

## ECAJ Policy Platform Confirmed November 2009

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## Preamble

**Tracing its origins to the Jews who arrived in Australia aboard the First Fleet on 26 January 1788, the Australian Jewish community is unique among Diaspora communities. Australian Jewry has played a prominent and recognised part in Australia's history and has made positive contributions, out of proportion to its numbers, to the development of Australian society.**

**For the Jewish community, Australia has indeed been the lucky country bestowing upon us the blessings of freedom and respect for human life and dignity. Quite simply we are at home here, something that sadly has not always been the Jewish experience in other parts of the world.**

**We celebrate the efforts and accomplishments of talented and hardworking individuals and groups from within the Australian Jewish community and are proud of the part they have played in the many cultural, sporting, scientific, political, social and economic achievements of this great diverse country. Not least among our number have been Jewish men and women, many of whom paid the ultimate price, who have served at home and abroad in times of war to defend Australia and the principles of freedom and justice which our country cherishes.**

**What follows is the current policy platform of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ). These policies are derived from the beliefs and values of the Australian Jewish community, which we are confident enhance general Australian values of democracy and human rights; individual freedom and the rule of law; social justice and compassion; mutual understanding and respect; and a fair go for all.**

## SECTION 1 - FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA

### 1. Social Inclusion

#### This Council:

- 1.1** NOTES that it is the vision of the ECAJ to create and support a community in which all Australians, including all Jewish Australians:
- (a) feel valued and their cultural differences are respected;
  - (b) have a fair opportunity to meet their material and other needs; and
  - (c) are equally empowered as citizens to participate in and contribute to all facets of life in the wider community;
- 1.2** NOTES that as Australians we take great pride in what we see as the uniquely Australian values of social egalitarianism, "mateship" and a "fair go";

- 1.3** REAFFIRMS our profound commitment on behalf of the Australian Jewish community to the dignity of difference, gender equality, and a belief in the equality of humankind;
- 1.4** PROUDLY AFFIRMS our ongoing commitment to reconciliation with indigenous Australians, to a multiculturalism that draws people into, rather than separates them from, Australian life, and to an Australia that is inclusive for all Australians and respects gender equality;
- 1.5** ACKNOWLEDGES that in the Jewish community, social exclusion may result from a number of factors including: lack of educational or vocational opportunities; low levels of income; mental or physical illness or disability; or immigration without social support, and that such exclusion most often results in individuals being prevented through no fault of their own, from building a better future for themselves and their families;
- 1.6** NOTES that poverty amongst Australian Jews is no less prevalent than in other sectors of the Australian community and that aspects of inequality from which poverty stems and which require further investigation and support are:
- Work opportunities particularly in the case of immigrants, families with young children, large families and religiously observant families and older people and people with a disability;
  - Access and Equity in the utilization of services - where members of the community do not have access to contacts, groups and opportunities which empower them to access the mainstream Jewish community and the wider society. This can arise from the inability to speak English, or lack of education and information, or lack of sufficient income to participate;
  - Social stigmas where individuals experience social exclusion from the community as a result of mental illness, disability, or choice of lifestyle;
- 1.7** ACKNOWLEDGES that across Australia there are numerous Jewish organizations whose role is to assist members of the Jewish community to overcome social exclusion and ameliorate poverty. There are community services, aged care services, and disability services, and there are educational institutions and synagogues that, inter alia, contribute to this work;
- 1.8** RECOGNISES that the role of the ECAJ is to encourage organizations across Australia to: identify and rectify gaps in services that ought to be provided; encourage such organizations to seek opportunities to reach out to and provide services for those who are marginalized, and to engage Federal government departments to assist the community to ensure that the most comprehensive services are provided;
- 1.9** RECORDS its belief that the maximum benefit across Australia will only be achieved by the Jewish community working at both national and State levels;
- 1.10** SUPPORTS the development of projects, especially in smaller and regional communities, which bring hope encompassing a range of policy and program domains at many levels: education, training, employment, affordable childcare, assistance with housing, a range of disability and aged

care services - support for care-givers; and above all - building up at community levels a network of supportive services, amenities and accessible transport facilities and social mentoring which reduce stigma and social exclusion from the networks and vibrant life of our community;

- 1.11** WELCOMES the efforts of the Federation of Jewish Aged and Community Service Organisations in assisting to achieve these objectives.

## **2. Racism in Australia**

### **This Council:**

- 2.1** DEPLORES all manifestations of racist action and speech, including antisemitism;
- 2.2** SUPPORTS the work of the Australian Human Rights Commission and other public programs to educate Australians regarding the irrationality and evil of racism;
- 2.3** CALLS ON leaders of all mainstream political parties to consistently articulate a vision of Australia which embraces cultural diversity and in which respect for the dignity and rights of each Australian is guaranteed;
- 2.4** CALLS ON all mainstream political parties to place racist divisive and extremist candidates in the last positions when allocating electoral preferences;
- 2.5** CALLS ON political, civil and religious leaders to play public, leadership roles in emphasizing the unacceptability of racism;
- 2.6** Calls on the Australian Government to fund and appoint a Race Discrimination Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission separate to other Commissioner roles.

## **3. Anti-Racism Legislation**

### **This Council:**

- 3.1** NOTES the activities of extremist organizations, the currency of certain racist myths, the proliferation of racist material on the internet and the tolerance given to racist commentary by some sections of the mainstream media;
- 3.2** NOTES the incidence of racial vilification and racially-motivated violence in Australia;
- 3.3** AFFIRMS that effective responses to racism include moral and political leadership from public figures, legislation to give victims of racism legal remedies, and on-going public education;
- 3.4** COMMENDS those public figures who have taken a leadership position

against racism, including antisemitism;

- 3.5** CALLS ON the Federal Government to strengthen legislative measures to combat racial vilification in the public domain and especially on the internet and to provide more streamlined, expeditious and effective remedies to individuals and groups who are the targets of public acts of racial vilification.

