

Joint Statement: Australia and New Zealand

Debate on the mitigation and countering of rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies

I make this statement on behalf of New Zealand and Australia.

It is with extreme sadness that we have learned this morning that at least 49 people have lost their lives in what seems to be an act of terrorism against worshippers at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.

More than 48 people have also been seriously injured, and four people are currently in police custody. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of those who have been impacted by this senseless attack.

This terrorism attack appears to have been based on extremist views that have absolutely no place in New Zealand, Australia, or the world. We condemn these acts, as well as the racism, xenophobia and intolerance that fuels them, including Islamophobia, in the strongest possible terms.

For many, Christchurch may not have been the place that they were born. In fact, for many, New Zealand was their choice: a place they sought to make their home, a place to raise their families, a community to love and be loved by, a place that was safe.

In the words of New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern: "We, New Zealand, were not a target because we are a safe harbor for those who hate. We were not chosen for this act of violence because we condone racism, or because we are an enclave for extremism. We were chosen for the very fact that we are none of these things: because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion, a home for those who share our values, refuge for those who need it. And those values cannot be shaken by this attack."

We give the strongest possible condemnation of the ideology of the people who did this. You may have chosen us – we utterly reject and condemn you.