



Form 59  
Rule 29.02(1)

## Affidavit

No. 1503 of 2024

Federal Court of Australia  
District Registry: New South Wales  
Division: General

**Peter Wertheim AM** and another  
Applicants

**Wissam Haddad** and another  
Respondents

Affidavit of: Peter Wertheim AM  
Address: C-/ Deutsch Miller, Level 9, 53 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
Occupation: Co-Chief Executive Officer of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry  
Date: 24 March 2025

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Filed on behalf of (name & role of party) Peter Wertheim AM, the First Applicant

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[Version 3 form approved 02/05/2019]

I, Peter Wertheim AM of C-/ Deutsch Miller, Level 9, 53 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000, Co-Chief Executive Officer of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (**ECAJ**), say on oath:

1. I am the First Applicant in these proceedings.

### **Background**

2. I am 70 years of age and am Jewish.
3. My father and his parents arrived in Australia before World War 2, as refugees from Nazism, and had the experience of living in Nazi Germany during the 1930s. My father passed away in 2006.
4. My mother is a survivor of the Auschwitz death camp and is 97 years of age. Her parents and most of her siblings perished at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Coming from a Jewish Holocaust surviving legacy is an important part of my identity as a Jew in Australia. This is not unusual for Jewish Australians. A study of the Jewish population in Australia in 2017, known as the Gen 17 report, found that 59% of respondents said at least one grandparent was a Holocaust survivor. The study was carried out by Dr David Graham and Professor Andrew Markus. Information about the study appears on Monash University's website:  
  
<https://www.monash.edu/arts/acjc/research-and-projects/past-projects/jewish-attitudinal-surveys/gen17>. One part of the study asked respondents about the importance of eighteen attitudinal statements and markers of identity 'for your own sense of Jewish identity.' The highest level of strong and consistent positive responses were indicated for 'upholding strong moral and ethical behaviour,' 'remembering the Holocaust,' 'sharing Jewish festivals with your family,' and 'combatting antisemitism'. I too consider these factors to be important in my sense of identity.
5. Between 1946 and 1954, approximately 16,300 Jewish refugees were admitted into Australia (Suzanne Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 1997, p.405), and this largely accounted for the approximately 50% increase in the Australian Jewish population between the 1947 and 1954 censuses. So many Jews in Australia, including myself, have family stories that link into the history of the Holocaust history. The Holocaust represented a catastrophic culmination of the tragedies that have befallen Jews throughout history, and I and many members of the Jewish community grew up and live with a consciousness of just how vulnerable to vilification, discrimination, persecution and mass murder Jewish communities have been in the past and continue to be. In my experience, the trauma of the Holocaust runs deep in the consciousness of Australian Jews and has echoed through the generations. I consider this to be an important factor




to be taken into consideration when assessing the impact of antisemitic discourse on the Australian Jewish community.

6. I consider myself to be fortunate to have been born and raised, and for my children and grandchildren to have been born and raised, in Australia. I grew up with only one set of grandparents and I did not have any family in Australia other than my parents and paternal grandparents, and only some family in Israel. For many years, I grew up calling my parents' friends aunty and uncle. I view the Jewish community as my larger extended family and given the history of my upbringing and my family's experience as Holocaust survivors, I feel the fragility of Jewish existence poignantly in my own personal life and circumstances. I am an only child, and when I was growing up, I was conscious of being the last link in the chain of my family's continuity. From the stories of survival, which I have heard from members of my own family and other Jewish families, I am conscious about how precarious and vulnerable the situation of the Jewish community is and how quickly things can change in terms of the security of Jewish people. I married young and had kids young. I wanted to have children for their own sake, but in part I also wanted to help ensure the continuation of Jewish life.
7. I never encountered antisemitism or discrimination growing up or in my adult life in Australia. In my early years of high school, I occasionally heard some low-level racist banter amongst the male students, but on the rare occasions it was directed at me I generally gave back as good as I got. I never felt victimised or bullied. I do see and hear examples of antisemitism frequently in my professional life, however, in my personal life, I have found Australia to be a good place for Jews to live in, which underlies why I am so concerned by Mr Haddad's speeches. During my lifetime, antisemitism has overwhelmingly seemed to me to be unacceptable in Australia and to have no place in public life.
8. I am aware because of my family's history, and my Jewish historical consciousness, that despite not personally encountering antisemitism or discrimination in Australia, there is always a very real potential for things to change.

#### **My Involvement with the Jewish Community in Australia**

9. I am currently the Co-Chief Executive Officer of the ECAJ, which is the peak national representative body of the Australian Jewish community. I was previously a lawyer for 32 years where I advised not-for-profit organisations and acted as honorary solicitor for a number of charities, including but not limited to the Aboriginal Medical Service Co-operative Ltd at Redfern and numerous Jewish community organisations.






