

**Chris Minns**

Premier of New South Wales

**Yasmin Catley**Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism,  
Minister for the Hunter**Jihad Dib**Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government,  
Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Youth Justice**Steve Kamper**Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property,  
Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport**Media Statement****Western Sydney Faith Leaders join NSW Government call for unity****Friday, 19 April 2024**

Yesterday we attended a meeting of faith leaders and government agencies, convened by His Excellency Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, Bishop of the Maronite Eparchy of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania. All attendees endorsed the following statement by the Faith Affairs Council.

*This week the people of our state have suffered deep loss and pain. Many are experiencing fear, trauma and grief as the result of senseless acts of violence. We offer our sympathies and prayers to all victims and their families.*

*During the next few days people of faith will come together in their places of worship. They will come to pray, to care and to heal.*

*They must be able to do so feeling safe and secure. Our places of worship are a refuge for those seeking God, solace and peace.*

*As people of faith, we respect one another's religions. We must all ensure that no one feels intimidated when attending their places of worship.*

*As faith leaders, we are united against all forms of violence. We exhort all those who share our respective faiths to treat one another with care and compassion.*

Statement endorsed by attendees:

- Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, Maronite Church of Australia
- Archbishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Assyrian Church of the East
- Archbishop Amel Nona, Chaldean Catholic Church
- Bishop Robert Rabbat, Melkite Catholic Eparchy
- Metropolitan Basilios, Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
- Chorbishop Joseph, The Ancient Church of the East
- Australian National Imans Council (ANIC)

- Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC)
- Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA)

Statement agreed to by all members of the NSW Faith Affairs Council:

- Right Reverend Dr Michael Stead, Anglican Church, Diocese of Sydney
- Mr Gawaine Powell Davies, Chair, Buddhist Council of NSW
- Imam Shadi Alsuleiman, President, Australian National Imams Council
- Dr Ali Al Samail, Resident Scholar (Sheikh), Australian Ahl Al Bait Islamic Centre
- Mr Surinder Kumar Jain, Vice President, Hindu Council of Australia
- Ms Monica Doumit, Director of Public Affairs and Engagement, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney
- David Ossip, President, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies
- Rev. Dr Steve Bartlett, Director of Ministries, Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT
- Rev. Dr Manas Ghosh, Minister in the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of NSW & ACT
- Rev. Dr Kamal Weerakoon, Minister, Presbyterian Church of Australia
- Mr Darshan Singh Gill, Patron, Australian Sikh Association (ASA) (Gurdwara Sahib Glenwood)
- Very Rev. Fr Christophoros Krikelis, Chancellor, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
- Rev. Ralph Estherby, National Director/CEO for Chaplaincy Australia, Australian Christian Churches
- Mr Darren Bark, Co-Chair, Better Balanced Futures (Faith NSW)
- Mr Murray Norman, CEO, Better Balanced Futures (Faith NSW)
- Reverend Heather Joyce Topp, Senior Chaplain and Interfaith Minister, Buddhist Council of NSW
- Reverend William Crews AM, Superintendent Minister, Ashfield Parish Mission
- Ms Katherine Xavier, Interfaith Commission Member, Catholic Diocese of Parramatta
- Ms Monica Chahoud, Melkite Charitable Foundation President, Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Australia, New Zealand and all Oceania

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