WE SUPPORT #UNITYOVERFEAR

DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

We are deeply concerned that the recent rise in anti-Chinese sentiment is driving a marked escalation in racial abuse towards Australians of Asian background. This poses a serious threat to our social cohesion.

We have been shocked by footage of the vilification of individuals that has circulated globally across social media with many of the victims targeted because of their Asian appearance. These instances are not isolated and alarmingly are sometimes accompanied by violence. In February 2020, the Australian Human Rights Commission reported that one in four people who lodged racial discrimination complaints in the past two months said they were targeted due to association with COVID-19 measures.

This disturbing trend is unacceptable and cannot continue unchallenged. We ask for fairness in our national debate, our media reporting and in our communities.

As we confront the COVID-19 pandemic, national unity is critical to our resilience and recovery. It is essential that the distrust, disenfranchisement and vilification of Australians of any racial background is not tolerated under any circumstances.

We support the online petition and campaign #UnityOverFear (http://www.change.org/unityoverfear) and urge Australians to sign and share it in order to demonstrate our unity and resolve in combating racism.

This is a time for all Australians to come together.

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