



PRESS RELEASE

MEMBER STATE COUNCILS:

The Muslim Council of
New South Wales Inc. (MCNSW)

The Islamic Council of
Victoria Inc. (ICV)

Islamic Council of
Australian Capital Territory Inc.
(ICTACT)

Islamic Council of
Queensland Inc. (ICQ)

Islamic Council of
Northern Territory Inc. (ICNT)

Islamic Council of
Western Australia Inc. (ICWA)

Islamic Council of
South Australia Inc. (ICSA)

Islamic Council of
Tasmania Inc. (ICT)

Islamic Council of
Christmas Island Inc. (ICCI)

**932 Bourke Street
Zetland (Sydney)
NSW - 2017.
P O Box 7185, SSBH
Alexandria NSW - 2015.
AUSTRALIA.**

Tel [02] 9319 6733

Fax [02] 9319 0159

Email: admin@afic.com.au

Web: www.afic.com.au

**AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL
ISLAMIC ORGANISATION
REPRESENTING
MUSLIM COMMUNITIES**

**45 Years of Community
Services**

16 January 2009

HIJAB - A Religious Obligation

The President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), Mr Ikebal Adam Patel has responded to the call by a radio announcer in Brisbane to ban full face covering Hijab or Niqab by saying that wearing Hijab is a religious obligation and Muslim women wearing Hijab regard it as their religious duty that preserves their dignity and modesty.

He said that head covering is not unique to Islam and the practice has a long history in the Judeo-Christian traditions as well as in the Sikh community. And within Islam there are options to the extent of the head covering individuals may choose.

Mr Patel has had discussions with the President of the Peak National body for retailers, the Australian Retailers Association and has been reassured by them that they do not see this type of dressing as causing them any concern what so ever. And the Australian Banks also are not in any way concerned that full head covering by Muslim women is causing them any security concerns.

The Hijab-ban, if implemented, besides curtailing right to religious practice, will lead to institutionalized discrimination against Muslim women.

Mr Patel thanked the individuals who raised this issue out of possible compassion for the comfort of the Muslim women in the heat of the present summer days but would like to reassure all that Muslim women are at liberty to decide for themselves their individual comfort levels and the choice of their dressing.

For further information, please contact:

MR. IKEBAL PATEL (CHAIRMAN) AT 0419 418 237.