



Over 300 organisations, businesses, and community groups call on all Parliamentarians to respond to the crisis in Afghanistan

18 August 2021

Dear Parliamentarian,

Re: Seven urgent and practical steps Australia can take to provide safety and leadership on the situation in Afghanistan

Australians are watching with alarm as the Taliban takes control of Afghanistan. The events are particularly distressing to members of Australia's Afghan diaspora who are hearing directly from family members and friends about the terrible violence within the country. There are already many reports of executions and forced marriages of young women and girls.

Years of work to support the education, safety and autonomy of Afghanistan's women, including programs generously supported by Australian aid, is being destroyed and many people are in fear for their lives. They include people who have worked with Australian and other western governments and organisations as translators, security and support staff, NGO workers and journalists. Members of religious minorities are also at grave risk, including the many Shia members of the Hazara community.

We, the undersigned organisations, businesses, and community groups, appreciate the Government's existing effort in working to provide visas to locally engaged staff, and ask that you urgently intensify these efforts to help these people evacuate Afghanistan. We believe that Australia can help to provide international leadership through its own response and by encouraging other governments to act. Civil society groups in the Asia-Pacific region, refugee-led organisations such as the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees and members of Australia's Afghan diaspora have shown wide consensus on seven important and urgent actions the Australian Government can take:

1. Do everything possible in coming days to **evacuate people who are at grave risk** within Afghanistan, including those who have worked for or assisted the Australian Government and Australian organisations (including the embassy, armed forces, NGOs and media), human rights defenders and women and girls whose lives and security are under great threat.
2. **Urge governments in the region to keep borders open** for people trying to flee persecution in Afghanistan, including and particularly Pakistan and Iran.
3. Offer **additional refugee resettlement places** for Afghan refugees immediately, as the Australian Government did in 2015 with 12,000 additional places for Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Canada has already announced its commitment of 20,000 additional places for Afghan refugees. Australia could match this offer and urge other resettlement states to do the same, sending a strong and positive message to states receiving Afghan refugees that the world is ready to share responsibility in the protection of lives at risk.
4. As many people are now at risk from hunger and lack of shelter due to their forced displacement, immediately **increase Australian aid to the region** to support programs to assist people who have been displaced across borders and, wherever possible, support organisations still offering assistance within Afghanistan.
5. We welcome the extension of temporary visas of all Afghan citizens in Australia announced by Immigration Minister Alex Hawke on 17 August. A vital next step of this is to ensure that people whose asylum claims have been previously rejected be **supported to submit new claims in the light of the changed circumstances in Afghanistan**.
6. **Extend permanent protection to 4300 Afghans on temporary protection visas**, recognising that members of this group are unlikely to be able to return in safety for many years to come and need the assurance that they can continue to live in Australia without the constant fear of forced return.
7. Assist Afghan Australians, including people with temporary and permanent protection visas, with **urgent family reunion applications** for relatives who are at particular risk, as members of minorities targeted by the Taliban or people likely to be targeted because of their connections to western nations. This should include giving priority to finalising family reunion applications which have previously been lodged but are waiting on a decision from the Department of Home Affairs.

We urge you to address these critical priorities.

Signed by:

1. Refugee Council of Australia
2. Accessible Diversity Services Initiative Limited (ADSI)
3. Accord Tiling Pty Ltd
4. Act for Peace
5. ACT Hazara Community Inc
6. Afghan Australian Development Organisation
7. Afghan Australian Initiative Inc
8. Afghan Sufra Pty Ltd
9. Afghan Traditional
10. African Australian Hunting and Drumming Group
11. Alliance of Philippine Community Organisations Inc.(APCO)
12. ALMAS Medical Group
13. Amnesty International Australia
14. AMPARO Advocacy In
15. Amz Paint and Design Pty Ltd
16. ANCORW (Australia Committee On Refugee Women)
17. Anglican Board of Mission – Australia Limited
18. APNOR (Asia Pacific Network of Refugees)
19. Architects for Peace
20. Armidale Rural Australians for Refugees
21. Armidale Sanctuary Humanitarian Settlement, Inc.
22. Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors
23. Association of Women Educators
24. Assyrian Australian Association – Assyrian Resource Centre
25. Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)
26. Asylum Seekers Centre
27. Au Bro Construction Pty Ltd
28. Auburn Small Community Organisation Network (ASCON) Inc,
29. Ausco Electrical Group
30. Australasian Society of HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine
31. Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace
32. Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce
33. Australian Council for International Development
34. Australian Council for Tamil Refugees
35. Australian Council of Social Service
36. Australian Education Union (AEU)
37. Australian Gender Equality Council

