

# Project SafeCom News and Updates

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# 1. An open letter from a refugee on Nauru to the leaders of the UN's Summit for Refugees and Migrants

Sydney Morning Herald  
September 19 2016 - 7:38PM

Dear Secretary-General Ban-Ki-Moon and Summit President Peter Thomson,

I am writing to you from Nauru to share with you one remaining fragment of our humanity and dignity, as you gather to meet and discuss the suffering of refugees around the world. I travelled by boat to Australia in July 2013 with my family, seeking protection after escaping persecution in Iran. When we arrived in Christmas Island, everyone was caught by the Australian authorities and we were told we would never be resettled in Australia.

But in fact after some time we were divided into two groups, and one lucky group was detained in Christmas Island and eventually resettled in Australia. We were in the other group, and we were told we would be sent offshore for three months to process our refugee claims, after which we would be resettled in a third country. We simply trusted what they told us. Yet over three years later we are still trapped in Nauru, like rare animals living in an Australian-made zoo.

After being brought to Nauru we spent almost 24 months in detention, before we were finally found to be genuine refugees. Since then I have not slept even one night without having recurring nightmares of those endless months living in a hot, mouldy tent. We became so alienated from our humanity, we were thoroughly transformed into a bunch of animals after years of living in the most appalling conditions possible.

Australia and Nauru made a big cage with many white tents in a slightly depressed area of the island (they deliberately selected this location because it is hottest part of Nauru). They called it a regional processing centre but we called it a Slaughter Camp. They treated us like dangerous criminals, with two zoo keepers assigned for every three animals, as well as cameras recording our every movement. The zoo keepers were allowed to carry out every kind of behaviour which they desired. Except there was to be no compassion shown towards cubs and female animals, in fact some zoo keepers even raped these helpless trapped animals and abused the children (as revealed in the leaked incident reports published by The Guardian). In many cases the female animals were sexually harassed in exchange for having three minutes longer in the shower.

Suicides and abuse and self-harm are all part of this processing regime, an inevitable part.

My family was lucky, we got the chance about a year ago to come out and live in the bigger zoo (all 21 sq. km of Nauru). About 920 other animals have also been assessed as refugees and most now have better accommodation living in the Nauruan community (while 410 animals remain in the decrepit tents, still waiting for their claims to be assessed).

To this day we are still like walking ghosts, utterly broken and hopeless. We are hollowed out and devoid of any enthusiasm for life, and we are stuck in animalistic state of existence because that is what we have become. Or even worse, myself and some others are basically just plants or vegetables, withdrawn in our pots for fear of the other animals. We absorb nutrients, sleep and breed, just like plants (ironically back in Iran I was an expert on plant life cycles as an agricultural engineer – but that feels like ancient history now).

Some of these animals are very useful for digging and moving rocks, so they are exploited by the Nauruan government to rehabilitate the island, which has been severely depleted and poisoned after decades of phosphate mining, with soil concentrations of cadmium over 460 times the normal level in some locations.

Obviously animals are illiterate with no high level abilities, so they are never given skilled well-paid jobs – only Nauruan people can do those. Since animals don't need an education, my son and most of the other tame cubs haven't attended school for over one year, due to abuse from other children.

Actually animals at the zoo are better off than us in some ways, for example medically: they have dedicated specialists who look after them, whereas we animals in Nauru are even deprived of adequate medical care. The IHMS doctors usually just provide superficial treatments. Some of these animals have been surviving for years on a daily injection of physical or psychological painkillers, without ever receiving any substantive curative treatments. And if any doctors become overwhelmed with compassion and speak to the media about the suffering these animals endure, the Australian government has threatened to put them in jail.

Is there really such a thing as human rights in this world, and if so, where are all the advocates and lawyers and courts? Why is nobody prosecuting Australia for such crimes against humanity?

Australia is confidently breaking and breaching every convention and rule which human beings have established to date, and we have been selected as the victims of this evil and despicable game. The more we suffer, the less likely it is that other refugees will come and ask Australia for protection. I pray that God will give you and the world's leaders wisdom, compassion and a burning desire for justice as you meet over the next two days. Yours sincerely,

A Dad in Nauru (I am too scared to share my name, because we are living in a jungle with no rule of law and no justice, so there could be repercussions for my family when the Australian and Nauruan governments see my name. I asked my friend in Australia to email this letter to you, so if you want to contact me, please reply to him and he can give you my name and contact details, so you can verify my identity.)

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/think-australias-treatment-of-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-is-ok-read-this-20160919-grijz2.html>

## **2. UN refugees summit: What you need to know about Australia's immigration policies**

ABC News Online

By political reporter Stephanie Anderson

Posted Mon 19 Sep 2016, 3:38pm

Australia's treatment of asylum seekers and refugees will come under the spotlight this week as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull meets with world leaders in New York.

Mr Turnbull, who is travelling with Immigration Minister Peter Dutton and Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, is due to take part tomorrow in a Leaders Summit on Refugees hosted by US President Barack Obama.

The meeting will take place on the margins of the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants, where the Prime Minister will address a roundtable on the drivers of migration.

The summit aims to bring countries together for a "more humane and coordinated approach" to the movements of refugees.

Both Mr Turnbull and Mr Dutton have been talking up Australia's immigration policy ahead of the meetings, with the Prime Minister telling reporters that "our policy on border protection is the best in the world".

### ***What is our current policy?***

People trying to reach Australia by boat are either turned back or sent to centres on Nauru or Manus Island.

Mr Dutton has described offshore processing, Temporary Protection Visas and boat turnbacks as "the trifecta of success in securing our borders".

As a result, the Government says 740 people in 29 boats have been turned back since the Coalition came to power in 2013.

In addition, hundreds of people remain in immigration detention: 1,346 on mainland Australia, 242 on Christmas Island and 1,244 across Nauru and Manus Island.

Last month, Mr Dutton confirmed that the Manus Island facility would close, but no timeline has been established between Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Australia's refugee policy also includes a humanitarian intake —13,750 places will be made available for resettlement in Australia this year, rising to 18,750 in 2018-19.

The Coalition also agreed to a one-off 12,000 intake of Syrian and Iraqi refugees, with 3,532 people resettled so far.

No timeframe for the overall resettlement has been made public.

### ***How much is it costing taxpayers?***

Overall, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection accounts for 1 per cent of the nation's total expenses.

The cost of processing refugees and asylum seekers offshore has been highlighted recently, most prominently by the Australian National Audit Office which slammed the Immigration Department over its handling of more than \$3 billion in contracts for Nauru and Manus.

Among the findings, the audit found:

-- That annual cost of holding a person in offshore detention was \$573,111, more than double the estimated \$201,000

-- The Department agreed to a Transfield contract, despite its estimate blowing out by more than \$1.1 billion. The Department did not seek clarification around the price increase or seek updated quotes from other tenderers.

Save the Children and UNICEF Australia also issued a report last week, citing the total cost of offshore processing, onshore mandatory detention and boat turnbacks between 2013 and 2016 to be \$9.6 billion.

The figures — sourced from budget documents, portfolio budget statements and portfolio additional estimates statements — were broken down as:

- Offshore regional processing: \$3.6 billion
- Onshore mandatory detention: \$5.5 billion
- Boat turnbacks and related operations: \$295 million
- Cambodia Agreement: \$40 million
- Regional Cooperation Arrangement: \$72 million

It stated that shutting down offshore centres would save nearly \$2 billion over the next four years — but only if all other elements of the policy framework remained the same.

### ***Is it likely to change?***

Offshore processing and regional resettlement are supported by both the Coalition and Labor and, according to Mr Dutton, Australia's relationship with Nauru is expected to continue for decades.

He defended the conditions of the centres, telling the ABC that they were necessary due to the ongoing operations from people smugglers, but added that the Government was in discussions with a number of third countries regarding resettlement.

But shadow immigration minister Shayne Neumann told the ABC that more action was needed.

"If the Minister and Prime Minister don't come back [from the US] with a durable third-party option, they would have failed," he said.

"And if they don't come back with an additional commitment to take more people, they would have failed."

Mr Turnbull told reporters in New York that an increase in the humanitarian intake relied on border security.

"Frankly, public opinion will not accept a generous humanitarian program, a substantial migration program, unless the Government is seen to be in command of its borders," he said.

"You've seen around the world, the way in which uncontrolled migration flows start to destabilise countries and undermine support for migration."

While Mr Turnbull said he would not dictate policy to other countries, his predecessor Tony Abbott told the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists in Prague that governments had to "stop the boats".

Citing the situation in Europe, Mr Abbott added that: "a million people coming by boat and almost a million people coming by land last year has the look of a peaceful invasion".

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-19/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-un-refugees-summit/7858492>

## **3. Frances Voon: What Australia Needs To Bring To The UN Refugees Summit**

Australia has a seat at the table, but what will we offer?

Huffington Post  
16/09/2016 5:11 PM AEST  
Updated September 19, 2016 15:35  
Frances Voon

Displacement is a global challenge requiring collective international action. This is the imperative driving two historic international summits taking place this week in New York, which Australia will attend.

