



## MEDIA RELEASE

To: News Editor  
From: Justice4Refugees WA Geoff Bice 0438 910 650

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**Sunday 25 March 2018**

***Dr Carmen Lawrence and new Anglican Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy will address the Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees today at 1pm at St George's Cathedral, 38 St George's Terrace, Perth.***

While Minister Peter Dutton considers fast track visas for South African farmers, thousands of refugees and people seeking asylum languish in the limbo of offshore detention and temporary protection visas. People in Manus and Nauru are approaching their fifth year in limbo, with the devastatingly slow US resettlement deal only a far off hope for some, and an unachievable dream for many. Approximately 30,000 refugees (the "legacy caseload") await visa grants or live on temporary visas with their futures shrouded in uncertainty and limbo. Many families are separated with no hope for reunification due to cruel policy, and live in constant fear of deportation to danger.

Dr Carmen Lawrence, Professorial Fellow, Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Western Australia has been involved in the pursuit of human rights for decades and knows we can do better to respond to people seeking safety on our shores.

Dr Lawrence, who will be joining the walk, said, "We must say no to the limbo and uncertainty of offshore detention in Manus and Nauru, no to the separation of families and no to the limbo of temporary protection. We can and we must offer safety to those who have turned to us for refuge."

The Justice for Refugees WA network is calling on Australia's political leaders to abandon the current harsh and unjust policies, and to provide permanent protection for people seeking safety. Instead of prolonging their despair, we can provide protection and freedom. As evidenced by the contributions of previous refugee intakes – for example the Karen community in Nhill, Victoria and more recently Syrian refugees calling Australia home – the Australian community will benefit both economically and socially from welcoming refugees.

Newly installed Anglican Archbishop of Perth, Kay Goldsworthy AO, Australia's first female Archbishop, is adding her voice to the call for a humane response to people seeking safety saying, "Australians are a compassionate people. Instead of limbo and uncertainty, we can offer safety, freedom and a future."

As one of her first major public appearances Archbishop Goldsworthy will join Dr Lawrence as a speaker at the start of the Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees.

Abdul Aziz Adam, Sudanese refugee currently on Manus Island, whose words will be read to the crowd at the Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees has said in an online statement:

“Nothing has been resolved after the Manus siege; we are still prisoners after nearly five years. Two refugees were badly bashed recently. The US deal is very slow and not a solution for all. People from Iran, Somalia and Sudan are not being accepted. I am from Sudan, and Iranians are the largest group on Manus. We demand freedom not indefinite detention. Australia remains responsible for our plight and could easily take us or speed up the American process or accept the NZ offer which is still on the table.”

For further information contact:

Geoff Bice, Social Justice Consultant, Uniting Church WA on 0438 910 650.

The Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees is endorsed by a broad range of more than 50 community organisations, churches, faith groups and human rights groups, including:

- Amnesty Australia
- Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission
- Anglicare WA
- Art of Humanity
- Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce
- Australian Red Cross
- Bikes for Refugees
- CARAD
- Caritas
- Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum
- Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
- Catholic Education WA
- Catholic Mission
- CentreCare
- Christian Life Community
- City of Fremantle
- Common Grace
- Council of Margaret River (Refugee Welcome Zone)
- Crossing Borders
- Curtin Centre for Human Rights
- Doctors For Refugees
- Ethnic Communities Council of WA
- Fremantle Refugee Rights Action Network
- Hills Network For Refugees
- Independent Education Union WA Branch
- Jesuit Social Services
- Jewish Spirituality Australia
- Jews For Refugees
- Justice, Ecology and Development Office; Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
- Labor For Refugees
- Love Makes A Way
- MercyCare
- Multicultural Services Centre WA
- Mums For Refugees
- Presentation Sisters
- Propel Youth Arts
- Quakers (Religious Society of Friends in WA Region Meeting)
- Refugee Rights Action Network
- Riverview Community Services
- Salvation Army
- Socialist Alliance
- Socialist Alternative
- St Vincent de Paul Refugee & Migrant Support Program
- Students For Refugees
- Teachers for Refugees
- TEAR WA
- The Greens WA
- The Humanitarian Group
- Unionists For Refugees
- Unions WA
- UnitingCare West
- Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Western Australia
- WACOSS
- Welcome to Australia