



10 April 2019

Peter Dutton MP
Minister for Home Affairs
Parliament House ACT 2600

Dear Minister Dutton,

I write on behalf of Australian Quakers to urge that the Australian Government act to protect the best interests of the children of ISIS fighters stranded in refugee camps in Syria.

The children are innocent victims of their parents' decision to join ISIS, and are now at great risk because of the Government's decision to remove Australian passports and in some cases citizenship from their parents. We note in particular the well-publicised case of the children of Khaled Sharrouf and Tara Nettleton.

We support the statement made by Ben Saul (International Law, Sydney University) in the Fairfax Press (3 April) that Australia is responsible for the welfare of these children. We cannot expect the Kurdish rebels to care for them indefinitely. We ask that the Government seek diplomatic ways to negotiate their release and safe passage via Iraq to Australia. We are aware of reports that the US Government is willing to consider this approach.

In writing this appeal we are aware that resources will have to be devoted to the care and upbringing of these children in Australia to ensure that they do not suffer unduly from the toxic effects of being exposed to such a brutal war environment. We believe there are appropriate agencies in Australia that can offer support of this kind.

Yours faithfully,

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

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

Cc: Scott Morrison, Prime Minister
Bill Shorten MP, Opposition Leader
Senator Penny Wong, Shadow Foreign Minister

Australia Yearly Meeting

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