protection of civilians, and; the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, as well as ensuring humanitarian access;

AFIC would also add that it calls for all people held without charge to be released in Israel and Palestine, and that international observers be sent to the area to determine the facts on the ground.

‘We appreciate the Australian Government voting for a ceasefire and showing a more balanced position that better represents the Australian Public’ said Dr Rateb Jneid, President of AFIC. ‘We ask the Government to use all its influence to make this motion become a reality’.

AFIC notes that this position is following a joint statement by the prime ministers of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada in calling for a sustainable ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and an end to the continuous suffering.

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AFIC is concerned, though, that the vote is not binding, and requests that the Security Council be recalled and vote for a binding immediate ceasefire. The humanitarian toll of over 17,000 people is unacceptable by any measure, and the continued killing is undermining the role and intent of the UN, and an affront to humanity. As winter approaches, with the collapse of the health care system, and blockade of food, water, fuel, and medicines, a catastrophe is unfolding in front of us in Gaza.

AFIC is the peak body for Muslim organisations in Australia and has a membership of over 150 organisations. Established in 1964 it has pioneered and established many initiatives that have benefited the local community. AFIC has lobbied the Government to change its position on international policy where it doesn't represent local communities' views nor a balanced values response.

'Australia needs to renew its approach to the Middle East and pursue a purposeful role towards a lasting peaceful solution' Dr Rateb Jneid concluded.

It's already late; action is needed now!

Authorised:

Dr Rateb Jneid
President of AFIC