The first, a special meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September, will reaffirm key principles of international refugee law, and set in motion a process to develop a Global Compact on Refugees, including a framework for more predictable and comprehensive international responses to refugee flows. With displacement at an historic high and the vast majority of refugees hosted in developing states, the meeting calls for greater responsibility sharing, including increased support for refugee-hosting states.

The second meeting is an invitation-only Leaders' Summit on Refugees hosted by US President Barack Obama on 20 September. Australia has secured an invitation, ending months of speculation that it might be excluded from the event. In the wake of continued revelations of harm and abuse in offshore centres on Nauru and Manus, Australia's harsh asylum policies

have attracted international criticism. In being offered a seat at the table, Australia appears to have avoided an embarrassing snub.

But the invitation comes with expectations. Only a small number of states are invited to attend the Leaders' Summit, and attendees must show 'new and significant commitments' to address the global refugee challenge. The summit will seek major pledges to expand humanitarian funding by 30 percent globally, double the number of resettlement and other refugee admission places, and ensure that in major refugee-hosting countries, a million more refugees have access to work, and another million have access to education.

It is not yet clear what Australia will bring to the table in New York. Our representatives will likely seek kudos for Australia's existing humanitarian funding, resettlement intake (despite recent criticism of its slow pace) and role as co-chair of the Bali Process, a regional forum created to address smuggling and transnational crime but showing signs of openness to refugee protection. But with more people displaced today than at any time since the Second World War, this is a time for stepping up, not self-congratulation.

Australia should heed to the call to commit additional funding to humanitarian and development assistance, and expand places in resettlement and other refugee admission schemes, ensuring that they are made available in a timely manner. The CEO of Save the Children Australia, Paul Ronalds, recently called on the government to double its humanitarian emergency fund for this financial year and commit a further \$442 million to the UN Refugee Agency. The Refugee Council of Australia, Save the Children and UNICEF have called for an increase in Australia's humanitarian intake to 30,000 people per year over the next year or so. This is eminently feasible.

But these measures alone would not be sufficient to salvage Australia's international reputation when it comes to refugees.

Australia cannot credibly stand with world leaders in New York and claim to be a champion for refugee protection while maintaining its current suite of asylum policies. The government's deterrent approach is inimical to global responsibility sharing for refugee protection, and contrary to the very goal of the summits.

Excising Australian territory from the migration zone, sending refugees to languish offshore without prospects of a durable solution, and turning back boats at sea are lynchpins of Australia's current policy that shift, rather than share, responsibility for refugee protection. They do not represent a cooperative or sustainable approach, and are at odds with our obligations under international law.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull reportedly intends to justify Australia's current policies in New York by claiming that it is strong 'border protection' that enables states to take humanitarian action on refugees. This spurious argument ignores the evidence that Australia's border security approach to refugees has antagonised our neighbours and undermined the conditions for refugee protection in the region.

Asia-Pacific countries have made it clear that they view Australia's policies of offshore processing and turning back boats as an abdication of responsibility. If Australia -- as a wealthy, democratic country that has voluntarily signed the Refugee Convention -- refuses to offer protection to those who seek it on our shores or in our waters, why should we expect any of our neighbours to do so?

A one-off announcement in New York of increased humanitarian spending or resettlement places would not be sufficient to undo the perception that Australia is undermining protection for refugees at our doorstep, and would not qualify as a satisfactory effort towards responsibility sharing. To be deserving of recognition at a gathering of leaders on refugees, Australia must adopt a more principled and comprehensive strategy for regional and international engagement on refugees.

Such a strategy must be based on a commitment to genuine responsibility sharing and aimed at expanding protection along the stages of displacement, through a coordinated approach across migration, aid and diplomatic channels. It would include increased humanitarian and development assistance to refugee-producing and refugee-hosting countries, to address the root causes of displacement and expand access to conditions of safety and dignity once people have had to flee. It would include engagement in international and regional efforts to produce more predictable and cooperative responses to displacement. But in order not to constitute attempts at containment or responsibility shifting, these efforts cannot be used as an excuse to refuse access to asylum on Australian shores.

Two reports launched this week, one by the Australian Human Rights Commission and another by Save the Children and UNICEF, articulate frameworks for a constructive Australian approach to refugee protection. The Australian Human Rights Commission's blueprint is based on the twin pillars of enhancing safe and legal pathways to protection in Australia, and good-faith efforts to build cooperation in the region, including through coordinated aid, diplomatic and humanitarian interventions to improve conditions for refugees.

Save the Children and UNICEF also call for increased regional engagement and resettlement, noting that Australia must commit to ending offshore processing and boat turnbacks if it is to restore its international and regional standing. These reports reinforce the growing recognition that alternative approaches to Australian refugee policy are both necessary and possible.

Australia's engagement in this week's summits offers an opportunity to reset our policy from one of deterrence to one of international cooperation. Australia can and should embrace its responsibility to expand refugee protection both at home and abroad. This is surely what the global challenge of displacement demands.

---->>>> Frances Voon is the Executive Manager of the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/frances-voon/what-australia-needs-to-bring-to-the-un-refugees-summit/>

## **4. Michael Gordon: Could Malcolm Turnbull's promise see an end to Manus and Nauru?**

Canberra Times  
September 21 2016 - 12:15AM  
Michael Gordon

If Malcolm Turnbull's offer to help the United States resettle Central American refugees being held in Costa Rica isn't the start of a solution for those on Nauru and Manus Island, it should be.

There is a logical quid pro quo here: that if Australia helps the US by resettling refugees being held in Latin America, they should do the same for Australia by resettling refugees detained on tiny islands.

Tragically, the only logic underpinning Australia's asylum seeker policy in recent years has been the tougher the policy, the less likely people are to seek protection without an invitation.

That logic has condemned more than 2000 people to three years of misery in limbo, purely to present a message of deterrence to would-be arrivals.

There is, of course, the possibility that the resettlement offer is just a friendly, one-off gesture to thank Barack Obama for inviting Malcolm Turnbull to his summit.

After all, the other initiatives were hardly ground-breaking: a commitment not to cut the refugee intake once it increases to the promised 18,750 in 2018 and \$130 million in new funding to help refugees over the next three years – less than it will cost to stage the same-sex marriage plebiscite.

Hopefully, the offer to take refugees from the Costa Rican resettlement centre was more than just the price of admission and is one that invites reciprocity and recognises the need to co-operative action on a global scale.

The parallels between those in Costa Rica and those on Manus and Nauru are self-evident: both enterprises were conceived to discourage refugees from embarking on dangerous journeys to a country where they will be able to rebuild shattered lives.

For months, some who are close to Turnbull have believed the Prime Minister has been working on a solution for those whose mental state has been steadily deteriorating on Nauru and Manus. Could this be the start of it?

The signals are mixed. When Fairfax Media interviewed him last week, the Prime Minister was tight-lipped, saying: "We understand the issue very well and we have worked very hard on resettlement options, but I can't go into any details about what might occur in the future."

The message from Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has been that, rather than inject a dose of compassion into the policy that stopped the boats, things may get even tougher.

Rather than explore countries with established resettlement programs, like the US, Canada and New Zealand, Dutton has given the impression that only the likes of Cambodia are still very much in the frame.

The same confusing narrative applies to the bigger picture, too. Turnbull told the summit Australia's strategy addresses all parts of the problem – from strong border protection policies, to tackling the causes of displacement, to a generous resettlement program.

But this ignores the damage done to those in detention and in limbo and the lack of action to establish a genuine protection framework in the region.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/the-american-solution-could-malcolm-turnbulls-promise-see-an-end-to-manus-and-nauru-20160920-grkggyo.html>

## 5. Editorial: The Guardian view on the New York declaration: better than nothing

Refugee charities are disappointed that there's no immediate promise to take in more refugees, but at least the postwar settlement survives

The Guardian  
Tuesday 20 September 2016  
Editorial

The idea of a refugee or a displaced person means different things to different people. But the human suffering they encompass is often much the same. Europeans might envisage families in leaky boats adrift in the Mediterranean, or quietly determined crowds trekking northwards along highways. For people in the Middle East, it might be row upon row of tents in a refugee camp; for Africans, stories of men, women and children trafficked across the Sahel, only to end up in a sordid detention centre run by militias in Libya. In Asia, it might be desperate boat people being turned back, or the island camps where those who hope to find a new life in Australia find themselves detained.

Across the globe, the 21st century has become an era of disruption and exodus. An unprecedented 65 million people are fleeing war or persecution, or migrating in search of training, an education or a job. The response is asymmetrical: most refugees only go as far as a neighbouring country. According to Britain's Refugee Council, 44% of refugees are in the Middle East and Africa, and 27% in Europe. Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon are all sheltering more than 1 million from Syria and Afghanistan. The UK, according to the UNHCR, hosts about 170,000.

And beyond the human trauma, there are the geopolitical consequences. The stability of democracies is jeopardised when scenes of chaotic population movements fuel demagoguery and populism; authoritarian regimes or their proxies exploit refugee flows as weapons of war to destabilise adversaries whose resources will be suddenly stretched, or as a technique to score points in a diplomatic negotiation. Against that backdrop, a UN summit devoted to the crisis can only be applauded – especially considering the topic had never been addressed before in a diplomatic gathering of all nations. Yet to many, today's event in New York turned out to be a disappointment.

