

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful



THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## PRESS RELEASE

Attention: News editors. Social affair, Ethnic media, interfaith media, and community writers

Monday 17th January 2015

### **“Charlie Hebdo hypocrisy”**

The Islamic Council of WA (ICWA) strongly condemns any insults to our beloved prophet Mohammed, Peace and Blessings Be upon Him “pbpu”, ICWA describes the cartoon as “insulting” and extremely provocative. The beliefs and sacrosanctity of over 1.6 billion Muslims is desecrated and the world is pushed further into the fire of hatred and war”.

Muslims revere the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him (pbpu), and indeed all God’s messengers, and as such are offended when he is insulted or mocked. The Quranic message declares: "Let there be no compulsion in religion". The prophetic example demonstrates respect for freedom of thought, religion and pursuit of life. Therefore, the violent assault on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, was a complete affront to Islamic principles and values.

It’s really disappointing that our leaders have been so silent on the glaring double standards of Charlie Hebdo. They have sacked the veteran French cartoonist Maurice Sinet in 2008 for making an allegedly anti-Semitic remark. Jyllands-Posten, the Danish newspaper published caricatures of the Prophet in 2005, reportedly rejected cartoons mocking Christ because they would "provoke an outcry" and proudly declared it would "in no circumstances... publish Holocaust cartoons". Muslims are expected to have thicker skins than their Christian and Jewish brethren.

The magazine has invoked freedom of speech to defend its publications of cartoons that many Muslims and non-Muslims alike consider offensive. Freedom of speech gives the right to express a viewpoint without fear, but does not give a right to offend any person. Muslims are asked to denounce a handful of extremists as an existential threat to free speech while turning a blind eye to the much bigger threat to it posed by our elected leaders. There is however no justification whatsoever for gunning down journalists or cartoonists. ICWA also condemn the actions of gunmen who massacred 12 staff at a Paris satirical magazine.

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Section 18C currently makes it unlawful to "offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate" a person on the grounds of "race, colour or national or ethnic origin". The Act does not cover persecution based on religion. ICWA believes more urgent action is needed in the particular area of religious vilification. Widen the Discrimination Act to cover persecution based on religion, by introducing a bill that would make it illegal to incite hatred, ridicule or contempt for anyone based on their religion.

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Islamic Council of Western Australia Inc.

Islamic Council of Western Australia (ICWA) was established in 1976 and incorporated as a State Council for Islamic affairs in 1977. We promote unity, peace and friendship amongst Muslims and other communities within and outside of Western Australia.  
<http://www.islamicouncilwa.com.au/>