



Australian Federation  
of Islamic Councils

## **AFIC condemns Australian High Commissioner O'Farrell's validation of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in India**

**Media Statement**

**18 November 2020**

This past weekend, Barry O'Farrell, a significant figure within the Australian Diplomatic Corps and the Liberal Party visited and praised Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) a right-wing extremist Hindu nationalist paramilitary organisation.

RSS fills Indian nationals with hatred against non-Hindus and then feeds its hate-filled members into the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The RSS was a major inciter and participant in the 2019 pogroms against Indian Muslims.

O'Farrell's visit not only attempts to normalise the RSS, it also empowers them to continue with more of the same. O'Farrell's praise of the RSS directly offends and causes pain to the two billion Muslims around the world, especially Muslim Australians and Muslims living under the RSS's reign of terror in India and Kashmir.

O'Farrell's meeting with RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat brings shame to us all, we stand alongside Christian leaders who deplored the meeting and the associated provocative photos in front of images of RSS founding leaders.

O'Farrell, a seasoned statesman, knew what the visit represents, being Australia's High Commissioner to India, he would be fully aware of RSS systemic atrocities against civilians. Late last year, RSS terrorists attacked and killed tens of peaceful protestors in India, they attacked street protestors, university students inside their places of study and worshippers inside their places of worship.



Australian Federation  
of Islamic Councils

Instead of visiting the RSS, O'Farrell should be visiting their victims, he should be investigating and condemning RSS and BJP atrocities in India and in occupied Kashmir.

O'Farrell's visit empowers extremists and threatens national security. O'Farrell's actions make his position untenable. He should either find ways to make amends or resign declaring himself unfit for this position. If he is unwilling to take one of these two options, we would call on the Australian government to take appropriate action. The nature of O'Farrell's engagement with the RSS is hurtful and offensive not only to the 2 billion Muslims around the world but also to every fair minded decent human being.

**Authorised by:**  
Dr. Rateb Jneid  
*President*