



## **MEDIA ALERT – Wednesday, 29 May 2024**

### **PARA Welcomes Victorian state Government targeted funding to sustain critical support in Victoria for Palestinians fleeing the war on Gaza**

#### **For immediate release**

Palestine Australia Relief and Action Foundation (PARA) welcomes the Victorian Labor State Government targeted funding allocation, which will enable PARA to continue its vital work supporting Palestinians who have fled Israel's war on Gaza.

Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt today announced that funding of \$125,000 will be provided to Palestine Australia Relief and Action (PARA) to support people who have arrived in Victoria since October 2023. This will help PARA to provide tailored, culturally appropriate support to newly arrived Palestinians in Victoria.

"Palestinian Australians are watching loved ones face slaughter and starvation, denied basic human rights, dignity and protection." said Reem Borrows, PARA Board member.

"Those who managed to save the lives of their family members, and bring them here, at great personal and financial costs, are looking to our government for leadership and support."

Many community and religious organisations have been supporting newly arrived Palestinians and their communities and have done so primarily through relying on the generosity of an exhausted, overstretched and traumatised Palestinian community and their larger community of friends.

This much welcomed funding will allow PARA to cover the costs of some of its tailored culturally appropriate assistance including access to legal services, accommodation support, finance and education programs needed to newly successfully integrate newly arrived Palestinians in Victoria.

This will also allow PARA to hold community engagement events to enhance connection, improve mental health, build social cohesion and empower newly arrived Palestinians to feel safe and supported within the Victorian community. PARA's work these past gruelling months has been driven entirely by a team of dedicated volunteers who have tirelessly championed the care, safety and wellbeing of Palestinians fleeing Israel's war on Gaza.

Furthermore, we hope this move by the Victorian State Government will encourage other states and the Federal Government to deliver on promises to allocate help directly for Palestinian Australians through Palestinian Australian organisations.

PARA is a registered charity founded by Australian Palestinians to advocate, support and connect Palestinians in Australia.



**Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt**

*"The conflict in Israel-Gaza continues to have a devastating humanitarian impact and Palestinians fleeing the conflict are arriving in Victoria to be supported by their families."*

*"Many of these people have experienced the trauma of war – it's only right that we provide them with culturally appropriate support and services to help them feel welcomed, safe and connected in Victoria."*

**Quotes attributable to Rasha Abbas, PARA Founder and Executive Director**

*"We extend our gratitude to Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Ingrid Stitt, who has shown great leadership in recognising the importance of this support to the wellbeing of the Victorian community and our social cohesion."*

**For more information or to arrange interviews with Palestinian refugees, please contact:**

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