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Maria Vamvakinou MP,
Chair,
Joint Standing Committee on Migration,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission on Multiculturalims

I was born in India and lived in Muslim majority provinces before the Partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan. Herewith my submission on Multiculturalism and Immigration - it is focussed on Islam and Muslim immigration because Australia has not had major problems with multiculturalism until we had substantial numbers of Muslim immigrants. Islam does not allow for separation between the state and their religion, so they have inherent difficulties in integrating into a society which separates church and state, is democratic and gives equal rights to women.

It is easy for those who have not lived in Muslim-majority provinces, as I have, to disagree with South Australian Liberal Senator Cory Bernardi's recent description of Islam, as an ideology, as "dangerous".

This is not an issue of racism because there are Muslims of all races. Nor is it one of animosity towards Muslims, most of whom are kind and very hospitable people. But Muslims are bedevilled with the pernicious ideology of Islam, and there needs to be a public debate on this, to enlighten Muslims as much as others.

In late 2007, Michael Savage, one of the most popular radio talk-show hosts in America, was targeted for an advertiser boycott by the Council on American-Islamic Relations for referring to the Quran (or Koran) as "a book of hate". Predictably, Savage was accused of promoting "hate" by making this observation.

However, Joseph Farah, writing in *WorldNetDaily* (December 5, 2007), defended Savage against this charge by publishing direct quotes from the Quran and the Hadith (collections of sayings and acts of Muhammad and the early Muslims). He then invited his readers to judge who was more responsible for promoting hate:

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Quran 4:89: "They (infidels) desire that you should disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so that you might be (all) alike; therefore take not from among them friends until they fly (their homes) in Allah's way; but if they turn back, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take not from among them a friend or a helper."

Quran 8:12: "Instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers;"

Quran 2:191: "... kill the disbelievers wherever we find them ..."

Quran 22:19-22: "... for them (the unbelievers) garments of fire shall be cut and there shall be poured over their heads boiling water whereby whatever is in their bowels and skin shall be dissolved and they will be punished with hooked iron rods."

Quran 8:7: "Allah wished to confirm the truth by His words: 'Wipe the infidels out to the last.'"

Quran 8:59: "The infidels should not think that they can get away from us. Prepare against them whatever arms and weaponry you can muster so that you may terrorise them. They are your enemy and Allah's enemy."

Quran 9:29: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection."

Quran 47:4: "Strike off the heads of the disbelievers" and, after making a "wide slaughter among them, carefully tie up the remaining captives".

Hadith Sahih Muslim (41:6985): "Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: 'The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say: Muslim, the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him; but the tree Gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews.'"

Quran 9:5: "When the sacred forbidden months for fighting are past, fight and kill the disbelievers wherever you find them, take them captive, torture them, and lie in wait and ambush them using every stratagem of war."

Sura 3:151: "Soon shall We cast terror into the hearts of the unbelievers for that they joined companions with Allah for which He had sent no authority: their abode will be the fire; and evil is the home of the wrong-doers!"

Sura 8:60: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power including steeds of war to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies of Allah and your enemies and others besides whom ye may not know but whom Allah doth know. Whatever ye shall spend in the cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you and ye shall not be treated unjustly."

Tabari IX:113: "Allah permits you to shut them (women) in separate rooms and to beat them, but not severely. If they abstain, they have the right to food and clothing. Treat women well for they are like domestic animals and they possess nothing themselves. Allah has made the enjoyment of their bodies lawful in his Quran."

Tabari I:280: "Allah said, 'It is My obligation to make Eve bleed once every month as she made this tree bleed. I must also make Eve stupid, although I created her intelligent.' Because Allah afflicted Eve, all of the women of this world menstruate and are stupid."

Ishaq:327: "Allah said, 'A prophet must slaughter before collecting captives. A slaughtered enemy is driven from the land. Muhammad, you craved the desires of this world, its goods and the ransom captives would bring. But Allah desires killing them to manifest the religion.'"

* * * * *

These quotations are not out of context. They are representative of dozens of other messages in the Quranic texts. I know there are many peaceful Muslims who view them allegorically rather than literally.

