



AFIC Statement on the Disruption of Peaceful Muslim Prayer

Monday, 9 February 2026

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils condemns the police disruption of peaceful Muslim prayer during a lawful and non-violent protest against the arrival of the President of Israel.

The facts are clear. Muslims were engaged in prayer. The surrounding protest was calm. Police were already present and aware of what was taking place. Despite this, officers moved in, forcibly interrupted prayer and used physical force against worshippers, including dragging individuals away and throwing some to the ground.

This conduct is unacceptable. Peaceful religious observance does not constitute a threat to public order. Interrupting prayer mid-act and using force against worshippers cannot be justified on public safety grounds and raises serious concerns about discriminatory policing and the treatment of Muslim communities.

AFIC also notes the broader context in which this incident occurred. Protest against the actions of the Israeli state, which is facing international scrutiny for war crimes and genocide in Gaza, is legitimate political expression. Treating Muslim prayer in this context as a policing problem is deeply troubling.

AFIC calls for a full explanation from police leadership, the release of all relevant body-worn camera footage, and a public apology from the Minister for Police, the Police Commissioner and the Premier for the disruption of peaceful prayer and the use of force against worshippers.

AFIC stands with those affected and will continue to advocate for the protection of religious freedom, peaceful protest and equal treatment under the law.

Dr Rateb Jneid
President