It is more than 60 years since the world agreed that such huge population flows were a matter of global responsibility. Now the Geneva convention on refugees, signed by 144 states in 1951, is facing a profound threat as politicians respond to domestic pressure by looking for ways to evade its obligations. Across the world, the power of a global moral imperative is being undermined by the rise of nationalism and identity politics, driven partly by a traditional fear of the other, partly by the impact of recession on governments' capacity to provide public services.

At the UN this week, there will be much empathy and little concrete action. The great hope of the NGOs and other humanitarian lobbyists was for a commitment for the global north to resettle 10% of the world's refugees. Instead, although the text of what is to be known as the New York declaration recognises the scale of the crisis, it fails to lay out concrete measures. Signatories are asked to continue to work towards a global compact to be reached by 2018. Whether the second summit, convened by President Obama, will do any better seems uncertain. Its objective is to encourage individual state pledges of aid to refugees, not develop a global strategy.

All of this leaves unaddressed the no less important matter of preventing or resolving the conflicts that drive mass migration. Hopes for a ceasefire in Syria have all but dwindled. Alone, this conflict has forced 12 million people from their homes in the last five years.

The wider picture is that politicians across the world feel little incentive to act – after all, refugees have no voice, no vote, and scant organisation. The moral commitment to them was made in the aftermath of what the world's leaders thought was an unrepeatably catastrophe. It was not supposed to happen again. In that context, small as the results of the refugee summit appear, the mere restatement of the commitment was a small victory. Now President Obama will hope at least to incentivise some positive action.

But here's the paradox: political leaders won't reduce the risks they fear for themselves (and their careers) by sitting idle in the face of an unprecedented exodus. Creating safe channels for refugees and organising migration routes, not building fences, may be a better way. It has been tried before. Thirty years ago, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese boat people were saved by a coordinated and comprehensive plan. Globalisation increases mobility. Instead of resisting it, nations should consider organising it. Save lives, rather than creating conditions that only aid the people smugglers. Inaction breeds more chaos, not less.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/19/the-guardian-view-on-the-new-york-declaration-better-than-nothing>

## 6. Daniel Webb: A modest pledge won't erase the stain of Manus and Nauru

The Age  
September 22, 2016  
Daniel Webb

Our Prime Minister, Immigration Minister and Foreign Minister have spent this week in New York attending high-profile global summits on refugees. They arrived insisting that the Australian government's policies were the "best in the world", but they'll leave having offered little more than self-congratulations.

The summits were an important opportunity for Malcolm Turnbull to show leadership on both global and local challenges – globally to the unprecedented number of people fleeing danger and locally to the festering sores that are the offshore camps on Nauru and Manus.

But Turnbull comprehensively shirked both.

He pledged a modest funding increase for global relief efforts – spread over the next three years – and to do no more than maintain our current planned refugee intake. He also failed to offer any way forward from the Nauru and Manus dead ends.

While the government, on the world stage, tried to pretend otherwise, the situation in its offshore centres is becoming more and more untenable by the day.

The legal framework is crumbling, with the highest court in PNG ruling the Manus facility is illegal. The companies operating the centres are walking away, first Broadspectrum, then Wilson Security, now Connect Settlement Services. Most importantly, every day the government refuses to act, innocent people continue to suffer.

In recent months I've sat face to face with women who have been sexually assaulted on Nauru. I've seen a man collapse unconscious after being robbed and beaten with an iron bar on Manus. I've spoken with families desperate to begin rebuilding their lives in safety but who languish on a painful road to nowhere after three years.

Turnbull's announcements in New York won't end their suffering and his self-congratulations rub salt into their wounds.

Deliberate cruelty to innocent people is fundamentally wrong. And there are alternatives – innovative and humane.

The underlying issue is there are people in our region who have fled danger who need protection and a chance to rebuild their lives. Our policy objective should be to make sure they can access these things in a safe and orderly way.

Deterrence doesn't help. Rather than using costly and cruel measures to close unsafe pathways we need to look at innovative ways of opening up new ones. Measures which improve conditions in transit countries and re-allocate some of our huge skilled migration intake to skilled people who are also seeking asylum should be considered.

The bottom line is that whatever the policy challenge, deliberate cruelty to innocent people is never the solution. Turnbull's modest pledge on the world stage to welcome one group of people seeking safety doesn't justify his continued mistreatment of another.

The men, women and children on Nauru and Manus must be brought to Australia to begin rebuilding their lives. After three years of fear, violence and limbo, it is well and truly time.

---->>> *Daniel Webb is the director of legal advocacy at the Human Rights Law Centre. Twitter: @DanielHRLC*

<http://www.theage.com.au/comment/a-modest-pledge-wont-erase-the-stain-of-manus-and-nauru-20160922-grlyd9.html>

## **7. Michael Gordon: Australia's badge of honour is really a badge of shame**

Canberra Times  
September 20 2016 - 12:00AM  
Michael Gordon

Malcolm Turnbull is right. Australia does have the world's best border protection policy, if the principal measure of success is that no one gets in without an invitation.

No other country combines our potent mix of turning back boats, arbitrarily and indefinitely detaining those who manage to get here on poor, remote foreign islands, including children, and ignoring multiple reports citing serious violations of international law on human rights.

But the Prime Minister should be very careful about urging other countries to copy what is undoubtedly the harshest policy on asylum seekers by any developed country.

If they did, the likely result would be the collapse of the international protection framework Australia committed itself to when it signed the United Nations Refugee Convention.

That framework is being mightily tested by the biggest global refugee crisis since World War II, but unilateral action aimed at deterring arrivals by punishing those already here will only make for an even bigger catastrophe.

The Prime Minister says his government's uncompromising stand has prevented deaths at sea and enabled Australia to increase its humanitarian intake while maintaining public support.

He is correct, up to a point, but this assumes that the only way Australia can manage its borders is to continue a policy that sees the slightest hint of compassion as providing a green light to the people smugglers.

It isn't and, by persisting in framing the debate this way, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton makes the task of developing a policy that protects our border and refugees all the more fraught.

Only global co-operation can address the forces that compel people to flee their homes, improve conditions for them in transit countries and provide resettlement options for those who cannot return. For Australia, that means playing a leading role in creating a regional protection framework that takes away the incentive for vulnerable people to pay smugglers to board leaky boats.

This is a big endeavour and will take time, effort and money - time that those on Manus and Nauru and in other compartments of Australia's border protection network simply do not have. They need a solution now.

In the meantime, Australia's badge of honour is really a badge of shame.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/australias-badge-of-honour-is-really-a-badge-of-shame-20160919-grjoph.html>

## **8. Get control of your borders or face instability: Malcolm Turnbull's advice to the UN**

Canberra Times  
September 19 2016 - 11:45PM  
Mark Kenny

New York: Malcolm Turnbull has urged world leaders to look to Australia's uncompromising border protection policies as a model for holding their own political systems together while regaining control of irregular international refugee flows.

He said countries must design their internal policies with the public in mind and should co-ordinate efforts internationally to create "order out of chaos" with some 65 million people displaced by wars, famine and disasters.

Urged on by Pauline Hanson, who declared Australia was "landlocked" on Monday despite boasting one of the longer maritime borders in the world, the Australian Prime Minister told a United Nations summit on refugees and migrants in New York that official control and public support went hand-in-hand.

"Addressing irregular migration, through secure borders, has been essential in creating confidence that the government can manage migration in a way that mitigates risks and focuses humanitarian assistance on those who need it the most," he told the gathering.

"This has had a direct impact on our ability to provide generous and effective support to refugees. Without this confidence, we would not have been able to increase our intake of refugees – the world's third-largest permanent resettlement program – by more than 35 per cent.

"And we would not have been able to commit to welcoming 12,000 additional Syrian and Iraqi refugees, on top of this."

The message, which will provoke a strong disagreement from refugee advocates in Australia, was buttressed by Australia's record of resettlement since World War II.

While Australia lauds its achievement of effectively ending large-scale deaths at sea from ill-equipped people-smuggling voyages, the ongoing humanitarian disaster of indefinite detention in refugee centres branded as hell-holes on Manus Island and Nauru, has been glossed over.

Dubbing Australia "one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world," Mr Turnbull told the international community that "ours is an immigration nation" - a fact which has led to high levels of tolerance and a rich tapestry of cultural influences.

Also important was the separation of the state from theocratic interference or the danger of cultural dominance by one group over others.

"Diversity is an investment against marginalisation and extremism. It helps our community unite against extremism, rather than be divided by it."

"Australians are not defined by religion or race; we are defined by a common commitment to shared political values, democracy, freedom and the rule of law, underpinned by mutual respect.

"These values drive our approach to migration. We invite 190,000 migrants each year to join our nation of 24 million people. And our commitment to refugees is longstanding – our humanitarian resettlement program dates back to 1947.

But he warned governments they cannot afford to be naive and lose sight of the need for deep community acceptance of large refugee resettlement and assistance programs or face resistance leading to division and dysfunction.

