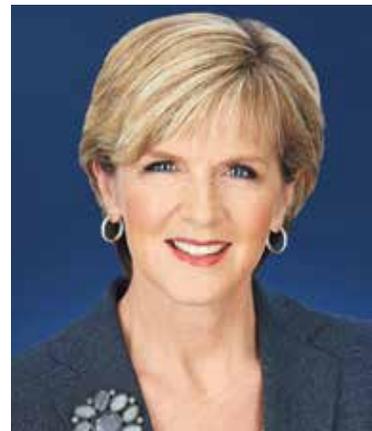




AUSTRALIAN FREEDOM NETWORK PARLIAMENT HOUSE CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA 2 DECEMBER 2015



"IT'S IMPORTANT THAT ALL CORNERS OF THE COMMUNITY JOIN TOGETHER TO WORK TOWARDS THE NOBLE GOAL OF ERADICATING SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACROSS THE WORLD..."
The Hon Malcolm Turnbull,
Prime Minister of Australia



"THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A REMARKABLE JOURNEY. TOGETHER WE CAN COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY."
The Hon Julie Bishop,
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Australia



THE AUSTRALIAN VISION

In early 2015, Salvation Army Commissioners, James Condon and Floyd Tidd had a vision, inspired by the Global Freedom Network's 2nd December 2014 event hosted in Vatican City. They appreciated the unique point of difference that the Global Freedom Network was founded upon, whereby religious faith can be a powerful motivating force to inspire individual and community action, both spiritually and practically, in the fight against modern slavery. Based on this, the Commissioners sought to create a similar initiative for faith leaders of Australia.

Before this, the Salvation Army was active in the anti-slavery movement through its 'Freedom Partnership – to End Modern Slavery'. The Freedom Partnership was mobilizing community, business and government to eradicate slavery while also independently operating Australia's only Trafficking and Slavery Safe House

since 2008. The Freedom Partnership championed collaborative, inclusive and networked strategies to address modern slavery, and had an existing interfaith network throughout Australia. It was obvious that parallels existed with the Freedom Partnership and the Global Freedom Network in terms of vision and strategic approach. It was at this point, Commissioners Condon and Tidd conceptualised the notion of the Australian Freedom Network. Their next step was to turn that vision into a reality.



Commissioner James Condon, Australia Eastern Territory



Commissioner Floyd Tidd, Australia Southern Territory

THE JOURNEY

The Salvation Army spent months, led by Ms Jenny Stanger, in consultation, engagement and planning mode in preparation for the historic faith leaders event to be held at Australia's Parliament House in Canberra on 2nd December 2015. The Global Freedom Network assisted throughout the process, along with the Chairman Mr Andrew Forrest.

Leading up to the event, the Global Freedom Network was excited by the overwhelming response of faith leaders in Australia. Such was the positive response, that when some leaders were unable to personally attend the event in Parliament House, a concerted effort was made to collect their signatures to the *Joint Declaration*.

To this end, arrangements for Matt O'Sullivan and Bec Thompson from the Minderoo Foundation team to carefully transport the *Joint Declaration* books to each of these leaders to collect the signatures. This involved travelling from Perth, to Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Canberra within 48 hours preceding the Canberra launch event.



THE AUSTRALIAN FAITH LEADERS EVENT

2 DECEMBER 2015 – PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

On 2nd December 2015, one year on from the historical event in Rome, Commissioner James Condon and Floyd Tidd hosted 12 faith leaders, 6 faith leader representatives and Mr Andrew Forrest to mark the formation of the Australian Freedom Network.

The Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Hon Tanya Plibersek, Acting Leader of the Opposition and Mrs Louise Markus MP were special guests.

The faiths represented included: Christian Evangelical, Baptist, Salvation Army, Presbyterian, Coptic Orthodox, Anglican, Catholic, Muslim Sunni and Shai, Lutheran, Jewish, Hindu, Quakers, Uniting Church and Buddhist. The vision of ending slavery had captured the heart and will of Australian faith leaders to take action. History was being made.





The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister of Australia

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister of Australia, was not able to attend 3rd December launch, however his message of solidarity was a powerful reminder of why the Australian Freedom Network is so important in the fight against slavery in Australia.

“I THANK THE SALVATION ARMY AND THE FREEDOM PARTNERSHIP FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO THIS IMPORTANT CAUSE. BY EDUCATING AUSTRALIANS ABOUT SLAVERY AND PROVIDING WAYS IN WHICH THEY CAN TAKE ACTION, YOU ARE EMPOWERING EVERYONE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP,
Prime Minister of Australia



The Hon Julie Bishop MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs

The presence of the Hon Julie Bishop MP, The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, and Mrs Louise Marcus MP at the Australian Freedom launch was a positive indication of their commitment and support. We are grateful to them for their leadership.



The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Acting Leader of the Opposition





Sandra, Salvation Army Freedom Advocate

The audience were visibly moved by the words of Sandra, who came to Australia as a domestic worker in Western Sydney but soon found herself trapped in slavery. She had been promised a salary and permanent residency but after three years without pay and increasingly abusive conditions Sandra escaped. She said,

"I HAVE SHARED MY STORY TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST SLAVERY IN AUSTRALIA. I HAVE SHARED MY STORY TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN SLAVERY TO SEEK HELP. AS A PERSON OF FAITH, I KNOW THAT FAITH IN ACTION CAN BE A POWERFUL FORCE FOR GOOD IN OUR WORLD."

