



FEDERATION OF PONTIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF AUSTRALIA
ΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΝΤΙΑΚΩΝ ΣΩΜΑΤΕΙΩΝ ΑΥΣΤΡΑΛΙΑΣ
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Media release

The Federation of Pontian Associations of Australia condemns the vilification of its members and of all Hellenes on display in today's demonstrations by the Slavomacedonian community in Sydney, Melbourne and other Australian cities.

Exhibiting banners proclaiming "Greeks and Pontians out of Macedonia", "Pontian refugees are not Macedonians" and more, demonstrators used Australian streets to promote extreme messages of hate. Burning and defacing the Hellenic national flag is a calculated insult, designed to provoke a response.



Photo 1: Sydney



Photo 2: Melbourne

As the descendants of survivors of genocide and persecution, the Federation and its members decry the use of the freedoms all Australians enjoy to assault a particular group of people because of whom they are.

Pontians are originally from the southern and eastern shores of the Black Sea, descendants of the Hellenes who colonised those areas over 25 centuries ago. Between 1914 and 1924, our ancestors were subjected to genocidal persecution by the Turkish state. The survivors found refuge in Greece, Australia and elsewhere, re-establishing lives and communities.

Many of our members were born and raised in Macedonia, while many others are their Australian-born children. We are as much Macedonian as we are Australian.

Since the 1950s, large numbers of Pontian Hellenes have made Australia home many from the towns and villages of Macedonia where their parents and grandparents had made new homes. Prominent Australians of Pontian background include athletes Stan 'The Man' Longinidis, Michael and Stathi Katsidis.