This appeared to be a message directed to those countries - principally Germany - who have embarked on an ambitious resettlement programs in response to the massive humanitarian disaster created by the Syrian civil war, only to find themselves beset with political difficulties and damaging social divisions.

While German Chancellor Angela Merkel won international praise for inviting displaced Syrians in their hundreds of thousands to the federal republic, German public opinion has since turned sour and the once unassailable leader now faces a difficult task holding on to power at next year's election.

Transit countries through which asylum seekers must travel to reach Germany have also slammed shut their borders erecting barbed wire fences and restrictive rules to keep the displaced diaspora out.

Similar forces are building in other European countries and were the main cause of the Brexit decision earlier in the year.

Mr Turnbull, and his tough Immigration and Border Protection Minister Peter Dutton who is also on New York for the talks, attracted Ms Hanson's full support on Monday.

"I think that Peter Dutton has done a very good job in controlling our borders with the number of refugees that we have coming across the borders," Senator Hanson told Seven's David Koch.

"Twelve hundred had perished. I think they have done a very good job in controlling refugees into Australia and the rest of the world will take note of that. Although we are landlocked. The other countries around the world have got many pouring across the borders. It has got an impact on this country ... enough is enough."

While here, Mr Turnbull will attend other meetings on refugees including a Barack Obama-led summit on Tuesday, and a meeting on ending human slavery chaired by Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May.

He commended moves to strengthen the international framework.

"Australia welcomes the momentum we are seeing in the UN system and internationally," he said

"There is now stronger recognition that the international community must better share responsibility for helping those forced to leave their homes. All countries have a role to play and Australia is committed to a playing a role that provides resettlement options to genuine refugees, that sees our multicultural society grow from strength to strength, and that supports international efforts to help the most vulnerable."

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/get-control-of-your-borders-or-face-instability-malcolm-turnbulls-advice-to-the-un-20160919-grj95l.html>

## **9. Tony Abbott says Europe is facing 'peaceful invasion' of asylum seekers**

Former Australian prime minister urges European leaders to secure their borders with Australian-style policies

The Guardian

Paul Karp

Monday 19 September 2016 08.52 AEST

The former Australian prime minister Tony Abbott has urged Europe to adopt harsh Australian-style border protection policies to avoid "losing control" in the face of record numbers of people seeking asylum.

Abbott said the large numbers of people entering Europe "looks like a peaceful invasion" and said European countries risked losing their character if they allowed people he labeled "would-be economic migrants" to settle there.

The comments to a gathering of centre-right members of the European parliament in Prague on Saturday came as Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, prepared to tell the United Nations in New York that Australia has the best border policies in the world.

Both argue that tighter border protection helped convince the Australian public to accept a higher refugee intake, justifying a harsh set of policies that has left more than 1,000 people in indefinite offshore detention to deter others attempting to reach Australia by boat.

The United Nations has said that both Australia's system of indefinite offshore detention and the process of returning asylum seekers after a summary assessment are illegal under international law.

Abbott said "the prospect of millions of new Europeans from the Middle East and Africa streaming into Britain" had pushed Britons to "vote against losing control".

"Uncontrolled immigration didn't cause Brexit but it did prompt Britons to take back their sovereignty."

He said that after Brexit, Britain would need a new visa system that would "end uncontrolled movement".

Abbott lauded the former Australian prime minister John Howard, who famously said "we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come".

"Why shouldn't each country keep the final say over who can enter?" Abbott asked.

"After all, a country or a continent that can't control who enters its territory will eventually lose control of its future".

Abbott said it was a "decent and a humane impulse to give a better life to people from wretched places".

"But a million people coming by boat and almost a million people coming by land last year has the look of a peaceful invasion."

Abbott argued that people who have gone beyond their first place of safety "[are not] asylum seekers but would-be economic migrants". He did not address what those who were not allowed to remain permanently in transit countries should do.

Abbott said among the "would-be migrants" are "are soldiers of the caliphate bent on mayhem", that many would "join an angry underclass" and many "are coming, not with gratitude but with grievance, and with the insistence that Europe should make way for them".

"People in no immediate danger have to be turned back at Europe's borders," he said, including by intercepting people in the Mediterranean and returning them to their "starting point".

"This crisis can't be managed; it has to be resolved."

Abbott lauded Australia's border policies, which include turning boats back at sea, and intercepting boats and returning people to the countries they are fleeing, such as Sri Lanka, after only a summary assessment of their refugee claims.

"And having stopped the boats, we've been able to increase our genuine refugee intake because the Australian government has been in charge, not the people smugglers," he said.

The flows of people into Europe have been hundreds of times greater than those seeking to come to Australia, including many coming by foot. "Effective border protection is not for the squeamish, but it is absolutely necessary to save lives and to preserve nations," Abbott said.

Abbott called for "an end to self-doubt about the entitlement of European nations, individually and collectively, to keep their character". He warned that if the "sensible centre scoffs at people's real concerns" that "populism will increase".

"Stand guard on your borders and you ease so much of the anxiety that now grips this great continent."

In a cursory mention to another global crisis, Abbott said "we can't do much to change climate".

"But what's the point of government if we can't secure borders and control immigration?"

"This is one lesson that my part of the new world might usefully offer to your part of the old one."

Australia's detention facilities have drawn heavy domestic and international criticism following the Guardian's publication of the Nauru files, more than 2,000 leaked incident reports that laid bare the devastating abuse and trauma inflicted on children held there.

On Sunday immigration minister, Peter Dutton, defended conditions in offshore detention by comparing detention centres favourably to makeshift refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon, areas just outside the war zone in Syria.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/19/tony-abbott-says-europe-is-facing-peaceful-invasion-of-asylum-seekers>

## 10. Turnbull claims Australian border policies 'best in world' despite widespread criticism

Prime minister lauds generosity of Australia's humanitarian program despite concerns about slow resettlement and indefinite offshore detention

The Guardian

Paul Karp

Sunday 18 September 2016 08.49 AEST

Malcolm Turnbull has claimed Australia's border protection policy is the best in the world, ahead of refugee talks at the United Nations which will include fresh scrutiny of Australia's offshore detention system.

The prime minister said in New York on Saturday that Australia's border policies, which include indefinite offshore detention and controversial boat turnbacks at sea, were the "right responses".

Turnbull said that "strong borders" and one of the most generous humanitarian programs in the world "go together" because the public accepted migration when the government appeared in control of its borders.

On Saturday the new Pacific representative of the United Nations human rights office, Chitrlekha Massey, told Guardian Australia that Australia's detention of asylum seekers on Nauru "is unsustainable, it's a violation and it's unnecessary".

Australia's detention facilities have drawn heavy domestic and international criticism following the Guardian's publication of the Nauru files, more than 2,000 leaked incident reports that laid bare the devastating abuse and trauma inflicted on children held there.

On Tuesday the 73rd committee on the rights of the child will be held in Geneva. The United Nations committee has asked Nauru to attend the hearings, in part to provide an update on the frameworks in place to protect child asylum seekers on the island.

"Our policy on border protection is the best in the world," Turnbull claimed.

"Public opinion will not accept a generous humanitarian program, a substantial migration program, unless the government is seen to be in command of its borders," he cautioned.

The prime minister cited worldwide evidence of uncontrolled migration flows which cause destabilisation but insisted he wasn't about to dictate to others.

"We don't tell anybody else how to run their country," he said.

On Sunday Labor's foreign affairs spokeswoman, Penny Wong, said the opposition provided bipartisan support for many aspects of the border protection policy.

She added: "I think support for offshore processing doesn't mean support for indefinite punitive detention and the government really does need to start looking at third-country resettlement."

Wong also criticised the speed with which Australia was accepting refugees from Syria, saying it was "very slow to process people for those places" compared to other nations.

Leading Australian humanitarian organisations have said Australia's promise to settle 12,000 refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq appears "hollow" because there had been just 3,500 arrivals since then prime minister Tony Abbott promised the new intake a year ago.

Turnbull's comments follow a speech by his predecessor Tony Abbott in which he said Europe should pay heed to Australia's success in controlling its borders and warned the refugee crisis "can't be managed, but must be resolved".

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/18/malcolm-turnbull-australias-border-protection-policy-the-best-in-the-world>

## 11. Liberal MP says Turnbull can't possibly claim world's best border protection policy

The PM should use talks in New York on the global refugee issue to find a country to resettle those in Australian offshore detention, says Russell Broadbent

The Guardian

Katharine Murphy and Ben Doherty  
Monday 19 September 2016 14.46 AEST

Malcolm Turnbull needs to use a looming refugee summit to find a country prepared to take detainees from Nauru and Manus Island, according to one of his backbenchers, who says the government's policy amounts to indefinite detention.

In the lead-up to the high-powered gathering this week in New York, the Victorian Liberal backbencher Russell Broadbent has comprehensively rejected a recent characterisation by the prime minister that Australia has the best border protection policy in the world.

Broadbent told Guardian Australia on Monday Turnbull could not possibly make that claim, given the consequences of the current policy. "It's not the world's best policy if you end up with 2,000 people in limbo in indefinite detention," Broadbent said Monday.

"We should use this summit to look for a third country to take the people on Nauru and Manus Island."

