



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IMAMS COUNCIL



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ANIC Appreciates the Denunciation of the Collective Punishment being Inflicted on Palestinians But much more needs to be said and done

The Australian National Imams Council (ANIC) welcomes the recent comments by Industry Minister Ed Husic and Early Childhood Education Minister Anne Aly, who courageously spoke out against the collective punishment being committed by Israel against the Palestinian people. ANIC joins with them in calling for Australia to step up support for Palestinians facing a humanitarian crisis.

The events in Gaza, particularly the horrifying airstrike on Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza City, have left the entire world in shock and mourning. The devastating attack resulted in the loss of over 800 innocent lives and left thousands injured, including patients and displaced Palestinians who were seeking refuge in the hospital. It is heartbreaking to witness the suffering of more than 2.2 million civilians, who are already suffering from the siege which has been imposed by Israel and denial of humanitarian aid. With each day, the suffering worsens as they struggle with electricity shortages, diminishing food and clean drinking water and a lack of medical supplies. Yet, so many political leaders have remained silent about the siege and its devastating effect.

To date, the Australian Government has maintained a stance supportive of Israel with little regard for the violence and suffering inflicted against the Palestinians. There has been a silence in the face of Israel perpetrating war crimes against a civilian population.

ANIC commends Ministers Husic and Aly for their recent statements, which reflect the concerns held by the broader community. However, there is much more that needs to be said and done to confront and begin to stem the humanitarian disaster which has already unfolded in Gaza. As stated by Oxfam, a British-founded confederation of independent charitable organisations focusing on the alleviation of global poverty, *“the severity of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza that is unfolding as a result of Israel’s siege of the area is worse than anything international disaster relief organization Oxfam has seen in its 80-year history”* and *“The humanitarian rulebook has been thrown out, and polite pleas from politicians to ‘minimise civilian fatalities’ are naive at best, and at worst seem blind to the unimaginable horrors already taking place in Gaza”*¹.

The Australian Government cannot maintain a partial or blinkered position any longer. It must speak out against the atrocities being committed against Palestinians. Justice and fairness demands that oppression and violence be called out, wherever it may occur. The war crimes being perpetrated by Israel must be unequivocally condemned. We, as a nation, cannot be complicit, whether by our silence or partial approach, in another nation committing war crimes against a civilian population.

For any media inquiries, please contact ANIC’s Spokesperson, Bilal Rauf, on 1300 765 940 or spokesperson@anic.org.au

¹ <https://truthout.org/articles/oxfam-leader-says-humanitarian-crisis-in-gaza-is-worst-theyve-ever-seen/>