## 4. Aboriginal Reconciliation

### This Council:

- 4.1** RECOGNISES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first Australians, with unique cultures, languages and spiritual relationships to the land and seas;
- 4.2** PURSUES a vision of an Australia that provides equal rights and life chances for all;
- 4.3** AFFIRMS the fundamental importance of reconciliation as the basis of an Australian Community which respects the diversity of values, cultures, ideas and the contribution of all people;
- 4.4** SUPPORTS Reconciliation Australia's National Program of Action which encourages organizations and individuals to turn their good intentions into action;
- 4.5** ACCORDINGLY the ECAJ will continue to develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan that includes actions, timeframes for implementation and performance measures;

Areas for action may include the ECAJ using its networks to:

- raise Community awareness and understanding of the historic, social and economic factors which contribute to the current levels of disadvantage confronting many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- influence governments and businesses to address the systemic issues that keep many Aboriginal and Strait Islander people and their communities in poor health and poverty.
- support human rights based approaches to economic and social development programs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- lead inter-faith alliances to develop and provide targeted financial and capacity building support to selected projects which strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organizations' governance, management, service delivery and professional development.

- 4.6** ENCOURAGES the Jewish community in Australia to increase its knowledge and understanding of the identity and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and reflect this awareness in our social relationships and our support for their advancement;

- 4.7** CALLS UPON the governments, business and civil communities and people of Australia to take action to reduce the relative disadvantage many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may face by improving education, health, housing, employment, governance, social and communal relationships and law and justice;
- 4.8** CALLS ON Jewish organizations around Australia to speak out in favour of reconciliation, actively participate in the annual events, Week of Prayer for Reconciliation and National Reconciliation Week.

## 5. Multiculturalism

### This Council:

- 5.1** AFFIRMS its support for Australia's policy of multiculturalism, which has served Australia well as a basis for the social harmony which for all Australians to enjoy;
- 5.2** CALLS ON the Australian Government to confirm its commitment to multiculturalism as a policy which respects the right of all Australians to express their individual cultural identity, and to maintain and share their cultural heritage, within an overriding commitment to Australia and the basic values of Australian democracy and the rule of law; and
- 5.3** COMMENDS the Government's policy of ensuring access and equity in the provision of government services, including the provision of mechanisms to address the barriers faced by immigrants who are not yet familiar with Australian culture and language.

## 6. On-Line Services and the Internet

### This Council:

- 6.1** NOTES the value of the Internet in communicating information, knowledge and ideas but notes also that the Internet is increasingly being abused by individuals and organisations for the purpose of propagating racism including antisemitism;
- 6.2** RECOGNISES the complexities involved in any system of regulation of on-line services;
- 6.3** AFFIRMS the view that any communication by traditional means which is unlawful is and should be equally unlawful if it is effected through on-line services;
- 6.4** SUPPORTS moves to bring in a Code of Practice for Australian Internet Service Providers and other regulatory measures for the Internet based on the principles that:
- Nothing that it is unlawful to print or broadcast should be able to escape legal prohibition merely because it is published or communicated through on-line services.

- No person, entity or organization should be punished for an act they could not reasonably know has been committed.
- The right to freedom of speech must be respected, bearing in mind that in democratic societies this right (as with all other rights) is not unlimited and, for example, does not permit the commission or promotion of unlawful acts, or other behaviour harmful to the community or any section of the community.
- Governments have a responsibility to counter the activities of those who harass and/or promote contempt and hatred for any section of the community.
- In these respects, the Internet should not be regarded differently to other means by which speech and ideas are disseminated.

## 7. Refugees and Asylum Seekers

### This Council:

- 7.1** NOTES with grave concern the increase in the number of people around the world who have been made refugees as a result of war and civil conflict;;
- 7.2** NOTES that a small number of these refugees seek asylum in Australia;
- 7.3** RECOGNISES the difficulties faced by successive Australian Governments in balancing the Government's obligations to its citizens to carry out proper screening (including health and security checks) on all potential new entrants to Australia, in particular unauthorised arrivals, and the Government's humanitarian obligations under the *International Convention on the Status of Refugees* (1951) (the Refugee Convention) and the 1967 *Protocol to the Refugee Convention*, as well as under customary international law;
- 7.4** RECALLS WITH SHAME that especially prior to, but also during and immediately after, World War II many thousands of Jewish refugees attempting to flee persecution in Europe were denied entry into other countries or forced to engage "smugglers" to try to escape to freedom;
- 7.5** RECALLS that the Refugee Convention came into existence in belated recognition by the international community of the great wrong that had been done by ostensibly civilised nations in refusing to grant asylum to Jewish refugees fleeing from Europe prior to and during World War II, and as a principled and compassionate response to the moral imperative of assisting European Jews in seeking new homes after the Holocaust;
- 7.6** NOTES the important and positive contribution that Jewish and other refugees, from many countries, have made to Australian society and the development of Australia;
- 7.7** NOTES that in the past, after proper processing of their claims by Australian officials, the vast majority of those seeking asylum in Australia have been found to be genuine refugees who had fled their country of usual residence because of a well-founded fear of persecution;

- 7.8** ACCORDINGLY CALLS UPON the Australian Government:
- (a) to process applications by persons seeking asylum in Australia as expeditiously as possible and in a spirit of compassion, regardless of whether those applications are made through the offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;
  - (b) to work constructively with other governments and appropriate non-government organisations, to ameliorate the plight of refugees around the world and in Australia;
  - (c) to implement in good faith and with humanity, Australia's important legal and moral obligations with respect to refugees;
  - (d) not to hold women and children asylum seekers in mandatory detention while their applications for recognition of their refugee status are processed; and
  - (e) to desist from actions that are likely to result in persons who seek asylum in Australia being sent to countries which are not parties to the Refugee Convention;
- 7.9** URGES all Australians to engage in discussion of the issues in a considered and respectful manner and without resorting to pejorative generalisations, which are unhelpful and can be misleading and unfair.

## **8. Accommodation of Religious Practices**

### **This Council:**

- 8.1** NOTES decisions by a number of instrumentalities which recognise and support the right of all staff to meet their religious and ceremonial obligations, regardless of religious, ethnic or cultural background;
- 8.2** RECOGNISES the right of all Australians to observe religious and ceremonial obligations;
- 8.3** SUPPORTS the work of the Australian Human Rights Commission in enhancing religious freedom in Australia;
- 8.4** CALLS UPON government and employer organizations to respect and accommodate, as a matter of policy, the right of employees to meet the obligations of their faiths; and
- 8.5** CALLS UPON the Australian Government to make provision in Australia's industrial relations legislation to ensure that religious and ceremonial obligations can be observed without attracting the threat of loss of employment.

