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Kevin Rudd to send asylum seekers who arrive by boat to Papua New Guinea

No asylum seeker who comes by boat will ever be resettled in Australia under Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's dramatic and "hardline" new refugee laws.

They will instead be sent to Papua New Guinea for processing and, if found to be refugees, will be resettled there.

All asylum seekers arriving by boat after Prime Minister Rudd and PNG Prime Minister Peter O'Neill signed the agreement are subject to the new rules. Asylum seekers already on Manus Island and Nauru, as well as those detained in Australia, are not subject to the new laws.

"I understand that this is a very hardline decision," Mr Rudd said. "But our responsibility as a government is to ensure that we have a robust system of border security and orderly migration, on the one hand, as well as fulfilling our legal and compassionate obligations under the refugees convention on the other."

Mr Rudd said the agreement purposely did not cap how many asylum seekers could be sent to PNG.

"What we're seeking to do through these arrangements at the moment is to send a message to people smugglers around the world that the business model is basically undermined. It says if you jump on a boat you're going to end up in Australia. That doesn't apply any more" he said. "Be in no doubt. If people are paying thousands and thousands of dollars to a people smuggler they are buying a ticket to a country other than Australia."

He said the agreement had been written "mindful" of the potential for legal challenges.

Mr Rudd said the government would consider progressively increasing its humanitarian intake.

<http://www.northqueenslandregister.com.au/news/metro/national/general/kevin-rudd-to-send-asylum-seekers-who-arrive-by-boat-to-papua-new-guinea/2664915.aspx?storypage=0>

Australia and Papua New Guinea regional settlement arrangement

Immigration Minister Tony Burke said "Papua New Guinea has a critical role within a regional approach and has provided assistance to Australian Governments for some years through facilities on Manus Island."

Our country has had enough of people smugglers exploiting asylum seekers and seeing them drown on the high seas.

Regional processing arrangements in Papua New Guinea will be significantly expanded and people will be sent to Manus Island as soon as health checks are complete and appropriate accommodation is identified.

PNG officials will assess their claims on Manus Island.

Our governments will expand existing facilities on Manus Island, as well as establishing further facilities in Papua New Guinea.

The Australian Government, in partnership with the PNG Government, will support settlement services for those with refugee status, as safe and appropriate accommodation and services are identified.

We are a compassionate nation and we will continue to deliver a strong humanitarian program.

If the measure already announced and the international meeting on the Convention that has been flagged lead to a significant change in the number of people arriving by boat, then the government stands ready to consider progressively increasing our humanitarian intake towards 27 000 as recommended by the Houston Panel.

There is nothing compassionate about criminal operations which see children and families drowning at sea.

The new arrangements will allow Australia to help more people who are genuinely in need and help prevent people smugglers from abusing our system.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/immigration-minister-tony-burke-joins-prime-minister-kevin-rudd-on-trip-to-papua-new-guinea/story-e6frg6n6-1226679275390>

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/tb/2013/tb205550.htm>

Nations wrestle with smuggling priorities

Australia is pushing Indonesian authorities to take police involvement in people smuggling more seriously, while Indonesia wants Australia to double its intake of refugees from the "queue".

The asylum seeker issue set the scene for a challenging meeting between the Prime Minister and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

Fairfax Media has learnt that three weeks ago Australia's deputy head of mission in Jakarta, Dr David Engel, met senior Indonesian official Johnny Hutauruk, the deputy head of Indonesia's People Smuggling Desk, and asked that the Indonesian government "be more serious in dealing with asylum seekers".

The Indonesians want Australia to accept up to 2000 refugees a year through official UNHCR channels, to reduce their reliance on leaky fishing boats.

There are about 2000 officially registered asylum seekers in Indonesia waiting for resettlement.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/nations-wrestle-with-smuggling-priorities-20130625-2ovcg.html>

Unrest grows over large asylum seeker numbers

The towns in Indonesia where most asylum seekers hide out as they wait for passage to Australia have rebelled against their unwelcome guests and are trying to evict them, writes Indonesian Correspondent Michael Bachelard.

The move by the cities of Cisarua and Bogor, which neighbour each other about 70 kilometres south of Jakarta, is a sign of the growing unrest among Indonesians at the thousands of refugees living in their midst.

