

**Submission
No 132**

MEASURES TO PROHIBIT SLOGANS THAT INCITE HATRED

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Partially
Confidential

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I thank the committee on Law and Safety for the opportunity to put in a submission to the parliamentary inquiry "Measures to prohibit slogans that incite hatred".

I have a doctorate in Political Science, a First Class Honours degree, a distinction grade undergraduate degree in Communications, and taught at the University of Technology, Sydney, School of Communication for over ten years. Analysing the impact of slogans and symbols has been a significant part of my work since 1999, when I published on the impact of tobacco advertising in Indonesia.¹

I understand this inquiry has been prompted by the atrocity at Bondi, the massacre committed by the father and son, Sajid and Naveed Akram. Both have now been linked to the terrorist group IS, Islamic State. Reports state they acted alone. Sajid Akram originally came to Australia from India in 1996. Naveed Akram was an Australian citizen.

The despicable attack carried out by the Akrams had no connection whatsoever with rallies calling for an end to Israeli war crimes and freedom for Palestine people. IS has no regard for Palestine. Factions linked to IS have in fact tried to steal food aid from Palestinians: the former Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Liberman has even said that the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has given weapons to ISIS-linked clans in Gaza to carry out this theft.²

Attempts to link the Bondi atrocity with Palestine are now drawing widespread condemnation.

The Adelaide Writers Festival has collapsed, with its Chair and half its Board resigning following the mass withdrawal of most of the invited speakers, on the back of the Board's despicable, racist attempt to link the author Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah's advocacy for Palestine with the Bondi massacre.

I note that the terms of reference for this inquiry ask the Committee to investigate and report on the causes of violence directed against communities, and how to protect communities from violence. Reporting on the use of slogans is a focus of the investigation.

While the timing suggests that protecting the Jewish community is the focus of this inquiry, it is hard to understand how singling out one community and not others can be sustained. I ask the Committee to consider this in light of hate speech directed against Aboriginal people, as well as Islamophobia directed toward people with a Muslim background.

Meaning is shaped in this country not just by slogans: the media, commentary on social media, and political discourse play a role.

¹ https://tcsc-indonesia.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Tobacco-advertising-in-Indonesia-_the-defining-characteristics-for-success.pdf

² <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-liberman-accuses-netanyahu-of-giving-weapons-to-isis-linked-clans-in-gaza>

The Jewish Council of Australia clearly identifies this point in a petition calling for unity , which condemns political opportunism : the petition has been signed by over 60,000 people. The Australian National Imams Council has also noted how political rhetoric and irresponsible media commentary is drawing a false equivalence between peaceful pro-Palestinian advocacy and the Bondi terror attacks: they made this observation following a vicious and religiously motivated attack against an Imam and his wife this weekend.³

Indeed, since Bondi there's been a 740% increase in Islamophobic attacks, despite my local Sutherland Muslim tobacconist Ahmed Al-Ahmed risking his life disarming one of the attackers.⁴

It is in this context I note that I would ask the Committee to consider whether demonising Muslim words is appropriate at this time. (The last thing the Committee should do is inflame prejudice and hate.)

The Committee has been asked to consider whether the use of phrases like "globalise the intifada" poses a threat to community cohesion and safety and the importance of maintaining social harmony and cohesion.

When asked about the phrase the Premier Chris Minns appeared to only have a very partial understanding of its meaning.

The slogan, 'globalise the intifada', asks the world to support the Palestinian State resist the genocide being carried out against Palestinian people by Israel. 'Intifada' is an Arabic word that means an uprising: but it is also a verb that means 'to shake the dust off something'. Banning the phrase would be the equivalent of banning the words 'globalise the struggle'.

The phrase 'globalise the intifada' is not anti-Jewish, and is in fact used by many Australian Jewish people who attend the rallies that oppose war crimes Israel is continuing to commit in Palestine. One Jewish woman was arrested recently and released for wearing a jacket with the phrase.⁵

As the Committee would know, the Australian Federal Court has determined that : "Political criticism of Israel, however inflammatory or adversarial, is not by its nature criticism of Jews in general or based on Jewish racial or ethnic identity... The conclusion that it is not antisemitic to criticise Israel is the corollary of the conclusion that to blame Jews for the actions of Israel is antisemitic; the one flows from the other."⁶

It is not inherently antisemitic to criticise the state of Israel or the Israel Defence Forces.

