



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Asylum Seekers**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 14 September 2015**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Monday, 14 September 2015  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Bandt, Adam, MP

**Source** House  
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**Mr BANDT** (Melbourne) (16:32): I rise today to talk to about the Melbourne Welcomes Refugees project, which my office and I are running. Since launching it last Thursday, 16,000 people have put up their hand to provide practical support to refugees coming to Melbourne. I am overwhelmed by the generosity and support Melbournians are prepared to give to people making their new homes in our city. I am overwhelmed but I am not surprised, because Melbournians have long stood up for the rights of people seeking asylum and refuge.

Early last week, over 10,000 Melbournians joined thousands more people across the country to call on the government to take strong, compassionate action to support Syrian refugees. Once the government made that welcomed decision to accept 12,000 Syrian refugees above our usual intake, I knew that the outpouring of empathy and compassion from Melbourne and from throughout Australia would see people wanting to do more. Now Melbournians are not just putting compassion back on the national agenda but also opening their arms at home too. Sixteen hundred Melbournians having already put up their hand to say that they will take real action to say, 'Welcome'. These people are from all ages and backgrounds. We have had people at university say they would like to help by giving their time, and others who have come to Melbourne as refugees themselves saying they want to extend the same welcome they received years ago.

You can join them and contribute food and other needed supplies, donate, or even help host a welcome dinner with refugees in Melbourne. Visit [adambandt.com/welcome](http://adambandt.com/welcome) and we will put you in touch with the relevant local agencies to welcome and support refugees on the ground in Melbourne.