

AUSTRALIA'S COMMUNITY SECTOR WELCOMES OFFER OF SANCTUARY



Thu 4 February 2016

Australian international aid and community sector agencies today united behind churches across the country who are opening their doors to asylum seekers facing removal back to offshore detention centres.

The groups including; ACOSS, the Australian Council for International Development, World Vision, St Vincent de Paul Society, Anglicare Australia, Oxfam, Save the Children, Care Australia, Catholic Social Services Australia, and Mission Australia urge the Australian government to allow the families and their children to stay in Australia.

“The High Court of Australia may have ruled against the challenge to the legality of our offshore detention centres, but what’s at stake here is the safety and wellbeing of traumatised and vulnerable people, including 37 babies. This goes beyond technical legalities, it’s about our humanity, our morals and values, our human rights obligations and what’s the right humanitarian thing to do,” said ACFID Chief Executive Officer, Mr Marc Purcell.

“We are a wealthy nation made up of people who have been welcomed from all around the world. It is certainly within our capacity and our moral duty to provide these people sanctuary. At the end of the day we’re only talking about 270 people. We remain opposed to offshore processing, and urge the Federal Government to immediately move to process the outstanding applications of asylum seekers and provide safe haven here in Australia. Our services are offered to provide assistance to the families and their children to enable them stay in Australia, out of harm’s way” said ACOSS CEO Cassandra Goldie.

“Australia’s community sector and broader civil society is ready and able to welcome and ensure the proper care and protection of this small group of people and children. We urge the Federal Government to do the right thing and listen to the growing concern in the community over this issue.” Dr Goldie said.