



MUSLIM LEGAL NETWORK (WA) INCORPORATED

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Press Release

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Calls for protection of religious freedoms under section 116 of the Australian constitution

Instead of policing the grief of Australians, the Australian Government would do well to spend time studying international law, including the international law against 'preventive war', and the international law against attacking heads of state. They might find those laws instructive.

The unlawful killing of Iran's head of state, Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, has far-reaching consequences. In Australia, those consequences include condemnations and calls for the criminalisation of religious events.

The Muslim Legal Network of WA calls on the Australian Government, and on State and Territory Governments around Australia, to uphold the constitutional right of all Australians to freedom of religion. Peaceful prayers held out of grief are not appropriate targets for condemnation or criminalisation.

For many Shi'a Muslims around the world, including in Australia, Ayatollah Khomeini was not just a head of state, but was also one of the most senior religious leaders. For those Shi'a Muslims, his passing – regardless of politics or war – is a time of great sadness. Their prayer events and commemorations are an expression of their grief.

Regardless of which religious group is targeted, this is a fundamental attack on the constitutional rights of Australians to freely practise our religion in whatever way we deem appropriate. That is what makes our democracy truly free, worth protecting at all costs.