38. Australian Global Health Alliance
39. Australian Lawyers for Human Rights
40. Australian Lutheran World Service
41. Australian Network of Museums for Peace
42. Australian Refugee Association
43. Australian Services Union
44. Australian Women Lawyers Ltd
45. Australian Women's Health Network
46. AVI
47. A1 Contracting Group Pty Ltd
48. A1 Spare Parts Pty Ltd
49. Baba Mazari Foundation Inc
50. Baptist World Aid Australia
51. Bbr Bricklaying Pty Ltd
52. Bendigo Amnesty Group
53. Bennelong Friends of Refugees
54. Beyond the Orphanage Foundation
55. Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group
56. Bosco Social Justice Group, Engadine
57. BPW Australia (Australian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs)
58. Bridge for Asylum Seekers Incorporated
59. Bridging Lanka Ltd
60. Brien Holden Foundation
61. Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP)
62. Brisbane On-Arrival Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group
63. Brisbane Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network (BRASS)
64. Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL)
65. Burnet Institute
66. Byron Friends of Palestine
67. Cabrini Outreach
68. Canberra Refugee Support
69. CARAD – Centre for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees
70. CareerSeekers New Australian Internship Program
71. Caritas Australia
72. Castlemaine RAR
73. Catholic Social Services Victoria
74. CatholicCare Toowoomba and SW Qld
75. Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University
76. Centre for Multicultural Youth
77. Circle Green Community Legal

78. Cisarua Learning
79. Communify Qld.
80. CommUnity Construction
81. Community Information and Support Victoria
82. Community Migrant Resource Centre
83. Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia
84. Community Resource Unit
85. Companion House
86. COTA NT
87. Creating Space Project
88. Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney
89. Diaspora Action Australia
90. Diplomacy Training Program
91. Door of Hope Australia Inc.
92. Eastwood Uniting Church
93. Edmund Rice Centre Western Australia
94. Eleven Collective
95. End Child Detention Coalition Australia
96. Essential Electric Solutions Pty Ltd
97. Fairtrade ANZ
98. FairTrade Films
99. Fasttransport Pty Ltd
100. Federal Loves Refugees
101. Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
102. Filipino Women Support Group MacArthur
103. Forcibly Displaced People Network
104. Free To Feed
105. Ghan Roofing
106. Global Learning Centre
107. Good Return
108. Good Samaritan Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network
109. Good Shepherd Parish Plumpton
110. Green Community
111. Green Connect
112. Hagar Australia
113. Hagar International Foundation
114. Hazara Women of Australia
115. Hazarajat Transport Pty Ltd
116. HealthServe Australia
117. Hojat Migration Agent
118. Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency

119. HOST International Ltd
120. House of Welcome
121. Human Rights Council of Australia
122. Human Rights Law Centre
123. Hunar Symposia
124. Ilyas Auto Dismantlers Pty Ltd
125. Imam Ali Ltd
126. Immigrant Women's Support Service
127. Immigration Advice and Rights Centre
128. Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)
129. Indigo Foundation
130. Institute for Human Security and Social Change, La Trobe University
131. Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea
132. International Commission of Jurists Australia
133. International Detention Coalition (IDC)
134. International Justice Mission Australia
135. International Volunteers for Peace
136. International Women's Development Agency
137. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia
138. John Green Tiling
139. Josephite Action Group (JAG)
140. Josephite Justice Network (JJN)
141. Josephite Mission and History Centre
142. Just Peace Queensland Inc
143. Justice and Peace Office, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney
144. Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law, UNSW Sydney
145. Kapit-bahayan Cooperative Ltd
146. Kateb Hazara Association
147. Kateb Hazara Organisation
148. Katib Hazara
149. Kyeema Foundation
150. Leeton Shire Council
151. Liberty Victoria
152. Life Without Barriers
153. Live and Learn Environmental Education
154. Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services
155. Loreto Sisters
156. Lutheran Church of Australia
157. M4 Car Removal
158. Mary Ward International Australia
159. Medical Association for Prevention of War