10. I have a long history of being involved in the Jewish community throughout my career, including:
- (a) Since the 1990s, I have been a Governor of the NSW Jewish Communal Appeal, which is an umbrella charity for Jewish charities in NSW, including Jewish schools and welfare organisations;
  - (b) In August 1996, I was elected as President of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, and acted in that role up until August 2000;
  - (c) Since 1997, I have been the Chair of the Fund for Jewish Higher Education, which helps to fund university programs in Modern and Classical Hebrew, Jewish History and Jewish Civilisation, Thought and Culture;
  - (d) In 2003, I was made a member of the Order of Australia for services to the Jewish and wider communities and for work in a variety of projects promoting communal harmony and understanding;
  - (e) From 2004 to 2015, I was a Statutory Board Member of the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board, which is a State Government body; and
  - (f) In July 2010, I was appointed by the Australian Federal Government as a member of its Australian Multicultural Advisory Council and from 2011 to 2013 its successor body, the Australian Multicultural Council.
11. In the 1990s and early 2000s, I was involved in several cases involving complaints of racial vilification made by members of the Jewish community. From 1986 until 2005, I was a partner and principal of the legal firm Geoffrey Edwards & Co.
12. In 1992, I was one of several officers of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies who brought a complaint of racial vilification to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board under section 20C of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW). The complaint was made against the publisher and editor of an Arabic language newspaper called "An Nahar". The complaint related to an article that appeared in the newspaper which had criticised the Catholic Church in Australia for having published guidelines on friendly relations with the Jewish community. The complaint alleged that the An Nahar article included some grossly antisemitic statements. The complaint was resolved by conciliation, and the resolution included publication of an unconditional, unreserved apology to the Jewish community.
13. In 1994 and 1995, following the publication in 1991 of the Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia, the Federal Government put forward draft Federal legislation to address the problems highlighted in the Report, including the problem of






racial vilification. The ECAJ made a written submission to a parliamentary Inquiry in support of the draft legislation, and I recall assisting in the drafting of that submission.

14. In 1995, Part IIA of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) (**RDA**) was enacted by the Federal parliament. The new provisions were entitled 'Prohibition of offensive behaviour based on racial hatred'. They established a new basis for individuals who had been the targets of racial vilification to obtain civil redress. I already had an interest in anti-vilification laws and was interested in whether the new laws under Part IIA of the RDA would give broader scope for redress than had previously existed in respect of antisemitic publications. Some of the racial vilification cases that I subsequently acted pro bono in, included:

- (a) In 1996, I assisted the ECAJ in lodging a complaint under Part IIA of the RDA in the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (as it then was), against an Arabic-language Sydney publication called "El Telegraph". El Telegraph had published an offensive article by Al-Diar Charlie Ayoub, called "Chattering in the Face of the Death Machine," which referenced antisemitic conspiracy theories and cited the fabricated document known as '*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*'. This led to an unconditional, unreserved apology being published by El Telegraph, together with several articles exposing '*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*' as a fabrication. One of those articles was also jointly authored by the late Jeremy Jones and myself.
- (b) In 1997, the ECAJ was concerned about Holocaust denial content and other antisemitic content appearing on the 'Adelaide Institute' website operated by the late Fredrick Toben. I assisted the ECAJ in drafting a complaint to the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (as it then was), and acted as the instructing solicitor for the applicant in the hearing that subsequently took place before the Commission. In 2000, the Commission ruled that Toben had breached section 18C of the RDA, however, for Constitutional reasons, the case had to be relitigated in the Federal Court of Australia, and in 2002 the Court ruled that Toben had engaged in conduct that was unlawful under Part IIA of the RDA. Toben appealed the decision to the Full Court which unanimously dismissed the appeal: *Toben v Jones* [2003] FCAFC 137 (27 June 2003). I acted as the instructing solicitor for the applicant in both the Federal Court proceedings and the appeal case.
- (c) Also in 1997, Olga Scully, a woman in Tasmania, was distributing antisemitic leaflets and I assisted the ECAJ to draft a complaint against her to the Australian




Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and acted as the instructing solicitor for the applicant in the hearing that subsequently took place before the Commission. In 2000, the Commission ruled that Scully had breached section 18C of the RDA. For the same Constitutional reasons, the case had to be relitigated in the Federal Court of Australia, and in 2002 the Court ruled that Scully had engaged in conduct that was unlawful under Part IIA of the RDA: *Jones v Scully* [2002] FCA 1080 (2 September 2002). I acted as the instructing solicitor for the applicant in that case.

### The Complained Speeches

15. In or around November 2023, by reading some articles published by "The Australian", I first became aware of some of the speeches delivered by Wissam Haddad, the First Respondent in these proceedings, and which I complained about to the Australian Human Rights Commission (**AHRC**) prior to commencing these proceedings. There were several articles published by "The Australian" in or around November 2023, and I read those listed below on or around the date they were published:
  - (a) On 6 November 2023, an article authored by Alexi Demetriadi and called "*Al Madina Dawah Centre in new hate outburst after Brother Ismail sermon*";
  - (b) On 7 November 2023, an article authored by Alexi Demetriadi and Stephen Rice, called "*'Kill Jews' hate preacher Wissam Haddad (Abu Ouysad) unmasked as Islamic State backer*";
  - (c) On 9 November 2023, an article authored by Zaina Cheema called "*We can't turn a blind eye to extremist, antisemitic hate at home*" annexed and marked **Annexure PW-1**; and
  - (d) On 13 November 2023, an article authored by Alexi Demetriadi called "*Wissam Haddad doubles down on sermons and spruiks Holocaust comparison*".
16. At the time when I read the articles mentioned in paragraph 15, I initially thought that the reported content of the speeches was unusual and disturbing. It appeared to me that some of the reported statements were grossly antisemitic, and that the antisemitism was conveyed in an unusually overt, direct and blatant manner. I have not often seen reports of a cleric uttering sentiments of that kind in Australia. I felt that the honour and dignity of my people and my community, and my own personal honour and dignity, had been publicly traduced by a series of racist smears.