## **9. Australian Charter of Human Rights**

### **This Council:**

- 9.1** NOTES the "Brennan Report" which recommends a Human Rights Charter for Australia;



- 9.2** ACKNOWLEDGES that the necessity for, and desirability of, any charter remain matters for public debate, as are the scope and content of any such charter;
- 9.3** NOTES that there is diversity of views across the Australian Jewish community, as there is across the broader Australian community, in relation to these matters;
- 9.4** RESOLVES to engage in the public debate about the foregoing matters and to consult with its constituents, affiliates and observer organisations so as to tap the wealth of knowledge and experience across the Australian Jewish community in doing so.

## **10. Persons Accused of International Crimes**

### **This Council:**

- 10.1** NOTES the affirmation by the Australian Government in 1987 that Australia must not serve as a haven for individuals who participated in crimes against humanity during the course of the Nazi Genocide;
- 10.2** RECOGNISES the difficulties encountered in the trials of alleged Nazi war criminals thus far conducted in Australia;
- 10.3** RECOGNISES that major legal and political obstacles needed to be overcome to establish extradition treaties with some of the countries which were the scene of the crimes of the Holocaust;
- 10.4** RECOGNISES that extradition of Nazi war criminals to the countries of their origin and where their crimes took place is not a substitute for effective Australian legislation but is a welcome complement to it;
- 10.5** SUPPORTS the process of developing extradition treaties between Australia and all countries in which individuals may have participated in genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes prior to arriving in Australia; and
- 10.6** CALLS UPON the Australian Government to amend Australia's citizenship laws so as to allow for individuals who were born outside Australia and who, at the time of entering Australia, concealed their involvement in genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity in any context, to have their Australian citizenship removed, regardless of the length of time they have held citizenship.

## **11. National Ceremonies**

### **This Council:**

- 11.1** CALLS ON the local, State, Territory and Federal Governments and non-government organisations to recognise that national ceremonies, celebrations and memorials should be inclusive and not make use of religious words and symbols that may effectively exclude some Australian

citizens.

## SECTION 2 - JEWISH LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

### 12. Jewish Education

#### This Council:

- 12.1** NOTES with great pride, that Australia has a strong record for provision of day school education and that the Jewish Community maintains a number of independent day schools throughout the nation which are essential to Jewish learning and our community's continuity;
- 12.2** STRESSES the importance of Jewish day schools and other Jewish education providers having high quality Jewish Studies and Hebrew curricula;
- 12.3** RECONFIRMS the responsibility of leaders of Australian Jewry to seek to ensure that no Jewish child is denied full-time Jewish education due to financial considerations; and the continued responsibility of leaders of Australian Jewry to support organisations that provide Jewish education of children who are outside of the Jewish day school system to ensure Jewish continuity for all;
- 12.4** NOTES with great pride, that Australia has a strong record for provision of day school education and that the Jewish Community maintains a number of independent day schools throughout the nation which are essential to Jewish learning and our community's continuity;
- 12.5** NOTES that the provision of Jewish education to Jewish students who do not attend Jewish day schools, particularly through the Academy BJE and NSW Board of Progressive Jewish Education in New South Wales and the United Jewish Education Board in Victoria, is essential to ensuring Jewish learning and our community's continuity for those outside of the Jewish day school movement and organisation;
- 12.6** EXPRESSES support for the Zionist Federation of Australia initiated "Teaching Israel" program and CALLS ON all Jewish Day Schools and Boards of Jewish Education and Boards of Progressive Jewish Education to substantially increase the teaching of modern Israel and contemporary issues facing Israel and world and Australian Jewry in programs offered from Year 6 to Year 11; and
- 12.7** RECORDS its appreciation to the Federal Government for its initiatives in granting funds to independent schools (including Jewish day schools) to assist them to meet their security costs and in granting tax deductibility for gifts to funds established by them to meet such costs.

### 13. Communal Fundraising for Jewish Education

#### This Council:

- 13.1** CALLS ON Jewish communal and fund-raising organisations to explore additional methods of alleviating financial constraints affecting Jewish day school education and the ability of Jewish day schools to provide the highest quality Jewish education;
- 13.2** CALLS ON Jewish communal and fund-raising organisations to explore additional methods to ensure that these bodies are properly and adequately resourced, and to establish similar bodies and/or Jewish education providers in other States and Territories of Australia and in communities outside the major centres of Jewish life; and
- 13.3** CALLS ON Jewish communal and fund-raising organizations to invest in teachers and the teaching of Hebrew and Jewish studies and to see that investment as a critical contribution towards Jewish continuity in Australia.

## 14. Secure Schools Funding

### This Council:

- 14.1** RECALLS its concern during 2009 at the lack of a consistent and equitable national approach in the allocation of funds to Jewish Schools in Round 1 of the Government's Secure School Funding Scheme;
- 14.2** NOTES that on 12 November 2009, the National Co-Chairs of the Australian Council of Jewish Schools (ACJS) met with the Minister for Home Security, the Hon. Brendon O'Connor MP in Melbourne for the purpose of discussing the allocation of funds in Rounds 2, 3 and 4 of the Funding Scheme;
- 14.3** NOTES WITH SATISFACTION that the Minister for Home Security indicated, on a currently preliminary basis, that he would welcome an equitable allocation of the Funding Scheme to Jewish schools based on a minimum allocation in the same amount per school with the remaining amount to be based on the enrolment numbers at each school, subject to the Government being satisfied that the expenditure was for the purposes of the Funding Scheme;
- 14.4** RECOGNISES AND AFFIRMS that future funding for Rounds 2, 3 and 4 on that basis would not only be equitable but would provide a consistent basis for the allocation of Secure Schools Funding nationally;
- 14.5** RESOLVES to convey to the ACJS the ECAJ's appreciation for the effort and approach and encourages its final implementation.

## 15. Tertiary Jewish Education

### This Council:

- 15.1** NOTES the development of Jewish tertiary education and encourages Jewish students, particularly day-school graduates, to take advantage of the learning opportunities at these institutions and welcomes all initiatives

to fund academic positions and offer scholarships and financial support to enhance this development.

## **16. University Exchange Programs with Israel**

### **This Council:**

- 16.1** NOTES that some Australian Universities treat exchange programs with Israeli universities less favourably than exchange programs with other Western countries' universities;
- 16.2** CALLS upon all Australian Universities to treat exchange programs with Israeli universities no less favourably than exchange programs with other Western countries' universities.