This week the United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-Moon, will host a summit in New York "addressing large movements of refugees and migrants". A draft declaration document from the summit has already been widely circulated – and widely condemned – for its failure to commit countries to concrete actions to make refugees' journeys better or safer.

The day after Ban's summit the US president, Barack Obama, will host his own "leaders' summit", also in New York.

But, unlike the UN event, the US summit has been billed as a "pay-to-play" summit, with Obama offering invitations only to countries who indicate in advance they are prepared to make concrete commitments to accept more refugees.

Turnbull will attend the summit with the immigration minister Peter Dutton, but the government has not given any public indication about what its commitment might be.

It appears unlikely Australia's contribution to the summit will be any reform to its controversial mandatory detention, offshore processing, or regional resettlement policies but instead likely to be directed towards distant refugee flows, probably in the Middle-East.

Given the international publicity Australia's punitive asylum regime has generated, the prime minister is expected to face questions about when its offshore processing centres will wind up.

Late last week Dutton signalled Australia might shift its position on whether asylum seekers could be resettled in New Zealand, but he shut the door on that prospect on Thursday evening, saying Australia's regional processing relationship with Nauru would continue for "decades".

The group Australian Lawyers for Human Rights has written to the immigration and foreign ministers of New Zealand, Canada, the US, and Germany, urging those countries to resettle the recognised refugees currently held on Manus Island and Nauru.

The letter said it was "indisputable" that Australia's offshore detention regime breached international law, a position supported by the UN, the Australian Senate, and Papua New Guinea's supreme court.

"All of these countries [ALHR has written to] have demonstrated considerable generosity with respect to their resettlement intakes, particularly in response to the crisis in Syria," ALHR president Benedict Coyne said. "New Zealand previously offered to resettle 150 refugees from Australia's offshore processing centres but the Australian government refused."

"ALHR is concerned that if countries such as these do not offer resettlement places, refugees will be sent to countries that do not have the capacity to adequately protect and provide for their rights."

Canada has already accepted for resettlement two refugees held on Nauru, who had family members resettled in Canada.

The vast majority of people held in Australian-run offshore detention centres have been found to be refugees with a "well-founded fear of persecution" in their home country – 98% of the men on Manus who have been processed have been found to be refugees and 77% of the men, women and children on Nauru.

An estimated 86% of the world's 21.3m refugees are hosted in developing countries, usually close to the homelands they have fled.

The Refugee Council of Australia said Australia needed to outline – before this week's two global summits – firm new commitments on its refugee policies.

The acting chief executive of the council, Tim O'Connor, said the agreed draft of the outcome document to the secretary general's summit on Monday – which has been significantly watered-down from its original form – failed to adequately address the global forced migration issue.

“The international community is set to miss a landmark opportunity to manage the greatest displacement crisis the modern world has known if we again evade our responsibilities to provide durable solutions to displaced people and refugees.

“The global community needs to ensure people who flee conflict and persecution are protected and can live with dignity. The current draft does not go far enough and is an abrogation of our responsibilities.”

The refugee council said Australia’s refugee and asylum policies – which have been condemned by the United Nations, the Human Rights Commission, the Australian Medical Association, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and staff who work in Australia-run detention centres – undermine Australia’s credibility in international forums.

“The brutal impacts of Australia’s current offshore detention policy continue to undermine the positive story of Australia’s refugee resettlement success and the urgent need to engage with Australia’s neighbours to develop sustainable and humane regional solutions to the challenges of human displacement,” O’Connor said.

The refugee council proposed expanding and reforming the existing community proposal pilot, which allows communities to sponsor refugees to come to Australia. Moving this program outside Australia’s humanitarian intake, and reducing its cost – currently about \$70,000 – would allow more refugees to be resettled in Australia in a safe and orderly movement.

The St Vincent de Paul Society also urged the government to increase Australia’s annual intake of refugees to 30,000. “Contrary to the government’s assertions, breaking people’s spirits in offshore processing facilities is not the unavoidable alternative to deaths at sea,” said its chief executive, John Falzon.

“The most urgent matter facing the Australian government is the fate of refugees and asylum seekers stuck in limbo on Nauru and Manus Island.”

“We call on the prime minister to embrace a humane and respectful way forward for the vulnerable children and their families on Nauru, along with the more than 800 men on Manus Island, who have been living without hope for too long.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/19/liberal-mp-says-turnbull-cant-possibly-claim-worlds-best-border-protection-policy>

## **12. Turnbull tells UN secure borders essential for managing global migration flow**

Australian prime minister argues porous borders and uncontrolled flows of migrants drains support for multiculturalism, immigration and aid to refugees

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Thursday 22 September 2016 14.01 AEST

Strong national borders are the critical element to bring order to global migration flows, Malcolm Turnbull has told the UN general assembly, arguing that an uncompromising policy to stop irregular migration to Australia’s shores had restored confidence in a multicultural country.

The prime minister said Australia’s resolute suite of asylum policies – including boat turnbacks, offshore processing and regional resettlement – had enabled the country to increase its humanitarian refugee intake and to maintain public support for immigration.

While acknowledging the Australian circumstance could not be replicated in all places – for instance, countries with hard-to-monitor land borders or within the European Union, which was founded on a principle of freedom of movement – Turnbull said government control of territorial boundaries was crucial.

“Each country must adopt approaches that meet the needs of their own populations and geography, but Australia’s experience sheds some light on what the solutions are: strong borders; vigilant security agencies governed by the rule of law; and a steadfast commitment to the shared values of freedom and mutual respect.

“These are the ingredients of multicultural success,” he told the general assembly Wednesday night US time.

Turnbull said “secure borders are essential” and argued porous borders and uncontrolled flows of migrants across them, drained support for multiculturalism, immigration and aid to refugees.

“We believe that in order to secure and maintain public support for immigration, multiculturalism and a generous humanitarian program, the public need to know that it is their government which controls their borders.”

Turnbull said the current displaced population in the world – more than 65 million refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced – was too large for resettlement, and greater effort must be made to address the conflicts that were causing people to flee, and offer people in developing countries greater economic opportunities in their homelands.

Turnbull also told the general assembly that member states must accept the forcible return of its citizens if they do not meet the refugee convention threshold of a “well-founded fear of persecution” in their homeland.

His comment was implicitly directed at Iran, which refuses to accept the return of its citizens against their will.

Iranians are the largest cohort of asylum seekers on both Nauru and Manus Island. But the vast majority of those have been found to be refugees and cannot legally be refouled to Iran because they do face a “well-founded fear of persecution” and are legally owed protection.

Australia's uncompromising border protection policies - boat turnbacks, offshore processing, and regional resettlement - have been condemned as illegal under international law by the UN, and attracted fierce criticism domestically and internationally, especially over conditions in offshore detention, where physical violence, sexual predation and self-harm are at endemic levels, leaked copies of the detention centre's own internal reports reveal.

Turnbull did not address the issue of offshore processing during his speech to the UN, but was asked before speaking about the need to find resettlement places for refugees on Nauru and Manus, many of whom have been held on the islands for more than three years.

He told reporters the abuses of the offshore regime were the fault of the Labor party, which reopened the centres in 2012.

“That was the Labor party's legacy, and you ask about the people on Manus and Nauru – Kevin Rudd put them there. The Labor party put them there,” Turnbull said.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/22/turnbull-tells-un-secure-borders-essential-for-managing-global-migration-flow>

### **13. Australia to take Central American refugees as Malcolm Turnbull pledges to do more at Obama summit**

Canberra Times  
September 21 2016 - 6:33AM  
Mark Kenny

New York: Australia's humanitarian refugee intake will be set permanently at almost 19,000 per year and will now include a component of Central Americans under a series of pledges offered by Malcolm Turnbull in New York overnight.

At Barack Obama's invitation-only special summit on the refugee crisis, the Prime Minister has also stumped up fresh cash.

A new commitment of \$130 million will go towards providing aid to displaced persons across the world, as well as more resources for migration agencies facing funding uncertainty. .

Under his new formula, Australia's slated increase in the regular humanitarian intake from 13,750 to 18,750 has been effectively made permanent, over and above the skilled migration intake and irrespective of Australia's special intake of 12,000 refugees from the Syrian and Iraq humanitarian crisis. Tony Abbott originally announced the increase but never promised it would be permanent.

And that bolstered intake will now include Central American refugees currently housed in camps in Costa Rica - a pledge described by one observer as Mr Turnbull's "price of entry" to the summit. However, another theory suggests a potential quid pro quo arrangement, which could see the US resettle refugees stuck in Australia's offshore detention centres on Manus Island and Nauru.

Refugees in the Costa Rica camps are from the violence-stricken "Northern Triangle" countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

"This complex crisis requires a full spectrum of responses," Mr Turnbull told fellow governments, advocating determined policy based on a mix of principle and pragmatism.

"As leaders, we are responsible for helping those who are most vulnerable, and restoring the integrity of migration systems.

"Our strategy addresses all parts of the problem – employing strong border protection policies and a tough stance on people smugglers, while tackling the causes of displacement, with a generous and compassionate resettlement program supporting refugees in our communities."

During a speech to the UN on Tuesday, Nauru's Justice Minister David Adeang called on other countries "to assist in finding durable resettlement solutions" for the 942 refugees on the island.

