

### Press Release

## Statements by Politicians Are Driving the Rise of Online Discrimination

On Wednesday, 11 February 2026, several media outlets published the conclusions of the State Commission against Discrimination and Racism. These findings indicate that online discrimination and racism are demonstrably influenced by negative and stigmatizing statements made by politicians. The commission based its conclusions on research conducted by the University of Amsterdam, in which tens of thousands of statements made in the Dutch House of Representatives and their impact on online responses between 2014 and 2024 were analyzed.

The research shows that polarizing rhetoric from parliament directly shapes online debate. The framing and terminology used in the political arena are adopted on social media and in public discussions. Discriminatory expressions directed at Muslims and other ethnic groups in particular have increased over the past ten years. News media also appear to play an amplifying role by reproducing and legitimizing these frames.

What becomes visible here is not an isolated incident, but a structural pattern. Hizb ut Tahrir has for years pointed to the role of the political establishment and the media in problematizing Islam and the Muslim community. This research confirms with data what Muslims have experienced for some time: hostility does not arise spontaneously, but is ideologically cultivated.

Although statements by the PVV and like-minded parties explicitly contribute to anti-Islam rhetoric, the problem is not limited to these parties. The broader political discourse within the secular framework structurally places Muslims in a defensive position. Muslims are consistently framed as an integration issue, a security risk, or a cultural deviation. In doing so, Muslims are reduced to a pariah identity that is tolerated only insofar as they adapt to the dominant liberal normative framework.

Politicians frame social tensions as the result of “failed integration,” while their own rhetoric fuels these tensions. Responsibility is placed on the Muslim community, yet the underlying cause lies within the secular system itself.

These tensions did not arise from adherence to Islamic norms and values, but from a societal model that pursues a homogeneous order in which the secular norm forms the dominant framework for thought and action. The structural problem therefore does not lie with the Muslim community, but with the failure of a system that demonstrates a fundamental inability to accommodate a principled alternative worldview.

### Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in The Netherlands