



5 February 2026

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FAILS ON HERZOG VISIT

Independent Member for Clark, Andrew Wilkie, Independent Member for Mackellar, Dr Sophie Scamps and Independent Member for Warringah, Zali Steggall, will discuss the inappropriateness of Israel's president Isaac Herzog's visit to Australia, and the risk it poses to social cohesion.

WHEN: 11:30am TODAY (Thursday) 5 February 2026

WHERE: Mural Hall, Parliament House CANBERRA

Quotes supplied by Andrew Wilkie, Independent Member for Clark

"It is unacceptable that Australia should host the head of state for a country which the International Court of Justice has found is committing the crime of apartheid, and which the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory found was committing genocide," Mr Wilkie said.

"In January, the Government hastily legislated to stamp down on hate speech in Australia, and here we are in February inviting someone to Australia who has made public statements which have been cited as evidence of genocidal intent.

"Moreover this visit is divisive and in no way conducive to social cohesion. Indeed, it is clearly inflaming the situation. It is highly inappropriate to have invited President Isaac Herzog, inappropriate to provide him with a visa and inappropriate to host him at Parliament house. It shows disrespect for international law."

Quotes supplied by Dr Sophie Scamps, Independent Member for Mackellar

"Inviting a foreign head of state who was found to have incited the commission of genocide is deeply distressing for many Australians, and risks igniting further division at the very time when Australian leaders should be doing everything they can to rebuild social cohesion and bring our nation together," Dr Scamps said.

"It's entirely inconsistent that at the same time the Government was rushing through laws to crack down on hate speech, they were also extending an invitation to an Israeli official found by the UN Commission of Inquiry to have made statements that 'contain dehumanizing sentiments that encourage hatred toward Palestinians and violence against Palestinians'.

“Many Australians are utterly bewildered by this invitation, and it’s left them rightly questioning this country’s commitment to rules-based world order, human rights and international law.”

Quotes supplied by Zali Steggall, Independent Member for Warringah

“I stand in deep solidarity with Jewish Australians and our broader community in the wake of the Bondi attack. However, I am deeply troubled by the proposed visit by President Herzog,” Ms Steggall said.

“Australia is a multi-faith, multicultural society and our social cohesion has been considerably tested in recent years. Official visits by foreign leaders can cause significant damage to our fragile social harmony.

“I appreciate that many in the Jewish community support President Herzog's visit to Australia in the wake of the shocking Bondi terror attacks. However, in the broader interests of community cohesion, President Herzog's presence is likely to be deeply divisive and will cause further harm to national unity.

“If President Herzog’s visit is to proceed, it would be an opportunity to outline his commitment to a path for peace, and a situation in which both Israelis and Palestinians can co-exist and live safely.”

Andrew Wilkie MP Media Contact: 0427 291 785

Dr Sophie Scamps MP Media Contact: 0413 349 764

Zali Steggall MP Media Contact: 0407 790 892

Authorised by Andrew Wilkie MP 188 Collins St Hobart