



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils

AFIC Calls for Universal Condemnation of Attacks on Civilians in Ukraine and Palestine

Wednesday, 10th July, 2024

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC) extends its deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the recent attacks on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine on 9 July 2024. We are saddened by the loss of life and the destruction caused by these attacks, and we stand in solidarity with all those affected.

However, it is with great concern that we also observe the glaring disparity in Australia's response to similar atrocities occurring in Palestine. In the past few days, significant attacks have been reported in Gaza, including the bombing of a school and an assault on a United Nations office, leading to tragic casualties and suffering.

Dr. Rateb Jneid, President of AFIC, stated: "While we mourn the loss of life in Ukraine, we must also confront the painful silence and inadequate response to the continuous attacks on Palestinian civilians. The scale and frequency of these attacks in Palestine far exceed those in many other conflicts around the world, yet they fail to elicit a proportionate international outcry."

In response to the hospital bombing in Ukraine on 9 July 2024, Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong declared through X 'Russia's missile attacks on several Ukrainian cities, including a Kyiv children's hospital are abhorrent. We condemn the targeting of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals. Australia continues to support the people of Ukraine in the face of Russia's illegal, immoral war.'

In contrast following similar attacks in Gaza, Minister Wong stated 'Hospitals, patients, medical and humanitarian staff must be protected. Australia is deeply concerned by attacks in and around hospitals in Gaza, including an Indonesian-funded hospital in the northern Gaza and a Jordanian field hospital'

Despite the war in Gaza being described as potentially genocidal, and with the International Criminal Court recently considering issuing arrest warrants for the Israeli President over his actions in Gaza, the Australian government has not condemned the Israeli actions or



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imposed sanctions. Not only does Australia continue to condemn the Russian actions in the Ukraine, but it has also imposed several sanctions on Russia including travel bans, restriction on military cooperation and exports, and financial restrictions.

It is essential to recognise that selective empathy and selective application of international law only serve to undermine the principles of justice and peace. Both the Ukrainian and Palestinian civilians deserve the same level of protection and the same vigorous international response to aggressions against them.

This inconsistency is glaring. Speaking truth to power takes courage and we call on the Australia to show this courage.

"We urge the global community, including the Australian Government, to apply international laws uniformly and to extend their empathy and support to all victims of aggression, irrespective of geography. Australia must not be selective in its responses but should act decisively to prevent any aggressor from targeting civilians," Dr. Jneid added.

AFIC calls on all nations and international organisations to strengthen their efforts to protect civilians and to ensure accountability through international law and advocates for consistent and impartial enforcement of international laws and norms, ensuring that all civilian populations, whether in Ukraine or Palestine, receive equal protection and support in the face of aggression.

We call upon the international community, including Australia, to actively and equitably address these crises to uphold the dignity and safety of all human beings. This commitment to fairness and justice is essential for the integrity of international relations and for the advancement of global peace.

Authorised by
Dr Rateb Jneid
President of AFIC