

Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026

Submission No: 343

Submission By: Australian Muslim Advocacy Network

Publication: Making the submission and your name public

QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Submission on the

Fighting Antisemitism And Keeping Guns Out Of The Hands Of Terrorists And Criminals Amendment Bill 2026

Prepared by the Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN)

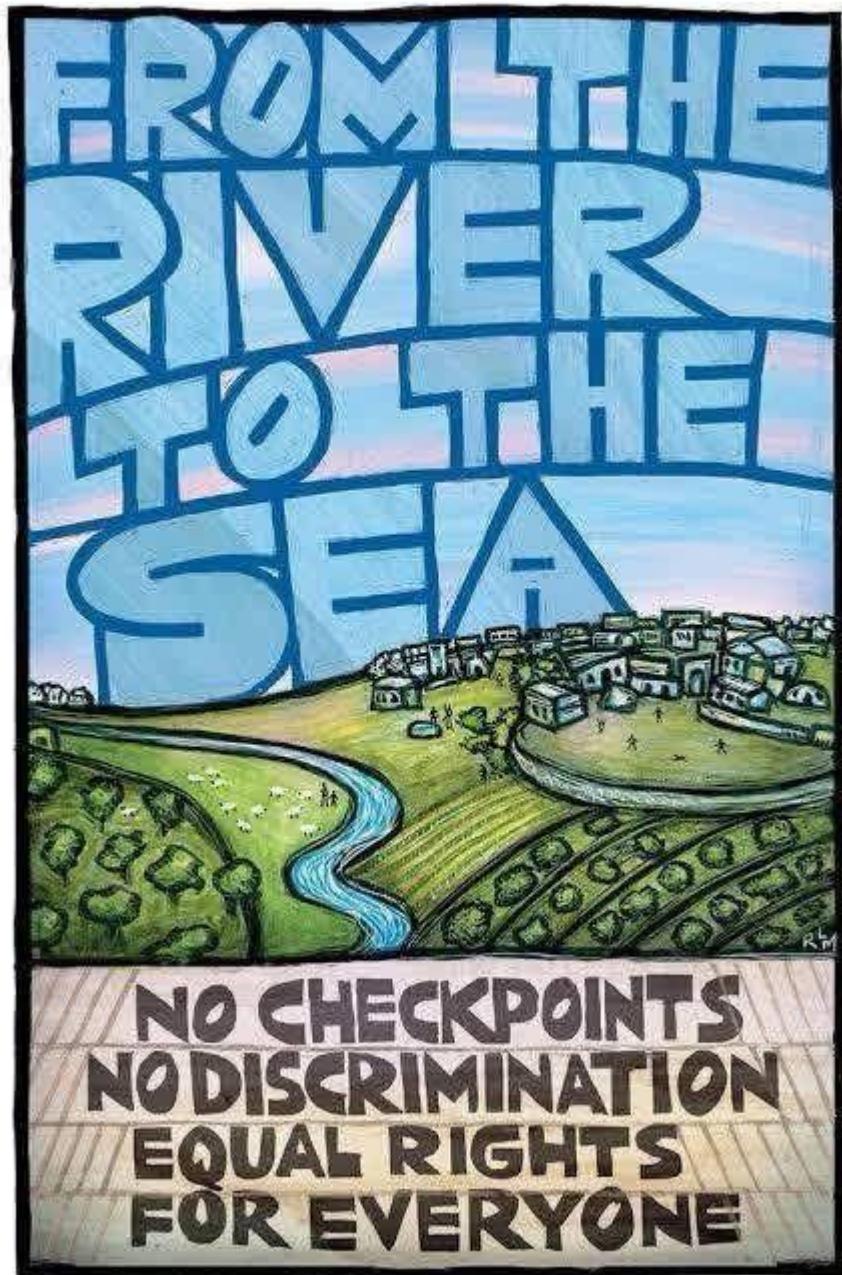
Signatories

Australian Muslim Advocacy Network Ltd (Aman)
Aimq - Association Of Indian Muslims Queensland.
Alliance Against Islamophobia Ltd (AAI)
Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC)
Masjid Al Farooq (Kuraby Mosque)
Shia Muslim Council of Australia (SMCA)

17 February 2026

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This poster by Ricardo Levins Morales explains “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free”: a vision of freedom and equality, not hate.

SUBMISSION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Inquiry

- (a) On 10 February 2026, the Hon Daniel Purdie, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, introduced the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026 into the Queensland Parliament. The Bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for detailed consideration.

