

To  
**The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP**  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

01 August 2016

Dear Hon Malcolm Turnbull:

Warmest greetings from Toowoomba. Heartiest congratulations on being elected as the Prime Minister of Australia. We wish you and your cabinet every successes.

The reason for this letter to you is to communicate the deepening and growing concern within the Muslim community in the wake of the recent Federal elections and recent attacks on Islam and Muslims by some ill-informed, intolerant, xenophobic, short-sighted, and opportunist leaders and their supporters to divide Australians by exploiting the ethnic, religious and cultural differences.

Although the intensity and voracity of the attacks have recently increased significantly, the inherent hate, racism and ignorance of the attackers are not new for at least one of these revitalised politicians.

I am sure that you are aware of the fact that the political rise of Ms Pauline Hanson in the late nineties was solely based on her anger and attack on indigenous Australians. Later she expanded her views and extended her attack on the Asians. Now she has discovered another target of abuse and attack, the Australian Muslims. There is nothing positive in her politics. She is against anyone who looks different from her.

While I acknowledge and applaud the vast majority of political, religious, and community leaders in Queensland and Australia, who stand strong against any attempt to divide Australians through attacks on any section of the community, sadly many of them have not been public to condemn the vile attack of Ms Hanson and others on Muslims and Asians, and exposed the potential danger of such hateful, divisive and extreme ideology.

You may know that the former Premier of Queensland, Mr Campbell Newman and the current Premier of NSW, Mr Mike Baird had publicly recognised the remarkable contribution of the Muslims in this country and rejected the unfair attack on the Muslim community in the strongest possible term. But we have not heard anything against Islamophobia from your office after the recent election.

The community requests that you and your colleagues publicly reject the politics of division, hate and attacks on a section of the peaceful people of Australia. This is a normal expectation of any leader who is committed to do good to all citizens, not just working for any selected group of them.

The ongoing irresponsible predominately anti-Muslim and also anti-Asian rhetoric of Ms Hanson is likely to have a significant impact on Australia's reputation as a peaceful egalitarian nation in the Asia-Pacific region, and more so on its economic and potentially security interests.

You may agree that her ongoing attack on Islam and Muslims has all the recipes to radicalise some young marginalised people and potentially help ISIS to recruit extremists – these are the sorts of people and situations ISIS seeks to exploit and

manipulate. People need to have a sense of belongingness, not rejection and humiliation. This is a security issue, and must not be ignored. Certainly, ISIS must be very happy to have such an Australian 'helper'. How long she should be allowed to help ISIS?

Surely if the actions of some leaders, including Ms Hanson, are not challenged in public it will make a bad situation worse and may undermine all the hard work and cooperation between members of Parliament and Muslim community leaders over the years, and send a totally wrong message to the young people creating further distrust and leading to deeper frustration.

In the past, the rise of Ms Hanson was at the expense of the conservative politics in Australia. The initial neglect of Prime Minister John Howard, and not speaking against her on time gave her a free go to divide the nation. I am afraid it will be the same this time if her poisonous views are not challenged now to stop the damage. No one should be allowed to have a political party only to spread lies and fear against a section of the population targeted based on race and religions without any nation building policies and plans for all Australians.

Unfortunately, Australian Muslims are under siege due to the sustained attack of likes of Ms Hanson, but we do not expect any undue favour from anyone, we just want to be treated and accepted as equals. As responsible citizens, we are committed to peace and contribute our due share to Australia in strengthening its economic growth and social cohesion, but we need the government to also show genuine partnership.

I hope that strong leadership and public communication by you, members of your cabinet, and other members of the Parliament, on this very sensitive issues, will ensure a much needed congenial, united, unhostile and tolerant environment for all Australians.

Should you have any queries on this matter, please feel free to contact me, or talk to our newly elected Federal MP, Hon Dr John McVeigh.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Kindest regards,



Professor Shahjahan Khan, PhD  
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