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MEDIA RELEASE**



## **Labor commits to reinstate \$224 million cut from aid budget**

The Micah Australia coalition of churches and Christian agencies welcomes the Australian Labor Party's commitment to reverse the scheduled \$224 million aid cut in the 2016-2017 Federal Budget if it wins the Federal election.

"We welcome this positive announcement as it shows that the Australian Labor Party recognises the vital contribution Australian aid makes to saving and improving lives in our immediate region and beyond," said Ben Thurley, National Coordinator of Micah Australia.

"We see this as an important first step in restoring Australia's aid program and playing a more constructive role in the global fight against poverty. However, the aid program has been deeply damaged by recent cuts and we urge the ALP to make further commitments to make Australia, once again, the generous nation we can and should be," said Mr Thurley.

"The ALP had a good track record in Government – increasing our aid investment and targeting urgent poverty issues – and we urge them to join the UK and other nations who have made much more substantial commitments to aid."

"We call on all political parties, to show their commitment to tackling global poverty by rebuilding and reinvesting in our aid program. Ultimately, this is a moral issue, above party politics. Australian aid is one of the ways we, as a wealthy nation, help build a fairer world, and work to save and improve lives in our region and beyond"

Last year alone, Australian Aid helped to: vaccinate more than 2.8 million children, ensure over 2.2 million more people gained access to safe drinking water, and more than 800,000 people gained access to basic sanitation, ensure treatment for more than 1.5 million people with HIV/AIDS and more than 1.3 million people with tuberculosis, distribute more than 130 million treated bed nets to fight malaria, and respond to humanitarian crises and natural disasters in 15 countries (including Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and the major earthquake in Nepal).

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**To organise an interview with Ben Thurley call 0431 985 009.**

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