"This is the critical missing component," he said.

Mr Turnbull again used his intervention to stress the critical pre-condition of establishing strong border policies in order to secure public support for subsequent increases in resettlement and assistance for more of the estimated 63 million displaced persons currently on the move across the globe.

Those comments had particular resonance in the US, where terrorist attacks have prompted widespread public questioning of American immigration system - especially Muslim immigration.

As a first world country, Australia will also increase its current commitment of \$220 million aimed at helping those on the ground in conflict zones.

"I can announce that Australia will commit an additional \$130 million Australian over the next three years in support of peace-building and assistance to refugees, forcibly displaced communities and host countries. This multi-year commitment will give greater certainty to aid delivery organisations and facilitate longer-term planning."

Mr Turnbull told leaders Australia's program of permanent refugee resettlement remains the third-largest in the world.

"Australians support these actions because they have confidence that our migration system is well managed. This confidence is a key pillar on which our successful multicultural society is built (but) allow public trust to erode and the mutual trust that binds us will similarly falter. As leaders, we must always choose laws and policies that develop strength and unity over weakness and division."

In Australia, Opposition Leader Bill Shorten chose to focus on the element of Australia's policy mix that Mr Turnbull has been more inclined to gloss over in New York: indefinite offshore detention.

"I notice that a lot of Mr Turnbull and Mr Dutton and the others are out there lecturing the rest of the world," he said.

"Well I think they need to explain to not just the rest of the world but to Australians what's really going on in Manus and Nauru, and when are they going to get those people out of indefinite detention and make regional resettlement a reality?"

Going into the summit, Mr Turnbull described that border control as "critically important".

"Unless you have that, you will not get the public support and the confidence you need to take the 12,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict zone in addition to the 13,750 refugees that come in through the regular program, increasing to 18,750 over the next few years," he said.

Without that control he said, "you don't have the public license to have a generous humanitarian program and of course you are simply providing a product for people smugglers to sell and we must deprive them of that - as we have done so in Australia".

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/australia-to-take-central-american-refugees-as-malcolm-turnbull-pledges-to-do-more-at-obama-summit-20160920-grkcq9.html>

## **14. Australia will take refugees from Costa Rica camps, Turnbull tells UN**

Prime minister offers more money for peace building and assistance but no additional resettlement places

The Guardian

Ben Doherty

Wednesday 21 September 2016 08.22 AEST

Australia will take refugees from camps in Costa Rica as it offered more money for peace building and refugee assistance, but no additional resettlement places, at Barack Obama's global migration summit in New York.

That humanitarian intake will include a cohort of refugees from the violence-plagued "northern triangle" countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador taken from camps in Costa Rica, Malcolm Turnbull announced.

The prime minister praised Obama "for bringing us together to pledge new commitments to support some of the world's most vulnerable people", but did not pledge any additional places in Australia.

Instead he announced the previously earmarked increase in Australia's humanitarian intake to 18,750 by 2018-19 would be made permanent.

Australia's approach to the issue of forced migration was "both principled and pragmatic", Turnbull told the summit.

“Our strategy addresses all parts of the problem – employing strong border protection policies and a tough stance on people smugglers, while tackling the causes of displacement, with a generous and compassionate resettlement program supporting refugees in our communities.

“This is why Australia recently announced a \$220m commitment to help the humanitarian and resilience needs in Syria and its neighbouring countries.

“And I can announce that Australia will commit an additional \$130m over the next three years in support of peace building and assistance to refugees, forcibly displaced communities and host countries. This multi-year commitment will give greater certainty to aid delivery organisations and facilitate longer-term planning.”

Turnbull’s address did not mention Australia’s offshore processing regime, or the future of the 2,000 refugees and asylum seekers held on the islands of Nauru and Papua New Guinea’s Manus.

Nauru’s justice minister, David Adeang, told the same gathering that while he was proud of his country’s role in assisting in refugee processing, Nauru would never be a permanent home for the refugees now held there. “Nauru invites other countries to assist in finding durable resettlement solutions for our refugees,” he said. “This is the critical missing component.

“Remote processing is one part of what needs to be a comprehensive migration strategy. I encourage states today to assist us find permanent homes for the 924 refugee men, women and children currently on Nauru.”

Turnbull’s failure to acknowledge or address the ongoing human rights abuses in the Australian-run offshore camps – including physical and sexual violence, child abuse, and endemic rates of self-harm – has been condemned by rights groups.

The Human Rights Law Centre’s director of legal advocacy, Daniel Webb, said the fundamental principle of indefinite offshore detention was flawed, and that “showing decency to one person seeking asylum doesn’t justify or require cruelty to another”.

“Right now there are 2,000 innocent people in our care who are suffering. I’ve sat face to face with women who have been sexually assaulted on Nauru. I’ve seen a man in our care collapse unconscious after being beaten on Manus. I’ve spoken with families desperate to begin rebuilding their lives in safety but who still languish on a painful road to nowhere after three years. Last night’s announcement doesn’t end their suffering.”

Turnbull has also been criticised for his consistent characterisations of Australia’s refugee resettlement program as one of the world’s most “generous”.

“Australia’s program of permanent refugee resettlement is the third largest in the world,” he told the Obama summit.

But Dr John Minns, associate professor at the Australian National University and convenor of Canberra Refugee Action Committee, said claims that Australia was the third-most generous resettler of refugees in the world was “a trick”.

“Last year Australia resettled just 11,776 people. According to the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, of those we recognised, registered or resettled – considered the truest way of determining generosity to refugees – Australia was ranked 25th overall, 32nd per capita and 47th compared to our GDP. Those we take compared to the total refugees under the UNHCR mandate puts us 81st in the world on a GDP basis – hardly something of which we can be proud.”

Minns said for Australia to boast of its performance in the face of an unprecedented global refugee crisis was embarrassing.

“Australia took fewer than 12,000 in 2015 while a much poorer country such as Turkey has over two and a half million, Pakistan has around one and a half million and Lebanon and Iran have around one million each.”

Save the Children’s chief executive, Paul Ronalds, welcomed Turnbull’s announcement of a funding boost in Australia’s assistance for refugees in other countries but said the prime minister had failed to back this up with a meaningful increase in the refugee resettlement intake.

“Claiming that the maintenance of Australia’s already stated humanitarian intake for 2018-19 of 18,750 places into future years is some kind of significant pledge to help the international community deal with the global refugee crisis is disingenuous,” Ronalds said.

“While we welcome any additional financial contribution by Australia towards helping children and adults forced to flee their homes from conflict and persecution, the \$130m announced by the prime minister pales in comparison to the \$9.6bn the Australian government has spent since 2013 maintaining its damaging and isolationist ‘deterrence-based’ asylum seeker policy.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/21/australia-will-take-refugees-from-costa-rica-camps-turnbull-tells-un>

# 15. Malcolm Turnbull lashes out at Kevin Rudd over 'biggest policy failure in the history of the Commonwealth'

Canberra Times  
September 22 2016 - 7:25AM  
Mark Kenny

New York: Malcolm Turnbull has described Labor's botched management of the people smuggling challenge under Kevin Rudd's leadership as his "legacy of shame" and the worst policy failure in the country's history.

The fiery outburst came as the Australian Prime minister appeared less confident of progress in peace moves in Syria than he was just 24 hours earlier.

In a spirited defence of his government's recently announced decision to resettle an undisclosed number of refugees from a Costa Rican refugee camp while hundreds of refugees languish much closer to home on Manus Island and Nauru, Mr Turnbull reaffirmed that irregular arrivals to Australia would never achieve their goal of settlement, and slammed Mr Rudd's approach after 2007 as wantonly ill-advised and ultimately as the cause of more than a thousand drownings.

The strength and obvious conviction of Mr Turnbull's comments revealed Mr Turnbull's personal anger at the policy mess that was Australia's border regime, and follow the Prime Minister's decision to block Mr Rudd's bid to head up the United Nations.

Asked why refugees in a Costa Rican camp were deemed morally superior and could be granted the right to Australian resettlement whereas those in PNG and Nauru did not, Mr Turnbull let fly.

"We have to recognise that in Australia, we don't theorise about people smuggling," he began.

He said the boats had stopped under John Howard and there was no people smuggling but that Mr Rudd had been elected in 2007 and changed the policy settings creating a "pull factor" or incentive to attempt the vast and dangerous maritime voyage.

"The Labor Party have that on their conscience, they made that decision, it defied reality, it defied common sense, they pressed ahead with it and 50,000 people arrived, 1200 at least, drowned at sea, \$11 billion of expense. It was the biggest policy failure in the history of the Commonwealth – tragic, so many people died, that was the Labor Party's legacy," he said.

"And you ask about the people on Manus Island and Nauru? Kevin Rudd put them there, the Labor Party put them there. We have been dealing with Labor's legacy, their legacy of shame.

He said his government had closed 17 detention centres, removed "several thousand" children from detention under Labor.

"This is what we've had to deal with now we do not have to theorise about it, this is not a matter for academic speculation, we know exactly what works and what doesn't work," he said.

