

Combating Islamophobia in Australia: An Analysis of Six Legal and Holistic Strategies to Help Address Discrimination towards Muslims

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Abstract : In today's religious and political climate, Muslims find themselves the focus of much attention, often in the form of discrimination and vilification. There is a widely held belief that Islam and terrorism are inextricably intertwined. An anti-Muslim narrative has been shaping policy around the world for some time now. This study, which focuses on the experience of Muslims in Australia, provides guidance on legislative and other steps that can be taken by Australia to help address Islamophobia. This study provides a doctrinal analysis of the state, territory, and federal anti-discrimination laws in Australia. Using principles of statutory interpretation along with an analysis of relevant jurisprudence, this study concludes that Australian anti-discrimination laws are ill-equipped to address modern-day Islamophobia. The study also finds that laws alone are insufficient to combat Islamophobia, and a more holistic approach is required. Six strategies are identified, which can, in combination, help to successfully respond to Islamophobia. In addition to legislative initiatives, combating Islamophobia requires Australia to promote inclusive human rights education, fair media coverage, strong leadership, integration of the Islamic community, and comprehensive documentation of anti-Muslim attacks.

Keywords : Australia, discrimination, Islamophobia, Muslim

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