

# FECCA calls for mature and considered response from leaders

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) today condemned sensational reporting and commentary around so-called 'African gang crime' in Victoria.

The Chairperson of FECCA, Mary Patetsos, said that media and politicians had a responsibility to deal with all community issues, including youth violence in Victoria, in a responsible manner.

"Our elected leaders, media and civil society should make responsible and accurate statements, avoiding any temptation to sensationalise in ways that fuel racist dialogue around issues such as immigration, population and multiculturalism," Ms Patetsos said.

"FECCA acknowledge challenges which all nations face; especially amongst disengaged youth.

"We should never shirk responsibility where there is a problem – we must deal with it. We must also be responsible and not seek to gain political mileage by layering it further with racist innuendo.

"FECCA supports programs that enable Australians of Sudanese background to settle successfully, noting the efforts of African community representatives who are working closely with Victoria Police.

"We must allow our law enforcement agencies and community leaders to work as they have long done best, and that is without political context to their work.

"Generations of migrants have delivered economic and social benefits, nation-building and diversity to Australia. Their rights to equality and non-discriminatory treatment have been respected by our leaders, regardless of politics," Ms Patetsos said.

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Our role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of our constituency to government, business and the broader community.

FECCA has a New and Emerging Communities Committee which advises FECCA on issues and policies affecting Australia's new and emerging communities. This committee includes representatives from Australia's African communities.

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