On speaking about modern slavery at the event, Commissioner Condon said, "The cases that we know about represent only the tip of an iceberg. We must do more to close the gap between the victims we know about and the thousands still enslaved in Australia. Faith communities can play a critical role in this and be part of a global movement that prevents slavery in the first place. All of the world's

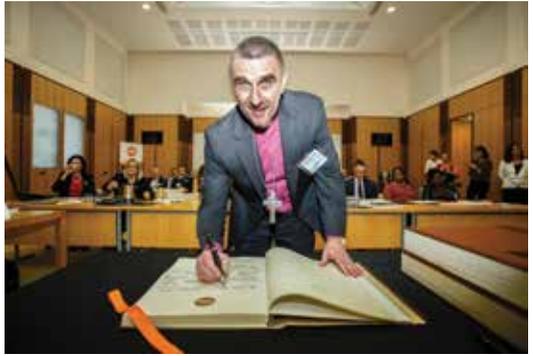
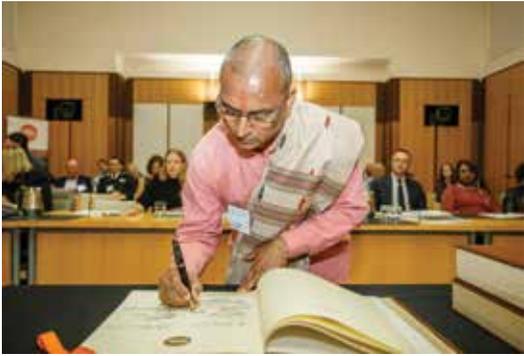
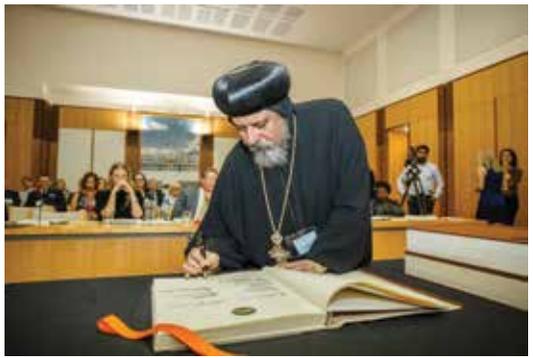
major faiths share universal values of dignity, freedom and social justice."

Chairman of the Global Freedom Network, Andrew Forrest, spoke about the role of faiths in ending slavery at the event and said, "On this day last year, for the first time in history, the leaders of the Catholic and Anglican churches, his Holiness Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby, as well as leaders from the Orthodox, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim faiths jointly committed to one common endeavour against slavery.

"Today, we are repeating that in Australia. I applaud the commitment today of Australia's faith leaders to embed action against slavery in the very fabric of their advocacy." The Global Freedom Network is founded on the premise that religion can be a powerful motivating force to inspire individual and community action both spiritually and practically. By signing the *Joint Declaration*, Australian faith leaders have made a commitment to measureable actions towards ending slavery in Australia in the next five years."

The official signing ceremony took place and history was made in Australia as the faith leaders one-by-one signed the *Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery*. This was now the beginning of something unique in Australia; joined up action being led at the highest level of the faith community, for the people. The vision was transforming.





NEWS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



Freedom Partnership
[@partner4freedom \(2Dec\)](#):

Join the Anglican Church & Archbp Philip Freier & SIGN the Declaration to [#EndSlavery](#) at [afn.org.au](#)

Social media was active during the event with the [#endslavery](#) leading the commentary.

lucky to be referred to the Salvation Army. She says we operate the only safe house for victims of human trafficking and slavery in Australia and we were lucky to get that referral and have that kind of partnership with the Department of Immigration.

James Condon of The Salvation Army Eastern Territory. Former CNN breakfast presenter and host of SBS Dateline, Anjali Rao, was Mistress of Ceremony.

The Global Slavery Index estimates 35.8 million people are enslaved globally with 3,000 people estimated to be enslaved in Australia. In 2015 shocking abuses of people in Australian agriculture, food production and retail franchises have been exposed on an unprecedented scale.



Art of Living
[@ArtofLivingNow \(2 Dec\)](#):

At Global Freedom Network meet [#FaithLeaders](#) unite to [#EndSlavery](#). Sign the petition [here](#)

ABC NEWS 24, TELEVISION BROADCAST, SYDNEY, NEWS AFTERNOONS, SCOTT BEVAN AND KUMI TAGUCHI

(2nd December 2015)

Interview with Jenny Stanger, National Manager, Freedom Partnership to End Modern Slavery and Sandra, former victim of modern day slavery.

Taguchi says slavery is not a practice most of us would consider part of modern Australia, but around 3,000 people are believed to be enslaved in Australia. She says today a group of Australian religious leaders launched the Australian Freedom Network. Stanger says over the past ten years the Australian Government has officially uncovered around 500 victims of slavery and human trafficking. She says if you think about all we have learned in the past year about exploitation in industries as broad as agriculture and construction and hospitality, she believes it is naive of us to think it is as low as 3,000. Stanger says people are often held in a prison without walls. Stanger says Sandra was

AUSTRALIAN FREEDOM NETWORK WEBSITE

(2nd December 2015)

Audience: 46,000 people

Faiths United to End Slavery

"To mark the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, the Australian Freedom Network was launched today at Parliament House in Canberra. The Australian Freedom Network brings together faith communities making a firm commitment to practical actions to tackle modern slavery in Australia. Having been inspired by global faith leaders, Australian faith leaders signed the same Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery signed last year in Vatican City at the launch of the Global Freedom Network.