Yet, is it outside the bounds of civil public discourse to challenge such statements? How can Islam be described as a "religion of peace" when it overtly and unmistakably preaches that its followers should convert the unbeliever or kill him? The burden of proof is on Muslims to show that those saying that Islam is not a "religion of peace" are inaccurate, because, while most Muslims are not terrorists, virtually every recent terrorist attack has been committed by Muslims.

Islam's treatment of women is particularly repugnant. How can permission for a man to have four wives be consistent with "equal rights" and democracy? How can encasing women from head to toe in a face-covering tent-like enclosure, the burka, be regarded as humane?

The Taliban is at the extreme edge of extremist Islam, but not even the most barbaric of primitive tribes burned little girls' schools and threw acid in their faces to stop them getting an education as the Taliban does.

Even in moderate, secular Indonesia, hardline Islamists are seeking the overthrow of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono unless he disbands Ahmadiyah, a small breakaway sect regarded as heretical by mainstream Muslims.

And the current Afghan government, on whose behalf we have expended the lives of men and millions of dollars, has shown its "enlightenment" by closing TV stations because they show Bollywood films from India in which men and women associate socially, sing songs and talk to each other!

Let's have a debate about these issues and the plight of individuals condemned to death in Afghanistan and Pakistan on spurious charges of "blasphemy" or for converting to Christianity, before we rush to judgement on Senator Bernardi.

I don't know what Australia's immigration laws were at the height of the Cold War in regard to admitting to this country those who were card-carrying members of the totalitarian Communist Party.

The problem with Muslim immigrants does not occur in the first generation, who work hard in humble jobs and are glad to escape the troubles in their countries of origin. The problems arise with their sons who, because of the stultifying effects of Islam, fail to move up the ladder of opportunity and also lack a normal social life with

women. They risk becoming radicalised, especially when exposed to the preaching of extremist clerics from overseas.

In my view, before Australia accepts Muslim immigrants, they should be required to sign an affirmation that:

- They accept Australia's laws and judicial system and will not lobby for *sharia* law.
- They accept freedom of religion, and that it includes the right to change from one religion to another.
- They accept that it is barbaric to impose the death penalty for those who leave Islam.
- They accept that polygamy is degrading to women.
- They will allow their adult daughters and sons to mix socially with whomever they choose and to choose whom they wish to date and marry.
- They accept that criticism of Islam or its Prophet is part of political and religious debate in Australia and does not warrant violent reprisals.

If Muslim immigrants sign such affirmations, these can be used in Islamic schools to educate their children on the values their parents accepted as citizens of Australia.

Case One: Study of how Sharia law treats rape victims even in a moderate so-called "secular democracy" like Bangladesh:

In a perceptive two-page article titled "How I lost faith in Multiculturalism" in the *Inquirer* section, **Weekend Australian**, 2-3 April 2011, Greg Sheridan relates how he has - reluctantly - come to the conclusion that multiculturalism doesn't work. Specifically, his reasons relate to Islam and the difficulty of Islamists in integrating into Australia's cultural ethos of freedom, equality before the law and democracy. Islam allows no separation between the state and the Muslim religion.

Having lived in India and experienced its myriad of cultures, languages and religions, I need no convincing of the evils of fundamental Hinduism (eg. the persecuting Hindus who convert to Christianity) or radical Islam, but fundamental Hindus do not want to migrate to Australia whereas Muslims are arriving daily, legal and illegal. Once Muslims achieve citizenship, some of them are not content but lobby for the establishment of *Sharia* law. Demanding Halal food is one of the relatively harmless observances demanded by *Sharia* but the treatment of women is a tragedy. Here's one story - not from 50 years ago, but from this year.

Catholic Online (www.catholic.org) reported on 3/3/11 that a teen girl was lashed to death for 'adultery' in Bangladesh:

"In a horrific case of rural justice, a 14-year-old girl was lashed 70 times in front of her parents on alleged adultery charges. She cried out to her mother proclaiming her innocence; a her death a week later was judged a suicide by a local hospital. Hena Akhter was the youngest child of Darbesh Khan and his wife, Aklima Begum. The 14-year-old Hena lived with her parents and four other siblings in Bangladesh's Shariatpur district. Crisscrossed by murky rivers that lend waters to rice paddies and lush vegetable fields, she lived with her family in a house constructed of corrugated tin and rotting wood.

