

**Submission  
No 43**

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

**Organisation:** Multicultural Disability Advocacy Australia

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

PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LAW AND  
SAFETY

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work, and meet. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

We recognise their enduring connection to their land, waters, and skies and honour their rich cultural heritage and knowledge systems.

We commit to listening, learning, and standing in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, walking alongside them in the ongoing journey towards justice and reconciliation.

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## **Submission response by the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW (MDAA)**

### **About MDAA**

The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Australia (MDAA) is the peak body in NSW for all people with disability (PWD) and their families and carers, with a particular focus on those from multicultural and non-English Speaking (NES) backgrounds with disability.

Our vision is a society where everyone regardless of background or disability feels welcomed, included and supported. Our aim is to promote, protect, and secure the rights and interests of people with disabilities.

MDAA works within a cultural sensitivity framework to ensure the safety, comfort, and well-being of our diverse consumers. At MDAA, we provide support in the form of Individual Advocacy, with the aim to build the capacity of multicultural people with disability and ensure that the rights of individuals are promoted, protected, and secured.

MDAAs other services include Systemic Advocacy, NDIS Appeals and Reviews, and ongoing projects including the Aged Care Volunteer Visitor Scheme (ACVVS).

### **About this Submission**

MDAA welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety. As a peak body representing multicultural people with disability and their families and carers across NSW, MDAA is uniquely positioned to offer insights into the challenges, racism, and hatred faced by our consumers and the communities we support. Given the current events and connotations attached to the Terms of Reference for this consultation, MDAA feels it appropriate to highlight the voices of its Muslim clients and community members who have also been targets and victims of extreme racism in public spaces, workplaces, schools, and social media. This submission aims to amplify their stories and voices to achieve political justice and fair legislative change.

Our submission is informed by consumer and staff consultation, through their lived experiences, as well as organisational data highlighting the clear need for appropriate responses to hate speech in NSW. This includes a deeper consideration of the proposed legislation that may work against social cohesion, and the need for a significant shift in systemic structures perpetuating negative stereotypes of people and communities.

We would like to note that MDAA is disappointed at the very short consultation period and timing that has impacted our ability to widely explore the sentiments and feedback of our communities across the state. Nor does it point to an authentic attempt at public consultation on legislative changes, a process that is also important for maintaining or fostering social cohesion.

### **A threat to social cohesion?**

Having considered the feedback from our communities, MDAA holds concerns that this proposal invertedly targets one particular cultural and religious group. With this as a starting point, the idea of adopting UK laws in relation to protests and hate speech will only lead to further disdain, distrust in police and governments, increased outrage as the perceived purpose of those laws was to belittle, silence, and bury political movements. We can also not deny that when we look at international examples, we must first look at the social conditions and community sentiments at the time of introducing such laws.

As Laverick and Joyce (2020) highlight *“given this history [of discrimination and inequality], we argue that an appreciation of the wider historical, political and economic context, and an awareness of the particular events that prompted the government to intervene to produce legislation and policy, are important.”* For this reason, we cannot so easily adopt or mirror reactions to events in the same way. In addition to this, Amnesty International posits that over 2,700 people have been arrested since the new UK terrorism laws took effect in July 2025 for protesting against the ban of Palestine Action (Amnesty International 2025). The general public opinion continues to be that the UK’s 2023 public order laws egregiously restrict the fundamental right to protest, a right historically used by the masses to topple oppressive systems and authoritarian regimes. The introduction of these anti-protest laws saw increased police powers to prevent protests, set a low threshold to define disruptive protesting, and increasing stop and search powers to include ‘suspicion-less stop and search’, all which impede on personal autonomy, freedom, and the right to political engagement.

Increasing the powers of the police leads NSW and in turn Australia down a never-ending road of increased complaints and reports made against police, rising divide between the people, governments, and the police, degradation of social cohesion, and the increased occurrence of racial profiling. We know that people of colour and Aboriginal Australians are far more likely to be victims of police stop and search than their white counterparts (Yussuf 2025) (Brennan 2026), where unconscious biases continue to impact professional practice.

There is a vast difference between a protest celebrating and exclaiming ‘white power’ and one that calls for the cease of funds and support towards an apartheid state and encourages the resilience and resistance of an active colonial power. It seems however, that the NSW government is incredibly quick to place the both under the same category of terrorism and hatred as if the two are not on complete opposite sides of the spectrum. The message our communities convey is that they find it disheartening and instils a sense of hopelessness where there is a clear discontent with few communities due to the actions of two who have no connection to the majority. This painting of Arabic phrases as something to fear and the refusal to understand their meaning has been set before, with many people reporting having lived their entire lives through general prejudice and discrimination based purely on the colour of their skin and the god they pray to stemming from the actions of such few that do not represent the wider community’s beliefs.