Mrs. Louise Markus MP sponsored the gathering. The Hon Julie Bishop Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Hon Tanya Plibersek Acting Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the Global Freedom Network, Andrew Forrest, spoke at the event, which was led by Commissioner

Commissioner Condon says, "The cases that we know about represent only the tip of an iceberg. We must do more to close the gap between the victims we know about and the thousands still enslaved in Australia. Faith communities can play a critical role in this and be part of a global movement that prevents slavery in the first place. All of the world's major faiths share universal values of dignity, freedom and social justice."

Salvation Army Freedom Advocate, Sandra, came to Australia as a domestic worker in Western Sydney but soon found herself trapped in slavery. She had been promised a salary and permanent residency but after three years without pay and increasingly abusive conditions Sandra escaped. "I have shared my story to motivate people to take action against slavery in Australia. I have shared



GlobalFreedomNetwork
[@gfn2020 \(2 Dec\)](#):

To join the fight to [#EndSlavery](#) pledge your support now...

my story to encourage people who are in slavery to seek help. As a person of faith, I know that faith in action can be a powerful force for good in our world." Sandra said.

Chairman of the Global Freedom Network Andrew Forrest said at the event, "On this day last year, for the first time in history, the leaders of the Catholic and Anglican churches, his Holiness Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby, as well as leaders from the Orthodox, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim faiths jointly committed to one common endeavour against slavery.

"Today, we are repeating that in Australia. I applaud the commitment today of Australia's faith leaders to embed action against slavery in the very fabric of their advocacy."

The Global Freedom Network is founded on the premise that religion can be a powerful motivating force to inspire individual and community action both spiritually and practically.

By signing the Joint Declaration, Australian faith leaders have made a commitment to measureable actions towards ending slavery in Australia for at least the next five years. Australians can join them in their efforts at www.afn.org.au."

THE AUSTRALIAN

(14th December 2015)

Andrew Forrest Launches Australian Freedom Network to clamp down on slavery

"Launching the Australian Freedom Network at Parliament House in Canberra, Mr Forrest and leaders from the Hillsong church through to a Shia mosque in Sydney will commit to taking "measurable actions" towards ending slavery until at least 2020.

One year after the Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery was signed in Vatican City, Mr Forrest, chairman of the Global Freedom Network, said it was "incredibly important" that religions called out slavery as a "major problem in the world".

"It is in fact the distortion of the definition found in the holy text and distortion of the integrity of those religions which has led to the suffering," he told The Australian.

"It is in fact the distortion of the definition found in the holy text and distortion of the integrity of those religions which has led to the suffering," he told The Australian

"Where distortion exists it can only be laid to blame at the feet of the teachers and leaders of religion, which must become active across the world that they no longer can tolerate distortions of their texts which allow slavery and violence against the innocent.

"There should be no slavery measured in Australia after five years".

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Labor's foreign affairs spokeswoman Tanya Plibersek are expected to attend the launch of the network.

Faith leaders who will be at the event include chair of the National Council of Australian Baptists, Reverend Bill Brown, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, Right Reverend David Cook, director of Al Sadiq Foundation, Sheikh Ali Jaber and Sheikh Youssef Nabha, an imam at the Masjed Al Rahman mosque in Kingsgrove, Sydney.

Today marks the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

ABC LOCAL RADIO

(8th December 2015)

AFN Members speak to John Cleary

"This week amidst the turbulence of Canberra's last sitting week, you may have caught another event in the media from the national capital.

Mining magnate Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest launched the Australian arm of his Global Freedom Network to combat human trafficking.

One year after the Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery was signed in Vatican City, Mr Forrest, chairman of the Global Freedom Network, joined with more than a dozen Australian religious leaders calling for a clamp down on slavery across the country, declaring no one should be enslaved in Australia after five years.

Slavery is a strange and almost alien term to associate with a democratic country like Australia, but as recent exposes from agriculture to retail have shown, exploitation merely requires opportunity.

According to the Global Slavery Index, in 2015 some 35.8 million people are still living in conditions akin to slavery. Even here in Australia, the number is estimated to be close to 3,000. They may not be wearing chains or manacles, but according to Commissioner James Condon of the Salvation Army they can be found across the economy.

GUESTS IN THIS HOUR

- Jenny Stanger, Salvation Army
- Sr Noelene Simmons, ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious against Trafficking in Humans)
- Sheikh Ahmed Abdo, NSW Muslim Police Chaplain
- Fuzz Kitto, National Coordinator, Stop the Traffik"

Also broadcast from the following 10 stations:

ABC News 24 (Melbourne), ABC News 24 (Regional NSW), ABC News 24 (Brisbane), ABC News 24 (Adelaide), ABC News 24 (Perth), ABC News 24 (Regional Queensland), ABC News 24 (Hobart), ABC News 24 (Canberra), ABC News 24 (Regional Victoria), ABC News 24 (Regional West Australia)



Joel A'Bell @joelabell (2 Dec):

An honour to sign the declaration to end modern slavery with @gfn2020 #EndSlavery

SLAVERY IN AUSTRALIA

"I AM ... LIVING PROOF THAT SLAVERY HAPPENS IN AUSTRALIA. ONE DAY I HAD THE CHANCE TO ASK SOMEONE FOR HELP, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION FREED ME FROM THE HOUSE. THEY TOOK ME TO THE SALVATION ARMY SAFE HOUSE, AND FROM THERE BEGAN TO HAVE CHOICES AND FREEDOM AGAIN."