"Hena's cousin, Mahbub Khan, had returned to Shariatpur from a stint working in Malaysia. His son was Hena's age, and the two were in seventh grade together. Khan reportedly eyed Hena and began harassing her on her way to school and back, said Hena's father. He complained to the elders who run the village about his nephew, who was three times Hena's age.

"The elders admonished Mahbub Khan and ordered him to pay \$1,000 in fines to Hena's family. According to her sister, many months later, Hena was walking from her room to an outdoor toilet when Mahbub Khan gagged her with cloth, forced her behind nearby shrubbery and beat and raped her. Hena struggled to escape and Mahbub Khan's wife heard Hena's muffled screams and when she found Hena with her husband, she dragged the teenage girl back to her hut, beat her and trampled her on the floor.

"The next day, the village elders met to discuss the case at Mahbub Khan's house. The imam pronounced his fatwa. Khan and Hena were found guilty of an illicit relationship. Her punishment under Sharia or Islamic law was 101 lashes; his 201. Mahbub Khan managed to escape after the first few lashes. Darbesh Khan and Aklima Begum had no choice but to mind the imam's order. They watched as the whip broke the skin of their youngest child and she fell unconscious to the ground."

101 lashes delivered swiftly, deliberately in public. Hena dropped after 70. Bloodied and bruised, she was taken to hospital, where she died a week later. Amazingly, an initial autopsy report cited no injuries and deemed her death a suicide. Hena's family insisted her body be exhumed. They wanted the world to know what happened to their daughter.

Never mind that this 14-year old girl was raped. Under *Sharia* law rape is well-nigh impossible to prove, and the female victim typically is accused of "fornication," or "adultery" and lashed, if not stoned. Despite a "ban" by ostensibly overriding secular law, *Sharia law* and its attendant discriminatory abuses of women compounded by barbaric punishments of these victims persists in Bangladesh.

Three out of four women in prison under "*Hudud*" laws in Islamic countries are rape victims. "*Hudud*" (or 'claims of God') refers to that group of laws for which there are fixed punishments. i.e fornication, drinking alcohol and apostasy. Because rape is equated with adultery/fornication under *Hudud law*, rape victims are required to produce four pious male witnesses. It is of course nearly impossible for the rape victims to produce the four male witnesses required to prove their allegation. Therefore their police report of rape was taken as a confession of illicit sex on their part and they were duly found guilty.

In the real world, rape is unlikely to occur in the open, such that four pious males can observe the act. If they actually did witness such an act, and have not sought to prevent it, then technically they are abettors to the crime. In reality, unless the rapist confesses to the crime, women can never prove rape at all if rape is placed under *Sharia* jurisdiction.

"What happened to Hena is unfortunate and we all have to be ashamed that we couldn't save her life," Sultana Kamal, who heads the human rights organization *Ain o Shalish Kendra* says. Bangladesh is considered a democratic and moderate Muslim country, and national law forbids the practice of *Sharia*. Activist and journalist Shoaib Choudhury, who documents such cases, said *Sharia* is still very much in use in villages and towns aided by the lack of education and strong judicial systems.

Case two: How Sharia law treats those accused of blasphemy in Pakistan which is supposed to be a democracy and ally of the West against terrorism:

I intended to title this item "The myth of the moderate Muslim". I was going to discuss the myths promoted by US President Obama that Islam has made a great contribution to US history (and to space travel), and particularly the recent myth, expressed in a *New York Times* editorial (January 6, 2011), that the assassination of Salman Taseer, governor of Pakistan's Punjab province, was attributable solely to "radical fundamentalists" and had nothing to do with the violence embedded in Islamic teaching itself.

However, I acknowledge there are moderate Muslims. The problem is some of the courageous ones have been killed, e.g., former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Others live protected by security guards and the majority of Muslims are either uninformed or cower in fear, afraid to confront the religious leaders who spew intolerance and hatred.

