



Tuesday, 5 August 2014

A Great Win for Our Communities

Arab Council Australia has welcomed Prime Minister Tony Abbott's announcement that his Government will not proceed with its proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA).

"We believe the Prime Minister has made the right leadership call. It is gratifying that community voices have been heard," said Ms Randa Kattan CEO of Arab Council Australia.

"No real case was ever made to justify repealing section 18C or weakening the Act overall. Had the proposed changes gone ahead we believe that members of our community would have been subjected to increased racial vilification without any recourse to defend themselves.

"All racism is intolerable. In fact, there is a strong case for greater protection against the kind of abuse that is experienced by many Australians.

"I would like to pay tribute to our brothers and sisters in other community organisations who joined us in the campaign against the proposed changes. I am convinced that this battle was won by the strength and breadth of community support we pulled together in a very short time.

"I would like to acknowledge in particular the work of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, Chinese Australian Forum, the Armenian National Committee of Australia, Chinese Australian Services Society, Australian Hellenic Council, Executive Council of Australian Jewry and Korean Society of Sydney.

"I also extend my thanks to politicians from all parties at every level of government who had the courage to make a stand against the proposed changes to the Act.

"It is important to note as well that racial discrimination in Australia does not end just because the proposed amendments have now been withdrawn by the government.

"We urge the Federal Government to take on board the strength of community opposition to racial discrimination and make greater efforts to promote inclusion and harmony among Australia's diverse communities," said Ms Kattan.

END

media release

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