



## PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 550  
27 August 1975

### TIMOR EVACUEES

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced tonight that the Australian Government would take immediate action to help evacuees from Timor.

He said he had approved a series of charter flights to bring evacuees from Timor landed in Darwin from the "Lloyd Bakke" and the "Macdili" to proper facilities in southern Australia.

Darwin does not have facilities to accommodate those evacuees who do not wish to return immediately to Portugal.

Temporary residence will be granted to those refugees electing to remain in Australia and those wishing to apply for permanent residence will have their applications processed in the normal way.

The Department of Labor and Immigration will be responsible for chartering civil and R.A.A.F. aircraft to move the evacuees south and for accommodating them in migrant hostels. Flights are expected to begin within a few days.

There were 862 evacuees still in Darwin today. The "Macdili", which is expected to arrive in Darwin on Friday, is carrying about 800 evacuees. Most of the evacuees are Portuguese citizens and the Portuguese Government will pay their transport costs to southern Australia.

CANBERRA A.C.T.