

**Palm Sunday 2023**

# Justice for Refugees



**Permanent Protection  
for ALL Refugees**

**#justice4refugees #PermanentVisas**

# Justice for Refugees means:

- > **Permanent visas and family reunion for all refugees**
- > **Fair and timely assessment of all claims for refugee status**
- > **Health care, work rights, income support, and access to education for all those seeking asylum**
- > **Releasing ALL refugees from detention**
- > **Offering resettlement here for refugees still in PNG and on Nauru, and those in trapped in Indonesia**
- > **Ending offshore processing and detention**
- > **Increasing the humanitarian intake of refugees**

The change of government at the federal election in 2022 has brought hope for more compassionate policies. However, thousands of refugees and people seeking asylum are still in limbo waiting for certainty about their future. It is important to make sure that Labor keeps their policy commitments, and works towards undoing the policies which harm people and deny their basic human rights.

## **ALL refugees need permanent visas and access to family reunion**

We welcome the news, that 19,000 refugees who have been in limbo for 10 years on temporary TPVs and SHEV visas will now be able to apply for permanent visas, and will also be able to apply for family reunion. Refugees have been separated from loved ones for many years, and family reunification is an essential element of the resettlement process.

## **People seeking recognition as refugees need fair and timely assessment process**

Around 12,000 people have had their refugee claims processed under the flawed so-called 'Fast Track System'. After 10 years most of these people are still waiting for their claims for refugee status to be determined, and many have been unfairly refused. There is no doubt that many of these people are owed protection as refugees, and they need natural justice and a rapid pathway to permanency. The announcement by the government on 13 February has no effect for these people.

## **People who are seeking recognition as refugees need work rights and support in the community**

People on bridging visas have no income safety net. Because of their short term visas they find it difficult to find permanent work. Some have no work rights at all. Some people do not have access to Medicare. Many people on bridging visas are struggling in poverty while living in substandard and insecure housing.

People who do not have permanent visas are unable to undertake tertiary study unless they pay full fees. Young children cannot access early childhood education and people with disabilities are being denied NDIS support.

Adults who want to build their work skills are not eligible to undertake further training.

All people who are seeking asylum need support and opportunities to live with dignity, and not be at risk of destitution while they wait for their refugee claims to be assessed.

## **No refugee or person seeking asylum should be held in detention**

The Albanese Government has released a number of people from long term detention. However, there are still people seeking protection who remain in immigration detention, some of whom face involuntary deportation.

## **Refugees and people seeking asylum still in limbo on PNG, Nauru and Indonesia**

At least 150 people are still held in shocking conditions on Nauru and in PNG. They need immediate pathways to safe resettlement here in Australia. There are around 1,000 refugees previously held offshore, including the families brought here from Nauru in 2015 who need the option of safe resettlement here. Around 14,000 refugees and people seeking asylum from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka have been stranded in Indonesia since 2014 because the Australian Government has refused to offer resettlement. These people cannot be resettled in Indonesia and cannot return to their home countries - they need the option of resettlement in Australia.

## **The Australian government needs to significantly increase the quota for resettling refugees**

In recent years the quota of 13,750 has not been filled. The Albanese government has committed to increase the number of refugees to be resettled, but so far there has been no increase. Thousands of refugees are desperately waiting for Australia to lift its humanitarian intake to at least 30,000 per year. Importantly, all of the places in the refugee quota need to be allocated each year.

## **Palm Sunday is the day to come together for Justice for Refugees.**

