



Public Statement

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A Call for Responsible Journalism to Combat Bias and Ensure Accurate Reporting

Responsible journalism plays a crucial role in **shaping public understanding** and responses to tragic events. The way incidents are reported can influence public perception, **fuel division**, perpetuate **harmful stereotypes**, and impact social cohesion. In the face of increasing violence and destruction—whether from devastating attacks abroad or humanitarian crises—it is **essential for media outlets** to report with **accuracy, fairness, and sensitivity**. Misinformation or biased reporting can lead to **misinformed public opinions** and the unjust treatment of entire communities. Journalists and reporters bear a **critical responsibility** to present facts objectively, without inflaming prejudice or fear.

The recent attacks in the United States and the killing of innocent people are **unequivocally condemned**. These events highlight the urgent need for **careful and accurate reporting**. The media's framing of the incident **disproportionately** emphasised the attacker's identity and religion, with terms like "*Islamic terrorism*" and "*Muslim terrorists*" dominating coverage. This selective focus raises **serious concerns** about **biased reporting** and reinforces **harmful stereotypes**. It perpetuates the **false narrative** that terrorism is inherently linked to Islam or any religion and implies that acts of terror are labelled as such only when committed by individuals of a particular faith or background. This is **categorically false** and must be **rejected**. Such inconsistencies in reporting underscore the critical importance of responsible journalism in maintaining **objectivity** and **avoiding inaccurate and biased narratives**.

Similarly, recent events have been portrayed in the media as a Muslim-driven agenda to harm non-Muslims, creating a skewed and prejudicial image. However, the fact that one of the victims, **Kareem Badawai**—a *Palestinian Muslim*—was also tragically killed complicates this narrative. His death, alongside all victims of such violence, is a stark reminder that **terrorism has no religion, colour or race**. It is an act of **violence** that must be **condemned unequivocally**, regardless of the perpetrator's identity.

The **Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)** is **deeply appalled** by the **irresponsible and biased coverage** of these events by certain media outlets and reporters. This coverage has unjustly targeted and demonised a particular community while exploiting these tragedies for ulterior motives.

In times of heightened tensions, media agencies, journalists, and political leaders **must act with utmost caution and responsibility**. They are obligated to provide **fair, balanced, and accurate information** and must **refrain** from actions that **divide or fuel prejudice**.

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