

Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

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MEDIA RELEASE

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ECAJ slams local Muslim leaders' support of Hezbollah

Geoffrey Zygier, executive director of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the elected representative roof-body of Australian Jewry, today deplored public support by Australian Muslim leaders for Hezbollah.

“The Australian Jewish community can accept political debate about the rights and wrongs of the conflict in the Middle East. We understand the emotions it arouses and we look forward to a just and peaceful resolution that takes the interests of all affected parties into account. However we cannot accept the recent reported statements by Sunni Muslim leader and community spokesman Keysar Trad and Shia Sheik Mousselmani in support of Hezbollah.

It is well known that Hezbollah is committed to the destruction of Israel. As its leader, Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah has stated: “I am against any reconciliation with Israel. I do not even recognise the presence of a state that is called ‘Israel’.” But of even greater concern than this is Hezbollah’s blatant hatred of Jews. In 2002 the Lebanese press quoted Nasrallah as saying “if [Jews] all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.” Some years later, Lebanese author and expert on Hezbollah Amal Saad-Ghorayeb quoted Nasrallah as saying, “If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice, I do not say the Israeli.”

Hezbollah is a voice of extremism, murder and hate. It does not ask for a two-state solution or for justice, but stridently calls for genocide; by endorsing Hezbollah this is what Keysar Trad and Sheik Mousselmani are effectively supporting. While this has global implications, it also endangers local community harmony. We ask all Australians of good will, including the leaders of the Australian Muslim community, to reject this stance in the strongest possible terms.”

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