## **17. Israel Experience Programs**

### **This Council:**

- 17.1** NOTES the importance of the relationship between Israel and Australian Jewry;
- 17.2** APPLAUDS the success of many Israel experience programs operated by Australian Jewish organisations in partnership with Israel and in particular Jewish day schools, AUJS, Zionist Federation of Australia and the Zionist youth groups;
- 17.3** RECOGNISES the central role of the Zionist Federation of Australia in promoting and facilitating such programs;
- 17.4** APPLAUDS the establishment of the Israel Experience Fund/birthright Program in Australia by the Zionist Federation of Australia with the support of the United Israel Appeal.

## **18. Demographic Data and Communal Planning**

### **This Council:**

- 18.1** NOTES the importance of the Jewish community basing its decisions and planning on the most reliable information available;
- 18.2** NOTES that the data available to the community from each Australian Bureau of Statistics Census is an important resource;
- 18.3** WELCOMES wholeheartedly the publication in September 2009 of the initial results of the Australian and New Zealand Jewish Population Survey undertaken by the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, with the support of a range of organizations in the Australian Jewish Community (the Gen08 survey) and warmly commends all those who conducted,

supported and participated in the Survey; and

- 18.4** CALLS FOR Jewish communal organisations to make full use of the Survey data in their future planning.

## **19. Government Measures to Combat Antisemitic Violence**

### **This Council:**

- 19.1** COMMENDS the steps taken by Australian police forces to provide visible protection for Jewish communal gatherings;
- 19.2** NOTES the improvement in measures taken by law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute individuals responsible for arson attacks on synagogues, assaults and harassment;
- 19.3** NOTES that still too often the perpetrators of other acts of antisemitic violence against people and property remain unidentified and therefore remain at large;
- 19.4** CALLS ON state and federal law enforcement agencies to urgently upgrade their capacity to pursue and apprehend the perpetrators of acts of racist violence and vandalism and to fund both public and Jewish communal strategies to achieve those ends; and
- 19.5** RECORDS WITH APPRECIATION the Federal Government's legislation in 2008 designed to alleviate the costly security burden borne by Jewish communities Australia-wide by enabling donations for the purpose of the provision of security to Jewish institutions to be tax deductible.

## **20. Recording of Incidents of Antisemitic Violence, Vandalism and Harassment**

### **This Council:**

- 20.1** NOTES the importance to the Jewish community of the availability to its national leadership of accurate data concerning the nature and extent of antisemitic violence, vandalism, intimidation and harassment in Australia;
- 20.2** NOTES that the only communal bodies which are in a position to act on behalf of the entire Jewish community in each state and territory are the constituents of the ECAJ, which in Victoria is co-ordinated with the ADC;
- 20.3** STRESSES the importance of state constituents making known to the Jewish and wider communities their role in collating information relating to antisemitism;
- 20.4** REAFFIRMS that all community organisations should promptly forward reports of incidents of antisemitism to the Constituent bodies of the ECAJ.

## 21. Holocaust Denial

### This Council:

- 21.1** NOTES that some individuals and organizations in Australia continue to propagate Holocaust Denial including as a means of attacking the Jewish Community;
- 21.2** NOTES the deception employed by Holocaust deniers in the way they present their hatred in quasi-academic guise;
- 21.3** NOTES THAT Holocaust Denial has been found by the Federal Court of Australia to constitute unlawful behaviour;
- 21.4** CALLS ON Jewish organizations to continue their policy of not engaging Holocaust deniers in any public debate which could give credence to Holocaust Denial but to clearly and publicly identify Holocaust deniers as people engaged in antisemitism and promotion of extremist ideologies

## 22. Relations with Other Ethnic, Religious, Ethno-Religious or Cultural Communities

### This Council:

- 22.1** RECOGNISES the distinctive character of the Australian Jewish community as part of the Jewish people, with a shared history, tradition and linguistic and religious heritage, and as a vital and vibrant component of multicultural Australia;
- 22.2** RECOGNISES the pluralistic nature of Australian Jewry and the complex nature of the various ethnicities of Australian Jewry due to diverse language, cultural origin and national background;
- 22.3** ACKNOWLEDGES the right of any Jewish organization to identify as an ethnic, religious, ethno-religious or cultural organization through the choice of the membership of that organization or through its specific aims, objectives and programs consistent with policies and programs of the government relating to ethnic affairs;
- 22.4** VALUES the friendly cooperation and cordial relationship between Australian Jewry and other ethnic, religious, ethno-religious and cultural groups and roof bodies within Australia;
- 22.5** ENCOURAGES close liaison between Jewish organizations, ethnic communities councils and other Australian groups in the pursuit of common policies in the best interests of the whole Australian community.

## 23. Interfaith Relations

**This Council:**

- 23.1** CONGRATULATES members of the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews, the Anglican Jewish Australian Dialogue, The National Dialogue of the Uniting Church in Australia/ECAJ and Australian Catholic Bishops Committee/ECAJ Annual Conversation on the conduct and outcome of their meetings;
- 23.2** APPLAUDS the development in Sydney of the Women's Interfaith Network which now has four branches;
- 23.3** WELCOMES the development of multi-faith events and contacts between bodies representing many diverse faith groups;
- 23.4** APPLAUDS activities which improve the basis for dialogue between Jews and Christians;
- 23.5** AFFIRMS past efforts at improving Jewish-Muslim relations, particularly those which have recognised common concerns in areas such as religious liberty, racial tolerance and recognition of religious rights;
- 23.6** SUPPORTS dialogue and cooperation between Federal, State and Territory representatives of the Jewish community and all other Faith communities with a view to common action for communal tolerance and inter-community cooperation;
- 23.7** CALLS on all religious groups to respect the dignity and right of all people to maintain their own religious traditions;
- 23.8** APPLAUDS the work of APRO, The Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations;
- 23.3** SUPPORTS the expansion of the dialogue process to include other partner organisations representing religious communities.

