

Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

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יהודי אוסטרליה

The Representative Organisation of Australian Jewry

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His Excellency Mr Anthony L. K. Mongalo
High Commissioner
Republic of South Africa
Corner State Circle and Rhodes Place
Yarralumla ACT 2600

09 May 2007

Dear Mr Mongalo

I write on behalf of the Australian Jewish community to express our extreme concern at South African Intelligence Minister Mr Ronnie Kasrils' invitation to representatives of Hamas to visit South Africa.

Our community understands the sympathy many South Africans have for the Palestinian people. Nonetheless it is well recognised that Jews in general and Israelis in particular have long accepted the need for a two-state solution, as evidenced by Israel's withdrawal from Gaza some 18 months ago. It is unfortunate, indeed tragic, for Israelis and Palestinians alike that Hamas and other radical Islamic groups clearly have a very different view.

The Hamas Covenant is nothing if not explicit; I attach the following link for your information - <http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/hamas.htm> - which outlines Hamas' views in graphic and unambiguous detail. Suffice it to say that part is a paean to an imperialist Islam while much of the rest is a murderous racist and supremacist diatribe against the idea of a Jewish state and against the Jews as a people. It provides no basis or hope for compromise or resolution. Indeed it is astonishing that South Africa, given its history, could apparently endorse such principles by extending an invitation to Hamas.

As the EU, US, Australia and others well realise, offering legitimacy to Hamas can only be counter-productive to the interests of those seeking a just solution. If South Africa does not wish to be culpable in perpetuating this terrible conflict, we would respectfully urge your government to rescind its invitation and rather support the forces of moderation in the region.

Yours sincerely

Grahame J. Leonard
President

Cc: The Hon Alexander Downer MP
South African Jewish Board of Deputies