

**The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP**  
*Prime Minister of Australia*



**The Hon. Peter Dutton MP**  
*Leader of the Opposition*

**Mr. Adam Bandt MP**  
*Leader of the Australian Greens*

**Independent Members of the Crossbench**

**Dear Leaders of the Government, Opposition, Greens, and Crossbench,**

We are writing as the leaders of Australia's Christian churches and faith-based international development organisations who care deeply about our nation's role in the world and our commitment to standing with our neighbours through Australian aid.

First, we want to **thank you for your service to our nation**. We recognise the weight of leadership, particularly in these times of global and economic uncertainty, and we continue to uphold you in our prayers as you lead and serve your community.

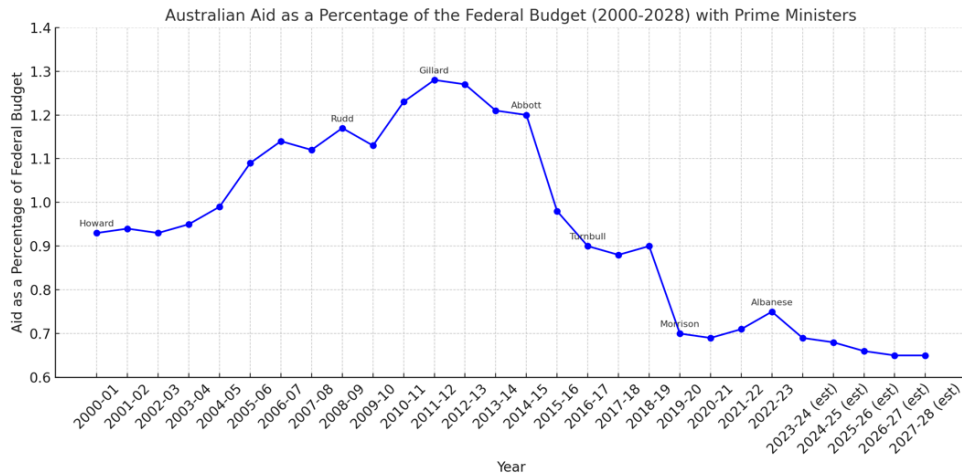
As church leaders, we see firsthand the hardship facing many Australians. Our churches are deeply involved in supporting those doing it tough—from food relief and crisis care to mental health support and pastoral care. **We wholeheartedly support efforts to ensure that domestic needs are met.** At the same time, we believe we are also called to care for our neighbours beyond our shores.

For many of our churches, this commitment is lived out through longstanding partnerships across the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and beyond. **We've seen the impact of Australian aid—helping communities overcome poverty, respond to disasters, and build resilience.** We are grateful for the Government's collaboration with faith-based organisations through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), which has demonstrated the effectiveness of these partnerships.

We acknowledge the importance of responsible budget management and share the desire for aid to be well-directed and effective. Australians rightly expect that every dollar of aid is used wisely to support those most in need. At the same time, **maintaining a stable and predictable aid program remains crucial for our relationships in the region.**

While Australia's aid has been stabilised in recent years, it remains at historically low levels as a share of the federal budget. **At just 0.68% of the budget, aid is now almost half of what it was under Prime Ministers Howard, Rudd, and Gillard.** As a share of Gross National Income (GNI), our aid stands at just 0.19%, placing Australia at 26th among OECD nations in 2023, down from 14th in 2015.

## Graph: Structural Decline of Australia's Aid Budget (2000-2024)



Source: [ANU Dev Tracker](#), ODA from DFAT statistical summaries and budget documents, federal budget from Treasury budget document

While we recognise the need for ongoing fiscal discipline, research commissioned by Micah Australia and conducted by RedBridgE has shown that when Australians learn what a small fraction aid is of the federal budget, they **support modestly increasing it**. The same research found that framing aid as just 1% of the federal budget reassures Australians that 99% of spending remains focused at home, addressing domestic challenges.

As the graph above illustrates, **setting our sights on aid reaching 1% of the federal budget** would be a modest and achievable goal. *This is not an expansion—it is a restoration back towards levels of past bipartisan support.* A renewed commitment at a time of global need and uncertainty would send a strong message to our neighbours that Australia remains a steadfast friend and ally.

In the past six months alone, church leaders and members from across the country—not agency staff or lobbyists—have conducted over **55 meetings with MPs from all parties**, organised by Micah Australia. These meetings, led by constituents who care deeply about Australia's role in the world, have highlighted the strong and widespread support for aid within the Christian community.

We ask you to **affirm your commitment to maintaining Australia's aid program** and continuing to **build on the stability that has been achieved**. At a time of global uncertainty, Australia has an opportunity to provide genuine leadership in our region. We urge you to ensure that our nation remains a generous, reliable, and engaged partner, living out the values of compassion and justice that we hold dear.

We appreciate your leadership and look forward to your reassurance on this important matter.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Please see the following page for signatories.**

## National Heads of Churches

**Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB**

*President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference*

**Rev Charissa Suli**

*President, Uniting Church in Australia*

**The Most Rev'd Geoffrey Smith**

*Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia*

**Ps Wayne Alcorn**

*President, Australian Christian Churches*

**Commissioner Miriam Gluyas**

*Territorial Commander, The Salvation Army Australia*

**Pr Terry Johnson**

*President, Seventh-day Adventist Church Australian Union Conference*

**Rev Mark Wilson**

*National Ministries Director, Australian Baptist Ministries*

**Rev Paul Smith**

*Bishop, Lutheran Church of Australia*

**Rob Nyhuis**

*National Chair, Churches of Christ in Australia*

**Rev John Gilmore**

*President, National Council of Churches*

## Church Based International Development Agencies

**Rev'd Dr John Deane**

*Executive Director, The Anglican Board of Mission – Australia (ABM)*

**Elijah Buol OAM**

*CEO, Act for Peace*

**Denison Grellmann**

*CEO, Adventist Development and Relief Agency Australia*

**Melissa Lispett**

*CEO, Baptist World Aid Australia*

**Kirsten Sayers**

*CEO, Caritas Australia*

**Dr Sureka Goringe**

*National Director, UnitingWorld*

**Bec Oates**

*CEO, Tearfund Australia*

**Winsome Merrett**

*Chief Secretary, The Salvation Army*

**Jane Edge**

*CEO, CBM Australia*

**Jo Knight**

*CEO, Anglican Overseas Aid*

**John Lamerton**

*CEO, Global Mission Partners*

**Michael Stolz**

*Executive Director, Australian Lutheran World Service*

**Richard Reeve**

*CEO, International Nepal Fellowship Australia*

## Micah Australia

**Rev Tim Costello**

*Executive Director, Micah Australia*

**Matt Darvas**

*National Director, Micah Australia*