1.2 About the signatories

- (a) **Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) and AMAN Foundation Ltd.** AMAN played a leading role in hate crime law reform passed by the Queensland parliament in recent years, as part of a coalition of many faith and cultural based organisations. AMAN is a legal and research-based advocacy organisation focused on online dehumanisation of Muslims. It addresses research gaps, initiates legal actions, and engages in parliamentary and media advocacy. AMAN has analysed the legal, policy, and community impacts of the “terrorist act” definition, and successfully pursued hate speech cases, including against X (formerly Twitter) and former Senator Fraser Anning. It has developed a working definition of dehumanising material to support hate speech identification. AMAN also scrutinises counterterrorism and national security laws, and advocates for platform accountability.
- (b) **Association Of Indian Muslims Queensland (AIMQ)** provides a transparent, inclusive platform the Indian Muslim community across Queensland. Through vibrant social and cultural gatherings, AIMQ fosters familial bonds, encourages collaboration, and builds lasting networks. AIMQ actively advocate for the interests of the community it represents, presenting its views to broader society and relevant institutions. By amplifying voices and promoting dialogue, AIMQ ensures that the concerns, values, and aspirations of their members are heard and respected. Their mission is to bridge cultural and religious divides, nurture understanding, and promote cohesion. By creating spaces for meaningful

engagement, they support well-being, integration, and shared experiences that enrich lives. AIMQ aims to stand as a symbol of unity and empowerment—helping individuals thrive and contribute positively to the wider Australian society.

- (c) **Alliance Against Islamophobia Ltd (AAI)** is dedicated to adopting a research based, data driven approach to addressing and alleviating the helplessness, suffering, marginalization, social isolation, and sense of isolation faced by Australian Indian Muslims in particular and Muslims in general as a direct consequence of the increasing ridicule, contempt, and anti-Muslim hate speech from far-right Hindu extremist rhetoric in Australia.
- (d) **The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC)** is the peak body for Australian Muslims, representing State and Territory Islamic Councils and Societies.
- (e) **Masjid al Farooq (Kuraby Mosque)**, originally founded in the early 1990s, aims to serve as a safe space for worship, reflection, social engagement, education
- (f) The **Shia Muslim Council of Australia (SMCA)** is a national umbrella organisation that represents the Shia Muslim community in Australia. Established to represent and unify the voices of Shia Muslims, SMCA advocates for social justice, religious freedom, and community development, while engaging with government, interfaith bodies, media and civil society on matters affecting the Muslim community. The Council plays a key role in amplifying the concerns of its member organisations, addressing issues of national and international importance, and promoting values of justice and compassion. The SMCA currently has 38 members from across the 8 states and territories in Australia.

1.3 About this submission

- (a) AMAN does not have the resources to prepare a lengthy submission at such short notice. We have seen the submissions of Muslim Votes Matter, and the Islamic Council of Queensland, and reiterate many of their concerns. Our submission focuses on the disproportionality of the proposal to proscribe expressions.

- (b) We note that the timeframe provided for this inquiry was wholly inadequate, particularly given that it concerns the proposed criminalisation of political expression.

1.4 Public hearings

- (a) A representative of AMAN would be pleased to appear in person at the public hearings in relation to this Bill.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) We reject

- (i) changes to the prohibition on the public use of hate symbols;
- (ii) new proposed prohibition the use of expressions;
- (iii) the prescription of additional offences under the Youth Justice Act 1992 (Youth Justice Act) as Adult Crime, Adult Time arising from the seriousness of the new offences introduced or maximum penalties imposed;
- (iv) amendments that expand the scope of offences that may be investigated through the use of controlled operations, controlled activities and surveillance device warrants;
- (v) reform controlled operations legislation under Chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 (PPRA) and enable the Queensland Human Rights Commission to review this legislation.

- (b) We support

- (i) amendments to protect faith communities by ensuring people are not intimidated while accessing places of worship;
- (ii) amendments to modernise criminal offences related to religious worship to align with contemporary drafting practices and increase maximum penalties;

- (iii) amendments to increase the maximum penalty for stealing a firearm or ammunition to 14 years imprisonment;
 - (iv) amendment of section 540 ‘Preparation to commit crimes with dangerous things’ of the Criminal Code by clearly stating the offence applies in relation to dangerous or offensive weapons or instruments;
 - (v) a specific offence prohibiting the reckless discharge of a weapon towards a building or a vehicle;
 - (vi) new offences within the Weapons Act prohibiting the possession and distribution of a blueprint material for the manufacture of a firearm on a 3D printer or electronic milling machine;
 - (vii) amendments to broaden the scope of an individual’s history that may be considered in firearms licensing decisions to include information about violent and weapons-related offences, irrespective of whether a conviction is spent or not recorded;
 - (viii) amendments to strengthen the effectiveness of the Firearm Prohibition Order (FPO) scheme which is designed to deter high-risk individuals from acquiring, possessing, or using firearms;
 - (ix) amendments to strengthen the storage requirements for category A, B, C, E and M weapons by requiring these weapons to be stored exclusively in solid steel containers.
- (c) Further, we recommend that the QLD Government
- (i) progress recommendations from the Queensland Human Rights Commission in relation to civil protections from hate speech.¹
 - (ii) focus on education about dehumanisation based on protected attributes rather than privileging certain types of racism.