Meanwhile, almost two months after the government declined to nominate him for the UN secretary-general election, Mr Rudd has maintained that Mr Turnbull betrayed him and was justifying it with a "concocted excuse".

In an interview with Sky News overnight, Mr Rudd said criticism of him - that he didn't have the character to lead the organisation - was invalid because Foreign Minister Julie Bishop privately and publicly advocated his candidature and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also endorsed him.

"We all know, in the case of Malcolm Turnbull, it's pretty simple," Mr Rudd said.

"Malcolm felt the pressure of the hard right-wing of his party, having had a narrow win in the last election, and as a result of that, lost courage of his convictions, having provided me with multiple assurance privately over many, many months that he would be backing my candidature for the position."

Former Labor leader and Australian ambassador to the US, Kim Beazley, recently said Mr Turnbull had expressed concerns to him about Mr Rudd's candidacy early this year, calling the Prime Minister's eventual rejection of his former rival "utterly consistent".

Mr Turnbull was speaking on his last day in New York before addressing the UN General Assembly and then heading to Washington to press legislators to back the Trans-Pacific Partnership, during the so-called "lame duck" session of congress.

While officially he remains upbeat, as do senior Obama administration officials, few hold out realistic hopes of it actually happening.

Australia has agreed in principle to resettle some Central American asylum seekers while attending Barack Obama's special refugee and displaced persons summit ahead of the UN meeting.

More than 850 asylum seekers housed on PNG's Manus Island have been found to have legitimate refugee claims, but Australia has insisted they cannot be settled in Australia nor in any comparable standard country, for fear of providing a new incentive – or as the government puts it, a product to sell – for criminal people smugglers.

The government maintains that no agreement has been reached with the US for the settlement of PNG or Nauru refugees, but hopes remain that Australia's gesture to Central America might prompt some reciprocal gesture in the near future.

In other comments, Mr Turnbull again appealed to larger powers such as the US and Russia to resist the tendency to fight a proxy war in Syria, saying it was vital that Islamic State be defeated and peace re-established.

But fresh from more talks with Mr Obama on the sidelines of UN meetings, and with arguments raging internationally over horrendous civilian and aid workers deaths from errant air raids, Mr Turnbull appeared more despondent about resolving the long-running conflict.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/malcolm-turnbull-lashes-out-at-kevin-rudd-over-biggest-policy-failure-in-the-history-of-the-commonwealth-20160921-grlnnh.html>

## **16. Turnbull rules out US refugee swap following UN Costa Rica announcement**

Sydney Morning Herald  
September 21 2016 - 1:44PM  
Fergus Hunter

The government has rejected suggestions that Australia's newly announced acceptance of Central American refugees will form part of a people swap arrangement with the United States.

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten demanded to know on Wednesday if there had been consideration of a "Costa Rica solution" to the prolonged detention of refugees in Australian offshore detention centres, following the surprise announcement by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull from the US overnight.

In the speech at the at the invitation-only United Nations refugee summit, Mr Turnbull announced that an increase in the annual refugee intake to 18,750 would become permanent as well as a boost in humanitarian funding.

"Mr Turnbull needs to spell out: is he having negotiations with Canada?" Mr Shorten asked. "Is he having discussions with New Zealand or the United States? Is he talking to leaders in our region? Has he sent his ministers to talk to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees?"

The announcement of Australia's assistance with refugees in US-assisted Costa Rican camps – fleeing violence in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador – had surprised observers and triggered speculation of third country resettlement for the 1500 people at the Manus Island and Nauru detention centres.

But Special Minister of State Scott Ryan told ABC radio "there is not, and there will be, no people swap". A spokesperson for Immigration Minister Peter Dutton also ruled out a swap.

"Speculation that it may be linked to an arrangement with the US or any other country or that this is part of a 'people swap' is false," she said.

"The government has been working with a number of countries to provide settlement for people currently in Nauru and Manus Island."

Mr Turnbull's announcements have received a mixed response, with some voices welcoming the contribution to the global migrant crisis but others dismissing them as trivial.

"Malcolm Turnbull has flown to New York to re-announce Tony Abbott's policies. We said in 2014 that we supported this proposition. We still support it," Mr Shorten said on Wednesday.

"Is this really the best that Malcolm Turnbull can do on the world stage? Reheat the leftovers of Tony Abbott's policy two years later in New York? Let's call it for what it is. This is just a hoax."

As prime minister, Tony Abbott announced the gradual increase from the recent annual program of 13,750 refugees to 18,750 by 2018-19 but did not commit to making it permanent.

The Refugee Council of Australia welcomed the increased funding and the promise to peg the annual intake at the increased level while Amnesty International said the government had "shirked its fair share of responsibility at a time of record global displacement".

"We would like to see it even more than that but certainly it's a big development, a big move over the 13,750 that we'd had in recent years so, yes, we welcome that," Refugee Council president Phil Glendenning told ABC radio.

"Let's be clear about this, very little of what the Australian government has announced is new," Amnesty refugee campaigner Ming Yu Hah said.

The Refugee Council had joined speculation that this announcement of central American refugees might mean a people swap is in the works, saying the treatment of people in Australia's offshore detention centres had "gone on too long".

"The elephant in the room when the Prime Minister gets up in New York is the horrors of what's happening on Nauru and Manus Island and that suffering cannot go on for a day longer," Mr Glendenning said.

While the government has consistently talked down the likelihood of a regional resettlement arrangement with New Zealand, which has previously offered help, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton recently left the door open to such a shift.

At the summit, Mr Turnbull said the complex migrant crisis "requires a full spectrum of responses" and Nauru's Justice Minister David Adaeng called third country resettlement for its 942 refugees "the critical missing component".

John Coyne, head of the border security program at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, said controversial boat turn-backs had prevented asylum seekers from reaching Australia and those in offshore detention could now be treated as a legacy caseload to be resettled without restarting the boats.

"There is an opportunity for consideration for a European or North American country to say they might take those people," he told Fairfax Media.

"If we were able to find a viable third country resettlement option ... we could easily, without attracting further irregular migrants, identify that as being a legacy caseload issue."

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/turnbull-government-rules-out-us-refugee-swap-following-un-costa-rica-announcement-20160921-grl2hx.html>

## **17. Australian PM's refugee policy slammed as 'deception'**

Human rights organization urges countries to see through Australia's refugee policy and reject its 'model of abuse'

Anadolu Agency  
By Jill Fraser  
MELBOURNE, Australia

On the eve of United States President Barack Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees, Amnesty International Australia called on other countries Tuesday not to be deceived by the Australian prime minister's words regarding the refugee model he is promoting.

Speaking at a United Nations summit in New York, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton told world leaders to look to Australia's tough border control policies as an example of instilling confidence in citizens and dealing with refugees.

Graham Thom, Amnesty International Australia's refugee coordinator, who is currently in New York for the UN and Leaders' summits, vehemently disagrees with Turnbull and urges other countries to reject the "model of abuse" that Turnbull is championing and instead "call on Australia to do its fair share".

In a statement released late Tuesday, Amnesty called on countries to "see through Turnbull's deception".

"It is absolutely shameful to see our Prime Minister stand on the world stage and champion the systematic abuse of thousands of women, children and men on remote islands as a model others should follow," Thom said in the statement.

"Prime Minister Turnbull says world leaders should look to Australia's border control policies for inspiration, yet he fails to explain that Australia's definition of 'border control' equates to the Government building a deliberate system of cruel treatment for refugees, and flouting international law."

At the UN General Assembly meeting aimed at finding a better international solution to deal with the 65.3 million displaced people around the globe, Dutton and Turnbull defended Australia's frequently criticized immigration policy.

Turnbull urged the leaders in the audience to look to Australia as an example of a solution.

Human Rights groups and UN representatives have constantly criticized Australia's immigration policy, which is currently responsible for detaining more than 2,000 asylum seekers and refugees in centers in Papua New Guinea, Nauru and Australia.

Following Turnbull's speech, Save the Children issued a statement criticizing his words, saying he promoted "an isolationist deterrence based model to asylum seeker policy that evidence has shown is expensive and takes a toll on those Australia should be aspiring to protect [including refugee children]".

Save the Children CEO Paul Ronalds said Turnbull should have "used his time on the world stage to announce an increase to Australia's humanitarian intake, which many organizations believe should be lifted to at least 30,000 refugees per year by 2018-19 to reflect the growing global need and Australia's capacity".

Twelve months on from former Prime Minister Tony Abbott's public commitment to resettle 12,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees, only 3,532 have made it to Australia.

<http://aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/australian-pm-s-refugee-policy-slammed-as-deception-/649186>

## **18. Refugees condemn Malcolm Turnbull's promotion of Australia's asylum policy**

Manus Island detainee says Australia went to New York refugee summit and 'shouted that it is a country that violates human rights'

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Wednesday 21 September 2016 16.25 AEST

Refugees detained on Manus Island for three years have condemned Malcolm Turnbull's international promotion of Australia's asylum policies. They have said the Australian government runs an offshore detention policy designed to torture, and that Australia had gone to New York and "shouted that it is a country that violates human rights".

The prime minister addressed global leaders at two refugee summits in New York this week, saying Australia's asylum policy was a model for the world to follow.