Sandra, survivor of modern slavery in Australia

The Global Slavery Index (2014) estimates 3,000 children, women and men are enslaved in Australia. Slaveholders are using people against their will for their own advantage. Sometimes hidden behind closed doors; some are hidden in plain sight. Victims of slavery and human trafficking may be the person who picks the apples on your table, attaches the rain gutters to your house, cares for your neighbour's children, cleans your car, makes the clothes you are wearing or serves your food. Some people are sold as objects, forced to work for little or no pay and are at the complete mercy of their employers. Slavery in Australia can look like someone who is:

- Forced to work through psychological or physical threat
- Owned or controlled by their employer usually through psychological or physical abuse or the threat of abuse
- Dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as property
- Physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement
- Forced to marry without consent

Slavery in Australia is a crime and most victims have been from outside Australia. Many enter legally and then are subjected to severe forms of exploitation and possible forms of slavery by their employers. There are approximately 1.2 million temporary migrants in Australia, which includes international students, working holiday makers, skilled visa holders and New Zealand citizens. While reforms have recently been adopted to address some vulnerabilities, restricted working hours for those on student visas, the temporary nature of man visas, and reliance on workplace sponsorship leaves many migrants at risk of situations of exploitation.

Concerns have been raised about the Australian inter-country adoption scheme presenting risks for child trafficking, with reports of children kidnapped in India having been adopted in Australia. Dutch NGO Against Child Trafficking, raised concerns of child trafficking with the Australian Government about children from India, China, Ethiopia and Colombia being trafficked for adoption in Australia. In light of such trafficking concerns, Australia has suspended the inter-country adoption programmes.

"SLAVERY NO LONGER LOOKS LIKE WHAT IT ONCE DID. IT'S NOT LIKE 12 YEARS A SLAVE ANYMORE. HERE IN AUSTRALIA IT IS THE YOUNG GIRL FORCED INTO MARRIAGE AT THE AGE OF 12. IT'S THE HOSPITALITY WORKER WHO'S HAD THEIR PASSPORT TAKEN - WHO'S TOLD THAT THEY HAVE TO WORK 15 HOURS A DAY TO REPAY THEIR DEBT."

Richard Di Natale

EXAMPLES OF SLAVERY IN AUSTRALIA

"WHEN I FIRST HEARD THEIR STORIES, I THOUGHT - SURELY THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING IN AUSTRALIA. AND YET IT IS."
Commissioner James Condon

- 2011, a Sydney woman suffering from a kidney condition was suspected to have trafficked a young woman from the Philippines with the intention of harvesting an organ. Due to this case, Australia now has a criminal offence to address organ trafficking under the Commonwealth Code. ¹
- 2013, a martial arts fighter faced court on 2 charges of human trafficking and two charges of debt bondage. He is accused of operating a labour hire company that lured men to Australia where they were kept in bondage. This included taking control over their bank accounts, confiscating their passports, demanding money from them and threatening them with violence if they did not comply. ²
- 2013, a Brisbane woman was jailed for 9 years for trafficking her 9 year old daughter from Thailand to work in her Brisbane sex work business. The mother sent for her daughter from Thailand to be brought to Australia for a 6 week holiday in 2004 and was kept in a situation of slavery. ³
- 2013, the Australian Federal Police arrested 3 Australians for recruiting Filipino boxers to Australia, promising them riches and success. When they arrived in Sydney they had their passports taken and they were used as unpaid domestic workers. ⁴
- 2014, an Australian Institute of Criminology study revealed the exploitation of women coming to Australia as spouses and being used as slaves. In one case, a Thai woman was subjected to labouring in her husband's market garden for \$40-\$50 per month, in another case a woman was put to work as a domestic worker for her husband's family. ⁵
- 2015, a 12 year old girl was forced into marriage with a 27 year old man in New South Wales. ⁶

1 <http://bit.ly/organtrafficking>

2 <http://bit.ly/westaustrialiacase>

3 <http://bit.ly/brisbaneslaverycase>

4 <http://bit.ly/filipinoboxers>

5 <http://bit.ly/slavelikemarriage>

6 <http://bit.ly/forcedmarriagensw>

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IN AUSTRALIA

The Government of Australia sustains a strong stance against modern slavery, with continued criminal justice efforts, financial support for NGOs offering victim support, and regional leadership and collaboration. In 2013, the passing of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Act 2013 strengthened Australia's ability to prosecute offenders by introducing new offences of forced marriage and harbouring a victim, and amending definitions to capture subtle forms of coercion such as psychological oppression. The Crimes Legislation Amendment (Law Enforcement Integrity, Vulnerable Witness Protection and Other Measures) Act 2013 was also passed to improve protection of victims and increase their participation in prosecutions, including by allowing victims and witnesses to testify via video link and have a support person with them.

Australia continued to show regional leadership in tackling modern slavery by dedicating \$US50 million to the five year Australia-Asia Program to Combat

Trafficking in Persons. In 2013, the Government also committed to ensuring that public supply chains are free of modern slavery through amendments to government procurement policies, however, concrete steps are yet to be taken to implement this policy.

On 1 December 2014 the Government released the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19. The initiatives contained in the Plan were founded on the following principles: to prevent and deter human trafficking and slavery; to detect, investigate and prosecute offenders; and to provide support to trafficked people, including by protecting their human rights.

The role of Government and their ability to work with other Governments, international agencies and civil society organisations is considered vital in the fight against human trafficking and slavery.



The Australian Government's National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19

THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN FREEDOM NETWORK

"WE CONDEMN SLAVERY IN ALL ITS FORMS, AND ARE COMMITTED TO ACTIVELY ENSURE THAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS ERADICATED IN OUR WORLD."