¹ Queensland Human Rights Commission, *Building Belonging: Review of Queensland’s Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Report, July 2022).

3. THE DISPROPORTIONALITY OF THE PROSCRIPTION OF PHRASES PROPOSAL

- (a) At the outset, we note that the Premier's public characterisation of the slogan "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free", and statements advocating for its criminalisation, have already caused significant harm to community trust and social belonging. Those statements demonstrated a failure to engage with Palestinian communities to understand the context and perspectives surrounding the expression. It also points to a degree of pre-determination of outcome.
- (b) We oppose the proscription and criminalisation of contested speech used in protest movements, especially through delegated legislation.

Burden on individuals and communities

- (c) Under the proposed scheme, once a phrase is proscribed the practical burden shifts to the individual to demonstrate an absence of harmful intent if they are subject to charges. By that stage, however, the consequences are already engaged.
- (d) Individuals and whole communities will be exposed to disproportionate policing responses, intrusive investigative measures, reputational harm, and significant incursions upon privacy — often well before any judicial determination of intent.
- (e) The proscription structure risks reversing, in substance if not in form, the presumption that the state bears the onus of proving criminality. It also generates a foreseeable chilling effect: individuals engaged in lawful political speech, protest, journalism, or human rights advocacy may self-censor rather than risk investigation, search, or arrest.
- (f) In this way, the mechanism does not merely regulate harmful conduct; it alters the practical balance between state power and individual liberty.

Burden on freedom of expression, association and assembly

- (g) The fact of proscription and the heavy penalties for the offences under the proposed Bill will mean that it is reasonable to expect people to be risk averse, to adjust their behaviour and to avoid using any pro-Palestinian

phrases. The interference with the Queensland Human Rights Act and Constitutional implied freedom of political communication in this Bill must be measured both by the restrictions required by the letter of the criminal offences; and by the further extent to which people will exercise self-restraint in terms of what they say and what they do.

- (h) The proscription of phrases such as “From the River to the Sea, Palestine Will be Free” and “Globalise the Intifada” is likely to result in a general impact on expressions of support for the Palestinian cause, and in that sense is also racially discriminatory under Australian law.
- (i) The prohibition of expressions is a clear interference with the right of freedom of expression as set out in the Queensland Human Rights Act.
- (j) That interference that exists applies to everyone, anyone who might wish to associate with the Palestinian protest movement which routinely uses that phrase.
- (k) This measure comprises a very significant interference with freedom of expression, association and assembly. It does not represent a lawful infringement on those freedoms because it
 - (i) Employs a threshold below incitement of hatred or the section 18C standard under federal law;
 - (ii) Is enforced through an explicit proscription regime which stigmatises the phrase and assumes guilty until proven innocent (through the onus on the defendant).
- (l) We do not accept that there will be any limit to what is included in this proscription list. By passing this proposal, the Parliament can expect the Government to continually proscribe by delegated legislation most of the language of the Palestinian movement, particularly anything considered to ‘delegitimise’ or oppose Israel.

Questions the parliament needs to consider

- (m) What needs to be justified is the restriction on peaceful protest and expressions against unlawful racial apartheid, occupation, consistent with

the Queensland Human Rights Act. *How will its disproportionate impacts be mitigated?*

- (n) No amount of police guidance or public advice would undo the stigmatisation of the phrase “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free” if it is designated. Nor is any such public advice likely, as the political purpose of this proposal is to stigmatise the phrase from being used at all.
- (o) *How will the public understand that the phrase would be proscribed, and not the activity or the cause?* For example, saying “Free Palestine from apartheid and occupation”, which is the technical meaning of “From the River to the Sea”, would not be uttering a proscribed phrase. *How can that consequential distinction be rationalised?*
- (p) *How will the police and public understand what constitutes a safe and unsafe use of that phrase so as not to offend?*
- (q) *Will disagreeing with the proscription of the phrase lead to police investigation and invasion of privacy?*
- (r) A court reviewing the constitutionality or discriminatory impacts of this Bill will consider, *were there less intrusive measures available?* Queensland already has hate crime laws that apply to public nuisance, as well as criminal serious vilification laws. Further, there is a swathe of federal offences for using a carriage service to menace or harass, including an aggravation for racial hatred, as a result of amendments in January 2026.
- (s) Individuals who clearly engage in incitement of hatred, violence, or online harassment can already be prosecuted under existing laws without stigmatising the Palestinian community, empowering widespread state intrusions in privacy and discouraging support for Palestinian human rights. *Why have those existing offences not been used?*
- (t) The apparent reluctance to prosecute using existing laws strongly suggests that the phrase does not meet the relevant statutory thresholds, most likely because it is not directed against an identifiable racial group. That, in turn, indicates that the expression such as “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free” is properly characterised as political speech, not hate speech.

