



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office



Catholic Church Against Refugee Resettlement Proposal in Cambodia 1 May 2014 Media Release

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) is appalled that the Australian Government is considering a policy of resettling refugees in Cambodia.

The proposal will mean that asylum seekers seeking protection in Australia will be transferred to Nauru where their application will be assessed. Any individual identified as a refugee will be resettled in Cambodia.

However Bishop Gerard Hanna, Australian Catholic Bishops Delegate for Migrants and Refugees said “Resettlement is about integrating refugees from poverty and oppression into a community that has the capacity to provide economic and social opportunities as well as peace and safety.”

“If the Australian Government is serious about expanding resettlement opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, negotiations should commence with nations who have the resources to support refugees, such as Singapore, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.”

“Any attempts to expand resettlement should concentrate on the resettlement of refugees from countries experiencing humanitarian crisis, not from developed nations redirecting asylum seekers, which is the current policy in Australia,” Bishop Hanna explained.

“It is unacceptable to place pressure on Cambodia to resettle refugees from Australia at a time when so many poorer nations are struggling to host significantly larger refugee populations,” he added.

The ACMRO is particularly concerned about the capacity of Nauru to provide asylum seekers with the adequate language support, pastoral care and legal assistance required to conduct fair refugee status determination assessments.

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