



7 November 2017

Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

I write on behalf of Australian Quakers to express outrage at the way the Government is handling the crisis on Manus Island.

Given the repeated reports by UNHCR and other agencies of the distress being experienced by the asylum seekers and refugees detained there, the withdrawal of all support services is in our view inhumane. We are convinced that there is clear evidence that (a) at least some of the facilities to which they are to be moved are not fully operational and secure, (b) the refugees are fearful for their safety, (c) medical attention is being denied to the detainees and health and hygiene conditions are deteriorating, and (d) the local people have not been consulted adequately about the location of facilities in their community and are therefore nervous of what may happen. In addition, we recall the PNG Supreme Court decision that the Manus arrangement is illegal under the PNG constitution, and that the PNG Government has stated that Australia has primary responsibility for the detainees.

We are deeply concerned that the situation will lead not only to starvation of the detainees but to violence as the tension increases. We consider that your rejection of the resettlement offer by New Zealand, and the lengthy delays and uncertainties surrounding the USA offer, make it urgent for you to take steps to reduce the risk of a serious outbreak of violence. This could involve bringing the detainees to Australia on a temporary basis until longer-term solutions are found.

Australia Yearly Meeting

The Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers) in Australia Inc.
Incorporated in the ACT
119 Devonshire Street
New South Wales 2010
Australia

M: 0423 308 550
E: ymsecretary@quakers.org.au
www.quakersaustralia.org.au
ABN 16 036 715 933

The way forward should not be influenced by an assumption that humane treatment of the detainees will encourage people smuggling, but rather by a desire to return Australia to its rightful responsibilities under the Refugee Convention.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.R. Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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