

Media Release
The Australian Church Refugee Taskforce
21 February 2016

Churches pray this is the beginning of the end for offshore detention

The Australian Church's Refugee Taskforce and 80 sanctuary churches across Australia applaud the community effort that has resulted in baby Asha and her family being kept safe here in Australia.

The Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce has welcomed the government's decision to show compassion after an intensive campaign by a wide range of social groups including churches.

Misha Coleman, Executive Officer of the Taskforce's and National coordinator of the Church Sanctuary Movement said that there is one simple reason that this little girl is now going to live in a home in the community - and that's the people who stood up and demanded better treatment of her - and who refused to allow her to be deported to Nauru.

"Churches have played a critical role in this social movement. We are incredibly proud that churches from numerous denominations and faiths led resistance to un-Christian and unconscionable treatment of people in the offshore detention camps".

"We continue to stand resolute to offer protection and sanctuary to the 267 vulnerable people who require confidence and certainty in their lives.

"Churches provided offers of sanctuary. These offers stand.

"Today shows the power we have if we stand together in peaceful non violent action. Churches have a proud tradition in this role and we are proud of our role in today's historic outcome.

"We're not done yet either. This is the start of a movement in Australia that is determined to see vulnerable people treated with compassion.

"Everyone deserves the chance to love, live and prosper and we pray that baby Asha and her family can now live in the community, rebuild their lives, make friends and share in what a great country we have proved to be over the last few weeks.

"We cannot overstate how proud we are to be a part of the community that has made a small difference to this poor toddler's life.

"Now we'll take this pride and we'll pour it into continuing to ensure that all of the 267 are protected here," said Ms Coleman.

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