**24. SBS****The Council:**

- 24.1** NOTES that, in the past, SBS Television and Radio have been a cause of concern to the Australian Jewish community with regard to the manifestation of anti-Israel bias in some of its news and current affairs programming and content and that common fairness standards have not been applied to material broadcast in languages other than English;
- 24.2** WELCOMES recent improvements in the quality and fairness of the news and current affairs programming and content of SBS Television and Radio with regard to Israel;
- 24.3** NOTES nevertheless the continuing absence of any independent complaints mechanism for SBS and the decision of SBS not to comply with the Australian Standard on Complaints Handling in issuing its 2006 revised Codes of Practice; and

**24.4** CALLS ON the Federal Government to implement an immediate and effective review mechanism which at the very least will require SBS to comply with the Australian Standard on Complaints Handling and implement an independent complaint resolution tribunal.

## **25. Religious Broadcasting on the ABC**

### **This Council:**

- 25.1** RECALLS the importance for the ABC to maintain the resourcing of religious programming, so as to provide insights into religion and the place of religious movements in public life and to provide Australia with an informative and stimulating religious programming mix including in its move to successful digital growth, and to commit publicly to those objectives;
- 25.2** RECALLS that together with other faith communities, in February 2009, it expressed its concern at the reduction in religious programming on ABC Radio National;
- 25.3** NOTES that at that time, the Managing Director of the ABC said that the ABC had no plans to scrap the religion unit or to scrap specialisation in reporting, but that it proposed to continue to modify programmes, and that in addition to other programming slots, religion will feature in "Background Briefing" which will reach a broader audience and allow for in-depth reporting;
- 25.4** FURTHER NOTES the assurance that the effects of the religious programming decisions made in 2008 are being considered within the review of ABC radio currently underway. The appointment of a new head of radio in mid-2009 will be of significance to the review. The review will provide scope to better articulate questions on specialities, digital media and rural broadcasting;
- 25.5** CALLS UPON the Committee of Management to monitor progress in relation to these matters and report to the Council.

## **26. Jewish Immigration and Settlement**

### **This Council:**

- 26.1** NOTES that the Jewish Community now includes large numbers of Jewish immigrants who are on the fringes of the organised community structure;
- 26.2** RESOLVES THAT Constituent organizations take more active steps to devise and implement innovative programs specifically designed to absorb and integrate these immigrants into our Jewish community's communal core;
- 26.3** ENCOURAGES Affiliate and Constituent organizations to foster the



establishment of a national group of representatives of Jewish immigrants from the Former Soviet Union, to assist in developing Jewish continuity within the Russian-speaking communities and building better relationships between this sector of the community and established Jewish organisations.

## 27. Young Adults Representation

### This Council:

- 27.1 RECOGNISES that the involvement of younger community members is of vital importance to the success of Jewish continuity;
- 27.2 NOTES with concern the lack of youth and young adult representation on some key communal bodies;
- 27.3 RESOLVES to prepare an action plan to develop strategies to encourage youth participation on communal bodies.

## 28. Jewish Burial Rights

### This Council:

- 28.1 NOTES that it has received reports that cemetery authorities in a number of jurisdictions are reviewing policies on permanent tenure of graves;
- 28.2 NOTES Jewish law and tradition require burial in perpetuity;
- 28.3 NOTES that, according to *halacha*, a grave containing human remains is demarcated as the final resting place of the person concerned and the integrity of the grave must not be altered without explicit Rabbinic authority;
- 28.4 REAFFIRMS the need to maintain arrangements for Jewish burials in perpetuity and calls on cemetery authorities to respect this requirement; and
- 28.5 CALLS UPON State Governments to plan for the future burial needs of their Jewish citizens and ensure that sufficient land is allocated for Jewish communities to bury their dead in accordance with Jewish religious requirements.

## 29. Gett Refusal

### This Council:

- 29.1 RECALLS the concern expressed by the ECAJ at the continued failure to alleviate the plight of victims of wilful Gett refusal;

- 29.2** APPLAUDS the efforts over some years by the Joint Task Force of the ECAJ and the Organisation of Rabbis of Australasia to develop useful proposals;
- 29.3** NOTES that the British Parliament has now joined the legislatures of Canada, South Africa and New York in passing laws to provide remedies aimed at releasing those spouses who are "chained" by wilful Gett refusal;
- 29.4** URGES the Australian Government to legislate in the terms of the Report of The Family Law Council of Australia which recommends to the Attorney-General that the joint legislative proposal of the ECAJ and ORA should be enacted as Australian law;
- 29.5** WELCOMES initiatives by the rabbinate to draft a form of pre-nuptial agreement for Jewish couples that is enforceable under Australian law and encourages Jewish couples to sign such an agreement requiring compliance with Beth Din instructions relating to the granting of a Gett in the event of a civil dissolution of the marriage.

## 30. Schehita

### This Council:

- 30.1** NOTES that the slaughtering of bovine and ovine animals according to methods authorised by *halacha (schehita)* has been an integral part of Jewish life for 3,000 years and that *schehita* has for centuries been accepted in civilised societies as a humane way of slaughtering such animals for consumption;
- 30.2** AFFIRMS the united view of Rabbinic authorities in Australia that according to *halacha*:
- (a) the pre-slaughter stunning of animals renders such animals unfit for Kosher consumption; and
  - (b) the post-slaughter stunning of ovine animals renders such animals unfit for Kosher consumption.
- 30.3** FURTHER NOTES that Australian law has always permitted the slaughter of animals and poultry according to *schehita* and, in particular, has never required the pre-slaughter stunning of animals or the post-slaughter stunning of ovine animals;
- 30.4** CALLS UPON the Australian government to maintain existing laws and regulations permitting *schehita* and to reject all proposals to require the pre-slaughter stunning of animals or the post-slaughter stunning of ovine animals.

## 31. Brit Milah

### This Council:

- 31.1** NOTES with concern challenges to the practice of *Brit Milah*;

- 31.2** RECOGNISES that *Brit Milah*, according to *halachic* process, is an essential and definitive rite of Jewish identity;
- 31.3** AFFIRMS its commitment to protect the right of Jewish families to continue the observance of *Brit Milah* by competent *Mohelim*.

