

Organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network, endorsed by:

3CR Community Radio
Academics for Refugees
Amnesty International
Amnesty International - Bendigo Group
Amnesty Refugee Network (Vic)
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
Australian Advocacy for Good Governance in Sri Lanka (AAGGSL) Inc
Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce
Australian Education Union
Australian Hazara Women's Friendship Network
Australian Nursing And Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch)
Australian Refugee Action Network
Back Your Neighbour Campaign
Bayside Refugee Advocacy and Support Association
Befriend A Child In Detention
Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project
Brunswick Uniting Church
Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum
Collins Street Baptist Church
Combined Refugee Action Group
Darebin City Council
Doctors for Refugees
Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
Faith Communities Council of Victoria
Freedom Socialist Party
Grandmothers for Refugees (Victoria)
Grandmothers for Refugees (Bendigo)
Humanists Victoria
Humanity in Need - Rainbow Refugees
Independent Education Union Vic Tas
Iranian Womens Association
Islamic Council of Victoria
Jesuit Social Services
Jews For Refugees
Justice4Refugees
Kommonground
Labor for Refugees
Love Makes A Way
Melbourne City Churches In Action (MCCIA)
Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church
Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group
Moreland City Council
Multicultural Women Victoria

Mums for Refugees
National Amnesty Refugee Network
National Tertiary Education Union
Northsiders for Refugees
Pax Christi Victoria
People for Human Rights and Equality
Radical Women
Refugee Action Collective (RAC)
Refugee Advocacy Network
Refugee Council of Australia
Refugee Legal
Refugee Voices
Rural Australians for Refugees - Casey/Cardinia
Rural Australians for Refugees - National
Rural Australians for Refugees - Queenscliff
Rural Australians for Refugees - Ballarat
Rural Australians for Refugees - Bendigo
Rural Australians for Refugees - Grampians
Rural Australians for Refugees - Healesville
Rural Australians for Refugees - Macedon Ranges
Rural Australians for Refugees - Queenscliff
Rural Australians for Refugees - South Gippsland
Rural Australians for Refugees Daylesford
Settlement Services International
Shamama Association of Australia
Sisters of the Good Samaritan
Social Responsibilities Committee, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
Socialist Alliance
Socialist Alternative
Solidarity
Solidarity with Asylum Seekers in Australia
St Paul's Cathedral
Teachers for Refugees
The Office of Adam Bandt MP
Unionists for Refugees
Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
United Workers Union
Victorian Trades Hall Council
Victorian Council of Churches
Victorian Afghan Associations Network
Victorian Socialists.
Welcoming Australia
Xavier Social Justice Network
Yarra City Council

Walk for

2022

JUSTICE & FREEDOM for REFUGEES

End Detention - Permanent Visas - Safe & Secure Futures

2pm, April 10

Palm Sunday

State Library

cnr Swanston & La Trobe Sts Melbourne



Music from 1.30pm Speakers at 2pm including **Rev Tim Costello AO, Somayeh - Iranian refugee, and faith leaders including #SetThemFree campaigners.** The Walk will proceed to the Park Hotel in Carlton to hear from a **refugee speaker detained inside the hotel, and Arnold Zable,** writer and long-time refugee supporter, followed by more music.

Organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network - enquiries 0409 252 673
<https://fb.me/e/11WCiGAAy>



JUSTICE FOR REFUGEES means:

- **Releasing ALL refugees and people seeking asylum from detention**
- **Permanent visas and family reunion for all refugees**
- **Fair and timely assessment of all claims for refugee status**
- **The right to work and access to Centrelink benefits for all refugees and people seeking asylum**
- **Ensuring that people still held on Nauru and in PNG have safe resettlement options either here in Australia or in New Zealand**

Australia's treatment of refugees is harsh, punitive, and is in breach of international obligations under the UN Refugee Convention. People fleeing political oppression and wars in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and the Middle East have held for years in detention.

This is in contrast to Australia's response to the refugee crisis at the end of the Vietnam War in the early 1970s. Just over 2000 Vietnamese arrived by boat following the fall of Saigon; none of them were detained. Australia resettled around 80,000 Vietnamese refugees in total. It shows that resettlement of much larger numbers of refugees is possible.

Why the detention of refugees must end

The imprisonment of refugees in the Park Hotel in Melbourne has been widely reported since Novak Djokovic was detained there in January. Unlike Novak, 26 men remain in the hotel after nearly 9 years of detention. These men who were held in PNG and on Nauru for nearly over 7 years, were brought to Australia with 160 others for medical treatment in 2018 under the now repealed Medevac legislation. These men continue to be detained - for absolutely no reason.

There are around 280 people who are seeking asylum being held in immigration across Australia (Home Affairs statistics Sept 2021). Over 200 refugees and asylum seekers are being held in Nauru and PNG, many without any prospect of safe meaningful resettlement.

No other country in the world has mandatory and indefinite detention of refugees. Long term detention strips away hope and leads to serious physical and mental health problems. As former Australian of the year psychologist Patrick McGorry said "detention centres are factories for producing mental illness".

What else need to change?

The Australian government has ignored the call for a special intake of 20,000 to provide safety for people suffering persecution and starvation in Afghanistan. Instead the government has offered only 15,000 over 4 years taken out of the existing refugee quota of just 13,750 each year.

In 2014 the Australian government banned resettlement in Australia of any refugees who come via Indonesia. Since then, over 14,000 UNHCR recognized refugees have been stuck in limbo in Indonesia. They have no rights, so cannot establish bank accounts, work legally or get health care, and often their children cannot go to school. Around half of these refugees are from Afghanistan.

Refugees should be granted Permanent Visas

Thousands of refugees have been living and working in our community for more than 8 years - by now they should be Australian citizens. Instead, they are still living on Temporary Protection Visas (3 years) or 5-year Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEVs) with no possibility of settling permanently in Australia. They are not allowed to apply for family reunion. They remain permanently separated from loved ones, who are often in places of danger.

Bridging Visas (BVEs) are short term visas. People on these visas need to reapply and have no certainty that they will be granted another visa. Most people on BVEs have no access to welfare, and sometimes do not have the right to work or study. Thousands of people have lived for over 9 years in constant uncertainty - usually because the government has not completed their refugee assessments, or because of the unfair fast track system. Some people are on BVEs despite having refugee status, this includes released Medevac refugees and children and families brought from Nauru.

These policies are cruel and costly, we can instead welcome refugees

Walk for Justice for Refugees on Palm Sunday raises public awareness of the ongoing plight of refugees in Australia.

Join the Walk for Justice calling for enlightened and humane policies to replace the cruel, harmful and shameful policies that have been in place for far too long.