

Rohingya peoples are the most persecuted minority group in the world,

According to the UN Report Rohingya peoples are the most persecuted minority group in the world, says Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, Fr Maurizio Pettenà.

This is a persecuted minority group from Myanmar and Bangladesh seeking asylum not being allowed to initially land in either, Thailand, Indonesia or Malaysia due to the fact that they are practically stateless and their claim for asylum is being rejected everywhere, says Fr Pettenà.

This is a situation of emergency that needs both an immediate solution as well as a long term strategy: says Fr Pettenà.

Situations of emergency such as these call on the solidarity and on the compassion of everyone. This is not enough. We need to find a long term solution:

Fr Maurizio Pettenà, Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, calls on the Australian Government, given its importance in this Region and its role as signatory to the Refugee Convention to exercise a role of leadership and act as a diplomatic mediator to work towards a more human and durable solution.

In this moment – says Bishop Vincent Long, recently appointed as Chair to the ACMRO, I make my own the pleading of Pope Francis and I call on the Catholic Community of Australia “to think of the Rohingya people: “When they left their land fleeing persecution, they didn’t know what was going to happen to them. And they have been stuck on a boat there, for months... They get to a city and ask for some water and food and they are told to “go away” says Pope Francis.

Though the smuggling of people must be condemned as immoral, leaving people to die at sea is not less irresponsible and immoral.

Care for our fellow man, must always be at the forefront of any policies that are put into place. Fr Pettenà expressed gratitude at the news that the Indonesian and Malaysian governments had been able to come to a temporary agreement and take some of these refugees

If no long term solution will be taken, these people will be condemned to die at sea and all of us will have to live with their blood on our conscience.