



Australian Federation  
of Islamic Councils

# Commemorating the Nakbah – The Great Catastrophe

Wednesday, 15th May, 2024

Today, May 15th, marks the somber commemoration of the Nakba, or "The Catastrophe," a pivotal moment in history that led to the destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages, the killing of more than 15,000 Palestinians, and the forced displacement of over 750,000 Palestinians who were dispossessed of their homes and land in 1948. This followed over a decade of murderous campaigns by Zionist groups that killed hundreds and created an atmosphere of terror in Palestine.

Dr. Rateb Jneid, President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), reflects, "Today we remember not just the historical catastrophe but also its painful ongoing impact. The Nakba is a wound that continues to bleed amidst the current atrocities facing the Palestinian people."

AFIC stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people, both in Australia and around the world, as we reflect on 76 years of this enduring displacement, struggle, and oppression. This day reminds us of the grave injustices that began in 1948, actions that have perpetuated a cycle of suffering and conflict affecting countless lives. The Nakba is not just a historical event, it is an ongoing reality for Palestinians facing brutal policies, including forced evictions, illegal settlement expansions, arbitrary arrests, and severe restrictions on movement due to military checkpoints and separation walls.

The Nakba is a continuing crisis that evolves with every passing year and has continued through the current atrocity playing out before our very eyes as we have seen the death of over 35,000 Palestinians in the



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last 7 months, with over 50% of them being women and children. Recently, Israel has escalated its aggression by initiating a brutal bombardment and invasion of Rafah—ironically, a 'safe zone' where over 1.2 million Palestinians were forcibly corralled. Today, this area stands as one of the most perilous on the planet for innocent families and children.

Considering these alarming developments, AFIC calls upon the Australian government to assert its role on the international stage and support efforts in the United Nations to recognize the State of Palestine. This is not merely a symbolic act but a vital step towards rectifying historical wrongs and fostering a genuine peace process.

Dr. Jneid states, "The recognition of Palestine at the United Nations is crucial not just for historical justice but as a significant stride towards sustainable peace. It is essential that Australia and other nations stand firmly for these principles."

It is imperative that we call out the ongoing complicity of nations that support the systemic injustices against the Palestinian people. The global community, including Australia, must not remain silent. We must demand an end to the occupation, a cessation of violence, and a serious commitment to achieving a lasting peace.

The path ahead requires courage and resolve. AFIC, along with the broader Australian Muslim community, condemns the continuous application of brutal policies by Israeli forces, including forced evictions, expansion of illegal settlements, and arbitrary detentions. These actions not only perpetuate the cycle of violence but also



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impede the possibility of peace.

As we reflect on the pain of the past and confront the challenges of the present, we call upon all Australians and those who stand for human rights to lend their voices in advocating for justice and peace. Engage with your representatives, educate yourselves and others about the Palestinian struggle, and push for decisive actions that lead to meaningful change.

AFIC urges the Australian government to take decisive action by enforcing a comprehensive arms embargo against Israel and recognizing the sovereign and independent State of Palestine. These steps are crucial to align Australia with international law and support the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people.

On this Nakba Day, let our collective actions inspire hope and lead to tangible outcomes that uphold the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people.

Authorised by

**Dr Rateb Jneid**

President of AFIC