## 32. Israel

### This Council:

- 32.1** APPLAUDS the efforts by successive Israeli governments to bring about a just and lasting peace and a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- 32.2** SUPPORTS the principle of two-States for two peoples, as the only principle upon which a just and sustainable peace between Israel and its Palestinian neighbours can be built;
- 32.3** NOTES with appreciation that all major political parties in Australia:
- (a) are committed to supporting an enduring and just two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the right of Israel to live in peace within secure borders, internationally recognised and agreed by the parties, and reflecting the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to also live in peace and security within their own state; and
  - (b) have repeatedly condemned and called for an end to Palestinian terrorist attacks deliberately aimed at killing and maiming Israeli civilians and the continued smuggling of arms and munitions into Gaza;
- 32.4** APPLAUDS the support of successive Australian Governments for international calls for the Palestinian Authority to renounce and prevent violence and incitement against Israel and for Hamas to recognise Israel, to renounce and prevent violence and incitement against Israel and to affirm and implement all agreements with Israel that have been entered into by the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Palestinian Authority;
- 32.5** REAFFIRMS Australian Jewry's strong and unshakeable solidarity with Israel and her people;
- 32.6** DEPLORES and CONDEMNS unreservedly as antisemitic all attempts to demonise or delegitimise Israel as the State of the Jewish people by:
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
  - Applying double standards by requiring of Israel or its military forces standards of behaviour higher than those expected or demanded of any other democratic nation or its military forces.
  - Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
  - Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
  - Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the State of Israel.
  - Calling for discriminatory boycotts, divestments and sanctions against Israel.

**32.7** STRONGLY URGES all Jews, individually as well as communally and institutionally, to visit Israel and schedule events in Israel.

**[Click here for  
Australia and Israel: A Pictorial History](#)**

### 33. Jerusalem

#### **This Council:**

- 33.1** REAFFIRMS the centrality of Jerusalem historically, religiously and culturally to Jews and Judaism;
- 33.2** STRESSES the need for free access and worship for Jews at all religious sites, including The Temple Mount;
- 33.3** CALLS ON the Australian Government to recognise Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem and to transfer the Australian embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

### 34. Gilad Shalit

#### **This Council:**

- 34.1** ACKNOWLEDGES with appreciation the efforts of many parties, to secure the release of the kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit;
- 34.2** CALLS ON all international organisations and governments that have contacts within the Gaza Strip to continue to press for his immediate and unconditional release;
- 34.3** DEMANDS that Hamas immediately and unconditionally release Gilad Shalit in accordance with its customary international law responsibilities as articulated in Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention which requires that: *"Prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities...."*

### 35. Ron Arad

#### **This Council:**

- 35.1** SHARES the heartfelt concerns of all Israelis about the fate of Israeli airman Ron Arad, who went missing in action in Lebanon in 1986;
- 35.2** CALLS UPON the Australian Government to continue to make representations to the United Nations and to all relevant Middle East states, and in particular Iran, Syria and Lebanon, urging them to seek and provide information concerning the fate of Ron Arad.

## 36. Terrorism

### This Council:

- 36.1** JOINS in mourning the victims of terrorism in Israel and throughout the world, and extends condolences to the relatives and friends of those who have been murdered, and sympathy and best wishes for a full recovery to the injured;
- 36.2** SUPPORTS efforts to prevent terrorist attacks, including the enactment of effective anti-terrorism laws, the allocation of resources for the efficient investigation of terrorist crimes and the arrest and prosecution of terrorist suspects, and Australia's participation in the international war against terrorism;
- 36.3** URGES the United Nations and all governments to take effective action against countries which serve as a haven and provide bases and support for terrorists;
- 36.4** NOTES the importance of legislation designed to counter terrorism and to provide security in a manner that properly recognises the required balance between civil liberties and law enforcement, and recognising that the great majority of Australian Muslims abhor terrorism;
- 36.5** CALLS ON the Federal Government to take effective measures and make appropriate arrangements where necessary with other governments, to prevent the transmission into or within Australia, by television or radio or through the internet, of material that promotes any form of terrorism, and applauds all efforts that help to ensure that the cohesion of Australia's multicultural society is not prejudiced;
- 36.6** URGES the Australian and other governments to act against Palestinian and other anti-Israeli terrorist organizations such as Hamas, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad;
- 36.7** CALLS ON the Federal Government to make appropriate arrangements with other governments to develop more refined and effective norms of international law to deal with the problems posed by armed attacks carried out by non-State actors.

## 37. Iran

### This Council:

- 37.1** NOTES widespread reports of systematic human rights abuses by the Iranian regime in virtually every facet of Iran's political, social and economic life, aimed particularly at minority religious and ethnic communities, but also at women, students and trade unionists, including government-sponsored extra-judicial killings, the trial and execution of minors and the use of horrific forms of torture against detainees;

- 37.2** REQUESTS the Australian Government to continue to investigate reports of this nature and continue to make representations in support of the victims at all appropriate forums;
- 37.3** SUPPORTS the international condemnation of President Ahmadinejad's repeated statements calling for Israel to be "wiped off the map" and his antisemitic Holocaust-denial statements;
- 37.4** SUPPORTS the efforts of the Argentine government and Interpol to arrest and bring to trial the alleged perpetrators of the bombing of the Argentine Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in 1994
- 37.5** NOTES that:
- (a) Iran became a non-nuclear weapon state party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970, and concluded a Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1974, under which Iran accepted safeguards (IAEA inspections) for the purpose of verifying that nuclear material is not diverted to nuclear weapons or to other nuclear explosive devices.
  - (b) In February 2006, the IAEA Board of Governors submitted a report to the UN Security Council on its difficulties with Iran and noted "Iran's many failures and breaches of its obligations to comply with its NPT Safeguards Agreement ...."( IAEA Board of Governors Res. GOV/2006/14 (4 Feb. 2006));
  - (c) the UN Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in Resolution 1835, has expressed its serious concern that, "as confirmed by the reports of 23 May 2007 (GOV/2007/22), 30 August 2007 (GOV/2007/48), 15 November 2007 (GOV/2007/58) and 22 February 2008 (GOV/2008/4) of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran has not established full and sustained suspension of all enrichment related and reprocessing activities and heavy water-related projects as set out in resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), and 1747(2007), nor resumed its cooperation with the IAEA under the Additional Protocol to the NPT, nor taken the other steps required by the IAEA Board of Governors, nor complied with the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) and which are essential to build confidence" and has imposed certain sanctions upon Iran which have failed to result in Iran complying with the aforementioned requirements;
  - (d) the Iranian regime recently admitted to the existence of a formerly undisclosed nuclear enrichment facility in Qom, in clear violation of the current IAEA guidelines;
- 37.6** WELCOMES the Australian Government's active support for the strongest possible additional measures being taken by the international community to ensure that Iran does not develop or gain access to nuclear weapons.

