



The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor of Melbourne

The Hon Tony Burke MP
Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
Minister for the Arts, Minister for Cyber Security
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Burke,

Tony,

Re: Offering a community-led resolution to Australia's most prolonged protection cases this Christmas.

I write to you as an executive member of the *Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum*. We are a group of 45 local governments representing over 6 million residents nationally, who advocate for community members seeking new life in Australia.¹

We would like to congratulate the Australian government for reaching a historic milestone, with **one million refugee visas** granted recently. Australia's refugee program has enabled families to escape violence and persecution and shaped our multicultural identity for 80 years.

We commend your work to lead reforms of the asylum system. However, we would like to advocate for a particular group of asylum seekers that are in need.

This Christmas, our Taskforce urges you to show compassion and deliver a just resolution for the most prolonged protection cases by:

1. Granting permanent visas to the 800+ people, deemed 'transitory persons', who were held on Nauru or PNG and are now in Australia with no viable third-country solution.
2. Allowing parents of Australian citizen children in this cohort to remain with their families and granting them permanent visas.

These people, who arrived in Australia more than a decade ago from offshore processing, have no viable pathway as the resettlement option to New Zealand is now exhausted. Most people in this "transitory" group were recognised refugees in Nauru and Papua New Guinea, and two-thirds have close family who are Australian citizens. Their children have attended our local schools, families have built businesses, and all have become deeply involved in their communities.

¹ See: <https://www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/greater-dandenong-council-advocacy-and-practical-response-changes-federal-status-resolution>



The local government leaders who support this letter stand ready to support the successful integration of this group of asylum seekers into our municipalities. Our communities are prepared to welcome these individuals, and we will provide the necessary front-line services to ensure their safety, stability, and wellbeing.

Our request presents the Australian Government with a unique opportunity to uphold Australia's 80-year legacy of refugee protection and to reaffirm its role as a global leader in refugee resettlement and protection. We hope you will respond favorably to our request this Christmas.

Please contact Ann Ly, Taskforce Secretariat at Ann.Ly@cgd.vic.gov.au for further queries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick".

Nick Reece
Lord Mayor

Executive Member, Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum

Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce member councils:

Greater Dandenong City Council	Ararat Rural City Council	Albury City Council
City of Melbourne	Ballarat City Council,	Blacktown City Council
City of Whittlesea	Bendigo City Council	Blue Mountains City Council
Banyule City Council	Borough of Queenscliffe	Canterbury Bankstown City Council
Brimbank City Council	Greater Geelong City Council	Cardinia Shire Council
Casey City Council	Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Inner West City Council
Darebin City Council	Nillumbik Shire Council	Griffith City Council
Hobsons Bay City Council	Surf Coast Shire Council	Launceston City Council
Hume City Council		Lane Cove Council
Kingston City Council		Newcastle City Council
Maribyrnong City Council		Northern Beaches City Council
Maroondah City Council		North Sydney City Council
Merri-bek City Council		Orange City Council
Melton City Council		Randwick City Council
Monash City Council		City of Ryde
Moonee Valley City Council		City of Vincent
Port Phillip City Council		Wellington Shire Council
Whitehorse City Council		Wagga Wagga City Council
Wyndham City Council		
Yarra City Council		