

Motion:

“That the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies endorses the media statement issued by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry on 23 July 2020 in respect of the plight of the Uyghur population of north-western China.”

ECAJ media statement of 23 July 2020:

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the peak representative body of the Australian Jewish community, has expressed its deep concern and alarm about the treatment of Uyghur and other minority communities in north-western China.

“It is impossible to ignore persistent reports of hundreds of thousands of members of the Uyghur and other Muslim communities in China being rounded up and sent to re-education camps to pressure them into abandoning their religion, and other harsh government measures directed at reducing their numbers”, ECAJ President Jillian Segal said.

“In the face of official denials of these practices, we have seen shocking footage coming from north-western China of dozens of people kneeling, bound and blindfolded with their heads shaved being led on to trains by armed guards”.

“Whilst every government has the right and duty to protect its people from terrorism and violent separatist and other political movements, the suppression by forced reductions in population and mass transports of hundreds of thousands of people to detention centres, simply for expressing religious ideas and participating in religious worship, can have no justification, and is an egregious violation of fundamental human freedoms, dignity and rights.

“These crude and brutal measures are unworthy of any nation, let alone one that prides itself on having inherited the enlightened traditions of a great civilisation.”

“We urge the government of China not to sully its global reputation by setting itself up as an enemy of religion. We ask it to re-think its policies and practices, and to act with the deliberation and self-restraint that befits China’s status as a great power.”