



The Salvation Army Australia Territory

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Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: jsct@aph.gov.au

Inquiry Into International Labour Organization Protocol of 2014 to Forced Labour Convention 1930 (No. 29)

Dear Chair,

The Salvation Army welcomes the opportunity to make this submission in full support of the Australian Government ratifying the International Labour Organization Protocol of 2014 to Forced Labour Convention 1930 (No. 29) **[the Protocol]**. Since 2008, The Salvation Army has independently operated the only dedicated refuge for survivors and people at risk of forced labour in Australia. We are an inaugural member of the National Roundtable on Slavery and Trafficking and work extensively with numerous government departments to improve protections for migrant workers who are recognised as being at higher risk of forced labour.

As you will be aware, the Government expressed its intent to ratify the Protocol in 2017 and this commitment was reiterated in Action 9 of the current National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2025. Now that the Western Australian Parliament has addressed the gap that excluded certain categories of workers, including private domestic workers, under the definition of employee, we are pleased to see the Government progressing this aim quickly.

In its response to the final report of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Inquiry into establishing a Modern Slavery Act, the Government expressed its commitment to implementing international standards to combat forced labour and has already ratified the most significant international treaties to abolish this element of modern slavery, the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No.105). This Protocol requires States to take that commitment further, focusing on how States can improve basic labour protections for vulnerable workers, including migrant and informal workers, and prevent abuses arising during recruitment.

While progress is being made to improve basic protections for migrant workers in Australia, there is much worker still do to. On ratification, we will seek to work with the Government to implement all recommendations from the Migrant Worker Taskforce, particularly the establishment of a robust, national labour hire licensing scheme. There is also a need for greater safeguards to

Founders **William & Catherine Booth**
General **Brian Peddle**

*Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight
alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus*

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enable workers to report unlawful conduct and support prosecutions. As noted in our evidence to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Protecting Migrant Workers) Bill 2021, on 23/2/22, such legislation will have little effect if workers are too fearful to come forward.

The quote below from a migrant worker who participated in a focus group convened by The Salvation Army illustrates the barrier so many workers experience. Many tell us they do not believe that reporting to authorities will have any effect in changing their circumstances.

“

“We just endure”

- Migrant worker from Queensland.

”

Ratification of the Protocol will provide another tool for ensuring Australia becomes a place where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity at work—regardless of their visa status. The Salvation Army would like thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide input into this inquiry and for the focus and attention being given to this important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Hateley, Major
Head of Government Relations
The Salvation Army Australia

25 February 2022

The Salvation Army acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters throughout Australia.

We pay our respect to Elders and acknowledge their continuing relationship to this land and the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

We also acknowledge future aspirations of all First Nations peoples. Through respectful relationships we will work for the mutual flourishing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.

We commit ourselves in prayer and practice to this land of Australia and its people, seeking reconciliation, unity and equity.