While Chris Minns has stated that the phrase is "hateful, violent rhetoric", the Committee should recall that the United Nations has passed numerous motions stating Israel's occupation of Palestine

³ <https://anic.org.au/anic-condemns-white-supremacist-hate-crime-against-victorian-imam-and-his-wife/>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/02/islamophobia-surged-bondi-attack-australia-muslim-community-ntwnfb>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/jan/06/protester-detained-in-sydney-for-wearing-globalise-the-intifada-jacket-says-she-should-never-have-been-arrested-ntwnfb>

⁶ <https://classic.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/cases/cth/FCA/2025/720.html>

is a violation of the Palestinian right to self-determination. Israel has binding obligations, as an Occupying Power, under international law, and Israel is currently in violation of those obligations, committing grave breaches of international law, humanitarian and human rights law, including Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights.^{7 8}

Basically, Israel's occupation of Palestine is illegal.⁹

So here in Australia it is troubling to see people lobbying on behalf of Israel, a foreign state, with the aim of silencing criticism of Israel's well documented war crimes. To attempt to ban a phrase that speaks to this issue, without considering the international context, or international law is political censorship. Australia has recognised the Palestinian State, and States have the right to self defence.

In this context it should be noted that just before Christmas Israel announced the approval of 19 new illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, on land Australia recognises as Palestinian.¹⁰

Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich actually stated openly that this was a deliberate decision made to prevent "the establishment of a future Palestinian state".¹¹ Israel has now taken over 58% of the Gaza strip, and the Israeli Defence Minister, has said that Israel will never withdraw from Gaza.^{12 13}

Zionism is a nationalist movement and a political ideology which is exemplified by the expansion of Greater Israel onto this land that Australia recognises as Palestinian. Criticising Zionism as an ideology is quite different to promulgating hatred of Jewish people.

I note that the NSW Parliament is also holding a separate inquiry into anti-semitism. I note that a submission from the NSW Police to the inquiry has revealed that a "significant number" of 367 listed antisemitic incidents since October 2023 did not "meet the criteria for antisemitism".¹⁴

It is difficult to avoid concluding that despite the Bondi atrocity Australia is not an anti-semitic country. It appears Australians are being told that we are anti-semitic in order to stop criticism of Israel and its genocide of the Palestinian people. The thought of banning keffiyehs and images of watermelons to this end is shocking. It is terrifying to think our democracy could be compromised in this way.

⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

⁸ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-bureau-press-release-24oct2025/>

⁹ <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20240719-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/06/israel-vast-illegal-settlement-west-bank>

¹¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/25/european-nations-canada-decry-israels-new-illegal-west-bank-settlements>

¹² <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/23/map-of-gaza-shows-where-israeli-forces-are-positioned-under-ceasefire-deal>

¹³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/amp/news/2025/12/23/israel-will-never-fully-withdraw-from-gaza-defence-minister-says>

¹⁴ <https://www.deepcutnews.com/p/chris-minns-exaggerated-the-scale>

And where is this demand coming from to silence criticism of Israel?

Divisive rhetoric used by groups such as the Australian Jewish Association, and Advance Australia has been incredibly damaging to Muslim and Aboriginal communities both. It is vital to address racial discrimination directed against any / all communities. Any examination of 'hate' used to intimidate communities and instil fear of violence must look at the messages spread by both groups' social media feeds. Advance Australia, the far right hate organisation that drove the campaign to reject the Voice referendum has been running racist, bigoted campaigns consistently ever since then.

Australia's antisemitism envoy [REDACTED] is compromised, and appears to be using the Bondi massacre on behalf of the Israeli state, while Israel itself has published a list of Australians it wants silenced.¹⁵

The terms of reference for the NSW inquiry specifically mention using British laws as a guide. As a final point - please note that in the UK, more than 2,700 people have been arrested since July 2025 for holding up signs saying they oppose genocide.

If similar measures are brought in here they are likely to result in similar outcomes - which will not result in community 'cohesion' or 'social harmony'.

I thank the Committee for considering this submission.

Kind regards,
Catherine Reynolds

Writing from land stolen from the Dharawal people.

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, and that sovereignty of their lands and waters has never been ceded. I pay respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

¹⁵ <https://michaelwest.com.au/israel-bans-msf-aid-orgs-from-gaza-publishes-aussie-antisemites-list/>