



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

Statement from the AFIC in Support of the Sydney University Muslim Students Association (SUMSA)

Thursday, 27th June, 2024

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC) stands in solidarity with the Sydney University Muslim Students Association (SUMSA) and commends their principled stand for justice and peace. Recently, SUMSA successfully negotiated with the University of Sydney to address its ties with Israeli occupation forces and weapons manufacturers. This courageous effort led to significant outcomes, including commitments for an independently-reviewed disclosure, paths to divestment, and plans for exchange programs with Palestine.

President of AFIC, Dr. Rateb Jneid stated, "We fully support SUMSA's stand for justice at the University of Sydney. Their peaceful efforts reflect the strength and unity of our community."

Throughout their encampment, the students received immense support from both the Muslim and wider communities, becoming a model of peaceful protest held up internationally. However, the closure of this peaceful encampment has been followed by an unwarranted smear campaign. Sensationalist and biased reporting has sought to undermine and discredit the legitimate achievements of these dedicated students and employing disingenuous tactics that misrepresent the nature of SUMSA's advocacy and activities.

AFIC strongly condemns these unjust attacks on SUMSA and the broader Muslim community. Dr Jneid further stated, "It is disappointing to witness such attempts to tarnish the efforts of students who stand up for their beliefs in a peaceful and lawful manner. The targeting of these young leaders through caricatures and unfounded accusations of extremism is an affront not only to them but to all who advocate for justice and human rights."

We urge all members of the Australian community, including politicians and community leaders, to recognise the legitimacy of SUMSA's endeavours. These students have not only advocated for an ethical stance from their university but have also fostered a dialogue about the broader implications of institutional partnerships that conflict with the values of equity and justice.

In light of these challenges, AFIC calls on the Australian Government and all relevant bodies to acknowledge the significant, positive contributions made by SUMSA. We also urge them to take a stand against the unfair treatment these students are facing and to support their call for justice and peace.

Authorised by
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President of AFIC