

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Australia needs to focus on generosity and compassion  
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The world is in crisis: We're tackling war, poverty, hunger, displaced people and climate change. To lead the global community, Australia must do more to help overcome these global challenges; we must lead by example and promote solutions. We must also live the values we promote internationally here at home – including domestic human rights, and contributions to global cooperation and aid projects.

Compassion is at the heart of what it means to be human, so Australian foreign policy must be grounded in shared humanity. For decades, Australian aid has helped people break free from the devastating cycles of poverty, disadvantage and oppression. If we prioritise compassion, Australian aid can continue to be a powerful force for transforming lives and communities.

Today, 800 million lives are still characterised by persistent, absolute poverty. Poverty stops people from achieving their potential, from contributing fully to society, and from enjoying basic health. Poverty's twin is inequality: in 2017, 8 billionaires own the same amount of wealth as the poorest half of the world – 3.6 billion people. We must eradicate absolute poverty and inequality to create a fairer world.

Australia's prosperity depends on overcoming extreme poverty and inequality, and promoting inclusive and sustainable growth for all. As the gap between rich and poor widens, global security becomes weaker and weaker. By writing off poor nations' excess debts, Australia could support development in those countries. By supporting a minimum tax on corporate income, Australia can help to stop corporations secretly shifting money around the world.

We need more women and girls in political and economic leadership, to shape decisions that affect them. This is vital if we want to ensure gender equality and a more prosperous future. Australia should use its influence to increase the number of women and girls in decision-making roles – at home and around the world.

The gap between the super-rich 1% and the rest of the world is only getting bigger. Australia must help make the world fairer – by helping other countries develop strong and inclusive systems for education and justice. We must also abolish trade barriers that keep rich countries rich and poor countries poor.

Education is vital to breaking the cycle of poverty. But conflict, teacher shortages, scarce learning resources, lack of disability support, and the need to work for an income keep about 60 million children out of primary school. Australia must support access to quality education for all girls and boys, no matter where they live.

Australian aid is at its lowest level ever (as a % of GNI). while the need for global cooperation has never been greater! Australia should follow the UK's lead and legislate an aid budget of 0.7% of GNI. It's time we recognised the crucial role aid plays in creating the kind of world we want.

We should increase aid to **at least** 0.7% of GNI and prioritise poverty reduction and meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This is integral to Australia's security and prosperity. For this reason, Australia must commit to aid and to

developing innovative approaches to sustainable progress.

Australia has a strong economy, a stable population and a significant opportunity to welcome people seeking refuge across the globe. We must commit to increasing our humanitarian intake to **at least** 42,000 by 2021.

Rev Dr Melinda Cousins