Pastor Wayne Alcorn

1. **Pastor Wayne Alcorn**, National President, Australian Christian Churches, represented by, Pastor Sean Stanton
2. **Reverend Dr Bill Brown**, Chair, National Council of Australian Baptists in Australia
3. **Commissioner James Condon**, The Salvation Army Eastern Territory
4. **Right Reverend David Cook**, Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Australia
5. **His Grace Bishop Daniel**, Coptic Orthodox Church of Australia, Sydney and Affiliated Regions
6. **Archbishop Dr Philip Freier**, Primate, Anglican Church of Australia represented by, Right Reverend Dr Matthew Brain
7. **Archbishop Denis Hart**, President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, represented by, Reverend Brian Lucas, General Secretary
8. **Sheikh Ali Jaber**, Director, Al Sadiq Foundation, Melbourne
9. **Bishop John Henderson**, Lutheran Church of Australia, represented by, Bishop Mark Lieschke
10. **Pastor Brian Houston**, Global Senior Pastor & Founder, Hillsong Church, represented by, Joel A'Bell Lead Pastor, Hillsong Church Australia
11. **Rabbi Alon Meltzer**, Rabbinic Council of Australia and New Zealand & Executive Council of Australian Jewry
12. **Pandit Narendra Dave**, President, Australian Council of Hindu Clergy
13. **His Eminence Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed**, Grand Mufti of Australia, represented by Shaykh Ahmed Abdo, Office of the Grand Mufti of Australia, Australian National Imams Council
14. **Sheikh Youssef Nabha**, Imam, Masjed Al Rahman, Kingsgrove Sydney
15. **Julian Robertson**, Presiding Clerk of Australian Quakers, represented by, Mrs. Rae Litting
16. **Venerable Ban Ruo Shi**, Senior Abbott, Prajna Monastery Australia
17. **Stuart McMillan**, President, Uniting Church in Australia, represented by, Dr. Mark Zirnsak, Director, Justice and Mission, Synod of Victoria & Tasmania
18. **Commissioner Floyd Tidd**, The Salvation Army Southern Territory



THE FUTURE

WHAT THE AUSTRALIAN FREEDOM NETWORK WILL DO



Plans are underway for the Australian Freedom Network to reconvene in February 2016 to progress their strategic direction. Thereafter, they will engage in individual consultation sessions led by The Salvation Army's Freedom Partnership. The Global Freedom Network will participate in these initiatives and continue to provide ongoing support, strategic alliances and identify opportunities for joined up practical and spiritual action.



"WITH EDUCATION, RESPECT AND DIGNITY FOR EVERY HUMAN PERSON, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

Catholic Archbishop Denis Hart

Below are examples of the initiatives the Australian Freedom Network will undertake in 2016:

- Raise awareness about slavery in Australia amongst faith communities
- Unify faith-based organisations to collaborate on ending slavery in Australia
- Inspire people to engage with the issue of modern slavery as an extension of their faith in Australia
- Encourage faith communities to take meaningful actions to end slavery in Australia
- Support and amplify existing anti-slavery work in Australia

"IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE ALL TAKE A STAND TO ELIMINATE THIS GREAT EVIL, AND WE JOIN TOGETHER TO RECOGNISE THE GOD-GIVEN DIGNITY OF EACH HUMAN PERSON: TO KNOW FREEDOM; TO LIVE WITHOUT THEIR LIVES BEING OWNED BY OTHERS AND TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES TO THE FULLEST OF THE POTENTIAL THAT GOD HAS GIVEN THEM."

Anglican Archbishop Dr Philip Freier





"ON BEHALF OF THE MUSLIMS OF AUSTRALIA, I AM HONOURED TO SIGN THIS DECLARATION THAT LIFTS THE STATUS OF THE HUMAN BEING, RESTORING HIS OR HER DIGNITY AND FREEDOM."

His Eminence Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed



FULL SPEECH TRANSCRIPTS

We, the undersigned, are gathered here today for a historical initiative to inspire spiritual and practical action by all global faiths and people of good will everywhere to eradicate modern slavery across the world by 2020 and for all time.

In the eyes of God each human being is a free person, whether girl, boy, woman or man, and is destined to exist for the good of all in equality and fraternity. Modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labor and prostitution, organ trafficking, and any relationship that fails to respect the fundamental conviction that all people are equal and have the same freedom and dignity, is a crime against humanity.

We pledge ourselves here today to do all in our power, within our faith communities and beyond, to work together for the freedom of all those who are enslaved and trafficked so that their future may be restored. Today we have the opportunity, awareness, wisdom, innovation and technology to achieve this human and moral imperative.

Andrew Forrest
Chair of the Global Freedom Network

+ Jack Cantuar
مفتي كبير
للدين الاسلامي
في كندا

Shahab

Abdullah bin Ali
on behalf of the Islamic Council and
Pakistani Muslim community

Grand Imam of Al-Azhar uses the word - religions -

The full speeches of all leaders who spoke at Parliament House, Canberra Australia, at the signing of the *Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery* on 2nd December 2015, are provided.



Pastor Wayne Alcorn
*National President,
Australian Christian
Churches*

"The Australian Christian Churches believes that every human being is entitled to freedom and equality, to live with dignity and be treated with respect.

As a movement of over 1,000 churches, we condemn slavery in all its forms and we are committed to actively ensure that human trafficking is eradicated in our world during our generation.

Today we stand as advocates for the freedom of those whose lives are being traded as commodities, and as a voice for liberty and justice for those who have no voice and whose rights have been violated.

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that this is our mandate; in the words declared by Jesus: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news to the poor; to proclaim that captives will be released, the blind will see; that the oppressed will be set free..." (Luke 4:18 NLT)

Together with the co-signatories of the Australian Freedom Network, the Australian Christian Churches affirms our support for every effort and endeavour to effectively stand against and eliminate human trafficking in the 21st century. We believe that by working together in faith, we can achieve this goal."



