



Media Release

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Home is where the heart is: Let's keep it safe

Dr. Zarrin S Siddiqui, the President of ECCWA has expressed concerns about the fear wave that has gripped Australia. "The horrifying incidents during last two days from the other states have created fear among Muslims as well as non-Muslim communities across Australia. While Muslim communities fear backlash, non-Muslim communities are also fearful as the issue of mistrust is re-emerging."

"It is time to be vigilant, commend and connect with agencies who are doing an excellent job to keep Australia safe", commented Dr. Siddiqui. "While the community organisations are trying their best to achieve harmony and educate, a very important issue that arises, is the membership of the community organisations". She further quoted preliminary research conducted by ECCWA; "We have to understand the psychology of the different communities and how these networks work. There is no such tradition of associating with community organisations in the home countries where the refugees and migrants come from and our informal research has shown that; while the number of community organisations is increasing the membership is decreasing because there are too many groups within an ethnic group. It is also observed that many ethnic organisations struggle to find office bearers who can actively participate. When looking at different age groups it is also found that young ones do not really want to connect with peers from their own ethnic background unless they go to particular schools. This implies that unless the community organisations are established for years the involvement from youth is minimal and apparently they may be the ones who are at risk"

"These issues make the work of community groups very difficult who are working to facilitate the process of integration and loose the vital connections. This further places pressures on individuals who now need to be more vigilant and need support as we also observed that in a crisis situation, the community members find it easier to talk to someone outside their circle for the fear of being outcast or negative publicity."

"It is time for everyone to be vigilant and supportive of each other to build trust. At our end we have already raised at one of the briefings that small seed grants to facilitate research among state ethnic organisations will be very helpful to identify the vital information that is required for further course of action."

"ECCWA as per its strategic plan 2014 – 2016 is already working on identifying research priorities and establish its own research unit which hopefully be functional by the end of the year to present evidence based research for the community and by the community ."

Let's keep Australia safe.