



Refugee Communities Association of Australia Inc. *For Refugees | With Refugees | By Refugees*

2 September 2026

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Re: Protecting fairness, dignity and Australia's refugee and humanitarian legacy

Dear Hon Prime Minister

We write as refugee-led, multicultural, multifaith and grassroots community organisations whose members understand displacement, uncertainty and the challenges of rebuilding a life in Australia. We are deeply concerned by reports that your Government is considering unprecedented changes that could remove work rights, restrict family reunion and reduce access to fair review processes for people seeking asylum, stateless people and other temporary visa holders seeking humanitarian protection in Australia. These decisions directly affect whether people can support their families and live with dignity while awaiting the outcome of their applications.

Many of our member organisations are new, small and volunteer-led. We support and work with recent arrivals, separated families and people who have lived in Australia for years on temporary visas. Denying them the right to work would lead to poverty, homelessness and exploitation, while placing further pressure on community organisations and charities that are already stretched.

Prime Minister, your own life story gives you a personal understanding of disadvantage and hardship. We urge you to draw on that experience and provide the strong and compassionate leadership Australia needs at this time. Australia's migration policy must be guided by fairness, evidence and our national interest, not by the rise of One Nation and pressure from other conservative groups. Refugees, people seeking asylum and stateless people should never become targets of political fear and division. They have come to Australia seeking safety after escaping war, conflict and disaster in their home countries.

The proposed direction is especially difficult to understand as Australia marks a historic national achievement. In November 2025, Australia granted its one-millionth refugee visa since the post-war humanitarian program began in 1947. That milestone represents one million people who were given safety and the opportunity to rebuild their lives, raise their families and contribute to this nation.

Introducing sweeping restrictions while Australia celebrates this milestone would contradict the spirit of that achievement. It could also weaken Australia's reputation as a compassionate nation, one of the world's most successful multicultural countries and a global leader in refugee resettlement.

We recognise that Australia's protection system faces serious delays. However, the solution is to improve the quality and speed of decision-making, not to punish people while they wait. Fair review processes must also be protected, as mistakes can place people's lives at risk.

We respectfully ask your Government to:

1. Convene a community roundtable as a matter of urgency with refugee-led and lived-experience organisations before making any changes, as our communities are increasingly anxious and

concerned about the current public discourse surrounding refugees and Australia's humanitarian program.

2. Uphold its commitment to protecting the annual refugee and humanitarian intake of 20,000 places and to ensure the full program is delivered on schedule.
3. Guarantee the right to work for people seeking asylum and stateless people so they can support themselves and their families and contribute to the community.
4. Protect access to independent merits review, legal assistance and properly resourced decision-making so claims can be resolved fairly and without unnecessary delay.
5. Preserve fair and compassionate family reunion pathways, particularly for families facing danger and prolonged separation.

Our communities are ready to work constructively with your Government. Their lived experience can help develop policies that are fair, practical and responsive while strengthening community confidence and social cohesion.

Prime Minister, we ask you to uphold fairness, protect dignity and ensure that people seeking safety do not carry the cost of political pressure. Please choose a path that reflects Labor's values and Australia's proud humanitarian legacy.

With utmost respect and hope.

Yours Sincerely,

Representatives and members of refugee-led, multicultural, multifaith and grassroots community organisations:

1. Parsu Sharma Luitl JP, Chairperson, Refugee Communities Association of Australia
2. Abdulla Arifi, President, Victorian Afghan Youth Association
3. Altaf Hussein, President, Hazara Noorband Association
4. Andrew Gai, Co-Founder, South Sudanese Academic Society of Victoria
5. Assumani Kipala, President, Cairns Congolese Association.
6. Ava Ebrahimi, Public Officer, Launceston Hazara Association
7. Cr John Haddad, President, Beth Narain Assyrian Association
8. Dr Berhan Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer, Africause
9. Dr Mohamed Mohideen OAM JP, President, Islamic Council of Victoria
10. Elijah Buol OAM, Former Refugee and Chair, Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
11. Farah Warsame, President, Somali Community Inc. Victoria
12. Geeta Gurung, Chairperson, Mountain Mothers Foundation
13. Hanisha Sharma-Luitl, Chairperson, Help Himalayan Youth Foundation (HHYF)
14. Jacob Thang, Founder & Chairperson, Chin-Myanmar Community Care
15. Kamal Dahal, President, Adelaide Dragon Sporting Club
16. Khaing Moe Oo, President, Arakanese Association of Australia, Cairns
17. Mabor Chadhuol, Founder, Director, and Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Migrant and Refugee Health
18. Mae Sie Win, Treasurer, The Karenni Federation of Australia
19. Mariella Teuira, ITIKI Sporting Club of Glenroy
20. Meelan Rana, Chairperson, Himalayan Organisation for Multicultural Communities
21. Michael Foldi, Director, Auschin Foundation
22. Padam Magar, President, Bhutanese Magar Samaj of Cairns
23. Philip Lahpai, President, Kachin Association Victoria
24. Robert Lingtun, General Secretary, Burmese Welfare Association of Australia

25. Subash Chetri, President, GOPIO Cairns (Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin)
26. Tejman Monger, President, Cairns Bhutanese Community
27. Thaw Zin Htun, President, Victoria Arakanese Association (VAA)
28. Tun Maung, President, Mahamuni Buddhist Society of Cairns
29. Venerable Moonieinda Ashin, Director & Chairperson, Karen Culture and Social Support Foundation, Bendigo
30. Yasseen Musa, Chairperson, Eritrean Jeberti Community in Australia
31. Yusuf Liban, Director, Multicultural Youth Group