Rev Dr Bill Brown
*Chair, National Council of
Australian Baptists in Australia*

"Australian Baptists affirm the supreme authority of the Bible, the living Word of God, in all matters of faith and conduct, and seek to thoughtfully and diligently apply biblical teaching to issues of public and private morality.

From the Bible we are assured that all persons are created in the image of God, and should be treated with dignity and respect; and all persons are created equal, and should be treated with justice and compassion (Genesis 1:26-27; Amos 5:24; Micah 6:8; Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 10:25-37; James 5:1-6).

We believe that all slavery – whether chattel slavery, serfdom or debt bondage – is contrary to the will of God, who sees and hears the suffering and injustice caused by slavery (Exodus 3:7-8). We believe that slavery alienates humankind from God and from one another; that no person should be owned or exploited as the property of another; that workers are not to be

considered as merely instrumental in the production of goods and services; that work done should be justly remunerated; and that workers have a right to adequate rest from their employment.

We believe that an essential element of the mission of God, expressed in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, is to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, and release from oppression – including the physical and psychological oppression of slavery (Luke 4:18-19). All those who seek to follow Jesus are called to join him in this work.

We believe that, while the Bible does not explicitly outlaw slavery, the church of Jesus Christ constitutes a new kind of society which enables and empowers social transformation, including the elimination of slavery in all its forms. We are confident that the consistent application of the biblical principles of human dignity and equality, supported by universal human rights, will result in equality before God that is no longer a hidden, metaphysical reality but a social one, and that delivers freedom for slaves everywhere.

We commend the prophetic witness of all who work toward the noble goal of freedom from slavery and an end to its evil institutions. We commend the actions of governments and non-government organisations dedicated to ending slavery in our time.

We commit ourselves to expose the sin of slavery, to serve as Christ's presence in support of enslaved people, and to help to bring healing and wholeness to individuals and families and communities broken by slavery, for the glory of God and the realisation of the kingdom of God.

We further commit ourselves to work together with others of similar convictions toward a world where economic injustice and discrimination are eliminated – or, as the Apostle Paul put it, where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28)."



Commissioner James Condon
The Salvation Army Eastern Territory

"The Salvation Army Australia is deeply committed to ending modern slavery however it may be manifested. The Salvation Army stands together, united in one purpose, and with one voice to affirm that modern slavery must end.

Modern slavery is contrary to the principles of freedom and dignity, which are core to who we are.

The Salvation Army is opposed to the corrupt abuse of power against other human beings. We have a responsibility, both individually and collectively to work for the liberation of those who have been enslaved.

We believe all people are created in the image of God and are loved by Him (Genesis 1:26), no person is of less value or importance and therefore all should

be treated with the same respect and the same love.

Every person has the right to freedom, every person should be respected and every human life should be held in high regard. The Bible teaches that nobody should be exploited or damaged. Psalm 10 describes the wickedness of those who entrap others and the Psalmist calls on God to intervene. This Psalm is as relevant now as it was when it was written many years before the birth of Jesus.

Jesus taught that no one should live in physical or spiritual bondage. He said, 'The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, 'This is the year the Lord has chosen.'" (Luke 4: 18 - 19). He was quoting Isaiah 61: 1 - 2. Later in Isaiah 61 are these words, 'I, the Lord, love justice! But I hate robbery and injustice.' (v. 8).

We are called to rise up, to speak out and to act, to end modern slavery."



Right Rev David Cook
Moderator Presbyterian Church of Australia

"The Presbyterian Church of Australia affirms its faith in the God and Father of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the triune God.

We believe that God has breathed out the words of Scripture via His Holy Spirit, the Bible is the God-breathed Word of God, our supreme authority, that which a careful and serious reading of the Bible affirms, this denomination affirms, that which it condemns, we condemn.

We believe that all humankind is to be respected because man and woman were created by God in His image (Genesis 1:26 -27).

We believe that Jesus Christ took on human flesh and revealed God's model of humanity (John 1:14, John 14:9,

Colossians 1:15 - 19) and that humans are more truly human by knowing Him and growing to be like Him (Romans 8:29).

We believe that Jesus Christ was committed to the love of enemy (Matthew 5:44) and friend (Luke 10:27 - 28), we therefore commit ourselves to the consistent pursuit of the elimination of 21st Century slavery - which is profoundly unloving.

We believe that all enslavement, whereby humans lose freedom and are exploited, against their will, for the profit and advantage of others, is both disrespectful of God and dehumanising of the human being.

We believe that every effort ought to be made to rid the world of such a stain, by all legal means, thus expressing solidarity with our brethren of the 17th and 18th centuries who worked for the eradication of slavery in an earlier age."



His Grace Bishop Daniel
Coptic Orthodox Church of Australia, Sydney and Affiliated Regions

"The Coptic Orthodox Church Diocese of Sydney & Affiliated Regions affirms its faith in one God and Father of Our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We believe in the triune God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

We believe that God created man and woman equally in God's image and human mankind was created (Genesis 1:26 -27).

We believe that Jesus Christ was Incarnated of the Virgin St Mary and of the Holy Spirit, and became man except for sin, for the sake of humanity, in order to show us a model of life in Godliness and Holiness by being His disciples for the Kingdom of Heaven.

We believe that Jesus Christ died on the Cross and resurrected on the third day and ascended to the Heavens on the 40th day and will return to judge the living and the dead.

We believe that Jesus Christ gave us the commandment of "love", "to love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

We believe all men and women are born equal and hence, all men and women have the right to live in peace, harmony, without prejudice of any kind, without harm of any abuse, and of any kind of violence to all human beings.