## **38. United Nations Human Rights Agenda**

### **This Council:**

- 38.1** CONDEMNS the way in which UN institutions and instruments have been manipulated to try to cast Israel as a pariah state;

- 38.2** CALLS upon the Australian Government to support the reforms of the UN advocated in resolutions 38.3 and 38.4 and to insist upon the UN following a Human Rights agenda that is genuinely focused upon the pursuit of Human Rights in accordance with the UN Charter;
- 38.3** CALLS for the abolition of the UN "Special Committees" on Palestinian issues, and "Palestinian Units" of the UN, the predominant purpose of which is to spread anti-Israel propaganda and whose activities degrade the ability of the United Nations to pursue its noble human rights objectives;
- 38.4** CALLS for the abolition by the United Nations General Assembly of the UN Human Rights Council and its replacement by a new human rights body, membership of which is restricted to those countries which at the time of their admission to membership have a democratic political system.

## 39. "Durban II"

### This Council:

- 39.1** NOTES that the UN World Conference Against Racism held in Durban in 2001 (Durban 1 Conference) was preceded by the NGO Forum which was marred by virulent antisemitic behaviour from representatives of a number of Non-Government Organizations and which was marked by abuse of process and outcomes prejudicial to genuine work to combat racism;
- 39.2** NOTES that the Durban I Government Conference produced outcome documents including the Declaration which singled out Israel for criticism (while naming no other countries) and introduced extraneous anti-Israel content under the pretext that Israel's actions are racist, which anti-Israel content overshadowed and distorted the critically important professed agenda of the conference;
- 39.3** NOTES that the Durban Review Conference (Durban II) was held in Geneva in April 2009 and:
- (a) CONDEMNS the Durban II outcome document for:
    - (i) reaffirming without reservation in its opening paragraph the 2001 Durban Declaration and Program of Action, including the section titled "Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance," which specifically states: "We are concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation" and falsely implies that Palestinians are victims of Israeli racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, or related intolerance;
    - (ii) failing to address serious human rights abuses and genocide in various regions of the world; and
    - (iii) omitting any criticism or mention of the Hamas Charter and, in particular, those of its provisions which incite hatred and genocide against Jews and affirm racist stereotypes about Jews as a people.
  - (b) APPLAUDS the boycott of the Conference by 10 nations namely Australia, Israel, the United States, New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden and Poland;
  - (c) EXPRESSES ITS DEEP DISGUST at the unprecedented and disgraceful antisemitic tirade from the podium during the Conference by the President

of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad;

- (d) COMMENDS the actions of dozens of diplomats from 23 of the nations which attended the Conference in walking out of the Conference during Ahmadinejad's tirade; and
- (e) CONDEMNS Swiss President Hans-Rudolf Merz for meeting with Ahmadinejad just before the opening of the Conference and providing him with an undeserved patina of legitimacy.

## 40. United Nations Bias

### This Council:

**40.1** NOTES with concern that on 24 November 2008 the then President of the UN General Assembly, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann of Nicaragua, stated in the General Assembly:

*"I spoke this morning about apartheid and how Israeli policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories appear so similar to the apartheid of an earlier era, a continent away. I believe it is very important that we in the United Nations use this term. We must not be afraid to call something what it is. It is the United Nations after all, that pass the International Convention against the Crime of Apartheid, making clear to all the world that such practices of official discrimination must be outlawed wherever they occur.*

*Today, perhaps we in the United Nations should consider following the lead of a new generation of civil society, who are calling for a similar non-violent campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions to pressure Israel.";*

**40.2** RECORDS that the accusations against Israel are scurrilous, false and without basis;

**40.3** NOTES that on 29 November 2006, the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan criticised the UN Human Rights Council for its "disproportionate focus on violations by Israel" while neglecting other parts of the world such as Darfur, which had what he termed "graver" crises and that Annan reiterated this criticism in his formal address on 8 December 2006 (International Human Rights Day);

**40.4** FURTHER NOTES that at a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 20 June 2007:

- (a) UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon criticized the Council in a statement that read: *"The Secretary-General is disappointed at the Council's decision to single out only one specific regional item given the range and scope of allegations of human rights violations throughout the world."*
- (b) The European Union, Canada and the United States were also critical of the Council's focus on alleged Israeli violations; and
- (c) Alejandro Wolff, deputy U.S. permanent representative at the United Nations, accused the Council of having *"a pathological obsession with Israel"*.

**40.5** CONDEMNS the United Nations to the extent that it: applies different standards for Israel and the Jewish people than for other countries; utterly fails to mention let alone criticise, the campaign of terror waged against



innocent civilians in Israel from the territories and from Gaza from which Israel has unilaterally withdrawn; continues with its one-sided obsession with Israel especially on the part of the UN Human Rights Council;

- 40.6** NOTES that these developments continue to give rise to grave concerns about the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations among fair-minded people everywhere;
- 40.7** CALLS UPON the Australian Government to continue to work towards fair and equitable treatment of Israel in all UN forums.

## **41. Global Antisemitism**

### **This Council:**

- 41.1** EXPRESSES ALARM at the escalation in acts of antisemitism throughout the world such as racially motivated physical and verbal assaults against Jewish people, attacks upon Synagogues and other Jewish Institutions and businesses owned by Jews, and:
- (a) CALLS UPON government and community leaders in the European Union and the media to show leadership by publicly denouncing as and when they occur, all manifestations of antisemitism falling within the working definition produced by the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and adopted by the UK All Part Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism;
  - (b) DENOUNCES the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, for descending repeatedly into racist and bullying rhetoric against Venezuela's Jewish citizens, which has resulted in a significant upsurge in racially motivated physical and verbal assaults against them and their communal institutions; and
  - (c) DEPLORES the proliferation of grossly antisemitic material within many of the States of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in the form of written publications, television and radio programs and internet material, and the promotion of such material by their governments through its inclusion in school curricula and its dissemination through government-controlled media.
- 41.2** NOTES that a significant number of incidents have been carried out by Islamist groups who support and engage in antisemitic violence;
- 41.3** NOTES that extremist left and right-wing organizations have encouraged their supporters to work together with extremist elements within Muslim and Arab communities;
- 41.4** CALLS ON the UN and all countries to take all necessary steps to ensure that those violent antisemitic incidents are not repeated and to protect Jewish citizens and communal property and to prevent other acts of anti-Jewish incitement;
- 41.5** CONDEMNS the prevalence of anti-Jewish rhetoric in sections of the mass-media which masquerades as political criticism of Israel.