The head of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Denis Nihill, confirmed that the local governments in the Bogor region wanted to clear out asylum seekers - most of them Afghans and Iranians - because "large concentrations have aroused community concerns".

"We've been asked by the Indonesian government to move the IOM accommodated refugees. The IOM only houses about 300 people in the area, mostly families waiting the three years or more in the 'queue' for official United Nations resettlement to other countries including Australia."

United Nations figures suggest that perhaps another 5000 people, many of them young single men, live in private accommodation in Cisarua and Bogor, many waiting to board boats to Australia.

Indonesia has until now been relatively untroubled by the 10,000 or more asylum seekers in its midst. But the social problem with asylum seekers is growing. Its immigration detention centres are well over capacity, and are growing more crowded as police step up their attempts to arrest illegal migrants.

<http://www.theage.com.au/world/unrest-grows-over-large-asylum-seeker-numbers-20130712-2pvkj.html>

Customs confirms asylum seekers jumped overboard as Navy approached

The *Australian* newspaper says they jumped into the water after the HMAS *Larraklia* offered them food but decided to escort their boat to Christmas Island rather than taking them on board.

The paper says the men feared their boat would be turned back to Indonesia.

It says the men were all rescued and taken to the island by the patrol boat.

Immigration Minister Tony Burke says he is concerned about the incident and thinks people smugglers are willing to turn any situation at sea into a safety at sea situation

“This is an exact example of that, where the vessel was not in distress, but the moment the people on board didn’t like what was happening they made sure they put themselves in a situation of distress to invoke safety at sea principles,” he said.

Reported on ABC News July 10 2013

The man who trades on tragedy

An Indonesian former policeman turned people smuggler has been caught on a hidden camera referring to asylum seekers as "goats" and boasting of how he bribed police to turn a blind eye to his operation.

The man, Freddy Ambon, is one of Indonesia's most active people smugglers, and boasts of sending multiple boats per month to Christmas Island, charging refugees between \$5000 and \$6000 for the journey.

He also talks about a boat he helped arrange last year which sank, killing 96 people. The tragedy prompted a fierce parliamentary debate in Australia, and ultimately forced Labor to reverse its position and reopen Nauru and Manus Island detention centres.

The video was recorded in a Jakarta apartment in May by a man posing as someone who could bring Afghan refugees to sail on Ambon's boats. Fairfax Media and the ABC obtained the video in a joint investigation. The man who recorded it is now believed to have left Indonesia.

Fairfax has confirmed with authorities that Freddy is on the radar of police.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/the-man-who-trades-on-tragedy-20130624-2oswz.html>

Australia puts bounty on people smugglers

Australia has announced cash rewards for tip-offs on people smugglers.

Australian Federal Police would pay rewards of up to US\$180,000 for information leading to the conviction of people smugglers, Home Affairs Minister Jason Clare said.

"These people are peddling in misery and death. We need to shut this market down. We have taken the product they are selling off the shelves, we also need to lock these people up."

Meanwhile, Immigration Minister Tony Burke said Australia's new policy of resettling refugees in Papua New Guinea was already having a deterrent effect on boatpeople.

Speaking to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Minister Burke said "We've seen the reports on the ground from people smugglers and we've heard reports from people who've been considering getting on boats."

The immigration department said 81 Iranians who arrived over the weekend had been told they would not be resettled in Australia, and a number made clear they would not have made the trip if they had known of the new arrangement.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/07/201372245733336476.html>

Refugee policy in favour of helping the most desperate

The definition Australia adopts for a refugee comes straight from the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951, which limits protection to people who face harm for one of five arbitrary reasons, being their race, nationality, religion, political opinion or membership of a distinct social group. It only protects people who manage to leave their country of origin.

The world has changed markedly since the mid-20th century. The legal document for resettling the needy has not.

Mass movement and suffering is now likely to be the result of famine, natural disasters and civil wars as opposed to people being on the wrong side of a political demonstration.

It is manifestly discriminatory that humanitarian migration should be denied to people who cannot hobble across their border.