160. Melaleuca Australia
161. Mercy Community Romero Centre
162. Mercy Works Ltd
163. Metro Assist
164. Metro Express Car Removals
165. Micah Australia
166. Migrant and Refugee North Metropolitan Perth WA Conference
167. Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania
168. Migrant Women In Business
169. Migration Institute of Australia
170. Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Justice and Peace Centre
171. Motivation Australia
172. MRZ Wreckers Pty Ltd
173. Multicultural Assistance Task Force (MATF)
174. Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga Inc
175. Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association
176. Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network
177. Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN NSW)
178. Murdoch Children's Research Institute
179. Nasle Baba Foundation (NBF)
180. National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA)
181. National Council of Jewish Women of Australia
182. National Justice Project
183. National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group
184. Nawai Bricklaying
185. Northern Settlement Services Ltd
186. NSW Car Removals
187. NSW Teachers Federation
188. NSWCCCL
189. NT Working Women's Centre
190. NTCOSS
191. Oaktree
192. Older Women's Network NSW
193. Omex Tiling Pty Ltd
194. One World Metal Recycling Pty Ltd
195. Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Social Justice Ministry
196. Overseas Services to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
197. Oxfam Australia
198. PaCSIA (Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia)
199. Palmera
200. Parkinson Dental

201. Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated
202. Pax Christi Australia
203. Pax Christi Queensland
204. People with Disability Australia
205. Plan International Australia
206. Pottsville Refugee Support Group
207. Presentation Sisters Queensland
208. Puffling
209. Qh Electrical
210. Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)
211. Rasool Hussaini Plaster Setting
212. Rbn plumbing
213. Redlands for Refugees
214. RedR Australia
215. Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS)
216. Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS)
217. Refugee Art Project
218. Refugee Health Network Qld
219. Refugee Health, Tasmanian Health Service
220. Refugee Legal
221. Refugee Nurses Australia
222. Rights In Action Inc.
223. Roseville Asylum Seeker and Refugee Support Group – Roseville Uniting Church
224. Rural Australians for Refugees
225. Safe Asylum, Launceston
226. Sahar Super Market NSW Pty Ltd
227. SBHOPTICAL
228. SCALES Community Legal Centre
229. Settlement Council of Australia
230. Settlement Services International
231. SIMNI Morton North
232. Sisters 4 Sustainability
233. Sisters of Mercy Brisbane
234. Sisters of Saint Joseph
235. Sisters of the Good Samaritan
236. SJ Around the Bay – network of Catholic Parish Social Justice Groups in Diocese of Broken Bay
237. Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI)
238. Soroptimist International of Australia

239. Southern Downs Refugee and Migrant Network (SDRAMN)
240. Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
241. Speaking Up For You
242. Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
243. St Columbas Parish North Leichhardt Social Justice Group
244. St Mary's In Exile
245. St Vincent de Paul Society National Council
246. St Vincent de Paul Society New South Wales
247. St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria
248. St Vincent de Society SA Refugee and Asylum Seeker Service
249. Stafford Catholic Parish
250. STARTTS
251. Support Association for the Women of Afghanistan (SAWA) – NSW
252. Support Association for the Women of Afghanistan SAWA-Australia
(SA) Inc
253. Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service
254. Sydney Metal Corp
255. Sydney Multicultural Community Services
256. Sydney Peace Foundation
257. Sydney Peace Foundation
258. Sydwide Scrap Car Removal Pty Ltd
259. Tasmanian Asylum Seeker Support Network
260. The Bread and Butter Project
261. The Centre for Women and Co.
262. The Good Samaritans
263. The LBW Trust
264. The Refugee Health Network of Australia
265. The Separation Planner
266. The Social Outfit
267. The Tasmania Opportunity
268. The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc.
269. This Life
270. Tolo Supermarket
271. Tommie magazine
272. Transparency International Australia
273. Transparency International Australia
274. Uki Refugee Project
275. Unconcern Construction Pty Ltd
276. UNICEF Australia
277. Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA
278. Union of Australian Women (Qld)

279. United Workers Union
280. Uniting Church Action for Society and Environment
281. Uniting Church in Australia Assembly
282. Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Queensland
283. UnitingWorld
284. Verve Super
285. Victorian Refugee Health Network
286. Violence Prevention Australia
287. Walli Asr Fresh Food and Butcher Shop
288. Walter Taylor Branch of the Queensland Labor Party
289. WaterAid Australia
290. Welcoming Australia
291. Western Region Ethnic Communities Council
292. Western Sydney University Persian Society
293. Whitlam Institute
294. Whittlesea Community Connections
295. WIRE
296. WIZO Australia
297. Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE)
298. Women's Electoral Lobby Australia
299. Women's Health Goulburn North East
300. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) –
Australia
301. Women's Network Australia
302. World Wellness Group Ltd
303. Wyndham Community and Education Centre
304. Your Dream Painting
305. Zafar Painting

Source: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/over-300-organisations-businesses-and-community-groups-call-on-all-parliamentarians-to-respond-to-the-crisis-in-afghanistan/>