



MEDIA RELEASE

Exclusive Release

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WE CAN DO MORE; A MESSAGE FROM CONCERNED YOUNG AUSTRALIANS AS AUSTRALIAN AID FALLS TO RECORD LOW

Over 100 young adults from the advocacy group Micah Australia, tonight expressed their dismay over the government's lack of care for the world's poor as it was revealed in the budget that aid would fall to a record low.

Gathered in Canberra to advocate for a fairer deal for those living in poverty, there was visible frustration as it was revealed Australian aid would be frozen at just over \$4 billion until 2022-2023; meaning aid spending would stand at just 19c in every \$100 of GNI by 2021.

Tim Costello, Executive Director of Micah Australia said, "Tonight the choice has been made by our leaders, to continue to balance our books on the backs of the world's poor.

"Despite revenue rolling in and being in a much stronger economic position, we are left wondering why we are not moving to a more generous Australian aid commitment."

"We are blessed in this nation, and clearly in a situation where we can do more for our neighbours, but tonight the familiar cries from our government of 'we'd like to do more but we can't' has echoed once again through the chambers of Parliament."

Matt Darvas, Campaign Director of Micah Australia said "The decision to freeze aid means shockingly it will fall to a record new low and once again, compassion has been put to the side."

"While the rest of the economy 'takes off', and inflation rises, the aid budget is totally left behind and continues to diminish as a percentage of our overall Gross National Income.

"When will our government believe we have 'enough' so we can start being generous again?"

Tomorrow morning, Micah Australia and a group of young adults will be hosting a banquet on the front lawns of Parliament House to call for a fairer deal for the world's poor.

"Tomorrow morning as post-budget analysis centres on identifying who the 'winners' and 'losers' are, what these young people have perspective on is that by virtue of being born in this great nation, or now calling it home, we have all won the 'lucky lottery of life'.

"With that blessing comes responsibility, and our banquet on the lawns of Parliament is to represent that we can do more" said Matt.

Banquets were often used in the Bible to demonstrate the radical inclusivity, generosity and grace we are meant to demonstrate to our neighbours and to the poor.

Event Details:

Micah Australia and 80-100 young professionals from around Australia on the lawns of Parliament House.

Wednesday 9 May from 6:30am- 9am.

Available on the morning for filming will be:

- A Choir of Congolese refugees performing
- A young male adult, newly arrived from Syria
- Various community leaders and NGO leaders seated at the table

Available for interviews will be:

- Matt Darvas, Campaign Director from Micah Australia
- Other young professionals from across Australia willing to share about their vision for a more compassion and generous Australia

There will be an opportunity for media presenters to take a place at the table and speak to those gathered.

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Micah Australia is a coalition of churches and Christian organisations raising a powerful voice for justice and a world free from poverty.

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