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MEDIA RELEASE

ANIC CONDEMNS MINISTER DUTTON'S RACIST COMMENTS

The Australian National Imams Council (ANIC) condemns the comments made in parliament yesterday by the Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton. The Minister asserted that it was a mistake to allow Lebanese Muslims to migrate to Australia in the 1970s because of the associated problems with terrorism experienced today.

The comments are outrageous and serve only to vilify an entire segment of the Australian community. No community deserves to be tarnished by the actions of a very small minority. The ploy of shifting blame exposes the government's abdication of its responsibility to deal effectively with the threat of terrorism. It also confirms the base strategy of pandering to the extreme right within its party.

For more than forty years Australian Muslims of Lebanese background have been making significant and positive contributions to society in areas ranging from construction to farming, education, health and much more.

ANIC stands firmly against all forms of racism and calls on the Prime Minister to sanction members of his government who seek to undermine community harmony and cohesion.

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