



**SHIA MUSLIM**  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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The Shia Muslim Council of Australia

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**Media Release: Condemning the Ongoing Israeli aggression against Palestine, Lebanon and the wider region. Demanding urgent action in Australia.**

We speak up to mark 365 days of an escalated phase of Israeli aggression and occupation against the people of Palestine and the wider region. In the last year, Israel has killed at least 42,000 (identified) people in Palestine, with some reports estimating that the total number is more than 186,000. It has deliberately imposed starvation, thirst, disease and fear upon the people of Gaza, where more than 2 million are displaced. There is a regular cycle of violence, illegal land seizure and imprisonment in the West Bank. During this time, Israel has also killed 2000 people in Lebanon, and displaced 1 million Lebanese civilians. Israel has killed aid workers, healthcare workers and journalists, both in Palestine and Lebanon. It has also carried out attacks in Yemen, Syria and Iran.

**A History Rooted in the Nakba**

It is important to remember that the violence did not begin on 7th October 2023. It has deep roots even before the Nakba of 1948, when more than 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their homeland, their villages destroyed, and their lands confiscated to make way for the proclamation of a Zionist state.. This catastrophic event marked the beginning of decades of systemic dispossession, discrimination, and violence against Palestinians. The Nakba, or "catastrophe," set the stage for ongoing conflict and human rights abuses that continue to this day.

For decades, the United Nations has passed numerous resolutions condemning the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories and Israel's actions in Lebanon. UN Resolution 242 calls for Israel's withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967 and the recognition of Palestinians' right to self-determination. This year, the International Court of Justice has ruled the claim that Israel is committing genocide is plausible, and the ICC prosecutor has applied for arrest warrants for the most senior Israeli officials. The ICJ has also ruled that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory is illegal, and has ordered Israel to end its occupation. Despite these resolutions, violations have persisted with impunity. Australian leaders have been either silent, or have, astonishingly, said very little in proportion to the scale and scope of Israeli aggression. The silence of governments worldwide, including Australia, emboldens these aggressors.

### **A Call for Urgent Action in Australia**

Australia must act decisively and stand on the right side of history. It is time for our political leaders to:

- Call for an immediate ceasefire
- Condemn the ongoing Israeli aggression and illegal occupation
- Sanction Israel and cease all military, economic and diplomatic cooperation
- Comply with Australia's international obligations relating to Israel's genocide.

We urge Australians to unite in demanding that their political representatives stand against these gross injustices and human rights abuses.

The SMCA stands firm in its support for the Palestinian and Lebanese people against aggression and oppression. We call on Australia to uphold its commitment to human rights and take a firm stand against the atrocities occurring in the Middle East. It is time for Australia to be a global leader in the fight against oppression and to stand with those who are fighting for their right to live in peace and with dignity!

The Shia Muslim Council of Australia

*The Shia Muslim Council of Australia is an umbrella organisation for Shia Muslim communities in Australia. It currently has 35 member organisations from across the 8 states and territories of Australia.*