17. Ms Cheema's article referred to in paragraph 15(c) made a particularly strong impression on me. I recall that I shared it with our database in the ECAJ's bi-weekly 'News and Views' digest on 10 November 2023, annexed and marked **Annexure PW-2**. I understood when I read Ms Cheema's article that it was critical of Mr Haddad's preaching from her own Muslim perspective, saying to the effect that it was un-Islamic, was not helping the Palestinian cause and was gratuitously bringing antisemitism into the discourse.
18. I found it outrageous that anyone would attribute negative character traits to every Jewish person simply by virtue of being Jewish. To me, a person's ethnic or ethno-religious background or identity is an immutable attribute, not a matter of personal choice, and therefore not a matter for moral judgement by others. I consider it to be not only offensive, insulting and humiliating, but also morally perverse, to dehumanise members of an entire community by defining them solely in terms of an abstract impersonal category, instead of as individuals on the basis of their unique humanity.
19. I also felt that the reported statements were intimidatory because in my experience, clerics of any religion can be people who exert influence among their followers. I was concerned that the dissemination of those statements might have the effect of normalising antisemitic prejudices among other people and encourage acts of violence against Jewish people and institutions, especially in the highly emotional political environment of the war initiated by the Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel on 7 October 2023. I expressed these concerns in several media interviews I gave at the time, one of which was reported in The Australian, in an article by Cameron Stewart, called "*No citizen is safe' if tide not turned on rising antisemitism, says Peter Wertheim*", dated 10 November 2023, annexed and marked **Annexure PW-3**.
20. In around November 2023, various Jewish community members emailed me about their concerns over the speeches. Those concerns reinforced my own personal impression, when I read the articles myself, that Haddad's statements were grossly antisemitic and had the potential to normalise antisemitism and promote violence against Jewish people and institutions. This made me try to get more information about what happened and to understand the precise words used by Mr Haddad. During this time, the research director of the ECAJ, Julie Nathan, had researched some links to the Facebook pages associated with Mr Haddad and/or the Al Madina Dawah Centre, the Second Respondent in these proceedings. I understand from that research that at least one of the speeches, being Speech B (called "Murdered by Israel") was on the Al Madina






Dawah Centre's Facebook page which was accessible to the public. This reinforced the impression I had from the news articles (as stated above).

21. From on or around November 2023, Ms Nathan in the normal course of her role as the research director of the ECAJ, continued to monitor antisemitic discourse in the media and social media and compile examples and prepare reports for the ECAJ.
22. In the aftermath of Mr Haddad's speeches, I did not immediately turn my mind to act and bring a complaint about them to the AHRC.
23. In or around December 2023, I had a number of conversations with the ECAJ's honorary officers about the possibility of the ECAJ bringing a complaint to the AHRC, including what may follow if we did that, which included the possibility of litigation.
24. Using the links and recordings supplied to me by Ms Nathan and from my own inquiries from Rumble, Facebook and the MEMRI website, in January 2024, I watched the videos of each of the speeches in full that were delivered by Mr Haddad on or about the following days:
  - (a) On or about 4 November 2023, The Jews of Al Madina Part 1;
  - (b) On or about 10 November 2023, Murdered by Israel Khutbah Jumma;
  - (c) On 12 November 2023, The Jews of Al Madina Part 2;
  - (d) On 14 November 2023, Media Response to Reality of World Palestine; and
  - (e) On 29 November 2023, The Jews of Al Madina Banu Quraytha Part 3;
 (the **Speeches**).
25. After watching the Speeches in full, I was again struck by what seemed to me to be egregious, derogatory generalisations about Jewish people which were contained in Haddad's Speeches. I found those generalisations to be deeply offensive and insulting. I felt outraged at the Speeches, and the slurs made by Mr Haddad as I understood it as being directed at the honour and dignity of my community, my people, and me individually, because Mr Haddad was making sweeping comments about all Jews which were offensive and insulting to me. After watching the Speeches, I felt disgusted because of the untruthfulness of the assertions that Mr Haddad was making about Jews as a group and I also felt offence, insult and humiliation because, as I saw it, he was dehumanising Jews generically and therefore me as a Jew. It was offensive and insulting to me both as a Jew and on behalf of the community I represent that Mr Haddad was describing Jews in dishonourable and inhuman terms, and as having inherent negative character traits. This was particularly upsetting to me given my




family's experience of the Holocaust and my experience as a descendant of Holocaust survivors. From having lived a happy life as a Jew in Australia, Mr Haddad's comments to me were reminiscent of what was said about Jews in Nazi Germany prior to and during the Nazi genocide against the Jewish people, and that itself is intimidating to me as a Jew from a Holocaust surviving family. I was further deeply concerned about the promotion of anti-Jewish hatred in the Speeches among Haddad's followers, and I was fearful of Jews being physically harmed as I saw the Speeches as contributing and fuelling the rise in the number of reported antisemitic incidents in Sydney and Australia following 7 October 2023.

