

For the record, I would like to make few comments regarding the last set of articles published by *the Australian* on Wed 30 April 2008, and an article published on Tues 29 April 'Jihad Body Linked to Saudi uni Row.'

1. Regrading article 'Jihad Body Linked to Saudi Uni Row'

In the article 'Jihad Body...' Richard Kerbaj uses as a reference a young man from Sydney named Mr. Fadi Abdul Rahman to allege that I'm the head of the Brisbane Tabligh Jamaat (TJ), and by extension to have links with al-Qa'ida's terrorist overseas network.

I mentioned earlier that these claims are baseless and I know that a statement in this regard was signed by all major Australian Islamic organisations and was posted on Griffith's home page.

In addition, and perhaps of importance, yesterday Mr Fadi Abdul Rahman sent me an email outlining what exactly happened when he spoke to Richard Kerbaj, and he also sent me a copy of a letter to the editor that he sent to the Australian.

Both of these communications are listed below for your perusal. While Fadi continues to say that he is a good friend of mine, the only time I have met and spoken to him was during the 2020 Summit.

2. Regrading the last set of articles published on Wed 30 April 2008

Few articles were published on Wed 30 April, two by Jill Rowbotham and another by Richard Kerbaj and Jill Rowbotham.

I must say that I did the interview with Jill based on the advice I was given by ER. Few issues with these articles:

1. When I was interviewed by Jill she did not tell me that she will co-author an article with Richard Kerbaj.

In the article titled 'Islam Scholar ends Saudi Cash Chase,' Jill and Kerbaj claim that I **'vowed not to "chase" anymore Saudi government funding and admitted that accepting money from Riyadh was not a good look for his Queensland institution.'** This is not true. I didn't vow not to "chase" anymore Saudi money. I said that we should not return the \$100,000 because they were given without any strings attached and that they were not given in secrecy. Regarding the \$M1.37, I said that under the current circumstances it would be better not ask for the money but if the Saudis were to offer it I will take it because there is nothing wrong with that. I also said that I don't see any problem with seeking Saudi funding in the future because there is transparency and accountability.

2. In the article 'Saudi funds not a secret deal: Abdalla' Jill claims that I "was forced to deny" that I was not the head of TJ. This utter nonsense! I wasn't "forced" to do that. In fact, more than 15 high ranking Australian Islamic organisations simply defended the allegation and set the record straight.

It saddens me to be in the middle of a blatant attack that is not only baseless but is entrenched with an anti-Islam agenda.

If anything, I have come out strong from this ordeal and believe even more in the need to continue to build bridges of understanding.

P.S. Below are the communications from Mr Fadi Abdul Rahman

Thank you

Dr Mohamad Abdalla

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-----Forwarded by Mohamad Abdalla/Staff/Griffith on 05/02/2008 06:11AM -----

To: <m.abdalla@griffith.edu.au>
From: ICRA Youth Centre <icra.youthcentre@hotmail.com>
Date: 05/01/2008 04:13PM
Subject: My Sincerest Apologies

Assalamu Alaykum Br.,

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend my sincerest apologies for the articles published by Richard Kerbaj in the Australian over the last couple of days - I was not aware of them until I received a call from SBS today asking for a comment.

I would like to point out that I had in no way intended to feed Richard Kerbaj with the garbage he published nor was I aware I was being interviewed when he called to discuss the 2020 summit with me earlier this week.

I was under the impression that his call was merely a courtesy call congratulating me on my attendance at the 2020 Summit and I was totally unaware that he'd be using anything I had to say to shape an article against you.

I have been trying to call you all day, so that I can explain things to you, but unfortunately I have not been able to get through to you - I would really appreciate it if you'd return my call on 0410051556 and inshaAllah we can discuss the article and I can be given the chance to clarify to you my position.

If I'd known Kerbaj would be writing something to hurt you, then wallah, as God is my witness, I would not have spoken to him to begin with as I have the utmost, most sincere respect for you brother. The comments published have been totally misinterpreted and have been totally misused to serve his agenda and I sincerely apologise for all the concern and difficulty it would have caused you.

Please accept my sincerest apologies and I would love to be given the opportunity to clarify my position - please forgive me for any harm this may have caused you.

Your brother,

Fadi Abdul Rahman.

Wassalam..

Letter to the Editor

Often you hear of people in the media being quoted out of context and while it sometimes generates a laugh, the idea now resonates with me very well. It was not until I found myself

unexpectedly quoted in an article by Richard Kerbaj in the Australian on April 29, 2008 titled *Jihad body linked to Saudi uni row* that I realised how potentially damaging it could be. And though I believe my comments were misconstrued, I would like to point out once more that Dr Mohamad Abdalla and I are good friends and I will continue to support him in all his endeavours.. And while I may have indicated that he is a Tablighi, it was not to create suspicion of the man but merely to reiterate the fact he is a peaceful man working tirelessly to bridge the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia , whose efforts must not go unrecognised. He is a man who is highly respected within the Muslim community, who is of the utmost highest calibre and most profound character. And while the article would have you suspect him to be a threat to our society, he is nothing but an asset to the overall well-being of all Australians. Recent claims surrounding him have no profound basis and the truth should be made clear to the public.

Fadi Abdul-Rahman

President

ICRA Youth Centre Inc.