We believe that we will work in solidarity to eliminate slavery of all kind for the benefit of mankind."



Archbishop Dr Philip Freier
Primate Anglican Church of Australia

"Today, I am signing the *Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery*.

For any person the concept of slavery is abhorrent.

We know that it exists in far too many places in the world today, even in our own country.

It's important that we all take a stand to eliminate this great evil.

We join together to recognise the God-given dignity of each human person to know freedom, to live without their lives being owned by others and to express themselves to the fullest potential that God has given them.

So join with me in helping to make our world free of slavery."



Archbishop Denis Hart
President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

"In the words of Pope Francis, today slavery is rooted in the notion of the human being treated as an object.

When we no longer regard our neighbours as being of equal dignity, sharing a common humanity with our brothers and sisters, but rather as objects, slavery can often take root in our society.

It is a tragedy that in our world today, human beings created in the image and likeness of God, are deprived of their freedom, sold and reduced to being the property of others.

Many are treated as a means to an end. With education, respect and dignity for every human person, we can make a difference.

Together, let us commit to eradicate this affront to our humanity."

Sheikh Ali Jaber
Director, Al Sadiq Foundation, Melbourne

"We the **Muslim Eithna Ashari school of thought**, stand with our brothers in faith and our like in creation, for a practical action plan to eradicate modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution, organ trafficking, and any other abuse to a fellow human being across the world.

Allah created us free; no one has the rights to enslave or abuse the rights of his/her fellow human being.

Islam came as a practical religion to guide humanity from darkness into light with the teachings of the holy Prophets (Noah, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad peace be upon them all) who were sent as a mercy onto humanity all brought reform of slavery by encouraging the followers of the faith to free their slaves or treat them as their brothers, feed them from what they eat and dressed them from what they dress and not to ask them (slaves) to do things beyond their capacity (power) and if you they do so, then to help them.

To stop slavery

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces Towards east or West; but it is righteousness- to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, **and for the ransom of slaves**; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah-fearing. (Quran 2:177)

Allah will not call you to account for what is futile in your oaths, but He will call you to account for your deliberate oaths: for expiation, feed ten indigent persons, on a scale of the average for the food of your families; or clothe them; **or give a slave his freedom**. If that is beyond your means, fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths ye have sworn. But keep to your oaths. Thus doth Allah makes clear to you His signs, that ye may be grateful. (Quran 5:89)."



Pastor Brian Houston
Hillsong Church

"From the very beginning human beings were created in the image of God.

"Hillsong Church believes that all people are created in the image of God and that, as image bearers, all human beings are entitled to freedom, dignity and respect.

As a local church in Australia we are opposed to slavery in all its forms and are passionate about eradicating human trafficking across the globe.

The Bible says: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute" Prov 31:8 (NIV). Today we are raising our voices to speak on behalf of those whose voices have been silenced by injustice.

Together with the co-signatories of the Australian Freedom Network, Hillsong Church supports every effort to stand against, and eliminate human trafficking in the 21st Century. Working together we believe we can achieve this goal."



Bishop John Henderson
Lutheran Church of Australia

"From the very beginning human beings were created in the image of God.

Reverence for human life as a sacred gift and trust fills each person with dignity and worth.

We learn this also from the life of Jesus Christ, who treated each person with dignity and compassion. He did not come to be served, but to serve. As the Son of God he freely served other human beings with his whole life. He showed us the way that God wants us to deal with one another.

Forced service or bonded labour shatters that dignity. Turning one human into the possession of another, to deal with as they will, dehumanises both. This practice undermines the basis of human society,

and cheapens the value of human life. We are to explore new ways of living in which one human being does not exploit or dominate another.

We believe that slavery in all its forms is wrong. As a society we need to work to remove it, and repent of inhumane practices and the economic benefits we have received from them.

The Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand joins with church, faith, business and community leaders across the world to do all we can spiritually and practically to eradicate modern slavery.

Let us pray for the strength, grace, and determination we all need to achieve this end. Even as Christ has set us free, so let us live in that freedom for the welfare and benefit of all."



Rabbi Alon Meltzer
*Rabbinic Council of
Australia and New
Zealand & Executive
Council of Australian
Jewry*

"Maimonides the 12th Century philosopher, Joseph Caro, the author of the Shulchan Aruch (codification of Jewish law) in the 14th century, and modern day philosophers have maintained throughout history that slavery is not a Jewish attribute, and that fair treatment of all workers is mandated due to the fact that we are created b'tzelem Elokim, in the image of God.

Rabbi Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Palestine, transposed the ethics taught in the rules surrounding slavery, as an opportunity to educate the industrial hierarchy of their responsibilities to their works. Kook, realising that each of us works for someone, describes these laws as a way to ensure that each of us should be granted rights to combat injustices.

The Jewish people are commanded numerous times to remember that we were slaves in Egypt, strangers in a strange land. These principles govern much of our interactions between our fellow human beings. It is why Jewish communities have been seen linking arms in various civil rights movements and actions.

At this time, when the Australian Freedom Network is launching, at the centre of our democratic institution, that the Rabbinic Council of Australia and New Zealand stand with our entire Jewish community, and faith leaders from around the country, to decry human trafficking, the exploitation of men women and children, and the very concept of slavery.

For too long, we have seen reports and the impacts of human trafficking, and for too long the world has sat idly by doing too little. Now is the time to stand up and make our voices heard, joining a global network of faiths and organisations to bring an end to the destructive consequences of slavery!

In the Ethics of our Fathers (Pirkei Avot 1:14) we read of Hillel, the great Mishnaic Sage where he said, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?"