26. I felt that Mr Haddad's Speeches were an example of Jews being singled out as objects of hatred, and that I could become a target. Prior to seeing Mr Haddad's Speeches, I have never had thoughts of being targeted or being fearful of my safety. I set out below the following examples of the parts of the Speeches which I was offended and insulted by:

- (a) Mr Haddad says, *"So they were holding a position of wealth in the society and they would use this wealth in order to have authority over the weak, just like they do today"*, and he further says *"So they would give a loan to people that were in need that was impossible to pay back. And again this continues today, where we find the majority of banks are owned by the Jews"*. These examples to me repeat tropes dating at least from the medieval period about Jews being obsessed with money and being greedy and exploitative.
- (b) Mr Haddad says that Jews are *"cowards"*, and that *"You find that their hands are in everywhere in businesses, in products that we should be boycotting – Coca Cola and Nike and McDonalds and Starbucks, and the list is long"*. This statement seems to me to make stereotypical allegations about Jews as such controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- (c) I further noted that Mr Haddad says *"Nobody come and tell me but brother this is the Zionists, it's not really the Jews. [Shakes head]. There was no Zionists at the time of the prophet...It was Jews –Yahud – and they were addressed this way."* This statement struck me as stripping away any pretence that Mr Haddad's comments were confined to political commentary about the Israel-Hamas conflict. Mr Haddad seemed to me to make it unambiguous that his comments were to be understood as referring to Jews as a group.
- (d) Mr Haddad says *"the Zionist-backed media agencies under Rupert Murdoch and Newscorp. This is what happens when you learn the dirty games of your*






*oppressors and now use it on the ones you want to oppress. The Nazis did the same and exact thing to the Jews before the Jewish genocide.*" This statement seems to me to make stereotypical allegations about Jews as controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions. I also found Mr Haddad's comment to be outrageously untruthful by likening the victims of the Nazi genocide to the perpetrators.

- (e) Mr Haddad says, "*As we would see they [the Jews] are a people who constantly break their agreements*", and that Jews are "*vile*", which to me was further generalised slurs against Jews as a group.
27. On 19 March 2025, I checked whether some of Mr Haddad's speeches are still available online, and I found a speech titled "Murdered by Isreal" (sic) being Speech B (as referred to in our claim in the proceedings) on an internet page called "Rumble". The fact that there are still videos of the Speeches publicly available adds to my concern about the ongoing coarsening of public discourse about the Jewish community, as I believe that such discourse sends a signal to some people that it is permissible to vilify Jews and engage in anti-social behaviour towards Jews, and without consequence.
28. I am concerned that some people would interpret Mr Haddad's words as giving them social licence to indulge in their own antisemitic prejudices and anti-social behaviour.
29. Following 7 October 2023, and Mr Haddad's Speeches, for the first time in my life I had conversations with people in the Jewish community questioning whether they need a "Plan B" as an alternative to living in Australia, as a result of the rise of antisemitism and where it may lead and questioning whether they are safe in Australia. In my experience in the community, the fact that people in the Jewish community are even talking about the possibility of leaving Australia for the first time, and not regarding it as the safe place it has always been for Jews (especially those who came to this country as Holocaust survivors) is a marker of a fundamentally changed perception of where we fit in as Jews and how safe we feel in this country. I feel that change on my own part, and on the part of the community I represent. Mr Haddad's Speeches and the environment it has contributed to have had that direct impact on me and the community. I considered the Speeches to trigger feelings about the fragility of the Jewish experience in history, culminating in the Holocaust, and how we as Jews can find ourselves subject to hatred and antisemitism and the physical harm that it can lead to. I never thought Jews would be unsafe, or that I would feel unsafe, as a Jew in Australia.
30. The Speeches in my experience take antisemitism in Australia to a much more serious level than most of the instances of antisemitic discourse we have seen in this country. I






have not seen this type of rhetoric from any religious figure that has had a following in Australia, which seems to me to utilise the conflicts in the Middle East to promote ill-will and enmity between different ethnic and religious communities. The Speeches being made by someone who is ostensibly a preacher of a faith and the fact that the Speeches could motivate people in the name of religion to do things that are evil, is very concerning and creates fear of what may be in terms of future safety of Jews and potential for violence against Jews, including me and my family. In my view, the Speeches are hateful, and I took them as having violent connotations and messages that inescapably created fear.

31. There have been recent notorious incidents that have occurred this year such as attacks on Jewish buildings, burning of vehicles, burning down of synagogues, graffiti attacks directed against Jewish community buildings and so on. I see these acts not arising in a vacuum, but as having been made feasible by an atmosphere of prejudice and hatred towards Jewish people coming from several different sectors of society and religious extremists. To me, this leads to the demonisation of the Jewish community, and when one combines all these things, hateful and criminal acts have emerged.