## 42. Restitution

### This Council:

- 42.1** APPLAUDS the efforts of the Claims Conference and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation and other organisations working for the rights of survivors, their heirs and the Jewish world in the areas of restitution and restoration of property and true recording of the history of the Holocaust;
- 42.2** REAFFIRMS the principle that negotiations for restitution should wherever possible include representatives of both resident communities and survivors who live outside those countries;
- 42.3** CALLS for the expedition of all outstanding claims with a minimum of administrative cost or delay, and for priority in the application of funds for the benefit of survivors and the heirs of victims;
- 42.4** CALLS for the abolition of all forms of means testing as a condition of eligibility for the payment to survivors of compensation for personal pain and suffering.

## 43. The Vatican

### This Council:

- 43.1** RECOGNISES the importance of the work of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee and its joint declarations of November 4-7 2006 and November 2008.

## 44. APRID

### This Council:

- 44.1** NOTES the contribution to international understanding and dialogue between peoples of the Asia Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogues in Indonesia in 2004, Philippines in 2006, New Zealand in 2007, Cambodia in 2008 and Australia in 2009;
- 44.2** NOTES the unique and vital role played by representatives of the ECAJ's interfaith dialogues to this process and also to the inaugural Youth Interfaith Forum in Perth in 2007;
- 44.3** RECOGNISES the importance of members of Australia's delegations being engaged with representative bodies and being able to keep the broader community informed of the outcomes of the APRID processes and to properly represent communities' views;
- 44.4** URGES the Australian Government to include a representative from the ECAJ in all future Asia Pacific Interfaith Dialogues, as was the case until

2008.

## SECTION 4 - HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

### 45. National Curriculum

#### This Council:

- 45.1** NOTES the development of a National Curriculum and, within that, the importance of the Australian Jewish community working with National and State educational authorities to ensure the inclusion and adequate resourcing of topics relating to Jews and Judaism, Israel, the Holocaust and the contribution of Australian Jews to Australian society and culture.

### 46. Holocaust Remembrance and Education

#### This Council:

- 46.1** ENCOURAGES all major cities and State capitals to hold public remembrances of *Kristallnacht* and all Constituents of the ECAJ to prioritise the work of maximising public participation in Holocaust Remembrance and education; and
- 46.2** CALLS on all State Departments of School Education to ensure that all students have a basic knowledge of the events of the Holocaust, in order to gain an understanding of the fragility of human civilization and the dangers of irrational hatred;
- 46.3** CALLS upon the National Curriculum Board to include a unit of mandatory study addressing racism, racial hatred and genocide, and focusing on the facts and cause of the Holocaust, in the study of history for all high school students in Australia.

### 47. Inappropriate Holocaust Rhetoric

#### This Council:

- 47.1** RECOGNISES that the Holocaust, the Nazi program of genocide, was a unique historical event;
- 47.2** NOTES that the Holocaust is generally recognised as the benchmark of the most extreme case of human evil;
- 47.3** DEPLORES the inappropriate use of analogies to the Nazi Genocide in Australian public debate.

### 48. Stockholm Forums

**This Council:**

- 48.1** NOTES the importance of Holocaust education and remembrance;
- 48.2** NOTES the importance of civil society taking a stand against human rights abuses;
- 48.3** APPLAUDS the decision of the Swedish Government to host the international forum on Holocaust Education and Remembrance in January 2000; the Forum on Combating Intolerance in January 2001, the Forum on Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in April 2002 in Stockholm; and the International Forum on Genocide Prevention in 2004;
- 48.4** URGES the Australian government to implement relevant recommendations of the Stockholm Forums.

**SECTION 5 - SOCIAL ISSUES****49. Climate Change****This Council:**

- 49.1** NOTES that climate change is a major challenge facing Australia and the world. The current drought, water shortages, bush fires and record temperatures remind all Australians of our nation's vulnerability to climate change;
- 49.2** NOTES that the protection of the environment and conservation of its resources for the benefit of future generations are well-established principles of Jewish teaching and *halacha*;
- 49.3** APPLAUDS the action of The Climate Institute in bringing sixteen Australian faith communities representing the world's great religious traditions to unite and to speak out on climate change;
- 49.4** DECLARES its support for the five point action plan to tackle Australia's rising greenhouse gas emissions as the basis of an effective response to climate change as issued by The Climate Institute, viz:
- 1. Legislate to ensure Australia's greenhouse gas emissions go down and not up.
  - 2. Set a national price on greenhouse pollution.
  - 3. Implement a massive deployment of clean energy technologies.
  - 4. Deliver on energy savings and reduce Australia's energy bill.
  - 5. Provide international leadership on climate change.

**50. Stem Cell Research****This Council:**

- 50.1** NOTES that leading Rabbinic authorities have given their support to the use of existing embryos for stem cell research, mindful that Jewish law

concerns itself that such embryos are only appropriately obtained;

- 50.2** NOTES that stem cell research offers great hope to many sufferers and contains the potential to rectify painful, debilitating and life shortening genetic conditions;
- 50.3** SUPPORTS properly conducted research into the saving of life as a part of our human mandate to act in the image of God, to heal and to be merciful;
- 50.4** CALLS ON all ECAJ Constituents, Affiliates and Observer Organizations to encourage Australian Jews to publicly support the opportunities which stem cell research provides as reinforcing and not diminishing the sanctity of life.

## 51. Organ Donation

### This Council:

- 51.1** NOTES that Prime Minister Rudd announced funding to boost the low organ donation rate in Australia;
- 51.2** NOTES that lives can be saved by encouraging organ donation from Jews to the general population by educating our community about the different *halachic* and medical issues concerning organ donation;
- 51.3** SUPPORTS Medicare Australia changing donor registry forms so that members of the clergy can be involved in the decision-making process if members of the donor family so wish;
- 51.4** ENCOURAGES Australian Jews to learn about organ donation from both a medical and a *halachic* perspective, and to commit to organ donation processes subject to appropriate safeguards.

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