

## MEDIA RELEASE



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### **Tim Costello: *This aid reset is about the whole of our nation***

Tim Costello, Micah Australia's Executive Director, has welcomed the reset of Australia's international development policy, saying this is an opportunity to canvass Australia's role in the world.

"The opportunity to review aid isn't simply about the Pacific or about dollars and figures, it's also about soft diplomacy and deepening our relationships in the Indo-Pacific."

"This review will be a consideration for the whole of our nation – our security, our compassion and humanitarian responsibilities, our diplomacy and our hard and soft power. All of these factors should be looked at in the review."

Mr Costello said he would be encouraging Australian churches, many of whom have deep relational ties in the Indo-Pacific region, to make a submission to the review.

"Within our region, it's often the churches and faith-based NGO's that do the heavy lifting when it comes to development. This review is something that churches can really get behind and will have a lot to offer on. I will be personally encouraging churches to engage and make a submission."

The news comes on the back of Micah Australia's *Voices for Justice* event in Canberra last week that saw over 200 Christians and 15 Pacific Leaders meet with 90 politicians of all parties to discuss the upcoming aid review and the Pacific Step Up.

"It was a powerful moment to stand with our brothers and sisters from the Pacific and talk about the importance of doing aid in a smart and inclusive manner, that puts people and relationships at the centre." said Mr Costello.

"We believe our message was heard in Canberra - that Australia's church leaders and largest Christian development organisations stand ready and willing to use our deep relationships in the Indo-Pacific region to help build stronger ties and ensure the most vulnerable are kept at the centre of this aid reset."

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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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