Sworn by the deponent  
at Sydney  
in New South Wales  
on 24 March 2025  
Before me:

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Signature of deponent

Poppy Carlie Isabella Kambas  
Solicitor / Australian legal practitioner  
Level 9, 53 Martin Place  
Sydney NSW 2000

  
Signature of witness

**Annexure PW-1**

No. NSD 1503 of 2024

Federal Court of Australia

District Registry: New South Wales

Division: General

**PETER WERTHEIM AM** and another

Applicants

**WISSAM HADDAD** and another

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "**Annexure PW-1**" and referred to in the affidavit of Peter Wertheim AM sworn 24 March 2025.

# THE AUSTRALIAN

## COMMENTARY

By [ZAINA CHEEMA](#)

### We can't turn blind eye to extremist, anti-Semitic hate in Australia



Gift this article



355 Comments

12:00am November 09, 2023. Updated 6:58am November 10, 2023

I am a doctor, human rights advocate and secular Australian woman who has spent many years in the Muslim community.

My partner is Jewish, and in my professional life I consult both Muslim and Jewish patients almost daily. Growing up a devout Muslim, I spent years attending mosques and Islamic community centres across Sydney. I studied sharia law, memorised the Koran, performed the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and wore a hijab from the age of 12 to 29.

[I recently travelled to Israel, a country I once denounced as a colonial apartheid state.](#)

At university I joined student marches chanting "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free". I recall during one of those marches we arrived at the Israeli embassy. People were shouting "shame". I felt a knot in my stomach – something about the energy of the crowd had grown hateful.

But it's only now, since the October 7 attacks, that I understand what that intuitive gut feeling meant: there is an additional malevolence in today's anti-Semitism. It comes in the form of hatred towards Israel.

For decades secular Muslims have been forced out of Muslim communities for their divergent views and irreligious lifestyle. This has led to communities becoming more insular over time, where hardline and intolerant rhetoric creates a culture of exclusionism, racism, misogyny, homophobia and anti-Semitism.



We have seen the rise of Islamic extremism across the globe and Australia is in no way safe from that threat. In our society there are hateful men brainwashing their communities to murder civilians based on their religion and oppose the core values that make Australia an incredible country.

Multiculturalism is worth fighting for and the fight has arrived.

[Debate has been ignited across the nation following the hateful comments](#) of brainwashed cleric “Brother Ismail”, who said: “The flag of ISIS and al-Qa’ida is the flag of the Muslim community.” Yet another cleric from the Al Madinah Dawah Centre, Abu Ousayd, also known as Wissam Haddad, has now posted a video denigrating Jews and justifying the impending end-times murder of Jews by Muslims quoting a religious prophecy.

There is no place in Australia for these extremist views or this version of Islam. Given the Al Madinah Dawah Centre’s support for terrorism and anti-Semitism, there must be an immediate suspension of activities and events there along with a review of all personnel affiliated with the organisation. The comments that emerged from the centre should bring a sense of shame to Muslims.

I remember when I was a practising Muslim, whenever I heard hate speech such as this reported in the media it filled me with shame and anxiety. I internalised the negativity and the Islamophobia directed at me.

I did not feel empowered to speak up then; I did not have a voice then. But today I do and I want to use it to call out what I see as extremist and incendiary behaviour that runs counter to the national interest.

Since October 7 there has been a deafening silence across much of Australia’s Muslim community. Only a few have condemned Hamas. In my view this highlights the dangerous rise of political and radical Islam. The Lebanese Muslim Association and patrons of the Lakemba mosque in southwestern Sydney – some of the most influential Muslim organisations in this country – have not condemned Hamas. We must ask why.

[The NSW Legislative Assembly member for Bankstown](#), Jihad Dib, who represents a suburb in Sydney with a significant Muslim community, gave a heartfelt and

compassionate speech to the state parliament that should set the tone for our religious leaders to follow.

Sheik Ibrahim Dadoun, a mainstream preacher and key member of United Muslims of Australia, stoked raucous crowds with a tone of elation and celebration following the murderous actions of Hamas. He holds four degrees and was, until recently, PR director at the Australian National Imams Council. This man's words and actions cannot be ignored and must be denounced from across the Muslim community. They cannot be allowed to go unanswered; these communities must have the courage to stand against hate, not hide behind claims of "armed resistance".

Hamas has been denounced by leading Islamic authorities, including the internationally recognised Islamic Fatwa Council. This alone should make clear to Muslims there is no place for Hamas apologists.

Jihadist groups prey on Australian religious communities. Their game is simple: to isolate vulnerable individuals from the wider community, radicalise them and then use them to further their own political agendas. It's worth exploring their sources of funding. It's also vital these extremists feel the full weight of the law, and law enforcement works to update our counter-terrorism laws to prevent this type of violent hate culture and civil unrest in Australia.

