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Prioritizing Inclusivity: Remove Sama Abdulhadi from WOMADelaide Line-Up

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Dear Minister, Shadow Minister, Lord Mayor, Councillors and Womadelaide Management,

As dedicated supporters of WOMADelaide and proud Australians, we respectfully yet firmly urge the removal of Sama Abdulhadi from the 2026 festival line-up. This request is based on her documented history of hateful rhetoric directed towards Israel, Jews, Zionists, and their supporters.

Abdulhadi's comments extend far beyond legitimate critique of Israeli government policies. They aim to undermine the very existence of the State of Israel and glorify its violent destruction. This is not mere political discourse; it is incitement against a people and a nation, with direct repercussions for Jewish communities both in Australia and globally.

Israel is a vibrant democracy where the rights of all citizens—Jews and Arabs, men and women, religious and secular, straight and LGBTIQ—are safeguarded by law and actively debated in public forums.

This stands in stark contrast to Hamas, the misogynistic and violently homophobic Islamist terror organization that Abdulhadi openly endorses. Hamas's charter calls for the annihilation of the Jewish state, and its actions—including systematic attacks on civilians—are fundamentally opposed to the values WOMADelaide claims to uphold.

Abdulhadi has even referred to the October 7 massacre of Israeli and foreign civilians—including women, children, and the elderly—as a 'battle,' thereby sanitizing a mass atrocity filled with torture, rape, abduction, and the deliberate targeting of concert-goers and families in their homes.

Her presence at WOMADelaide is particularly troubling in light of the Bondi Beach Terrorist attack, where 15 Australians—predominantly Jewish—were murdered by a jihadist whose ideology aligns closely with the narratives Abdulhadi promotes.

We acknowledge that the Adelaide Writers' Week has already taken responsible action by rescinding the invitation to Abdel Fattah, who similarly expresses hateful, eliminationist rhetoric towards Israel, Jews, and Zionists. This decision recognized an essential truth: freedom of expression does not obligate cultural institutions to endorse or amplify voices that cross the line into bigotry, incitement, and the celebration of terror.

WOMADelaide's stated goals include fostering cultural understanding, inclusivity, and respectful engagement between communities. Abdulhadi's history is fundamentally at odds with these objectives. Her inclusion in the program does not promote dialogue; it legitimizes a discourse that vilifies a small, vulnerable minority and its homeland, especially at a time when that minority faces unprecedented pressure. Thus, her participation would tarnish WOMADelaide's reputation as a unifying, ethical, and genuinely inclusive festival.

Therefore, we argue that, both morally and ethically, her invitation must be retracted. This is not a call for censorship of unpopular opinions; it is a plea for responsible curation. In light of a Royal Commission and heightened public concern regarding extremism and hate-fueled violence, it would be wise and principled for WOMADelaide to act in the interests of the entire community, including Australian Jews, who deserve to feel safe, respected, and welcomed at major cultural events.

We eagerly await your thoughtful response and look forward to supporting a WOMADelaide that genuinely embodies its professed values.

Sincerely,