



The Federation of
Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)
اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

AFTERMATH OF THE MASSACRE OF MUSLIMS

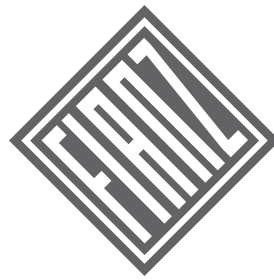
ON 15 MARCH, 2019 IN
Christchurch

THE HEALING PROCESS

**SOME CONSIDERATIONS RAISED BY THE
THE FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC
ASSOCIATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND
31 March, 2019**

You Are Us
We stand
alians

WE ARE
ONE



The Federation of the Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) is the national body of Muslims in New Zealand. It was established in 1979. The following are the constituent regional Associations of FIANZ:

- New Zealand Muslim Association Incorporated (NZMA), Auckland
- South Auckland Muslim Association Incorporated (SAMA), Auckland
- Waikato Muslim Association Incorporated (WMA), Hamilton
- Manawatu Muslim Association Incorporated (MMA), Palmerston North
- The International Muslim Association of New Zealand Incorporated (IMAN), Wellington
- Muslim Association of Canterbury Incorporated (MAC), Christchurch
- Otago Muslim Association Incorporated (OMA), Dunedin

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Christchurch

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KARAKIA

Kia hora te marino
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana
Hei huarahi mā tatou I te rangi nei
Aroha atu, aroha mai
Tātou i a tātou katoa.

May peace be widespread
May the sea be like greenstone
A pathway for us all this day
Let us show respect for each other
For one another
Bind us all together !

EMERGENCY POLICE EMERGENCY POLICE EMERGENCY POLICE





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In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

PREAMBLE

FIANZ wishes that this report had never been necessary.

The massacre of Muslims in Christchurch being the 10th deadliest mass shooting in recent history¹ and the "darkest day"² in NZ history, has resulted in a complete paradigm shift of the narrative of the peaceful Kiwi way of life. With the sixteen minutes of calculated mayhem caused by brass-encased bullets from AR-15 semi-automatics³, New Zealand joined the endless list of countries who have become casualties of terrorism.

The images of the bloodied corpses of 50 ordinary Kiwis with a similar number of casualties, are now an unfortunate part of the fabric which shapes our historical landscape. The victims aged 3 to 71 years and from many different countries of origin, are all ordinary Kiwis. They were singled out for death because they also happened to be Muslims. The execution-style massacre of Muslims at Masjid Al-Noor and Linwood Masjid will haunt generations of New Zealanders.

Unless steps are taken by all concerned stakeholders to address the healing process, the consequences of this massacre will linger and fester into a generational tragedy. The healing process needs to be well planned. The healing process shall have to be implemented with utmost care and sensitivity.

The scope of this Report is limited. It outlines some key considerations for the healing process, from the perspective of FIANZ, the national organization representing the Muslims of New Zealand. The Report is not a baseline of the Muslim perspective on the tragic events of 15 March. However, it highlights some of the mainstream views of Muslims on the antecedents and the responses to the massacre. The healing process proffered by FIANZ is guided by the mandates from the Quran and examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). FIANZ also considers that the efficacy of the healing process necessitates on-going formative evaluation.

For FIANZ, the healing process is the first step on the way forward to a new narrative on the clean, green and safe Kiwi way of life and a truly inclusive and harmonious New Zealand.

Abdur Razzaq
Chairperson,
BMD-FIANZ

¹<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-deadliest-mass-shootings-in-history.html>

²<https://www.smh.com.au/world/oceania/jacinda-ardern-shines-on-new-zealand-s-darkest-day-20190316-p514qh.html>

³<https://www.thisinsider.com/christchurch-mass-shooting-photos-inside-linwood-mosque-2019-3>



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SABR (PATIENCE)

" O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salah (the prayer). Truly, Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient)."

Source: Al-Quran : Surah 2. Al-Baqara, Ayaat 153⁴

Having patience after suffering a tragedy is mandated in the Quran.

At an individual level, Muslims affected by the 15 March Massacre have translated this into seeking solace through prayer and reflection. At an organisational level, FIANZ is also advocating all its constituent organisations and other Muslim organisational stakeholders to remain patient. It is this patience which provides the calm environs to reflect and plan for the future.