I do not agree, however, with the deportation of religious extremists. These jihadists must be studied and deradicalised if we are to deal strategically with the broader risk of extremism and security. Many former radicals, including "son of Hamas" Mosab Hassan Yousef, have become the greatest activists against extremist Islam. Yousef's father, Sheikh Hassan Yousef, was a co-founder of Hamas.

In medicine we know all diseases must be treated at their core; bandages only stop the bleeding. It gets you out of the intensive care unit but not out of hospital. Exporting the problem only risks delivering it to a population more susceptible to radicalisation, only to have them return to our doorstep once again.

[This has been a recurrent issue across Europe.](#) Our Muslim youth – who often feel caught between Australian values and what's being preached to them – must know they are Australian. They must know they were born here, that they're part of the

fabric of our country and that they are loved. We must not allow fanatical clerics to convince them otherwise.

Our Jewish community must also know they are supported, especially as the general atmosphere of anti-Semitism continues to rise. We must come together to root out fringe clerics – expose them for who and what they truly are – so our multicultural country is never divided.

*Zaina Cheema is a general practitioner in Sydney.*

## MORE ON THIS STORY



### **Not every silence is a sign of latent anti-Semitism**

By JANET ALBRECHTSEN



### **‘Holocaust inversion’: how a Covid conspiracy fired up anti-Semitism**

By ELLIE DUDLEY



### **Why the silence over anti-Semitism among our doctors?**

By SARAH B



### **I recently travelled to Israel, a country I once denounced as a colonial apartheid state**

By RACHEL BAXENDALE



**ZAINA CHEEMA** CONTRIBUTOR



**Annexure PW-2**

No. NSD 1503 of 2024

Federal Court of Australia

District Registry: New South Wales

Division: General

**PETER WERTHEIM AM** and another

Applicants

**WISSAM HADDAD** and another

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "**Annexure PW-2**" and referred to in the affidavit of Peter Wertheim AM sworn 24 March 2025.

**Jessica Wiltshire**

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**From:** Peter Wertheim AM, co-Chief Executive Officer ECAJ <[pwertheim@ecaj.org.au](mailto:pwertheim@ecaj.org.au)>

**Sent:** Friday, 10 November 2023 6:09 AM

**To:** Peter Wertheim <[pwertheim@ecaj.org.au](mailto:pwertheim@ecaj.org.au)>

**Subject:** ECAJ News & Views 10-November-2023



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## **‘Never have we felt the need for such a statement’**

Fiona Harari

*The Australian* • November 9, 2023



In his unexpected century on Earth, Abram Goldberg has endured the worst of humanity – and embraced its best. As one of Australia's oldest Holocaust survivors, he has dedicated much of his long life to warning against the perils of hatred, "never again" becoming the mantra of his adulthood.

"I witnessed the brutality of what antisemitism can be," says Mr Goldberg, 99, an Auschwitz survivor whose entire family, bar his sister, were among the millions murdered by Nazi Germany.

A new wave of antisemitism in Australia and overseas after the October 7 attack by Hamas in Israel has deeply disturbed many of the nation's remaining Holocaust survivors, prompting more than 100 of them, including Mr Goldberg, to publish an unprecedented statement. Calling on Australians to denounce antisemitism and hatred, the 102 signatories warn of the consequences of a repeating history. [Read more](#)

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## We can't turn a blind eye to extremist, antisemitic hate at home

***I was raised a devout Muslim. At university I joined student marches chanting 'from the river to the sea'. Now I truly understand the malevolent nature of antisemitism – and we need to stand up against it.***

Zaina Cheema

*The Australian* • November 9, 2023

I am a doctor, human rights advocate and secular Australian woman who has spent many years in the Muslim community.

My partner is Jewish, and in my professional life I consult both Muslim and Jewish patients almost daily. Growing up a devout Muslim, I spent years attending mosques and Islamic community centres across Sydney. I studied sharia law, memorised the Koran, performed the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and wore a hijab from the age of 12 to 29.

I recently travelled to Israel, a country I once denounced as a colonial apartheid state. At university I joined student marches chanting "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free". I recall during one of those marches we arrived at the Israeli embassy. People were shouting



"shame". I felt a knot in my stomach – something about the energy of the crowd had grown hateful. [Read more](#)

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## One month after Oct. 7 massacre, the ruins of Kibbutz Kfar Aza testify to its horrors

Deborah Danan

*Jewish Telegraphic Agency • November 7, 2023*

...Zaka is an organization that specializes in search and rescue for bodies. Zaka volunteer Simcha Greineman was asked by one reporter to verify IDF claims of Hamas beheadings. He said, "I collected heads without bodies, I collected bodies without heads, I collected children that were stabbed. One child had his whole body burned but there was a knife stuck in his head from side to side."

Greineman recounted a scene in which a family of five, including parents, two children and a grandmother, were found in the bedroom "standing in a circle, hugging each other, locked arms." Zaka was tasked with detangling the family. "We're taking these last moments of life that they had, this circle, and we're taking apart every body that was attached to each other, and putting them in the bags," he said. [Read more](#)

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## US House of Reps votes to censure Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib over her Israel-Hamas rhetoric in a stunning rebuke

***"River to the sea" slogan is a call for another genocide of Jews***

Farnoush Amiri

*Associated Press • November 8, 2023*

The House voted late Tuesday to censure Democratic Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Michigan — the only Palestinian American in Congress — an extraordinary rebuke of her rhetoric about the Israel-Hamas war.

...Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., one of 22 Democrats who voted with Republicans in favour of the

censure resolution, said he believed it was important to debate the slogan “from the river to the sea.”

“It is nothing else but the call for the destruction of Israel and murder of Jews,” the Jewish Democrat said. “I will always defend the right to free speech. Tlaib has the right to say whatever she wants.”

He added, “But it cannot go unanswered.” [Read more](#)

## We will defend ourselves

Gadi Taub

*Tablet Magazine* • November 6, 2023

We did not think we would ever see such sights in Israel. Helpless Jews—women, children, the elderly—tormented, raped, torched alive, beheaded, and mutilated. There is much that has not yet been made public, and may only reach few, because the gore is not just incomprehensible, but actually traumatizing. In some of the worst footage the victims are recognizable, and so they have to be kept away from the public eye lest the victims’ families witness their loved ones tortured and killed. We are faced with Nazi-scale atrocities—inhuman barbarism. [Read more](#)

## Under scrutiny over Gaza, Israel points to civilian toll of U.S. wars

***The battle of Mosul, Iraq, was far bloodier than earlier fights in Falluja, costing as many as 8,000 civilian lives to kill perhaps several thousand Islamic State terrorists***

Michael Crowley and Edward Wong

*New York Times* • November 7, 2023

Facing global criticism over a bloody military campaign in Gaza that has killed thousands of civilians, Israeli officials have turned to history in their defense. And the names of several infamous sites of death and destruction have been on their lips. [Read more](#)

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## Iran's interests are trumping the Palestinian tragedy

***Tehran is staring at the very real prospect of confrontation with the US and Israel — and appears to have quietly decoupled its interests from those of the Palestinians***

Kim Ghattas

*Financial Times* • November 7, 2023

Lebanon, and perhaps much of the world, breathed a sigh of relief on Friday when Hassan Nasrallah, leader of the powerful Lebanese paramilitary group Hizbollah, finally spoke after four weeks of silence. He sounded like a warrior but didn't declare war. Lebanon would be spared all-out confrontation with Israel — for now. Many Palestinians felt betrayed, not out of a desire for more conflict, but out of desperation for some back-up amid the devastating Israeli pounding of Gaza.

But Nasrallah's speech was an opening gambit in Tehran's negotiations with the US for its future place in the region, at a critical juncture not only for the Middle East but for the Islamic Republic. He mentioned America as much as Israel. Tehran's top priorities are regime stability, amid domestic political and economic pressures, safeguarding as many of its regional assets as possible and ensuring a smooth succession for the 84-year-old Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei when the time comes. [Read more](#)

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## Free Palestinians from Hamas

***An ideology committed to abominable cruelty in the name of territorial conquest and genocide cannot be reasoned with***

Editorial

*The Telegraph (UK)* • November 4, 2023

It is almost a month since Hamas unleashed its barbaric attack on Israeli civilians on October 7. The full, murderous horror of that day continues to emerge, in accounts of genocidal savagery that are almost beyond imagining. Innocent families were subjected to torture, rape and mutilation. Festival-goers were mown down without pity. It is natural to want to turn aside, rather than contemplate such unspeakable acts. Yet facing what happened, in all its monstrosity, is the only way to see Hamas for what it is, and why it must be destroyed.

Some 240 people are still being held captive in Gaza by Hamas's terrorists. But in truth the



entire population of the Strip are prisoners of Hamas. Its leaders could stop further bloodshed at any point by surrendering and releasing their hostages. As the death toll rises in Gaza, it is increasingly clear that Hamas cares as little for the Palestinians under its control as it does for Israeli lives. [Read more](#)

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## **Is campus rage fuelled by Middle Eastern money?**

***According to a new report, at least 200 American colleges and universities illegally withheld information on approximately \$13 billion in undisclosed contributions from foreign regimes.***

Bari Weiss

*The Free Press* • November 8, 2023

Since Hamas's October 7 massacre, it has been hard to miss the explosion of antisemitic hate that has gripped college campuses across the country. At Cornell, a student posted a call "to follow 'Jews' home and slit their throats," and a professor said the terror attack "energized" and "exhilarated" him. At Harvard, a mob of students besieged an Israeli student, surrounding him as they bellowed "shame, shame, shame." At dozens of other campuses, students gathered to celebrate Hamas. [Read more](#)

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## **California Jewish man dies after altercation at Israel-Palestinian protests**

Daniel Trotta

*Reuters* • November 8, 2023

A Jewish man who fell to the ground in an altercation amid pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian street protests in California died on Monday, and his death was determined to be a homicide, law enforcement and a Jewish organization said.

Paul Kessler, 69, died of blunt force head trauma a day after the altercation on Sunday, the Ventura County Sheriff's Office said, adding that witnesses described the incident as battery. [Read more](#)

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## **ABC journalists unhappy that broadcaster is not sufficiently skewed towards Palestinians**

Osman Faruqi and Calum Jaspan  
*Sydney Morning Herald* • November 8, 2023

More than 200 ABC journalists participated in a mass meeting about the public broadcaster's coverage of the war in Gaza, with a number of grievances raised leading to a possible shift in how the conflict is reported on, according to several people who attended.

