

Question – Senator Darmanin

You've noted there is a lack of confidence among Jewish staff and students in the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). The AHRC is undertaking a study into the impact of racism at universities - have you met with them to discuss this study and its approach to antisemitism?

Answer

I thank the Senator for her interest in my evidence to the committee.

While I have met with both the President of the AHRC and the Race Discrimination Commissioner quite early in my time as Envoy, I was not approached by the AHRC to contribute to their National Anti-racism Framework (which has just been released) or indeed to discuss more broadly the approach of the AHRC to antisemitism.

I have had an electronic meeting with Ms Fida Slayman, who is the senior executive at the AHRC working on their study of racism regarding communities affected by the Middle East which I believe is their study relating to racism at universities. I did convey to her that I see antisemitism as a unique hatred which cannot just be subsumed within general racism and it would be important that she speaks to students and community members to understand this. At this point, I do not know what approach she has ended up taking and where her work is up to.