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/time-for-refugee-policy-to-take-hard-rejection-line-in-favour-of-helping-the-most-desperate-20130714-2py0x.html>

Asylum seekers allowed to apply for refugee status

Nearly a year after the introduction of the tough "no advantage" principle aimed at deterring boat arrivals, the first tranche of asylum seekers have been assigned migration agents and told they can begin applying for refugee status, Fairfax Media understands.

A source said the first tranche of arrivals since August 13 2012 - when offshore processing at Nauru and Manus Island was resumed and the "no advantage" principle put in place - have been told they can now apply for asylum but even if successful, they will still wait several years for their visas, sources told Fairfax Media.

Under the "no advantage" principle, asylum seekers who come by boat have to wait as long for resettlement as they would if they had stayed overseas in a refugee camp and waited for their claims

to be processed through formal channels. It is not clear whether they will be able to work while waiting for their visas.

The new Immigration Minister, Tony Burke, is under pressure to grant such people work rights, especially those whose refugee claims are successful.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/asylum-seekers-allowed-to-apply-for-refugee-status-20130703-2pcf.html>

Vietnamese return home from Manus Island

The first group of Vietnamese asylum seekers from the Manus Island regional processing centre has been returned home, a spokesman for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship said.

The return of the group of 15 came as the government announced regional processing arrangements would be significantly expanded to ensure unauthorised maritime arrivals to Australia are transferred to Papua New Guinea, where their protection claims will be assessed and, if recognised as refugees, where they will be settled.

The new policy also rules out any chance of settlement in Australia.

“This makes it crystal clear that those who pay smugglers are throwing their money away and risking their lives in the process,” a departmental spokesman said.

“Paying a people smuggler is not a ticket to Australia – the rules have now changed.”

<http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/vietnamese-return-home-from-manus-island>

\$6.6 million to support refugees and migrants into work

Bill Shorten, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, announced the Labor Government will invest \$6.6 million to support the creation of innovative, sustainable employment projects for underemployed migrant and refugee job seekers.

The Migrant Communities Employment Fund (MCEF) will be available over two years and migrant community groups, employment services providers and employers are encouraged to be involved.

Under the MCEF employer organisations will receive funding to develop and implement innovative projects that help migrant and refugee job seekers prepare for and gain employment.

It is in the nation’s interest to ensure we’re utilising the productive capacity of each and every individual, including recent migrants and refugees.

A key focus of the MCEF will be to encourage effective engagement between employers and employment service providers to:

- improve employment outcomes for refugee and migrant job seekers;

- increase the capacity of employers to employ refugee and migrant workers;
- improve understanding of how to best support migrant and refugee job seekers and their employers; and
- provide best practice models that could be replicated to other locations and groups of migrants and refugees.

Organisations funded under the MCEF will be expected to partner with other groups to deliver projects.

<http://ministers.deewr.gov.au/shorten/66-million-support-refugees-and-migrants-work>

NSW immigration detainees jailed over riot

Four immigration detainees, including one who kept falling asleep at his trial, have been jailed for their part in the Villawood detention centre riot.

Justice Robert Allan Hulme said the actions of the men in April 2011 were "prompted by frustration and perhaps despair" at their situation but he said it did not excuse the "mob violence" they engaged in.

Mohammed Naim Amiri, 26, Taleb Feili, 57, Ali Haidari, 29, and Majid Parhizkar, 27, were sentenced to minimum terms of between 14 and 22 months on Friday after they were found guilty of rioting at the detention centre.

A fifth man, Haider Hussein Ali, 40, was found guilty of affray and placed on a good behaviour bond for two years.

Several other men have previously been sentenced over the riot, which caused about \$9 million in damage to the centre.

"Utter mayhem" broke out, with an office, bins and pillows set alight and tiles thrown at staff members.

"Staff members, who were forced to evacuate, were put in 'grave risk' and it was only by good fortune that no-one was injured in the riot," Justice Hulme said.

<http://news.ninensn.com.au/national/2013/06/28/14/11/nsw-immigration-detainees-jailed-over-riot>

Refugee boy's plea: help me, Australia

Nine months after young refugee boy Omid Jafary was plucked from the ocean, stunned into silence by watching his father, uncle and cousin drown, he is still living in Indonesia with no idea what his future holds.

