

**Submission  
No 1**

## **MEASURES TO PROHIBIT SLOGANS THAT INCITE HATRED**

**Organisation:** Indians in Sydney

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Submission to the NSW Parliament

Committee on Law and Safety

Inquiry into Measures to Prohibit Slogans that Incite Hatred and Threaten Community Safety

## 1. Introduction and Background

I am making this submission as a long-standing community leader in New South Wales and as the founder of Indians in Sydney, a community platform established in 2007 to support connection, civic participation, and social cohesion.

I am also a Muslim Australian. I mention this not to centre one community, but because it has shaped my understanding of how global events, language, and identity can affect local communities in very real ways.

Over many years, my work has involved direct engagement with families, young people, faith leaders, educators, and community organisations, particularly during periods of heightened social tension. What follows is drawn from that experience.

## 2. Why This Inquiry Matters

New South Wales is one of the most culturally diverse places in the world. That diversity is a strength, but it also requires care and responsibility, especially in how public language is used.

In recent times, slogans linked to overseas conflicts have increasingly appeared in protests, online spaces, and public discussion within NSW. Some of these phrases, including “globalise the intifada”, carry historical and political associations with violence and civil unrest.

The concern in NSW is not about endorsing or opposing any international cause. It is about how such language is received and experienced

## 3. Community Impact

From ongoing engagement across different communities, several consistent concerns are raised:

- Many people feel intimidated or unsafe when such slogans are used publicly.
- The language is often interpreted as endorsing violence, regardless of intent.
- Public tensions escalate quickly when these slogans are chanted or displayed.
- Some people choose to withdraw from public spaces or civic participation altogether.

These are not theoretical concerns. They are practical, lived experiences shared by people who simply want to feel safe in their own city.

## 4. Social Cohesion in NSW

NSW has always relied on the idea that people can hold strong, even opposing views without threatening one another.

What concerns me most is that when slogans with violent connotations become normalised, they blur that line. Overseas conflicts are pulled into local neighbourhoods, young people encounter highly charged language without context, and the risk of escalation increases.

This weakens social trust and makes public spaces feel less safe for everyone.

## 5. Preventing Harm Without Overreach

Any measures considered by the Committee should be careful and proportionate.

In my experience, prevention works best when it focuses on:

- The context in which a slogan is used,
- Its widely understood meaning and history, and
- Whether it would reasonably be expected to cause fear or intimidation.

Clear guidance and early intervention are often more effective than punitive responses, particularly where people may not fully understand the implications of the language they are using.

## 6. Freedom of Expression and Responsibility

Australia's freedom of political communication is essential and must be protected. At the same time, Australian law has long recognised that freedom carries responsibility.

Targeted and proportionate measures aimed at preventing intimidation or fear are not inconsistent with democratic values. In fact, they help ensure that public participation remains open and safe for all members of the community.

## 7. Australian and International Experience

Other democracies, including the United Kingdom, have faced similar challenges and have sought to distinguish between legitimate protest and language closely linked to violent movements.

In Australia, existing laws already address threatening behaviour, intimidation, terrorism advocacy, and racial vilification. The issue in NSW is less about a lack of law and more about clarity, consistency, and public understanding.

## 8. Media Literacy and Online Influence

As someone involved in social media and media literacy work, I see the online spread of slogans as a significant factor.

Many people encounter these phrases through short online content, often without understanding their background or impact. Education, community-led dialogue, and responsible moderation all have an important role to play alongside legal measures

## 9. Conclusion

This inquiry is an opportunity for NSW to reinforce its commitment to both community safety and democratic values.

Communities are not asking for censorship. They are asking for clear boundaries, fairness, and leadership that prioritises social cohesion.

As a Muslim Australian and a community founder, I support reasonable measures that prevent language from being used to intimidate or instil fear, while protecting the right to lawful and peaceful expression.

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Founder – Indians in Sydney