We have to make sure we look after ourselves and our people, but if we are only for ourselves what is the point of being here. If we do not act, we are part of the problem, and we are giving up parts of our very humanity. If we don't act now, then we will never act."



Pandit Narendra Dave
*President, Australian Council
of Hindu Clergy*

"One of the core beliefs of Hinduism is that God resides in the heart of every living being.

All living beings are the embodiments of the Divine. But it is only in the human birth that one can strive for self-realization and unification with the Divine.

The human birth is thus an extremely precious attainment and we deplore all forms of trafficking, slavery or any form of degradation, exploitation or coercion of other human beings for commercial gain.

There is a common universal prayer that we recite: "May the wicked become virtuous, may the virtuous attain peace, may the peaceful be liberated from their bonds and may those who are liberated help to liberate others!"



**His Eminence
Dr Ibrahim Abu
Mohammed**
*Grand Mufti of
Australia*

"Today, I am signing an important Declaration

calling for the freedom from slavery,
liberating people from the fear of creation
and worrying about their livelihood.

On behalf of the Muslims of Australia

I am honoured to sign this Declaration
that lifts the status of the human being,
restoring his or her dignity and freedom

Thank you.

May the peace, mercy and blessings of God
be with you."

Sheikh Youssef Nabha
Imam, Masjed Al Rahman

"We the **Muslim Eithna Ashari school of thought**, stand with our brothers in faith and our like in creation, for a practical action plan to eradicate modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution, organ trafficking, and any other abuse to a fellow human being across the world.

Allah created us free; no one has the rights to enslave or abuse the rights of his/her fellow human being.

Islam came as a practical religion to guide humanity from darkness into light with the teachings of the holy Prophets (Noah, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad peace be upon them all) who were sent as a mercy onto humanity all brought reform of slavery by encouraging the followers of the faith to free their slaves or treat them as their brothers, feed them from what they eat and dressed them from what they dress and not to ask them (slaves) to do things beyond their capacity (power) and if you they do so, then to help them.

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Julian Robertson
*Presiding Clerk of
Australian Quakers*

'Love thy neighbour as thyself' (Mark 12:31).

Most Quakers envisage a world in which 'that of God' in each of us enables us to recognize and acknowledge 'that of God' in our neighbour; a world in which we strive to put into practice our testimonies of Peace, Integrity, Equality, Simplicity, Community and Earthcare.

As well as trying to live by these guiding principles in our personal lives, Quakers, along with many people of goodwill, are committed to changing society, morally and politically, to provide equal opportunity, equal access to health and education, and equal right for all to enjoy a safe, wholesome and fulfilling life.

When we regard all people as equal in the sight of God we cannot exploit or humiliate them. For this reason Quakers everywhere work to make their society more equal, and

to make relationships between countries fairer. A good society is one in which people enjoy seeing other people thrive.

In the 19th century Quakers were very active in the anti-slavery movement. Today global slavery and human trafficking are less conspicuous but more widespread globally, and continue to be an appalling abuse of human rights and equality.

Many Quakers try to reduce their participation in human exploitation by purchasing Fair Trade products, but what else can we do, especially for those who are exploited here in Australia? We can also raise public awareness, support organizations that are active in this area, including the Australian Freedom Network, and 'speak truth to power'.



Venerable Ban Ruo Shi
*Senior Abbott, Prajna
Monastery Australia*

"Slavery in all its forms should be abolished as it does not respect the rights of peoples of all faiths. It undermines our common humanity and seeks to destroy individual, family and community bonds.

Buddhism believes that we are all equal and that we should show compassion and respect to all sentient beings. Slavery does not respect or value the lives of others as it exploits the vulnerable and often voiceless members of society.

All sentient beings have the potential to gain enlightenment and we should all work together to help those most in need."



Stuart McMillan
President, Uniting Church in Australia

“The Uniting Church in Australia believes that all people are precious and entitled to live with dignity because they are God’s children.

Each person’s life and rights need to be protected or the human community - the reflection of God - is diminished.

All forms of slavery and forced labour are an abuse of human rights and contrary to the gospel of God’s love in Christ for all human beings and the earth.

The Uniting Church in Australia has a long-standing commitment to advocacy for human rights through our own councils and agencies, and in solidarity with our partner churches around the world.

We proudly support this network for the elimination of human trafficking and slavery which is an abomination of human rights and dignity.”



Commissioner Floyd Tidd
The Salvation Army Southern Territory

“The Salvation Army Australia is deeply committed to ending modern slavery however it may be manifested. The Salvation Army stands together, united in one purpose, and with one voice to affirm that modern slavery must end.

Modern slavery is contrary to the principles of freedom and dignity, which are core to who we are.

The Salvation Army is opposed to the corrupt abuse of power against other human beings. We have a responsibility, both individually and collectively to work for the liberation of those who have been enslaved.

We believe all people are created in the image of God and are loved by Him (Genesis 1:26), no person is of less value or importance and therefore all should be treated with the same respect and the same love.

Every person has the right to freedom, every person should be respected and every human life should be held in high regard. The bible teaches that nobody should be exploited or damaged. Psalm 10 describes the wickedness of those who entrap others and the Psalmist calls on God to intervene. This Psalm is as relevant now as it was when it was written many years before the birth of Jesus.

Jesus taught that no one should live in physical or spiritual bondage. He said, ‘The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, ‘This is the year the Lord has chosen.’ (Luke 4: 18 - 19). He was quoting Isaiah 61: 1 - 2. Later in Isaiah 61 are these words, ‘I, the Lord, love justice! But I hate robbery and injustice.’ (v. 8).

We are called to rise up, to speak out and to act, to end modern slavery.”