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Islamic Society of South Australia (ISSA)

Statement on the Australian Government's Response to the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia

The Islamic Society of South Australia (ISSA) has carefully considered the Australian Government's response to the recommendations of the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, Mr Aftab Malik.

The response represents an important milestone in Australia's efforts to address Islamophobia and contains several significant commitments that ISSA supports. For the first time, the Commonwealth has articulated a coordinated national framework that recognises Islamophobia as a challenge to social cohesion, community safety and equal participation in Australian society.

ISSA welcomes the Government's recognition that Islamophobia extends beyond isolated incidents and requires a comprehensive national response. We particularly welcome the commitments to strengthen education and public awareness, improve hate crime data collection, expand culturally appropriate mental health services, support research into the experiences of Australian Muslims, enhance online safety, and deepen partnerships with Muslim communities. These initiatives provide an important foundation for long-term change and demonstrate a genuine commitment to fostering a more inclusive Australia.

At the same time, ISSA believes the Government's response should be viewed as the beginning of a long-term national reform agenda rather than its final destination. While meaningful progress has been made, a number of the Special Envoy's recommendations relating to structural reform, legislative protections, institutional accountability and implementation require continued attention as the Government moves from policy commitments to practical delivery.

ISSA encourages the Australian Government to publish a clear implementation framework identifying implementation priorities, responsible agencies, realistic timelines, measurable outcomes, transparent public reporting and ongoing consultation with affected communities. Such an approach will strengthen accountability, provide greater confidence to communities and help ensure that the commitments announced translate into practical and lasting outcomes.

ISSA also believes that effective implementation should build upon existing expertise and established community capacity wherever appropriate. Government initiatives are likely to achieve better outcomes when they work in partnership with organisations that already have trusted relationships within communities and practical experience in service delivery, education, research and community engagement. Strengthening these partnerships, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort, will help accelerate implementation, improve community confidence and ensure that public resources are used effectively.



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The long-term success of the Government's response will depend not only on the commitments announced, but also on how effectively they are implemented. Genuine partnership, evidence-based policy, transparent reporting and ongoing engagement with Muslim communities will be essential to ensuring that these commitments result in meaningful improvements in the everyday lives of Australian Muslims.

As one of Australia's oldest Muslim organisations, serving South Australia since 1955, ISSA remains committed to working constructively with governments, educational institutions, health services, law enforcement agencies, universities and community organisations to support the successful implementation of these reforms.

Combating Islamophobia is not solely about protecting one community. It is about strengthening Australia's democratic values, promoting equality before the law, reinforcing social cohesion and ensuring that every Australian can participate in society with dignity, safety and respect.

ISSA encourages the Australian Government to maintain momentum by continuing to strengthen accountability, legislative and institutional reforms, while fostering meaningful collaboration with Muslim communities throughout implementation. We also encourage all sectors of Australian society, including governments, educational institutions, media organisations, employers, faith communities and civil society to work together in addressing the underlying causes of Islamophobia and building a more inclusive Australia.

We look forward to contributing constructively to this national effort and remain committed to supporting practical, evidence-based initiatives that strengthen equality, safety, dignity, mutual respect and social cohesion for the benefit of all Australians

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