

Palm Sunday Justice and Freedom for Refugees 2022



SUGGESTION FOR LOCAL ACTIONS: Lives in Limbo installation

Here is an idea for your local Palm Sunday action. The idea is inspired by the Lives on the Lawn project lead by Uniting Church Social Justice Unit in Perth – their installation will have a very large number of small cut-outs representing the actual number of refugees and people seeking asylum in WA – colour coded to show numbers in detention, and those on TPVs, BVEs etc. In total there will be 1635 cut-outs, so it will have a big visual effect on Palm Sunday outside St George's Cathedral.

Smaller scale installation idea for local actions

Having some kind of colourful installation is eye-catching for those passing by and could provide a photo opportunity for your local media.

What you decide to do is really your choice, but this is a suggestion.

This installation should be supported by a banner or large sign: **Lives in Limbo** We suggest you also use the Palm Sunday 'flag' as a sign or banner – see above. You can download from the ARAN webpage: <https://aran.net.au/actions/palm-sunday-2022/#planlocalevent>

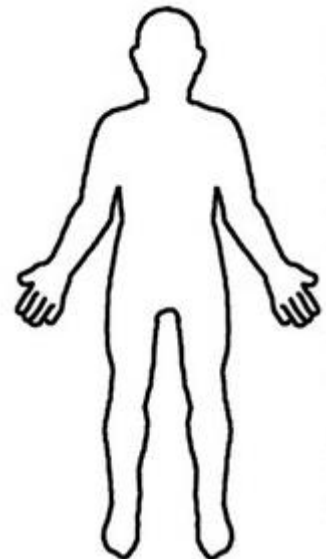
We suggest that you make 4 cut-outs near to life size cut-outs using heavy weight cardboard or corflute. (Fridge boxes would be ideal, or large boxes (packed flat) can be purchased from Officeworks).

Of course, this template is just a guide- you can modify - and probably improve on - this! Ideally not too small, as we are wanting to convey the idea these are adults primarily, not children.

Make up to be either attached to a stake in the ground, or if this is not an option where you are having your action, they could be made to be freestanding with a couple of props attached at the back, and sandbags to stabilise.

Ideally the cut-outs will be painted in vibrant colours – with information either had written or printed and pasted on – each cut-out representing one of the following groups:

- Refugees and people seeking asylum still in detention (*not including those on 501 Visas, who have had their visa cancelled, often for very minor offences.*)
- People seeking asylum still on Bridging Visas
- Refugees who are on SHEVs and TPVs
- Refugees and people seeking asylum stranded in PNG and on Nauru without safe resettlement options



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Detention figures are derived from the most recent Home Affairs report (September 2021):
<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/immigration-detention-statistics-30-september-2021.pdf>

BVE figures – June 2021 <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/illegal-maritime-arrivals-bve-30-jun-2021.pdf>

TVP/SHEV figures: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/ima-legacy-caseload-january-2022.pdf>

Also re 64,000 visa overstayers (tourist, student, and working visas) in 2017
<https://www.smh.com.au/public-service/more-than-64000-people-overstaying-visas-in-australia-20170718-gxddpj.html>

See suggested text for each cut-out is below. Make sure the text on the cut-outs can be easily read, with key messages in larger print so people viewing from a distance can read. Many women and children (as well as men) are on BVEs. So you might want to consider this when making your cut-outs.

280 refugees and people seeking asylum are unnecessarily in detention

I represent about 280 refugees and people seeking asylum who are still held in immigration detention here in Australia – some of us have been deprived of our liberty for nearly 10 years. Your government could grant all of us a Bridging Visas while they decide whether to give us refugee status. About 30 of us are still in the Park Hotel in Melbourne, but the rest of us are in immigration detention centres across Australia, separated from friends and loved ones for no good reason.

Did you know that in 2017 it was estimated that around 64,000 people were living in Australia with no visa because they overstayed their tourist or student visas – some in Australia for up to 20 years.

Please call your local MP and the Ministers for Immigration and Home Affairs and tell them you want to ALL refugees and people seeking asylum released from detention immediately

Nearly 12,000 people seeking asylum are living on Bridging Visas

I represent the 12,000 people living on short term Bridging Visas (BVEs). On these visas we need to reapply and have no certainty that we will be granted another visa. Most people on BVEs have no access to welfare, and some people do not have the right to work or study. This means many of us are at risk of destitution, and rely entirely on charity – it's humiliating, and we fear for our future.

Most of us have lived for over 9 years in constant uncertainty – usually because the government has not completed our refugee assessments. Some of us are on BVEs because they are in an appeal process to have their claim for refugee status considered more carefully.

Some of us actually have refugee status – we include families brought from Nauru years ago (remember the Kids Off Nauru campaign) and others brought from PNG and Nauru for medical treatment. The Australia government refuses to recognise this because we arrived by boat back way back in 2013.

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Please call your local MP and the Ministers for Immigration and Home Affairs that people need to be treated with dignity while their claims for refugee status are assessed.

19,000 refugees who should have Permanent Visas are still on temporary visas - SHEVs and TPVs

I represent thousands of refugees have been living and working in the Australian community for more than 8 years – by now we should all be Australian citizens. Instead, we are still living on Temporary Protection Visas (3 years) or 5-year Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEVs) with no possibility of settling permanently in Australia. We are not allowed to apply for family reunion. We remain permanently separated from loved ones, who are often in places of danger.

Please call your local MP and the Minister for Immigration tell them you want to all recognised refugees to be granted permanent visas immediately

Around 100 refugees and people seeking asylum stranded in PNG and on Nauru without safe resettlement options

I represent around 100 refugees and people seeking asylum who are still stranded in PNG and Nauru. The Australian Government has kept us in terrible conditions for years in detention here, and though we are no longer in detention, we still have no prospect of future security. Some of us have applied to go to the US and Canada, but many of us do not have any safe resettlement options. Until very recently the Australian Government has stubbornly refused to accept the offer made by the New Zealand Government in 2013 to provide safe settlement for 150 refugees each year. We would have been New Zealand citizens long ago had that offer been taken up.

Please call your local MP and the Ministers for Immigration and Home Affairs and tell them you want to see the New Zealand resettlement offer accepted immediately to provide safe resettlement for those still in PNG and on Nauru.

If you have queries: contact Marie on info@refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au or phone 0409 252 673