- (u) As a matter of Australian and Queensland law, ridicule of — or even hostility towards — genocidal conduct, military occupation, apartheid, or Zionism as a political ideology is *prima facie* political communication. Political communication lies at the core of the system of representative and responsible government protected by the implied freedom recognised by the High Court.
- (v) “Political belief” is not, of itself, a protected attribute under Federal or Queensland hate-speech provisions. Nor does the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights create a freestanding prohibition on criticism of political ideologies. To the contrary, Article 19 protects freedom of expression, including robust and even offensive political speech, subject only to narrow and demonstrably necessary limitations.
- (w) *What would a court consider is the level, scale and persistence of harm that would justify proscription of a phrase?* The nature and scale of offence suffered by parts of the Jewish and Israel community to these phrases is no substitute for the level, scale and persistence of harm that would justify the application of the criminal law measures that are the consequence of proscription, and the very significant interference with human rights consequent on those measures.
- (x) *What about situations where there are competing community experiences of offence?* A court would not consider subjective experience of one community to be privileged over the subjective experience of another community that is currently experiencing terrible human rights abuses, so as to justify this infringement of human rights.
- (y) The submission from Alliance Against Islamophobia to the NSW inquiry on prohibiting slogans makes a very good point regarding the use of slogans such as “Jai Shri Ram” and, in certain contexts, “Har Har Mahadev.”
- (z) Extant research does demonstrate the weaponised use by far-right Hindutva actors as ritualised chants accompanying mob intimidation, forced chanting, and lynching-associated violence, particularly against Muslims and Christian minorities.
- (aa) In these contexts, the slogans function as signals of dominance and imminent harm, understood by targeted communities as precursors to

violence rather than as legitimate religious or political expression. Here there is intent to harm people based on protected attributes, and incitement to hatred laws may be used.

- (bb) Would the Queensland Government ever proscribe “Jai Shri Ram” because of the fear that the chant instils in Indian religious minorities? No, it wouldn’t.
- (cc) The Queensland Parliament needs to seriously consider its first principles that would justify proscription (such a severe and blunt measure) of any phrase at all.
- (dd) If the Queensland Parliament cannot defend this proposal based on first principles that apply across a range of political and cultural contexts, and is not confident that it would survive legal challenge due to a fundamental lack of proportionality, it should not pass the proposal.

Further note on the meaning “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free”

- (ee) AMAN refers to a previous submission it made to the Meta oversight board in relation to the phrase, ‘From the River to the Sea.’² In that submission we supported Meta’s original decision that the phrase ‘from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free’ does not violate policies against promoting violence, supporting terrorism, hate speech or antisemitism. We also recommended not having that phrase as a content moderation signal on the grounds it would lead to excessive enforcement across Meta platforms. In that submission we stated:

The pro-Israel lobby interprets the slogan as violent and oppressive, reflecting their own chant, "from the river to the sea, the [Israeli flag] is all you'll see." Likud, Israel's long-time ruling party, openly advocates annexing all Palestinian territories to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state. Their efforts to project such a meaning on the Palestinian freedom chant are made in bad faith and are a particularly egregious form of gaslighting the victims of

² AMAN’s submission to the Meta Oversight Board regarding **Posts that Include “From the River to the Sea”**, 23rd May 2024: [Meta-Oversight-Board-Submission-AMAN-Ltd.pdf](https://www.aman.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/AMAN-Meta-Oversight-Board-Submission-AMAN-Ltd.pdf)

Israel's crimes. In genocide prevention studies, the technique is known as 'accusation in the mirror' and has been used throughout historical genocides—accusing victims of genocide of genocidal tendencies to help pave the way for public acceptance of violence against them.

"From the River to the Sea" is a call for freedom from Palestinians and their allies, fundamentally different from the annexation and colonisation promoted by Likud under the same phrase.

As Nasser Mashni, President of the Australian Palestine Advocacy Network, states, "Palestinians don't deny Jewish indigeneity. We just don't think it's superior to ours. Jewish connection and the Zionist enterprise of the state of Israel today are two separate connections. The desire for a Jewish homeland, I get it. I've got 100 years of trauma and not hundreds, but if a Jewish homeland, is predicated firstly on my dispossession and then my continued oppression then that is unacceptable to me and it should be unacceptable to anyone."