



Australian Federation  
of Islamic Councils

# AFIC sends prayers and condolences for victims of France's civil strife; calls on French authorities to work for social harmony

Media Statement

30 October 2020

AFIC condemns all violence against civilians, especially those inside places of worship, there is never an excuse for directing violence at civilians or places of worship by anyone.

AFIC prays for the victims killed inside their church and sends its sincere condolences to their families. AFIC also prays for the knifing victims at the Eifel Tower and those attacked and beaten inside their mosques in France and stands with them and their families.

AFIC is extremely disappointed at political and media rhetoric that blame this violence on religion and struggle, twist, spin and strain to link it to offensive Charlie Hebdo cartoons.

Yes, whilst these cartoons cause deep hurt to Muslims, no rational Muslim would allow them to escalate tensions or lead him or her to violence. The near 2 billion strong global Muslim community has consistently allowed these provocations to pass peacefully. The killing of the 18-year-old who beheaded Samuel Paty by French authorities deny us the opportunity to discover his motives, his state of mind or his mental fitness. We are sold an unbelievable story that an 18-year-old Chechen refugee paid hundreds of euros to identify a teacher with whom he had no connection to then behead him! These killings raise more questions than answers.

Charlie Hebdo was once a non politically aligned publication that spoke truth to power. Since its staff were killed in 2015, CH transformed into a French government propaganda tool that is used to stoke tensions, malign Islam and most recently, mock foreign leaders critical of French president Macron. It has become a mouthpiece for the establishment and this coup was only accomplished after its original editorial staff were killed. This week's disgraceful and shameful Charlie Hebdo cover that aims to negatively depict president Erdogan is also gratuitously insulting to all women and the Muslim faith. To know the true motives of the killers in France, one only need look at who benefited from the killing. Cui bono?



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In dividing France and turning citizens against each other, Macron has confessed his failure by turning to Islamophobia, a tried and tested last refuge of scoundrels throughout history.

A person exclaiming “Allahu Akbar” is no more motivated by religious zeal than a person who exclaims “God Almighty” or “O My God”! These are mantras even to people who have no religious observance whatsoever. Media, politicians and self-proclaimed experts must be brought to task next time they attempt to attribute such crimes to any religion, it is these people who stoke societal disharmony, divisions, tensions, territorial violence and almost always xenophobia, Islamophobia and class-warfare.

AFIC prays for France and its people regardless of their faith, race or social status and calls on every Frenchman and woman to resist those political opportunists who are dividing them. Political dog-whistling only succeeds when citizens acquiesce to being treated like sheep to be herded by the drover’s dogs. The French are well-educated intelligent people, it is time they reject the divisive voices in their political establishment.

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