



PRESS RELEASE

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Iran – Déjà vu?

The President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils - AFIC, Mr Ikebal Adam Patel reported that consideration should be given to a new assessment by the American Intelligence Agencies which concludes that Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003 and that the program remains frozen, contradicting a judgment two years ago that Tehran was working relentlessly toward building a nuclear bomb.

Mr Patel further urged the new elected Rudd Government to carefully consider its response to President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, who warned in a speech in October that if Iran "stays on its present course, the international community is prepared to impose serious consequences."

It appears, according to US intelligence that these comments are misleading and it is imperative that the Middle East, which is already steeped in tragedy and turmoil as a result of the so called weapons of mass destruction in Iraq not allow a repeat of this fiasco in Iran, a case of *deja vu*.

Mr Ikebal Patel urged the Australian government to make the government's stance on Iran clear and transparent. He said it is reasonable to expect a government to act on behalf of its citizens in a given situation in an objective and balanced manner that will not unnecessarily put lives in jeopardy. He further urged the Rudd Government to consider views expressed by International bodies such as the UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, which has protested to the US government over a report on Iran's nuclear programme, calling it "erroneous" and "misleading".

Mr Patel further stated, "It is imperative that western Governments act with justice and fairness in all international affairs. Political leaders need to think and act rationally and not allow either domestic or international political consideration to play havoc with the lives of innocent people, the value of a human life should override political solidarity."

For further information, please contact:

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