Like thousands of other children waiting indefinitely for resettlement to Australia, this heartbroken child has been shuttled from one temporary home to another.

Human Rights Watch has produced a scathing report about child refugees trapped there, a story of arbitrary detention, violence, abuse and neglect.

"Many children remain in detention for years, facing an array of abuses including physical violence from immigration officials, bribery and confiscation of property, and lack of basic necessities," the report finds.

Those outside the detention system are denied education, have no legal protection or material help and sometimes end up on the streets.

Omid's name in Farsi language means "hope". But there is precious little of it for this 12-year-old Afghan Hazara boy, who still suffers from his experience as one of just 55 survivors of a boat which sank off the coast of Indonesia last August. More than 100 drowned around him during three days on the ocean.

"My feelings, my senses, everything was under the sea," he told Fairfax Media. "That accident is always with me. In dreams, in waking. Only when I play football the stress leaves me for a while."

His one desire is to get to Australia, then try to bring his mother and siblings to join him. But he has heard nothing for months about his claim. And he's in a very long queue.

In recent years, Australia has tried to improve conditions in immigration detention in Indonesia by putting almost \$20 million into refurbishing three centres and training staff. But Human Rights Watch says conditions remain awful, and Australia is implicated because of its "strategy of immigration enforcement first, refugee protection second".

Children outside detention in Indonesia are given no guardian or legal help to find services or make decisions. It's not even clear in Indonesian law which department is responsible for them.

"Of those not detained, only a handful of children have shelter, and others are left to fend for themselves," the report says.

Omid is one of that lucky few. Non-government organisation Church World Service has placed him with an Iranian foster family in a house in Cisarua, West Java. But his life is still highly contingent. An earlier, Afghan, foster family left him behind when they were resettled in New Zealand.

He is happy with his current family but desperately misses his mother.

"I am so far from my mother, and I just want to see her again in Australia. This is my hope."

<http://www.theage.com.au/world/refugee-boys-plea-help-me-australia-20130624-2oryk.html>

Six months' jail for identity fraud

A Vietnamese man was handed a six-month jail sentence in the Melbourne Magistrates Court today after he was prosecuted for using three false identities to apply for and obtain permanent residence and fraudulently obtain and use a genuine Australian passport.

A Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) spokesman said the sentence sent a strong warning to those engaging in migration-related fraud.

Van Son Nguyen, a convicted drug trafficker serving a seven-year sentence, was also convicted on charges s.234(1)(b) of the Migration Act 1958, s.10(1)(a) of the Passports Act 1938 and s.11 of the Statutory Declarations Act 1959.

"The department continues to develop specialised capabilities in the areas of facial recognition, document examination and fingerprint analysis to assist with the investigation of fraud offences as well as maintaining the integrity of the migration program," the spokesman said. "This includes the expansion of biometric collection points and sharing of data with partner countries and government agencies."

<http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/six-months-jail-for-identity-fraud>

Fraud of the Visa System

The ABC has revealed that thousands of Indian students, skilled workers and 457 visa holders have been admitted to Australia on dodgy travel and work documents.

Briefings prepared by the Immigration Department and obtained by the ABC's Fact Checking Unit under Freedom of Information show out-of-control, large-scale fraud of the visa system.

The internal audits show fraud rates approaching 50 per cent, and an Immigration Department struggling to properly identify people who are entering the country.

"Identity fraud is a significant risk in the Indian caseload given how easily genuine documents with fraudulent details can be obtained," one document said.

Immigration Department spokesman Sandi Logan says the figures, from the 2008/09 financial year, are troubling. Documents reveal identity fraud. "Around the periods of 2008, 2009, 2010 the fraud levels were quite considerable, a matter of real concern to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship." He says things have since changed. "Longer term, robust biometric processes embedded in Indian identity documents and in DIAC systems will be the effective combatant," one paper said.

An Immigration Department eyes-only briefing from the New Delhi office, published in April 2011, bluntly describes its purpose is to "report on the ease with which identity fraud is possible in India". The documents suggest that, in exchange for payment, the agent helped many others into Australia while avoiding detection.

