



## **SCOA Media release: Concern about the impact of ‘no advantage principle’**

The Settlement Council of Australia is concerned about the impact of the latest announcements from the Federal Government about changes to asylum policy. ‘The conditions imposed by the implementation of the ‘no advantage’ principle will have significant impacts on the lives of vulnerable individuals’ said Cedric Manen, Chairperson, Settlement Council of Australia. ‘The removal of work rights for people on bridging visas in the community, and the long delays in status resolution leaves people in limbo, dependant on others and with limited support.’

Australian settlement services have been identified in international forums such as the recent UNHCR’s Annual Tripartite Consultation on Resettlement as innovative and client centred. ‘These changes will have substantial impacts on clients who then try to build a life in Australia. The settlement sector will need to prepare for significant changes to support this group who may have spent years in Australia as an under class before their status is resolved’ commented Cedric Manen.

‘Reflecting on research into the economic, social and civic contributions of refugees to Australia, as documented in Professor Graeme Hugo’s report (June 2011), it is unlikely these policy changes will give these refugees the opportunity to make the positive contributions we know they are capable of.’

The changes will inevitably place additional burdens on non-government organisations who will be called on to provide support to people who have experienced long delays in determining their future. ‘The settlement sector needs better engagement from the government around settlement planning, to understand the impacts of these policy developments on settlement, and to ensure that Australia’s record of settlement support, and long term support for social cohesion is maintained’ said Cedric Manen.

For enquiries contact:

Settlement Council of Australia,

SCOA Executive Officer, Sky de Jersey 0434 589 493

SCOA Chair, Cedric Manen 0414 698 906