



National Council of Churches in Australia

MEDIA RELEASE
17 October 2018

MULTI-FAITH DELEGATION TO MEET WITH MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION ABOUT MANUS AND NAURU CRISES

Senior leaders from Christian, Muslim and Jewish groups in Australia are meeting with Minister for Immigration and Citizenship (Hon David Coleman MP) and Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection (Hon Shayne Neumann MP) at Parliament House on Thursday morning 18 October 2018.

The faith leaders are seeking to work with the Government on a bipartisan plan to resettle all refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru without further delay.

The delegation will focus on matters of particular concern to faith communities regarding the refugees and asylum seekers detained in Manus and Nauru - relating to the treatment of people, respect for their dignity, the length of time they have been held, the need for speedy resettlement and protection, the harm that has been caused, and how to prevent further harm from now until resettlement.

The leaders will advocate for bi-partisan support for a first stage of a plan to restore hope and dignity to those on Manus and Nauru, to bring children and their families from Nauru to Australia.

“We need to bring them here and either offer resettlement in Australia or find another suitable country that welcomes them” says Bishop Philip Huggins, Anglican Bishop of Melbourne and President of National Council of Churches in Australia.

The leaders will also voice their support for the implementation of new guidelines for a Community Support Program (CSP) that will enable members of the Australian community to sponsor visas for refugees from around the world who wish to begin the process of rebuilding their lives in Australia.

In Australia faith communities have a long history in supporting the settlement of refugees. The CSP, based on the successful Canadian model, would be an opportunity for faith communities to renew this work and to include the most vulnerable refugees.

Members of the delegation are:

- **Bishop Philip Huggins**, Anglican Bishop of Melbourne and President of National Council of Churches in Australia
- **Rabbi Shamir Caplan**, Beit Aharon Synagogue (Melbourne)
- **Imam Alaa Elzokm**, Elsedeaq Mosque in Heidelberg (Melbourne)
- **Loreto Sister Libby Rogerson**, for Catholic Religious Australia
- **Elizabeth Stone**, Interim General Secretary, National Council of Churches in Australia
- **Harold Zwier**

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Anglican Church

Antiochian
Orthodox Church

Armenian
Apostolic Church

Assyrian Church
of the East

Chinese Methodist
Church

Churches of Christ

Congregational
Federation

Coptic
Orthodox Church

Greek
Orthodox Church

Indian
Orthodox Church

Lutheran Church

Mar Thoma Church

Religious Society
of Friends (Quakers)

Roman Catholic Church

Romanian
Orthodox Church

Syrian
Orthodox Church

The Salvation Army

Uniting Church

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