



8 February 2016

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull,
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

I write to you out of concern for the treatment and future health of the asylum seekers who may be returned to detention on Nauru.

Many amongst the Quaker community in Australia have a strong view that the cruel and in-human circumstances, particularly children in the Australian run detention centre cannot be justified on the grounds of its influence in stopping the traffic of asylum seekers coming by boat to Australia.

We acknowledge the reduction in deaths of asylum seekers from the virtual cessation of the people smuggling trade to Australia. However, the means by which this is achieved is totally unacceptable if the results of these actions are causing potentially life long mental and physical harm to detainees, particularly those in the first third of their lives.

Having acknowledged the extent of the mental and physical damage done to detainees whilst on Nauru, and bringing them to Australia for treatment, we cannot, by any civilised standards of decency, send them back into the situation in which these harms were caused. This would be a most shameful and immoral action, with which Australians would have to live now and into the future, at least for the duration of these detainees lives.

We strongly suggest that alternatives to detention centres on Nauru, Manus and Christmas Islands be found. For example, processing of asylum seekers within three months of application at offshore processing centres, particularly in Indonesia and/or increasing the humanitarian refugee intake are two options, and we are confident the Government has considered others.

I ask, on behalf of Australian Quakers, and in the name Australia's past record of humanitarian decency towards who have escaped appalling and life-threatening conditions in their own country and who are desperately seeking a future for their families, to not send detainees currently in Australia back to Nauru.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julian Robertson".

Julian Robertson
Presiding Clerk
Quakers Australia

Australia Yearly Meeting

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