The meeting on Wednesday afternoon, which ABC staff described as emotional and at times heated, took place in person and online and was initiated by Mark Maley, the ABC's editorial policy manager.

... They also raised concerns around the ABC's unwillingness to use language such as "invasion", "occupation", "genocide", "apartheid" and "ethnic cleansing" regarding Israeli government policy and allegations made by human rights groups. [Read more](#)

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## **Rising antisemitism requires a clear Catholic response**

The Editors  
*America Magazine* • November 7, 2023



On Oct. 7, Hamas militants stormed into southern Israel, torturing, raping and murdering over 1,400 innocent men, women, teenagers, babies and grandparents who were celebrating Simchat Torah. In the month since the attack, countries around the world have reported a sharp rise in antisemitic incidents.

By coincidence, two days after the Hamas assault, Catholic and Jewish historians gathered at a conference in Rome to discuss new research on what the church did and failed to do during the Holocaust to save Jews from Nazi extermination. [Read more](#)

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**Annexure PW-3**

No. NSD 1503 of 2024

Federal Court of Australia

District Registry: New South Wales

Division: General

**PETER WERTHEIM AM** and another

Applicants

**WISSAM HADDAD** and another

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "**Annexure PW-3**" and referred to in the affidavit of Peter Wertheim AM sworn 24 March 2025.

## **‘No citizen is safe’ if tide not turned on rising anti-Semitism, says Peter Wertheim**

By CAMERON STEWART



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345 Comments

8:43pm November 10, 2023. Updated 7:26am November 11, 2023

Death threats, abuse on the streets and incitement to violence against Jewish Australians has reached the highest level on record, prompting the head of the nation's peak Jewish body to lash out at authorities for not doing enough to stop it.

The trend has left many in Australia's 100,000-strong Jewish community shaken and scared, as Jewish schools, synagogues and organisations become the targets of pro-Palestinian extremists and racists.

The surge in anti-Semitic incidents across the country spiked after Hamas massacred 1400 Israelis on October 7 and has risen further as Israel's war on Hamas has led to a large civilian death toll in Gaza.

Peter Wertheim, the co-chief executive of the country's peak Jewish body, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, has criticised authorities for failing to act on the rise in hate speech and violent threats against Jews.

"The major concern of the community is the apparent absence of any legal action against hate preachers and against calls for violence or threats of violence at public demonstrations," Mr Wertheim said.

"We've seen very little in the way of prosecutions or enforcement action that would implement the laws that we have in place to deal with that sort of incitement.



“It impacts on the freedom of every citizen because any group of people, whether it’s the Jewish community, or anyone else, is not free to go about their daily lives with a sense of safety and security, then ultimately, no citizen is safe.”

Mr Wertheim cited the lack of action in relation to a radical Islamic preacher in western Sydney who urged worshippers in Australia to unleash jihad and described Hamas terrorists as “honourable men”.

The ECAJ, which tracks the incidence of anti-Semitism, says anti-Semitic acts are now at the highest level since records were kept. In this past week alone – from November 1 to 7 – 49 incidents of anti-Semitism were reported, the highest weekly figure on record, but that number is likely to rise further because reports of new incidents are still being made.

Anti-Semitic incidents are vastly under-reported because of the reluctance of victims to make official complaints to Jewish bodies. The ECAJ said the total recorded incidents since the October 7 Hamas attack was 221 – a 482 per cent rise on the 38 - incidents reported in October 2021, the last monthly figure for October.

ECAJ research director Julie Nathan said there had been a sharp spike in all types of anti-Semitic behaviour since October 7.

“We have seen increases in the threats of violence (against Jews), and an increase in death threats and an increase in harassment on the streets,” Ms Nathan said.



“The concern is that as the war continues people are going to get angrier and will they then take that out on individual Jews.”

Since October 7, she said there had been more reports of people making the sign of a gun with their hands outside Jewish schools and synagogues.

Genocidal chants such as “kill the Jews” have been reported at several rallies in Melbourne and Sydney in addition to the notorious Opera House rally of October 9 when chants of “gas the Jews” were heard.

This week, more than 100 of the nation’s remaining Holocaust survivors published an unprecedented statement calling on Australians to denounce anti-Semitism and hatred.

“Never have we, the survivors of the Holocaust, felt the need to make a collective statement such as this until now,” the statement said.

“Never did we think that we would witness a re-enactment of the senseless and virulent hatred of Jews that we faced in Europe.

“On 7 October 2023, we witnessed the horrors of Hamas’ terrorist attacks in Israel and the resulting war, with its terrible loss of life. Since then, we have seen an unprecedented outpouring of anti-Semitism raging on our streets, on our television screens, on social media and in our universities ... We cannot allow history to repeat itself.”

## MORE ON THIS STORY



### **How Israeli parents saved twin boys from slaughter**

By YONI BASHAN

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sia Lagos".

Registrar

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