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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **An end to temporary protection policy; a step in the right direction**

Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) welcomes the long-awaited announcement by the Albanese government of the end to Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV).

Over 19000 people with temporary refugee status will now be able to apply for a permanent Resolution of Status (RoS) visa, giving them the same rights as permanent residents. This will allow immediate access to social security payments, higher education assistance and the NDIS as well as the ability to apply for home mortgages and business loans.

Importantly, families will also be reunited, as RoS visa holders will be able to apply to sponsor family members through the migration programme.

“For too long, refugees on temporary visas have had their lives on hold, unable to feel that Australia is their home and subject to restrictions on basic human rights,” said Peter Jones OSA, President of CRA. “This continued uncertainty has exacerbated the already significant trauma they have experienced in fleeing their country of origin.”

CRA supports the inclusion of measures to facilitate the speedy implementation of the RoS visa application process, including the waiving of application fees and the provision of additional funding to specialist refugee legal centres to provide free legal assistance to applicants.

“This is an historic moment that ends a decade of unjust and inhumane treatment of people who are making a significant contribution to Australian society”, commented CRA National Executive Director, Ms Anne Walker. “For years, thousands of people with temporary refugee status have been paying taxes, starting businesses, working in our communities, and yet have been denied the ability to access something as basic as a home loan. It is time to stop this absurd situation.”

CRA also welcomes the introduction to the Senate of the Migration Amendment (Evacuation to Safety) Bill 2023, requiring the evacuation to Australia of all remaining refugees and people seeking asylum held in detention in Nauru and Papua New Guinea

CRA has been a vocal opponent of offshore detention, making a [submission](#) to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration’s inquiry into the End Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2021, supporting community based alternatives to Immigration Detention.

There are a total of 150 refugees still detained in Nauru and Papua New Guinea who need urgent evacuation to Australia.

While CRA welcomes moves to address systemic failures of the current immigration system, it calls on the government to work more proactively to protect people still at risk, particularly those from countries such as Afghanistan, Myanmar and Iran.

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