The horrific event occurring in December 2025 was not in direct link to the Pro-Palestine movements and the gunmen had no reported affiliation with the Australian Palestine Action Group – a fact fortified by both group leaders and other state officials. There has been no established connection to the historically peaceful movement, and this event has been more of a direct reflection of the failure of law enforcement in mitigating a known threat to the public.

MDAA understands and supports the desire and need for stricter guidelines and consequences over inciting hatred, however, the threat to social cohesion is amplified when these guidelines seem to cease being about protecting the majority and about oppressing the minority. MDAA clients believe the media and the government have continuously, profiled, attacked and vilified Arab and Muslim minority groups. In the same way you are able to say ‘not all cops’, this extremely marginalised group should be afforded the same leniency. As discussed in MDAA’s previous submission to the NSW Government’s review on criminal hate speech, it is increasingly concerning that measures are not being discussed in protecting the over 300,000 Muslims who are citizens and residents of this state (ABS 2021). This proposal and the issued terms of reference read heavily as anti-Muslim with the language being so focused on this one phrase that had gone largely unheard of until the input of media groups.

During consultations, the overriding opinion shed light on the fact that the specific phrase ‘globalise the intifada’ only seemed to be directly linked to the Bondi killings from external media agencies and subsequent press conferences referencing the UK. Targeting this phrase without a clear cause, creates a greater sense that there is a strong bias in the way the government is responding. Having serious community consultations with a more realistic timeline would allow feedback from the community to shed light on the slogans truly creating harm. Greater information on what other slogans and phrases are being considered may help with the current sentiment that the proposed changes are a very partisan reaction against a particular group of people.

As these concerns were made clear to us, MDAA continues to stress that the current language and response in policy and practice are not conducive to social cohesion. There have been many cases of extreme islamophobia over the recent years with incidents of veiled women having their veils and scarves ripped violently from their bodies, police racial profiling and the sensualisation of arrests of Arab men in the media fuelling a manufactured fire only enticing other Australians' violent behaviours – Including the abhorrent circulation of a social media post encouraging to “bash a wog” as if this behaviour earns them a medal of honour. The absence of a serious response to the mounting hatred of this nature, as well as the statements that ‘police aren't mucking around now’ generate distrust in various social institutions.

Further to this, the banning of the noted phrase is seemingly being discussed due to a lack of understanding of the language and its purpose. Intifada simply means resistance, a word so simple yet powerful encapsulating the realities of millions of indigenous people and communities across the world including Indigenous Australians. Using the current logic, the phrase “always was and always will be” could be a phrase that holds the same sentiment.

If we look at the definition of ‘intifada’, we see that it encapsulates the reality of people being affected by what is going on overseas and pushing a global movement supporting independence and colonial resistance. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese had recently declared acknowledgement of the state of Palestine. Compared to this messaging there is confusion created about how the NSW government is now interpreting what hate speech is.

There is absolutely no denying that anti-Semitic rhetoric has increased and that it has and is causing damage and hurt to our communities. However, this does not disqualify the actions of those receiving hate to have consequences imposed on them for spreading further religious and racial hatred to other communities. It does not eradicate nor validate the abhorrent levels of islamophobia and racism perpetuated in our society. It exists and it is just as harmful. The current language used in the terms of reference alone points to structural conditions which only continue to be conducive to prejudice-based violence.

### **Recommendations:**

MDAA maintains the position that legislating against hate speech must not impede on the democratic right to protest. The squashing of public assembly is an excuse to fuel anti-protest sentiment attempting to silence the voices of hundreds of thousands of sovereign citizens. This impedes on the democratic rights of all communities regardless of their background. Such legislative proposals read as an aim to squash protests and collective action calling out the failures of our governments and legislatures relating to global atrocities.

MDAA poses the following recommendations to the NSW Legislative Assembly:

- Appropriate and proportionate legislative change and reform which considers all sides and communities. Hate speech laws should include all forms of hate including but not limited to that against people with disabilities and other multicultural communities, broadening the focus from only religious and cultural attributes.
- A clearer and more broad definition of hate speech which does not impede on the democratic right to protest and political engagement and does not show favour for one group over another or vilify entire communities.
  - MDAA proposes the following definition of hate speech:
    - *A phrase or language directed at an individual, or group, and their protected attributes, which dehumanises and belittles, involves bigoted and racist undertones and overtones, and/or alludes to historical marginalisation of said individual or group. A phrase or language which causes anguish and fear of racial and/or religious violence.*
- Funding for grassroots organisations and advocacy groups to hold thorough community consultations and policy and legislative proposals, with the aim of reducing and mitigating hate speech in NSW.
- An inquiry into the role that the media plays in relation to reporting and producing information, and the dangers of sensationalism when reporting on sensitive and serious issues. The inquiry should focus on the consequences of the impacts of sensationalism in the wider community, and how the reporting and sensationalism of one major incident can impact social cohesion and increase rates of hate speech, hate crimes and profiling.

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