

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 25 September 2015
(for immediate release)

Internationally acclaimed comedian stands up for asylum seekers

Internationally acclaimed comedian, Sami Shah, will be performing **I, MIGRANT and other stories** on Tuesday, 27 October at 8.00pm at the Fremantle Town Hall as part of the 2015 Fremantle Festival. All funds raised by the performance will go to the A Fair Go For Asylum Seekers Appeal.

There are approximately 2,000 asylum seekers currently living in Western Australia who arrived by boat between August 2012 and December 2013. These asylum seekers are subject to a new fast track assessment process to determine their eligibility to seek protection in Australia by way of a temporary visa.

Only very limited, affordable legal assistance is available to this group of asylum seekers. They are often forced to go through the complex legal process for apply for protection unrepresented. This can compromise the integrity of the process and mean that people who are in need of protection are not recognised as such and are wrongfully returned to the persecution and harm from which they originally fled.

In response to this unmet need, The Humanitarian Group established the Temporary Protection Visa Project (**TPV Project**) to provide free specialised legal assistance to this highly vulnerable group of people. Since May 2015, The Humanitarian Group has:

- held 30 group information sessions across 10 languages to more than 400 asylum seekers;
- prepared and arranged for translations of fact sheets about applying for protection; and
- run more than 20 after hours clinics to assist asylum seekers to complete their protection applications.

To cover the ongoing costs of running the TPV Project on a full time basis, A Fair Go for Asylum Seekers Appeal was created in collaboration with a number of concerned organisations in Western Australia.

Helen Pearce, CEO of The Humanitarian Group, said the lack of access to legal representation is an almost insurmountable barrier to justice, especially when the success of a claim for protection can mean the difference between life and death.

“The funds raised by Sami’s performance will go a long way to providing this vital service to vulnerable people and ensuring they are treated with equality and dignity,” said Ms Pearce.

The Humanitarian Group is a not-for-profit organisation focused on empowering vulnerable people by providing free professional and accessible migration assistance, legal advice and education. It strives to do this in a way that embraces diversity and strengthens communities. END

[Community focused legal services for people new to Australia](#)

For more information, please contact Helen Pearce, Chief Executive Officer of The Humanitarian Group on **9227 7311** or by email to communications@thehumanitariangroup.org.au

Performance Details

Date: Tuesday, 27 October 2015

Time: 8pm (doors open at 7pm)

Venue: Fremantle Town Hall, 8 Williams Street, Fremantle

Tickets: \$25 + booking fee via fremantlefestival.oztix.com.au
18+ licensed event