FIANZ recognises that ad-hoc knee-jerk responses, whilst providing palatable media-sound bites, are not the way forward for sustainable healing. All too often we have seen such tragedies result in not only an out pouring of grief, but later transform into anger and calls for revenge. This has to be avoided and mitigating steps taken.

FIANZ has advocated patience and prayer to all Muslims of NZ. We have highlighted that patience and forbearance should not be considered as inertia, but rather a prerequisite to reflect on what happened and then bring about the inner-strength to address the aftermath of the tragedy which has consumed the whole nation.

Towards this end, FIANZ recommends that a reasonable timeframe of 4 months, particularly noting the Ramadan period in May, is given before any substantive decisions are made which may affect the Muslim community. We realise of course that the Government has its own priorities, for instance in the area of gun control.

For FIANZ the baseline of our priorities is to ensure the welfare of the victims and their families, the need for calm and patience by Muslims and a planned and systematic healing process which ensures that the outpouring of love, care and the unity of New Zealanders is sustained and translated into tangible social constructs for the future.

⁴<http://www.alim.org/library/quran/AlQuran-tafsir/TIK/2/153>



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SHUKUR (GRATITUDE)

**Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said,
"He who does not thank people, does not thank Allah"**

Source: (Ahmad, Tirmidhi).

At the outset, our gratitude is to all New Zealanders. People from all corners of NZ, from all walks of life, all races, creeds, and ages have consoled us, stood by us and held out their helping hands at this time of grief.

The outpouring has been sincere, concerted and insightful. This is the true New Zealand and what makes Aotearoa unique amongst the nations of the world.

FIANZ would like to thank the Prime Minister for taking leadership and managing this crisis as a **true stateswoman**. Her sincerity has been palpable, her forthrightness has been inspirational and her caring has been heartfelt. We recognise all Parliamentarians for their united stand against such atrocities and the commitment made to work together to mitigate such man-made calamities in the future.

The Police have for a long time maintained a close, caring and consultative relationship with the Muslim community. Inspector Rakesh Naidoo and Deputy Commissioner Wally Haumaha have been pivotal to this relationship. The NZ Police have been providing a service which goes above and beyond all our expectations. It has been as if each and every member of the Police is a close relative, given the depth, scope and sincerity of their dealings with the Muslim community. From the front-line risks undertaken by two rural policemen, to all the others officers keeping us safe at this time of extreme anxiety, we pray for all of you and your family.

To all the medical staff, from ambulance to hospital staff and all the professional counselors, you have an indebted nation that is immensely proud of each and every one of you. You have started the healing process and it is this which will be the lasting legacy of your selfless contribution.

To all the government and community service providers, from MFAT officials and immigration staff to social workers, school principals and teachers, local businesses, council staff, cemetery grounds staff, the list is endless, we will always remember the help given, your tireless effort at all times of the day and night. New Zealanders are known to work as a team when disasters happen, this has been no exception. Thank you for all your help.



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The fourth estate in NZ also should be particularly congratulated. The robust and culturally sensitive approach to the unfolding massacre was most appreciated. Of particular note has been the insightful and probing NZ media, who have kept the families, friends and wider community abreast of developments. They have provided an information life-line to those who were worried and scared. Thank you to the print, radio and television journalists, although in truth this has been the easy phase of the tragedy. Going forward, the media will be challenged in a more fundamental way. We earnestly hope that the media will follow the Prime Minister's lead in denying the perpetrator the oxygen of notoriety during the trial phase. We acknowledge that the integrity of a transparent judicial system requires that the accused be publicly named but in the reporting of the same, an appropriate balance will need to be observed in fulfilling this requirement. A minimum reference to the accused's name should suffice to meet this need; anything more will be read as indulgence in sensationalism.

This tragic episode has brought to the fore another related issue, namely the sensationalising of stories calculated to demonise some or other marginal group. These stories almost always originate overseas but the New Zealand media always has options on how these stories are relayed across our own country. Regrettably, broader public interest has not always prevailed in editorial considerations, and when this is the case, it nourishes and emboldens certain dormant attitudes and perceptions. Eventually and alas invariably we all harvest a bitter yield. Hopefully, the tragic events of 15 March will lead to some introspection across the media platforms.



