

8th of July, 2015

Statement on Nationwide Rallies (18/19th July)

The Faith Communities Council of Victoria (FCCV) has issued the following statement in light of reports that over the weekend of the 18/19th July, Reclaim Australia is planning nationwide rallies which we believe are divisive and not in the nation's best interests.

The acceptance of our multicultural and multifaith society is one of Australia's greatest achievements and assets. The celebration of this rich diversity that exists in our society ensures we remain innovative, resilient and globally competitive - all of which enhances our society and increases our standard of living.

Like any asset, our multicultural and multifaith identity needs to be continuously nourished and threats to undermine it need be addressed. The current environment fueled by economic uncertainty and fear is encouraging the rise of extreme groups like Reclaim Australia and UPF (United Patriots Front), who are intent on disenfranchising minorities and disturbing the peace within our society.

These groups demonstrate they possess anti-Muslim, anti-Asian, anti-Indigenous, anti-Semitic and anti-Refugee sentiments.

We, the Faith Communities Council of Victoria, actively discourage any kind of involvement with these groups and see them as a threat to peace and social cohesion within our society.

We believe there has to be a continuous dialogue promoting multiculturalism and multifaith.

We also encourage all to discourage others from supporting these groups in any way. The harmony and diversity in our society is the basis of the beauty of Australia, and we request your support in maintaining this.

Faith Communities Council of Victoria is comprised of the following peak bodies: Baha'i Community of Victoria, Brahma Kumaris Australia, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Community Council of Victoria, Islamic Council of Victoria, Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and Victorian Council of Churches.

Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria

Causeway House 4th Floor, 306 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000

P: +61 3 9650 4511 **F:** + 61 3 9650 8383 **E:** officer@faithvictoria.org.au **W:** www.faithvictoria.org.au