

To: Local Councillors, Mayors

Subject: **Letter to councillors regarding the Local Government Summit Against Antisemitism and for Social Cohesion - Nov 26-27, 2026**

Dear Councillors,

I/we are writing to highlight our concerns regarding the forthcoming Local Government Summit Against Antisemitism and for Social Cohesion which is an event organised by the global lobby group, the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM), its Australian partners and this year, co-hosted with Waverly Council.

CAM is a global organisation which operates in 40 countries. It has headquarters in the US but has very close ties to Israel. One of its aims is to introduce the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism and implant it in all levels of government, policing, law, education and health. Its aim at its local government conferences is to impose the IHRA definition across communities at a grassroots level.

This definition is controversial and has been criticised and opposed by civil rights groups, legal scholars, Holocaust experts and academics (including lead IHRA drafter Kenneth Stern) who argue that its Israel-related examples can be misused to conflate legitimate political speech or criticism of Israeli government policies with antisemitism.

This conflation has been used to create false statistics disseminated by key speakers at this Summit, about the level of antisemitism in NSW. These figures were disputed by the NSW Police under oath in the NSW Antisemitism Inquiry last year when more than half of the incidents reported as antisemitic via Operation Shelter were not classified as hate crimes.

We have seen the IHRA definition and false claims of antisemitism used to target many individuals and organisations in the last three years who have publicly supported Palestinian rights and condemned Israel's actions in Gaza - actions which are denied by CAM and Israel lobbyists, although they have been classified as genocide by key UN bodies as well as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Association of Genocide Scholars. We have seen numerous examples of Individuals throughout NSW and Australia who have been falsely accused of antisemitism and had their careers or their funding seriously impacted.

CAM has catalogued a set of symbols it associates with antisemitism. In the brochure delivered to its first Australian summit in 2025, it noted that wearing the Palestinian cultural scarf, the keffiyeh or displaying the watermelon is considered threatening to Jewish people and needed to be strictly monitored. Nasser Mashni, president of the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network, said the pamphlet was evidence that the summit's attendees were "being spoon-fed white supremacist and racist disinformation to carry back into their communities."

The Antisemitism Envoy, Jillian Segal who is supporting and addressing this conference, has produced a plan which she and organisations like CAM want to see imposed on all aspects of our civil life. These guidelines weaponise the IHRA definition as noted above, and have already been used to stifle free speech and public debate in this country. For these reasons, the ABC and SBS and other key organisations have declined to formally adopt the IHRA definition.

Recently, NSW Supreme Court Justice Fagan rejected the IHRA definition of antisemitism describing it as an attempt to "repurpose" the term to encompass racism against Jews and criticism of Israel. He stated that it was, *"detached from the reality of the common usage and understanding of antisemitism in this country"*. Referring to the Pew Research Centre poll from June this year which found that 79% of Australians had an unfavourable view of Israel, Justice Fagan said *"it would be preposterous to suggest that 79% of Australians are antisemitic because they disapprove of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians"*. Yet, this is precisely the aim of the CAM Summit which will focus on persuading local Councils to enforce the IHRA definition in all Council activities.

CAM was founded in 2019 by Republican donor Adam Beren, an oil magnate from Kansas whose family has contributed millions to pro-Trump causes. In 2025, CAM honoured Congressman Randy Fine with a baseball bat dubbed "The Hebrew Hammer". Fine is a Florida representative who has stirred controversy with his genocidal rhetoric toward Gazans and his blatant Islamophobia, including calls for the streets of Gaza to "overflow with blood", tweeting "Gaza must be destroyed" and telling Gazans to "just starve".

CAM's direct and strong links with the State of Israel raises many questions especially as Israel is accused of committing a Genocide in Gaza at the International Court of Justice by South Africa and its current prime minister and former defense minister are under arrest warrants for war crimes at the International Criminal Court. Sacha Roytmann, the CEO of CAM Global was previously head of social media for the Israel Defence Forces and lives in Tel Aviv. Yigal Nissel who is currently head of CAM in

Australia has a long history of promoting Israel through the Jewish National Fund and also as the CEO of Mosaic United, an initiative set up by Israel's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism. And the CAM Chair of the International Board is Natan Sharamsy, who was previously the deputy Prime Minister of Israel and worked for both the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Agency for Israel.

CAM's summit in the Gold Coast last year featured Pastor Sue Baynes who works in the office of the Mayor of the Gold Coast and is a supporter of the Seven Mountains Mandate, an evangelical Christian movement from the United States. She was also a former candidate for the conservative Family First Party that opposed same-sex marriage. Other speakers included Nova Peris who has a history of sharing Islamophobic social media posts which express stridently anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian views — including one describing Muslims as "Satan worshipping cockroaches [that] need to be eradicated".

This year's speakers include Alex Ryvchin, Co-CEO, Executive Council of Australian Jewry who has been outspoken in his attacks on peaceful pro Palestine protests and a long time supporter of Israel.

We believe attending the CAM Summit will give support to the highly problematic claims and ulterior aims of CAM worldwide and therefore call on councillors to avoid being misled into participating in this Summit.

This event is billed as supporting social cohesion and inclusion and fighting antisemitism but in reality it is part of an internationally well funded campaign to shut down criticism of Israel and sow division in our community by wrongly labelling those who criticise Israel as antisemitic.

Thank you for considering the serious issues raised in this letter.

If you would like further information about this organisation and the way it operates, I have included some links below.

Yours sincerely,
[Name]

Further Information:

[Combat Antisemitism Movement keeps slaying social cohesion](https://michaelwest.com.au/combat-antisemitism-movement-attacks-social-cohesion/)

[<https://michaelwest.com.au/combat-antisemitism-movement-attacks-social-cohesion/>]

[Point of Order. Antisemitism Summit raises ethics eyebrows](https://michaelwest.com.au/point-of-order-antisemitism-summit-raises-ethics-eyebrows/)

[<https://michaelwest.com.au/point-of-order-antisemitism-summit-raises-ethics-eyebrows/>]

[Watermelons deemed an antisemitic symbol at pro-Israel mayoral summit](https://www.deepcutnews.com/p/watermelons-deemed-an-antisemitic/)

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