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ADL (JUSTICE)

You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of Allah, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just.

Source: Al-Quran : Surat al-Maida, 8

That justice is delivered is a key part of the healing process. The alleged perpetrator, who shall remain nameless, was caught within a very short time period, due to the diligence our police. This same diligence should be evident in the method in which justice shall be delivered. The Muslims of NZ, have full faith in our justice system.

We would particularly appreciate that the proceedings, especially the potential grandstanding of the alleged perpetrator is not broadcast. Hate mongering during the judicial process may be the right of defendants, however the victims, their families and friends, as well as the wider Muslim community do not need to be reminded of the horror of the massacre nor any macabre rationale for such killings.

At another level, we note that the Government has convened a Royal Commission to investigate possible intelligence failure⁵. This is to be commended. We trust that FIANZ would have an opportunity to make some suggestions as to the terms and scope of the inquiry. The rationale being that the Muslims were the victims of this massacre and there are some questions which remain unanswered, the most pertinent of which is how a threat to an entire community failed to show up on the security agencies' radar. As a key stakeholder we consider that the above and several other unanswered questions will need to be addressed as part of the healing process.

We would further request that an appropriately qualified Muslim be also included, subject to the normal security clearance given that information from various intelligence sources may be part of the inquiry. The inclusion of a suitably qualified Muslim would be consistent with previous Royal Commissions where special interest stakeholders have been included . FIANZ would also welcome being included⁶ as a special advisory group, similar to another recent Royal Commission⁷.

⁵https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12213705

⁶<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1811/S00134/maori-council-welcomes-dr-eruetis-appointment.htm>

⁷<https://www.abuseinstatecare.royalcommission.govt.nz/>



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HIKMAH (WISDOM)

"I have given you the capacity for hearing, sight, and the intellect, and you are responsible for using them effectively.. All impropriety is condemned by your Lord. This is of the wisdom inspired to you by your Lord."

Source: [Quran 17:36-39]

Islam advocates rationality against rhetoric, stresses the use of intellect instead of emotion, and reasoned argument above mindless reaction. Hikmah dictates that in the process of healing we have to take stock of the hate-antecedents, mitigate the hate-catalysts and proffer a path to acknowledge and appreciate differences.

"Islamophobia" is as detestable as "apartheid" was in the past and "anti-Semitism" is in the present. When mixed with unchallenged racist behavior and hate speech the potential for violence is most evident, as noted by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance⁸. Our approach is to address the underlying issues and at the same time have appropriate social-cohesion education programmes. In this context, legislation may be considered but they are more akin to the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. Our preference is to encourage debate and clarify misunderstandings. Such an approach, which is more mid to long term, would lay a strong foundation for a **"YOU ARE US"** culture. FIANZ has a long history of encouraging such a dialogue-based change process. Islam teaches us not to look at humanity through our differences, but rather our similarities. God has given us diversity so we can celebrate the differences and not to condemn those who don't share our views. This is our baseline hikmah.

Whilst the demographics show that most Muslims have migrated in the last fifty years, with many refugees included in the recent past, the history of Muslims visiting NZ goes back to 1769⁹. We have many generations of Muslims who have been born here. The transition has been made a long time ago from Muslims in New Zealand to Muslims of New Zealand. In this context, the healing process also needs to address the wider society that Muslims have been a part of for over 2 centuries. We have noted that NZ history has been replete with negative associations of race with immigration, like the draconian regulations faced by the Chinese in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the humiliation faced by Pacific Islanders with the dawn raids. Muslims may be facing the same undue attention. We believe a lot more historical understanding has to be included in our education process, so that future generations of Kiwis appreciate that NZ's historical DNA is indeed multicultural. This will require jointly celebrating our history as it should have been written. Herein lies the kernel of a sustained healing process.

⁸<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/hate-speech-and-violence>
⁹https://www.nzherald.co.nz/bay-of-plenty-times/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503343&objectid=12217284

THE HEALING PROCESS



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