



## CATHOLIC JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

194 Charlotte Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000  
GPO Box 282 Brisbane QLD 4001  
Ph. 07 3324 3441  
Fax 07 3336 9177  
ABN 25 328 758 007

### Media Statement

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#### ***Give PNG a Break!***

#### ***Bring the Refugees Back!***

*Over 120 refugees are still living in limbo in Papua New Guinea after more than 8 years of the Australian Government's policy of offshore processing of applications for refugee protection from people who arrive by boat.*

*In July this year, the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands issued an open letter to the Australian Parliament calling for our Government to bring the refugees back to Australia to provide them with the necessary support and to manage their resettlement. Bishop Vincent Long, Chair of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service issued a response supporting this call.*

*The Australian Government cannot continue to leave these refugees in PNG indefinitely.*

*It cannot keep taking advantage of our PNG friends to deal with our responsibilities.*

*They are exhausted. It is high time the Australian Government took all the refugees back to Australia and took responsibility for them here.*

*Prime Minister Morrison often refers to our Pacific neighbours as our friends. It is time we started treating our neighbours and friends with respect and stopped taking advantage of their generosity!*

*PNG has its own priorities and concerns. Australia should not keep giving them more responsibilities. Supporting the refugees who came to Australia and helping them to resettle is Australia's responsibility, not PNG's.*

*Bringing the refugees back to Australia to manage their support and resettlement will be better for both PNG and the refugees.*

*Our friends in PNG have provided the refugees with good care, but they have had enough. The refugees have waited far too long and they have suffered enough!*

*We call on all Catholics to pray for Papua New Guinea and for the refugees. We ask Catholics and supporters of fairness and justice to urge the Australian Government to give PNG a break and bring the refugees back to Australia.*

*Today is the Feast of the Archangels. St. Michael the Archangel is the patron saint of Papua New Guinea. We ask for his intercession and for the intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, for Papua New Guinea and for the refugees.*

*For further information or comment, please contact Peter Arndt on 0409 265 476.*

**Chairperson:** Maree Rose – email [marose@bne.catholic.edu.au](mailto:marose@bne.catholic.edu.au)  
**Executive Officer:** Peter Arndt – email [arndtp@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:arndtp@bne.catholic.net.au)