



Public Statement

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ANIC Calls for Immediate Action Following Disturbing Survey Findings on Discrimination in Australian Educational Institutions

The **Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)** expresses grave concern over the findings of a recent survey conducted within tertiary institutions in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The survey reveals alarming levels of **Islamophobia, anti-Arab, and anti-Palestinian racism** that **compromise** the safety and well-being of students and staff.

The data highlights that:

- Over **70%** of respondents feel uncomfortable expressing grief on Middle Eastern conflicts.
- Nearly half feel unsafe wearing cultural or religious attire, such as the hijab or keffiyeh, on campus.
- **56.2%** have frequently or occasionally witnessed or experienced Islamophobic or anti-Arab behaviour.
- A significant **62.5%** report negative impacts on their mental health due to discrimination and unsafe conditions.
- Only **32%** believe their institutions provide adequate support to address these issues.
- Nearly **70%** perceive institutional communications as biased against Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims.

These troubling insights underscore the urgent need for universities to take action. No one should feel unsafe or marginalised in an environment meant to foster learning and growth.

ANIC calls on educational institutions to implement the following measures:

- Develop and enforce comprehensive anti-discrimination policies and codes of conduct.
- Establish accessible reporting mechanisms for incidents of racism and bias.
- Enhance support services, including mental health resources, for affected students and staff.
- Commit to unbiased, inclusive communication practices.

The insights gathered through this survey should inform strategies aimed at improving inclusivity, strengthening support systems, and addressing systemic issues within higher education settings. The safety and dignity of all students and staff must be a priority.

We thank **Senator Mehreen Faruqi** for presenting the report at the Senate Estimates hearing on 7th November 2024.

There is **no place** for **Islamophobia** or **racism** of any kind at university or anywhere else.

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