

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. (ICACT)

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)

22 August 2008

Proud to be Aussie

The President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils – AFIC, Mr Ikebal Patel, congratulates the Australian Olympic team for their excellent performance at the Beijing+ 2008 Olympic Games. The Australian Olympic team have made us all proud of their achievements. Australia is currently in fifth place on the medal tally.

This is a clear indication of the Olympic team's dedication, hard work and rigorous training that has paid dividend, he added.

This is testament to Australian's love for sport and is also an inspiration to young budding sport's men and women of all backgrounds and religions to aim, persevere and achieve individual and team goals.

Mr Patel also indicated his support for the stance taken by the Australian Government and Prime Minister to make reference to China's human rights policies. China has moved a long way forward since the Mao era, when all forms of religious identification was destroyed; however, persecution and injustice is, unfortunately, still prevalent.

Mr Patel commented that estimates of the number of Muslims in China vary and range from between 20 to 130 million, the majority of whom live in western China. The number of mosques is currently estimated at around 30,000. The plight of the Uighurs is particularly brushed aside by the Chinese government, Mr Patel said.

China's treatment of the Tibetan uprising has outraged the West. The suffering of the Uighurs, on the other hand, receives little attention. Beijing defends the suppression of the Muslim minority as fighting terrorism. Mr Patel urges the Chinese Government to uphold basic human rights of ALL its citizens under the Geneva Convention, so that a Chinese citizen is valued as a human being irrespective of their creed, colour or affiliation.

For Further information, please contact:

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**AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL
ISLAMIC ORGANISATION
REPRESENTING
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**45 Years of Community
Services**