

Recommended policies for Government, agencies and civil society to address the antisemitism crisis in Australia

Following the Bondi Beach terrorist attack, the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) recommends that the following steps should be taken as soon as possible by state and federal governments.

Public discourse

- The Australian Government should establish a Royal Commission into antisemitism. It should have broad terms of reference to address the three main forms of antisemitism (i.e. hatred of and/or discrimination against Jews based on reasons of ethnicity, religion or Israel), including: how it manifests in Australia; the actions (and inaction) of government, business or civil society that encouraged its growth; and what should be done to address it. Political leaders have proven unwilling and incapable of properly addressing the issue – we need the integrity of a Royal Commission to provide sweeping recommendations.
- The Australian Parliament should be immediately recalled, to mark the seriousness of the current situation, to hear from public representatives and Government about their plans, and to legislate urgent reforms.
- Public prosecution of hate speech and incitement must be prioritised. Enforcement should not depend on individual members of targeted communities bearing the emotional, financial and security burden of private legal action, as happens now. Extremism and racial vilification harm social cohesion and public safety and should be prosecuted by government authorities.
- Organisations advocating anti-Zionist positions in public institutions, campuses, or publicly-funded forums should be required to demonstrate how their activities avoid contributing to discrimination, exclusion, intimidation or violence against Jews.
- Symbols, slogans and messaging associated with eliminationist or genocidal ideologies should be treated consistently under the law. This includes contemporary extremist movements whose rhetoric explicitly calls for or celebrates historical violence against Jews (e.g. Houthi slogans, ‘Khaybar ya Yahud’, etc). These symbols should be subject to the same legal restrictions, enforcement standards and prohibitions as Nazi symbols, recognising that the harm lies in the ideology’s intent and impact, not its origin or branding.
- The Australian Government should establish an independent monitor to report on how the Government’s package of anti-hate reforms is being implemented. There are numerous existent federal and state laws regarding hate speech,

terrorist symbols and more that have not been adequately implemented by the police. There is no point adding more laws to the books unless they are enforced.

Security and law enforcement

Physical security

- Security requirements for Jewish community physical security (i.e. guards outside schools, places of worship, community buildings, events) should be fully funded by the federal and state governments. It would be preferable if security were directly provided by the Australian Federal Police and/or state police. The substantial cost of protecting these Australian citizens – currently borne by the Jewish community, albeit assisted by government grants – would likely spur government action to better curb antisemitism.
- There should be clearly mandated guidelines about levels of police presence at any Jewish communal gathering, and the minimum level for their operational capabilities. These details do not have to be made public for security reasons, but they should be developed and implemented as policy.

Police

- State and federal police should adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as the best tool to understand how modern antisemitism manifests.
- Police must be expected to rigorously enforce existing and new legislation that bans hate speech and terrorist or Nazi symbols. State and federal governments must prioritise enforcement by ensuring police receive proper training, education and internal support to apply these laws effectively when laying charges

Judiciary

- When cases are prosecuted, courts must apply the full force of the penalties available under the law.

Education

Schools

- There should be ongoing scrutiny of all schools (including religious schools) as to what is taught about the Israeli–Palestinian dispute and Zionism. Schools that teach hatred should lose funding.
- State and federal governments should make antisemitism education mandatory for all public, Catholic and independent schools (including all religious schools). ‘Antisemitism education’ should not equal ‘Holocaust education’, since antisemitism neither began nor ended with the Holocaust. Curriculum must be designed in collaboration with the nationally-elected Jewish representative bodies. The history and evolution of anti-Zionism would be incorporated into this syllabus, including its ideological origins and development, its intersections with Nazi antisemitism, Soviet propaganda and Islamist fundamentalism, and the

ways these narratives have been repurposed in contemporary progressive discourse.

Universities

- State and federal parliaments should legislate that universities must disclose funding from all foreign sources.
- No outside organisation should be allowed to organise campus-based activities, especially including protests.
- A uniform complaints process should be adopted by all universities. This complaints process should include antisemitism in the list of examples of banned discriminatory behaviour. The complaints process - and all universities - should adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as the best tool to understand modern antisemitism. Training about modern antisemitism should be compulsory for all staff involved in complaints handling. This training must be formulated in consultation with the nationally-elected representative bodies of the Australian Jewish community.
- The Australian Government should insist on better oversight of the TEQSA Act's Threshold Standards, and universities should be held accountable for any breaches, especially including providing safe environments for all students.
- The concept of 'academic freedom' must not be used as a shield behind which university staff can spread hatred and intolerance, as is the case today.

Social media and the Internet

- Online threats of, calls for or celebrations of violence towards a group should be dealt with in the same way as are such threats in the real world. Social media companies must be held responsible for anonymous threats made on their platforms.

Culture and traditional media

- The ABC and SBS Ombudsmans must be made independent and sit outside those organisations. Impartiality must be actively enforced across publicly funded broadcasting platforms. Outlets that claim to inform the public carry a responsibility to distinguish reporting from advocacy. The Ombudsmans should also carry out long-form research into the ABC's and SBS's treatment of subjects (e.g. Israel) about which they are accused of bias.
- There must be clear consequences for cultural and arts institutions that tolerate or legitimise hateful ideologies. Public funding should be withdrawn from individuals and organisations with established records of racist or discriminatory speech toward any group, including Jews, Zionists and Israelis. Academic and artists and other creatives who practise hate speech should receive no government grants, and should be stripped of existing grant funding. Funding bodies and public platforms must recognise that grants and institutional

endorsement confer legitimacy and social capital, and must not be used to elevate or normalise ideologies that contribute to hostility, exclusion or violence against any community.

Migration and citizenship

- Values-based migration should become policy. No migrant, including those based on family reunification, should be allowed to come to Australia and/or become Australian citizens unless they explicitly accept Australian values.
- There should be rigorous screening and security checks on incoming visa-holders, including examination of their social media history to determine whether they have promulgated antisemitic or other racist views.
- Visa-holders who express antisemitic or other racist sentiments, online or otherwise, should be deported.

Multicultural and interfaith engagement

- Funding and tax benefits must be stripped from religious institutions that engage in antisemitic behaviour or call for or glorify violence against any group. Any religious leader who is not Australian must be deported on character grounds if evidence emerges that they engage in antisemitic behaviour or glorify violence. Security agencies must actively monitor all religious institutions suspected of engaging in or allowing in their midst extremist rhetoric or behaviour.

Diplomacy and public education

- The Australian Government should use this opportunity to increase security and diplomatic cooperation with Israel to both prevent upcoming threats and send a message to extremists that terrorism would not undermine the strong ties between the two countries, who share values as democracies.
- Government should explore how to benefit from the shared values and close relationship between Israel and Australia, and the contribution and importance of the local Jewish community to Australia. This includes cultural exchanges with Israel along the lines of the New Colombo Plan.