



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service

Afghanistan commitment needs to be more generous

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service, says at least 20,000 more humanitarian places are needed for people fleeing Afghanistan.

Catholic bishops were among those to advocate for a generous response from the Australian Government, supported by faith-based and community groups, to welcome Afghans looking to escape after the Taliban seized power last year.

The Federal Government this week announced at least 15,000 places over four years for people fleeing the crisis in Afghanistan.

Bishop Long conceded such a commitment “sounds good, but the problem is that these are places within the existing humanitarian and family visa programs”.

“The scale of the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan requires the urgent creation of additional places in Australia’s humanitarian intake,” he said.

“We need to scale up our practical compassion, not simply adjust priorities within existing plans.

“That is why the bishops, together with other members of the Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA) and many other community groups, call once more for the allocation of at least 20,000 additional places.”