NATIONAL FRIDAY KHUTBAH
(SERMON)

11 March 2026

Assalamu Alaikom Wa Rahmatu Allahe Barakatuh,,

The **Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)** urges all Imams, Khateebs (speakers), and community leaders to dedicate their Friday Khutbah (Sermon) on **Friday, 13 March 2026**, to address:

The International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

Introduction

- March 15 is a significant date for Muslims worldwide. It marks the anniversary of the Christchurch massacre, where 51 individuals were killed and many injured at two mosques solely due to their faith.
- This tragic event underscores the need to combat Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate, a form of hate that continues to affect Muslims globally, including Australia.
- The United Nations General Assembly has officially designated March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.
- This year, this solemn remembrance coincides with the holy month of Ramadan, making it an essential time for reflection, unity, and action against anti-Muslim hate.
- Islamic organisations, schools and mosques across Australia are facing a disturbing escalation in anti-Muslim hate. This has included graffiti, vandalism, hate mail and threatening social media messages, including chilling references to “Christchurch 2.0”. At the same time, increased security breaches and alleged terror plots targeting mosques have deepened fear and anxiety within Muslim communities, particularly during Ramadan.
- While the community must remain vigilant and attentive to safety, it must also continue its daily life and uphold the sacred rituals of Ramadan with resilience, confidence, and steadfastness, refusing to be intimidated or driven into fear.

Understanding Islamophobia

- **What is Islamophobia?** It is a form of racism and hate targeting Muslims or those perceived as being connected to Islam.
- Islamophobia manifests in various ways:
  - Overt acts of violence (such as physical attacks on Muslims and vandalism of mosques).
  - Discrimination in workplaces, schools, and public spaces.

- Hate speech and incitement to violence.
- Cyberbullying and online abuse.
- Mocking Islam and our religious symbols and way of life, like hijab, halal food, fasting Ramadan, etc

- Islamophobia is when people give Muslims a really hard time simply because they are Muslim. Whether this is done by ridiculing them, inciting people against them, bullying them, or even attacking them, just because that person identifies herself/himself as a Muslim. Statistically, Muslim women are more likely to be victims of hate crimes because of the hijab, which makes them more identifiable as Muslims.
- Islamophobia is not new; it existed during the time of the Prophets and their followers, including Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon them all) and his companions, who faced persecution in Makkah.
- Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an, "*Indeed, messengers before you were rejected, but they patiently endured rejection and persecution until Our help came to them. And none can alter the words of Allah. And you have already received some of the accounts of the messengers.*" (Surah Al-An'am 6:34)

The Rise of Islamophobia in Australia

- The Australian Muslim community has experienced an alarming surge in Islamophobic and anti-Muslim hate incidents, which threaten the safety, security and wellbeing of the Australian Muslims.
- While the Muslim community has been aware that Islamophobia exists in Australia for some time, the most concerning thing for us is that it is on the rise, and incidents are becoming more common.
- Reports from grassroots community organisations, including ANIC's Action Against Islamophobia initiative, highlight a disturbing rise in incidents such as:
  - Threats of violence.
  - Hate letters sent to mosques and Islamic centres.
  - Verbal and physical abuse targeting visibly Muslim women.
- We hear about it more often, see it on our social media feeds, and read about it on the news—yet as a community, are we doing enough, both individually and collectively, to tackle this problem?
- This is a reminder that we can no longer sit back or remain unaware of the growing issue that our community is facing. We should actively be at the forefront of recognising it, responding to it and seeking justice for victims by calling for perpetrators to be held accountable. It's about the responsibility **YOU** have and about your role in doing something about this growing disease in our society.
- Given the majority of victims of Islamophobia are visibly Muslim women – this means it can be your wife, your sister, your daughter or your mother who is subjected to discrimination, harassment or even verbal and physical abuse. We need to ask ourselves, what role can we play in doing something about this growing threat to not only the Muslim community but society as a whole?

NATIONAL FRIDAY KHUTBAH
(SERMON)

- The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "*The believers, in their mutual mercy, love and compassion, are like a (single) body; if one part of it feels pain, the rest of the body will join it in staying awake and suffering fever."*
- It is important that each of us takes some action, however small, because doing NOTHING simply isn't an option.
- The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, *"Whoever among you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand [by taking action]; if he cannot, then with his tongue [by speaking out]; and if he cannot, then with his heart – and that is the weakest of faith".*

Call to Action for the Muslim Community

ANIC urges all Imams and community members to take the following practical actions:

1. There are many things that one can do to fulfil their obligation when it comes to a problem like Islamophobia.
2. Muslims must educate themselves about the reality of Islamophobia and hate crimes in general. It is important to understand what a hate crime or incident looks like and how to report them to authorities.
3. Encourage people to report every hate crime to the Police. Islamophobic incidents must be reported to the Police, and they are required to treat all reports of hate crimes seriously.
4. Reporting Islamophobic incidents to advocacy groups, such as ANIC's initiative, **Action Against Islamophobia.** These include:
    - **Vandalism, such as graffiti and arson attacks**
    - **Physical and Verbal Assault**
    - **Online/Cyber Threats and hate speech**
    - **Anti-Palestinian Racism**
5. Every incident, no matter how small, matters. Silence allows hate to grow. Speak up, report it, and be part of the change.
6. Understand **WHY** it is important to report Islamophobia:
    - Helps victims seek justice and support.
    - Raises awareness about the severity of Islamophobia.
    - Fosters in policy-making and legislative efforts against anti-Muslim racism.
    - Most importantly, it helps put an end to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate.
7. **Why is it important to report?** Unfortunately, there are still people who try to deny that the Muslim community is suffering from islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate. By recording the incidents, we can have the facts as quantifiable statistics, which can be traced back to specific events,

political statements, policy decisions, and other factors. This will allow us to identify trends and advocate for legislative and policy changes to better address the problem.

8. Challenge hate speech and rhetoric when you notice it. This could be something quoted in a news article, or a comment made on social media. It could be something someone says to you at work or in a shopping centre.
9. Raising awareness about the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate and educating others about Islam's message of peace.
10. Encourage and support the push for legislative and policy changes and community action against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate by engaging with local MPs and policymakers.
11. Raising awareness among your peers and colleagues about Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate and its impact on the Muslim community.
12. Sharing posts on social media to recognise, show solidarity with and educate others about the **International Day to Combat Islamophobia on March 15**.

Guidance for the Muslim Community

- Deal with matters wisely and responsibly, staying within the boundaries of the law.
- Always seek professional help and legal support when facing discrimination.
- Never lose hope and always rely on Allah. Allah SWT says, *"Indeed, with hardship comes ease."* (Surah Al-Inshirah 94:6)

ANIC extends its thanks and gratitude to all Imams, Khateebs, and community leaders for their leadership and support and for Standing for justice and against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate.

Together, we can put an end to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate.

Issued By:

The Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)