Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
Equality without exception

MEDIA RELEASE

Condemnation Cannot Be Selective: Addressing the Climate of Fear Facing Australian Muslims

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We are not surprised by the recent reports regarding the accused terror plot in Western Australia. Our community has been holding its breath, fearing that the constant vilification and escalation in rhetoric would eventually translate into something far more dangerous.

We see the swift and overwhelming condemnation directed at the accused. What we have not seen, with the same urgency or consistency, is condemnation of the broader environment that has allowed hostility and Islamophobia toward our community to grow unchecked. The relentless news cycles that repeatedly associate our community, our religion, our women, our men and our children with suspicion and threat have real-world consequences.

We have not seen equal scrutiny of the policies and policing powers that have allowed our community to be disrupted during sacred prayers and peaceful protests. We have not seen strong and unequivocal messages of support from our Prime Minister, nor clear additional protections announced by premiers to reassure Australian Muslims that our safety is a priority.

Condemnation cannot be selective. Accountability cannot be conditional. Media outlets and politicians who promote false narratives, fuel fear, or amplify harmful stereotypes must also be held responsible for the climate of fear they help create.

The Muslim community in Australia has continuously faced persistent and harmful forms of Islamophobia. This hostility does not exist in a vacuum, it is shaped and emboldened by the narratives that dominate public discourse.

Our community deserves safety, dignity and protection. As well as leaders who take accountability, publicly acknowledge the fears of Muslim communities and ultimately stand up for their rights as they do for countless others.

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