



20 October 2016

RE: OFF-SHORE DETENTION OF REFUGEES
Letter to Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull MP

Dear Prime Minister,

I write on behalf of Australian Quakers to call upon the Federal Government to work with the Opposition and act immediately to end off-shore detention of refugees, and bring those held on Nauru and Manus Island to Australia for resettlement and healing.

The latest Amnesty International report about conditions on Nauru is consistent with all previous reports about the suffering of asylum seekers and refugees in off-shore detention. The policy has failed to meet basic humane standards and has compromised Australia's stated commitment to international refugee law and practice.

Quakers believe that the Federal Government and Opposition need to separate their 'stop the boats' approach from the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in off-shore centres. It should be possible, with appropriate negotiation with Indonesia and Malaysia, to ensure that people smuggling is not encouraged and that an orderly processing system is put in place in co-operation with UNHCR. At the same time it should be possible to accept that the people on Nauru and Manus should not be hostage to a policy of deterring others, and that they deserve compassionate treatment and support by Australia.

I appeal to you to take the necessary steps (jointly with the Opposition) to end the enormous human and financial cost of off-shore detention, and to acknowledge the harm done to the people left there indefinitely. I further ask that appropriate measures be put in place, in consultation with NGOs like us, to enable those people to resettle in Australia and become able to contribute to our community.

I am sending a similar letter to the Leader of the Opposition.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.R. Jordan".

Jo Jordan
Presiding Clerk
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia

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