Islam itself is the problem. It is not just a religion: it is also an intolerant political creed that seeks to subjugate the world to Islamic *Sharia* law which degrades women to submissiveness under misogynist edicts, and condemns non-Muslims to second-class status.

There are moderate Muslims, but there is no such thing as "moderate Islam, the religion of peace". Islam inspires violence as is evident from the slogans shouted by *jihadis* when killing unarmed Christian worshippers in Baghdad Cathedral in October 2010. The massacre, according to theologian and expert on Islam Dr Mark Durie, was a "purely religious act" (See *MarkDurie.com* blog, January 15, 2011).

According to survivors, the attackers cried out *Allahu Akbar* ("Allah is greater"), each time they shot Christians, the same slogan shouted by Dr Nidal Malik Hasan, the US army psychiatrist who shot 13 people at Fort Hood. The Baghdad killers called the Christians *kafir* (infidel) and said it was *halal* (religiously permitted in Islam) to kill them because they were Christians.

The plight of Asia Bibi in Pakistan is a further illustration of the problems embedded in Islam. She is a farm labourer in her late-thirties who in 2009 had an argument with neighbours who taunted her about being Christian. Asia defended her faith, and was accused of blasphemy (insulting the Prophet) which, according to the penal code of Pakistan, is punishable by death.

Christians and other minorities in Pakistan have been trying for years to have the blasphemy law abolished, and the government of President Asif Ali Zardari of the Pakistan People's Party was considering doing so, when Asia was arrested and sentenced to death.

Mr Salman Taseer, governor of Punjab, Pakistan's major province, who has been an outspoken critic of the blasphemy law and who visited Asia Bibi in prison and called for clemency for her, was shot (29 bullet wounds) and killed by his own bodyguard, Malik Mumtaz Hussain Qadri, on January 4 because he had called the blasphemy law a bad law.

In most countries when a political assassination takes place, there is horror and revulsion, but not in this case. Qadri has become a national hero for major segments

of the Pakistani population. He was showered with rose petals on two successive days of court appearances.

Furthermore, a major Sunni Muslim group of 500 "scholars" and clerics praised Qadri for his "courage", i.e., for shooting the unarmed governor 26 times in the back. They warned other politicians of the same fate if they spoke out against the blasphemy law, which human rights campaigners claim fuels Islamist extremism.

Islamist-inspired terror is no longer "extremism"; it is mainstream in Pakistan. Interior Minister Rehman Malik of the governing Pakistan People's Party alluded to a wider conspiracy to destabilise Pakistan, and fears are rising for a PPP member of parliament, former Information Minister Sherry Rehman, who has proposed a private member's bill for parliament seeking to soften the blasphemy law.

Also assassinated was Shahbaz Bhatti, Pakistan's Minister for Minorities, whose portfolio deals with the rights of minorities under the Pakistani constitution. He wanted the blasphemy law abolished and criticised clerics who offered a reward to anyone who killed Asia Bibi.

Shehribano Taseer, the murdered Punjab governor's daughter, slammed the inconsistencies of the ruling party, her father's party. She noted that in 2008 the PPP had proposed changes in those elements of the blasphemy law that led to social and religious disharmony, but "demonstrations by religious groups against a pardon for Aisia Bibi" undermined the party's and the government's agenda. Shehribano has been warned to be silent or she will also be killed.

Not content with the massacres of Catholics in Baghdad, of Copts in a church in Egypt, and Christians in Nigeria, the Saudi-funded 56-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is trying to have a blasphemy law passed by the United Nations.

Keith Riley, vice-president of the Pakistani-Australian Christian Association, has asked Australians concerned about human rights to write to Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Kevin Rudd, requesting him to offer asylum to Asia Bibi. Bringing her out of Pakistan may be one way to defuse a volatile situation.

Ms. Vamvakinou, instead of conducting an academic inquiry into multiculturalism, offer asylum to Asia Bibi before she is killed.

Sincerely,

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Babette Francis (Mrs),
National & Overseas Co-ordinator