The ABC's Freedom of Information request took nearly two years - much longer than statutory required periods. When the documents were delivered, they showed wide-scale passport, visa and ID fraud happening in alarming numbers.

Calls for tighter regulation on overseas agents

Maurene Horder from the Migration Institute of Australia, the peak body for migration agents, says the situation has improved since 2009.

She wants migration agents overseas to be forced to register with the Department of Immigration, so they can be banned if they cheat the system.

"Now, some of those agents have been removed by the department and we think we should go even further with that and actually only allow people who are trained and registered migration agents to be dealing in that space."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-22/immigration-audits-reveal-large-scale-visa-fraud/4833710>

eMedical improves Australian/Canadian visa processing in 100 countries

Collaboration between Australia and Canada has resulted in more than 100 countries now having access to eMedical, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) new electronic health processing system that enables more efficient and cost-effective visa processing.

eMedical is an updated and improved version of the former 'eHealth' system used to record online the health examination results of visa applicants who complete their examinations for both DIAC and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

"Increased use of eMedical will result in substantial benefits to DIAC and our clients, including improved client service, enhanced integrity and significant financial savings," a DIAC spokesman said today.

DIAC has been working closely with CIC since early 2011 to progress this ground-breaking initiative and reached the 100-country milestone mid-year. The shared aim of eMedical was to increase the efficiency of both organisations' visa processing, while sharing support and development costs. It will make the respective immigration medical exam systems more secure, reduce the possibility of error, protect applicants' privacy and save applicants time.

The project demonstrated what can be achieved in practical terms when Five Country Conference (5CC) partners – Australia, United Kingdom, United States, Canada and New Zealand – work together.

Information on this new service and other developments in the immigration health systems space will be available on DIAC's website from June 30.

See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/health-requirements/arranging-health-exam.htm

<http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/emedical-improves-australian-canadian-visa-processing-in-100-countries>

Human Resources

Better Care for Older Australians from CALD Backgrounds

Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, has introduced Better Care for Older Australians from Backgrounds Culturally and Linguistically Diverse.

The Federal Government will provide funding to sixteen organisations supporting older Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in aged care.

A number of projects will receive funding through the \$60 million second round of the Government's Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund, which will deliver \$378 million over four years.

CALD focused initiatives already announced include projects from the following groups

- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- Chinese Community Social Services Centre
- Victorian Arabic Social Services
- Greek Welfare Centre
- Italian Australian Welfare Association
- Italo-Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre
- Multicultural Communities Council of SA
- Sri Om Foundation
- Australian Vietnamese Women's Association
- Polish-Australian Welfare Association
- Ozpol Service
- Diversicare, Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
- North East Multicultural Association
- Multicultural Aged Care Services Geelong
- Ethnic Broadcasting Association of Queensland

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr13-mb-mb058.htm>

Department of Attorney-General

National Security Legislation

Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus QC has welcomed the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security report examining potential reforms to Australia's National Security Legislation.

The Government will now carefully consider the detailed report, including all forty-three recommendations, before making any decisions on potential legislative changes.

All communication interception activities and access to telecommunications data carried out by Australian Government agencies are conducted in strict accordance with Australian law.

Early last year the Government referred potential changes to these and other national security laws to the Committee for Inquiry because huge technological change has occurred over the past 30 years since the legislation was enacted.

The public interest in this Inquiry was significant, with the Committee receiving 240 submissions, 27 exhibits and conducting a number of public and classified hearings. The report has taken the Committee over a year to complete.

“This Inquiry was part of this Government’s plan to engage more broadly with the community on national security issues and to ascertain the views of experts before modernising our national security legislation,” Mr Dreyfus said.

“The Committee has given the green light to further work being undertaken on most of the proposals.

The next, important step will be to develop a package of detailed measures for further public consultation. This will be particularly important for areas such as the communications interception and access regime, where the Committee has recommended a comprehensive review of the relevant legislation.”

The report is available at: www.aph.gov.au

<http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Mediareleases/Pages/2013/Second%20quarter/24June2013-ParliamentaryCommitteereportonNationalSecurityLegislation.aspx>

Foreign Affairs

Fight against TB in Papua New Guinea

The effort to stop tuberculosis (TB) in Papua New Guinea received a boost with the opening of new specialist treatment facilities at Daru General Hospital in PNG’s Western Province.

