



Daniel Nikoloski
National Ethno-Cultural Officer
National Union of Students

Suite 64 Trades Hall
54 Victoria Street
Carlton South, Victoria 3053

M:0400 625 489
E: Ethno-cultural@unistudent.com.au

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Dear Attorney-General,

I write to you as the National Ethno-Cultural Officer of the National Union of Students on behalf of university students from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds.

The National Union of Students is the peak representative body for university students in Australia. It exists as a lobbying body to Government, universities and other relevant organisations in the education sector; and runs nation-wide campaigns to raise awareness on student issues.

As the Ethno-Cultural Officer, it is my role to represent university students from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds in regards to their education and welfare.

Though there are many pressing issues that the Ethno-Cultural Department of the National Union of Students is dealing with in 2014, I believe that there is none more important than the proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act.

The National Union of Students believes that it is a fundamental right of university students to be able to undertake their study free from discrimination or vilification. It is for this reason that the comments that you made in the Senate that "people have the right to be bigots" were very shocking and disturbing.

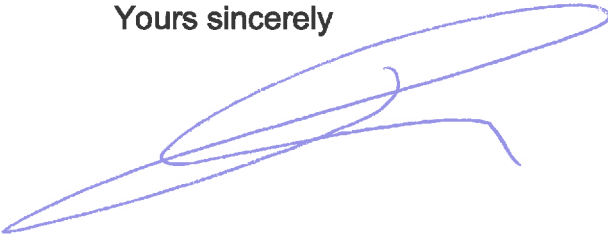
The National Union of Students believes that no one has the right to be a bigot.

It is important to note that racial discrimination and vilification have very dramatic psychological effects on the lives of students in all universities around Australia which can lead to the detriment of their health and mental health, study and personal life.

Further to this, the National Union of Students believes that it is imperative that the Australian Government safeguards the right of students to not be discriminated against or vilified because of their ethnicity or culture through legislation and that the Racial Discrimination Act, in its current form, is performing this role properly.

The National Union of Students therefore believes that the Racial Discrimination Act should not be amended and that it should be a priority of the Government to strengthen these laws, not water them down.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Daniel Nikoloski
National Ethno-Cultural Officer
National Union of Students