



PRESS RELEASE

Reports of Islamophobia have increased four-fold post Israel-Palestine escalations

13 October 2023

Since the latest escalations in Israel and Palestine on Saturday, reports of Islamophobic incidents to the Islamophobia Register Australia (Register) have quadrupled. In some of these incidents, direct references were made to the current Israel-Palestine situation.

The Register has also heard anecdotal reports about increased Islamophobia from other Muslim community organisations, including threats to mosques and Islamic schools and physical assaults of Muslim women in Australia. The Register's Executive Director, Sharara Attai, said:

"Unfortunately, we know that violence in the Middle East often leads to increased Islamophobia in Australia. We also know that divisive political rhetoric can lead to increased Islamophobia."

The Register is dismayed at the use of rhetoric that has racist implications and divisive rhetoric, by certain senior leaders in Australia. The Register echoes the comments of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation chief, Mike Burgess, who stated that: "It is important that all parties consider the implications for social cohesion when making public statements." Burgess also stated: "As I have said previously, words matter" and "Asio has seen direct connections between inflamed language and inflamed community tensions."

Divisive rhetoric from people in leadership positions is irresponsible and dangerous, and clearly has an impact on domestic tensions. Ms Attai stated:

"We call on all leaders, commentators and senior figures to use careful and considered language that works to advance social cohesion, and ensure that they are not fanning the flames to racism or division."

The Register also acknowledges that there have been reports of anti-semitism in recent days, such as the widely reported anti-semitic chants that were made by a small number of people at Monday night's pro-Palestine protest. We note that the organisers of that protest have publicly stated that those people were asked to leave the protest and that those views were not shared by either the organisers or the vast majority of the protestors, demonstrating that anti-semitic views are rejected by the majority of people irrespective of their views on the Israel-Palestine situation. As an anti-racism organisation, the Register completely rejects racism of any kind, including anti-semitism. Racism, whether Islamophobia or anti-semitism, is completely unacceptable.

This is a particularly tense time and the Register encourages Australian Muslims to remain alert and vigilant against Islamophobia.



The Register urges anyone who has experienced or witnessed Islamophobia, whether in real life or online, to report to both the Register and the police where appropriate. The Register is able to offer victim support services such as pro bono legal support, culturally sensitive mental health referrals and advocacy in certain circumstances. Ms Attai said:

“It is crucial that these incidents are reported so that victims are able to get the critical support that they need, and so that the Register can better track Islamophobia in Australia, particularly at this difficult time.”

The current situation in the Middle East is devastating beyond measure and the Register acknowledges the deep impact it is having on many Australians.

About the Islamophobia Register Australia

The Register is a not-for-profit organisation that has been leading the tracking and tackling of Islamophobia across Australia since its launch in 2014. It provides a secure and reliable online reporting platform that captures nation-wide data and offers first-hand support to victims of Islamophobia. Having recently expanded its board and appointed an inaugural Executive Director, the Register has grown its operations to take its work and influence to the next level.

Its operating model has been commended and replicated by multiple other marginalised groups who have approached the Register to support them in the establishment of their own reporting models. This includes the First Nations Racism Register, ‘Call it Out’ founded by the National Justice Project and the Jumbunna Institute. The Register was also recently invited to provide evidence at the Disability Royal Commission who are looking to make formal recommendations to create a similar organisation to track and tackle disability hate.

Media Enquiries

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