

Executive Council of Australian Jewry

**The Representative
Organisation of
Australian Jewry**



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**MEDIA RELEASE
20 November 2006**

ECAJ AND AVCC OPPOSE RACISM ON AUSTRALIAN CAMPUSES

Grahame Leonard, President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the roof body of Australia's Jewish communities, today welcomed the commitment of the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee to continue to strive on all Australian campuses to reject and prevent the racial vilification of any person or group on university campuses.

At the AVCC meeting on 14 November 2006, a delegation from the ECAJ outlined for the AVCC the rise in antisemitic violence on Australian campuses. Mr Leonard said: "The Vice-Chancellors agreed with us that such conduct is morally reprehensible and totally unacceptable."

Mr Leonard summarised the strategies that the ECAJ delegation presented to the AVCC to prevent campus vilification of Jewish, Muslim and other students rising to levels experienced overseas. The strategies presented were:

- Develop and issue a guideline for all academic and non-academic staff to enable them to comply with anti-vilification laws both state and federal, which guideline will include an effective grievance process.
- Develop and issue model curricula that empower staff and students to recognise and evaluate racist and antisemitic sources of information, and so that they can avoid hate speech that all too often opens to door to violence.
- Review security procedures to deter incidents.
- Instruct security staff to respond promptly and receptively to requests for protection made by students who are experiencing vilification.
- Instruct security staff to investigate with high priority complaints lodged by students, where attacks have occurred.
- Instruct security personnel on every campus to review procedures in place designed to protect students from physical and verbal abuse, and to ensure that they are able to respond promptly and effectively where necessary.

The ECAJ sees this meeting as the first step in an ongoing dialogue with the AVCC and regards its outcome as promising and fruitful.

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Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
the council of Australia's university presidents

Media Release

40/06

Friday 17 November 2006

Racial vilification and discrimination not acceptable on university campuses

The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) this week re-affirmed its rejection of any form of racial vilification or discrimination on Australian university campuses.

AVCC President Professor Gerard Sutton said that racial vilification of any person or group on university campuses is viewed by Vice-Chancellors as morally reprehensible and totally unacceptable.

"All Vice-Chancellors believe firmly in fostering fairness and civility within Australian universities and the broader community in which they operate and condemn any form of racial vilification, harassment and discrimination as morally reprehensible and contrary to Australia's values," Professor Sutton said.

"Australian universities have a long tradition of equality of opportunity, social inclusiveness and multiculturalism, and whilst racial vilification is not a widespread problem on campuses today, Vice-Chancellors will continue to strive to ensure that it does not become a problem of tomorrow.

"The AVCC's strong position and that of its individual members' universities on this matter was reaffirmed in discussions with the President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Mr Grahame Leonard at the AVCC plenary meeting on Tuesday in Sydney," Professor Sutton said.

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