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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**InTouch Welcomes Increased Funding Announcement and Calls for Prioritisation of Refugee and Migrant Women**

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence (inTouch) welcomes today's Federal Government announcement of a \$4.7 billion increase in funding to family violence services, and highlights the urgent need to prioritise refugee and migrant victim-survivors within this allocation.

The package covers a 5-year period, giving some much-needed stability to frontline services. "Today's announcement is very welcome for the family violence sector, which must be better resourced if we are to adequately respond to the growing national family violence crisis. This funding is a recognition of the crucial work that we are doing to support women and children to escape abuse and rebuild their lives in safety," said inTouch CEO, Rasha Abbas. "Services like ours need more capacity to assist the ever-growing number of people in need of life-saving assistance. Multi-year funding packages such as this allow us to plan ahead, ensuring that we can provide an in-depth, holistic service which supports women throughout their whole journey. The importance of frontline services and crisis response is clear, but recovery programs are also crucial to empower women to move on and thrive."

"Fleeing family violence is extremely challenging for anyone," added Ms Abbas. "However, migrant and refugee women are further marginalised by a myriad of additional hurdles in escaping the cycle of abuse. These women must also contend with linguistic and cultural barriers, a lack of support networks or familiarity with support services, increased isolation, the visa implications of leaving a relationship, and more. As such, we are calling on the government to put migrant and refugee women front and centre in their response to family violence, by prioritising these groups in this much-needed funding rollout."

inTouch provides refugee and migrant women with free, in-language, in-culture support, tailored to meet these specific needs. In addition to case management, referrals, education, advocacy, recovery programs and more, inTouch is the first multidisciplinary practice of its kind in Australia to include an in-house legal centre, which supports over 700 women per year to obtain intervention orders, parenting arrangements, property settlements, divorce and permanent residency.

inTouch's men's program, Motivation for Change, works with perpetrators of family violence to address the underlying causes of their behaviour. "We are pleased to see that this funding also aims to tackle the structural issues behind family violence, such as alcohol abuse. We urge for this to also be tailored to the specific needs of the different communities in Australia," said Ms Abbas.

"This funding package is a crucial step to addressing the family violence crisis in Australia," she adds. "We hope that the Victorian government works collaboratively with services such as ours

to ensure that immediate needs of the most marginalised women are met through this funding objective.”

**###ENDS###**

**About inTouch**

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence (inTouch) provides person-centred, integrated and culturally responsive family violence services to migrant and refugee communities across Victoria.

We have assisted over 30,000 women and children experiencing family violence throughout our 40 years of operation, providing a holistic service that centres the experiences of victim-survivors in everything we do.

inTouch provides many services including court and community outreach, legal assistance, sector training and capacity building, prevention work and perpetrator intervention programs. For more information, visit [www.intouch.org.au](http://www.intouch.org.au).