Senator The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, opened the 22-bed TB and isolation ward at Daru General Hospital with PNG Minister for Health and HIV, the Hon Michael Malabag MP.

The ward comprises six isolation rooms that meet international standards for isolation of airborne infections, as well as a 16 bed ward for patients recovering from TB.

The new ward is part of Australia’s \$33 million commitment to support the Government of PNG’s approach to detection and treatment of TB in Western Province.

Senator Thistlethwaite said the best way to stop drug-resistant TB is early diagnosis paired with Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course (DOTS) provided for patients in their own communities. The World Health Organization’s DOTS protocol uses health volunteers to visit TB patients daily to ensure they take their medication and complete their full course of treatment.

“This is the approach Australia supports and it is saving lives. Data from Daru Hospital shows that mortality rates from multi-drug resistant TB fell from 25 per cent to 5 per cent between 2011 and 2012,” he said.

Australia’s support in Western Province includes providing TB specialist staff, training for community health workers and volunteer treatment supporters, medical equipment, drugs, a sea ambulance, and funding for laboratory diagnosis support in Queensland. Australia’s approach has been endorsed by public health and TB experts, including the Commonwealth’s Chief Medical Officer, Queensland’s Chief Health Officer and the World Health Organization, the global authority on controlling TB.

<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/MediaReleases/Pages/daru-tb-and-isolation-ward-to-boost-fight-against-TB-in-papua-new-guinea.aspx>

United Nations High Commission for Refugees

Global upheavals dwarf Australia's refugee numbers

More people around the world were forced to flee their homes every day last year than the total number seeking asylum in Australia during the entire 12 months, according to the annual report on global trends by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

In what amounts to a reality check for the debate in Australia, the report reveals that refugee crises reached levels last year unseen in the previous decade, with an average 3000 people becoming refugees each day and many more seeking asylum.

By the end of the year, about 45.2 million people were considered forcibly displaced because of persecution, conflict and human rights violations, the highest level since 1994.

"This reminds us that the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia remains relatively small by global standards," said Richard Towle, the UNHCR regional representative for Australia, New Zealand, PNG and the Pacific.

Australia is 49th on the number of refugees hosted last year (Pakistan is the highest with 1.6 million) and 70th in total numbers of "people of concern", which includes refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and those who are stateless (Colombia is the highest with 3.9 million).

But Australia was ranked 11th on the number of asylum seekers who have lodged claims but have not yet had decisions.

The report highlights a continuing gap between richer and poorer countries when it comes to hosting refugees. Of the 10.5 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate, half are in countries with a per capita GDP of less than \$US5000.

UN crisis highest levels in 19 years

23,000 people around the world flee their homes each day

45.2m people forcibly displaced in 2012 due to persecution, conflict and human rights violations

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/global-upheavals-dwarf-australias-refugee-numbers-20130619-2ojd9.html>

Asylum seeker debate mean spirited: UN boss

The United Nations refugee agency has expressed alarm at a "sharp deterioration" in the quality of protection for asylum seekers coming by boat and a "worrying erosion" of public support for asylum in Australia.

Declaring that Australia is at a crossroads in its treatment of asylum seekers, the agency's regional representative, Rick Towle, highlights the "increasingly negative and, at times, mean-spirited" nature of debate in Australia about asylum seekers.

Mr Towle also lamented the "ever-widening suite of deterrent measures" being proposed, or already in place, for boat arrivals - from the forced transfer to inadequate facilities in Nauru and Papua New Guinea to the use of "unfair and unreliable" screening arrangements to decide if people have legitimate claims.

He also cited the suspension of processing of more than 20,000 asylum claims since August 13 last year; the use of mandatory detention; and limited levels of support for asylum seekers in the community "that are likely to inflict long-term harm and suffering" if claims remain unresolved.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/asylum-seeker-debate-mean-spirited-un-boss-20130617-2oeio.html>

Resources

Asylum process stands up.

Opinion – William Maley. Professor William Maley is director of the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy at the Australian National University.

See: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/asylum-process-stands-up-20130718-2q7hv.html>

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