

## Micah Challenge Calls for Action Over Disillusionment this Election

Micah Challenge is calling on Australians around the country to raise their voices to put global poverty on the agenda of all candidates in the lead up to the federal election.

According to Micah Challenge, both major parties have been wavering in their commitment to a generous and effective aid program over the past 18 months.

Since the May 2012 budget, the ALP has removed more than \$6 billion of planned aid expenditure and the Coalition has failed to announce a timetable for reaching the bipartisan commitment to increasing aid to 0.5% of Australia's Gross National Income.

"We're pleased that there is still a bipartisan commitment to a growing aid budget in place", said John Beckett, National Coordinator of Micah Challenge.

"However, we're calling on parties and candidates to renew that commitment as the election approaches. Australian aid is achieving too much good in the world to let our aid budget slip down the priority list."

In 2012, Australia's overseas aid helped give more than 1 million children a quality education; immunise more than 2 million children against killer diseases; and provide more than 16.5 million people with lifesaving assistance during a crisis or conflict. Since 2000, Australian aid has helped to increase the number of Afghani girls in school from 5,000 to over 2 million.

"I'm conscious that there are many Australians, and particularly young people, who are feeling disillusioned by the current political debate. So we're calling on aid supporters to choose action over disillusionment this election", said Mr Beckett.

"Voting is vitally important, but it is also essential that we look beyond the election to impact our political landscape. Whoever forms Government needs to know Australians are committed to a generous and effective aid program – no cuts, no diversions, no compromise."

**Micah Challenge has today launched election action resources to help constituents call on their electoral candidates to be champions for aid if elected on September 7 at [www.micahchallenge.org.au/take-action](http://www.micahchallenge.org.au/take-action).**

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**John Beckett, Micah Challenge's National Coordinator, is available for interviews.**

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*Micah Challenge is a global movement of Christians speaking out against poverty and injustice in support of the Millennium Development Goals. In Australia, more than 50 aid and development agencies, as well as churches, schools, groups and individual Christians endorse the campaign.*  
[www.micahchallenge.org.au](http://www.micahchallenge.org.au).