"Addressing irregular migration, through secure borders, has been essential in creating the confidence that the government can manage migration in a way that mitigates risks and focuses humanitarian assistance on those who need it most," he said.

Turnbull did not mention Australia's controversial offshore detention camps on Manus Island and Nauru, which have been condemned as illegal by courts amid consistent allegations of systemic physical violence, sexual predation, harsh conditions and endemic rates of self-harm.

In a video statement posted online in response to Turnbull's comments, Iranian journalist refugee Behrouz Boochani pleaded from the Manus Island detention centre for global leaders to pressure Australia to end its indefinite detention regime.

"Australia's offshore policy is not based on border protection, it is based on torture," Boochani said. "The Australian government has kept us in this remote island for more than three years and it is clear that they don't have any plan for settle us here.

"Please don't allow [the] Australian government to pretend it has a good policy for refugees and please speak against this cruel policy. We hope that the world puts pressure on the Australian government to give to us freedom."

Boochani, an ethnic Kurd and outspoken journalist, fled Iran after his news organisation was raided by the Iranian authorities and his workmates imprisoned and tortured. He was transferred to Manus in August 2013, where he has continued to work as a journalist, speaking out against conditions on Manus and revealing abuses.

Boochani has been found to be a refugee, he has a "well-founded fear of persecution" in his homeland and he is legally owed protection.

He told the Guardian from detention that Australia had gone to the UN and "shouted that it is a country that violates human rights".

"We people in Manus island were ready for this meeting in NY for about a month and wrote a letter to Ban Ki-Moon and Barack Obama and asked them that they deeply think about our situation.

"We asked them in our letters that try to find a way for help to us. Unfortunately, the Australian PM tried to hide his harsh policy and said it is the best policy in the world. It's a completely wrong comment from Mr PM and people in Manus prison are disappointed by his words like before.

"We expected that the PM would say some clear thing about us, but unfortunately he continued to make propaganda. We are disappointed more than before."

On Tuesday, Turnbull told the leaders' summit on refugees in New York, hosted by Obama, that Australia's policies were "both principled and pragmatic".

“Our strategy addresses all parts of the problem – employing strong border protection policies, a very tough stance on people smugglers, while tackling the causes of displacement, with a generous and compassionate resettlement program supporting refugees in our communities.”

More than 50 countries were invited to Obama’s summit. Collectively they pledged to double the number of refugees they resettled last year.

Australia did not offer any new resettlement places.

Its existing commitment to increase its humanitarian intake to 18,750 was announced as a permanent increase by Turnbull, and an additional \$130m was committed to assist refugees hosted elsewhere.

As well, Australia agreed to dedicate a proportion of its humanitarian intake to resettling refugees from the ‘northern triangle’ of countries in South America – Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador – currently in camps in Costa Rica.

Speculation that Australia’s Costa Rican intake might emerge as a quid pro quo for the US accepting some refugees from Australia’s offshore detention camps on Nauru and Manus was quickly quashed by special minister of state Scott Ryan. He said categorically that Australia would not be involved in a “people-swap” of refugees with the US.

“No, we will not,” he told ABC radio. “There is no, and there will be no, people swap.”

World Vision Australia’s chief executive, Tim Costello, said Australia’s desultory contribution to the Obama summit had been disappointing, and that while additional aid money was welcomed, Australia’s refugee intake would remain lower than it was in 2012, when it was raised to 20,000.

“In a world where 65 million people are now forcibly displaced from their homes, and where more than 20 million people – half of them children – have been turned into refugees, we are not even back to where we were when Tony Abbott was elected.”

“The fact is that Australia can and should do more for people who are running for their lives. Taking more refugees will not make Australia a worse country, it will make us a better country.”

The executive officer of the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce, Misha Coleman, said Australia’s commitment was “truly woeful” and paled into comparison with the pledges made by other countries.

Acting chair of the taskforce, the Rev Mark Riessen said he had hoped “Mr Turnbull would use the world stage in New York to announce an end to the hell that people are enduring in Nauru and in Manus province”.

“Despite a series of highly credible reports being released over recent weeks, which outline alternatives and other options for the government to take, unfortunately the cruel attempt to cover up government-sanctioned abuse just continues.”

Unicef Australia’s director of policy and advocacy Nicole Breeze said while the positive sentiments and commitments from nations in New York were an important and positive development, the world faced an unprecedented humanitarian need caused by forced migration.

“In 2015 only 107,000 refugees were resettled out of 21 million. All developed nations must do more to ensure safe and liveable options for refugees.”

Breeze said Australia had failed to find a solution to end the urgent problem and ongoing abuse of offshore processing.

“Offshore processing under current arrangements, which fails to provide a resettlement pathway, is simply not sustainable. It distracts proper attention, and diverts critical resources, from the very real global crisis we are experiencing. It’s time for a new approach in which we focus on addressing root causes of displacement and finding permanent solutions for refugees worldwide.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/21/manus-island-refugees-condemn-malcolm-turnbulls-promotion-of-australias-asylum-policy>

## **19. Nauru defends involvement in Australia's detention centre program**

ABC News Online

First posted Wed 21 Sep 2016, 9:58am

Updated Wed 21 Sep 2016, 10:36am

Nauru's President Baron Waqa has defended his country's involvement in Australia's offshore detention centre, in a speech to the United Nations summit on refugees.

But he called on the international community to help find permanent homes for more than 900 refugees.

At a summit to address international action and cooperation for displaced people, Mr Waqa described Nauru's refugee policy as fair and robust while ensuring people in need were granted protection.

"This remote processing model is able to take away the benefit being offered by people smugglers, reduce or eliminate deaths at sea and ensure that states can control their borders," he said.

"And at the same time ensure that people in need are granted protection."

Also at the UN Leaders Summit on Refugees and Migrants, Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said his government was working on resettlement options for refugees and asylum seekers on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island and Nauru.

Australia's border control policies, which have seen asylum seekers — including children — detained on Christmas Island, Manus Island and Nauru have been heavily criticised by human rights groups and non-government organisations, including the recent UN Human Rights Council's periodic review.

Despite international concerns and condemnation of the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru, Mr Waqa defended the program and called for international help.

"My country is not typically a source country, a transit country or a destination which can offer permanent settlement for refugees or migrants," he said.

"We are a small island in the middle of the Pacific, an isolated oasis, far from strife and conflict.

"Finding durable settlement solutions for our refugees is the missing component in a comprehensive strategy.

"I invite members to partner with us in providing permanent homes for 924 refugee men, women and children currently on Nauru."

### ***Fiji demands 'better response' to refugee crisis***

Meanwhile, Fiji's Prime Minister, Frank Bainimarama, joined the international criticism of Australia's offshore detention policy in his speech to the UN summit.

Mr Bainimarama co-chaired a roundtable at the summit and pledged assistance to deal with the world's growing refugee crisis.

"We hear the cries of those who are unfairly treated in detention centres, including in our own region, with no hope and no way out," he said.

"Excellencies our common humanity demands that we must heed this crisis and work together more realistically.

"Governments must also work together more effectively to confront the people smugglers, those who prey on the hopes and dreams of ordinary people for commercial gain.

"Along with the drug trade, the pernicious trade in people across borders is a grave threat to international security and demands zero tolerance the world over.

"Our common humanity demands a much better response to this crisis that the world has displayed so far."

Mr Bainimarama said global warming would trigger problems as people, particularly in the Pacific, were displaced.

"We are in a region in the world that is especially vulnerable to the extreme weather events and rising sea levels caused by global warming.

"We are already beginning to consider a worst case scenario, in which three low-lying Pacific nations — Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands — are submerged altogether."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-21/nauru-defends-involvement-in-detention-centre-program/7864096>

## **20. Nauru and Manus Island are at least better than camps outside Syria, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton says**

Canberra Times  
September 18 2016  
David Wroe

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has defended Nauru and Manus Island detention centres by saying they are much better than the sprawling, makeshift refugee camps that fringe war-torn Syria.

His comments came as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull lauded Australia's border protection system as the "best in the world" ahead of a major United Nations summit in New York that will be dominated by the issue of refugees.

Mr Dutton, speaking on ABC's Insiders program, suggested that Nauru and Manus could be favourably measured against camps such as Zaatari in Jordan where an estimated 80,000 Syrian refugees are living.

"I've been to Zaatari in Jordan and I've seen the devastation coming out of Syria and I've been to Lebanon seeing the situation there with many people who are living in desperate, desperate situations having been displaced," Mr Dutton said.

"The conditions that we support the Nauruan government to provide and the PNG government to provide are very different to that which I've seen in other camps.

"The situation on Nauru is very, very different. We provide \$26 million to the hospital on Nauru, \$11 million for the medical centre. Kids are picked up by bus and go to school each day. People are given financial support. There are 300 people working in Nauru, 35 have started businesses." Advertisement

He said he was not making any comparison with Syria itself.

Jordan along with Lebanon and Turkey is straining under the weight of the Syrian refugee flow, with an estimated 6.5 million Syrians having fled the country, most of them now stuck in those three neighbouring countries.

Zaatari camp is administered by the United Nations in co-operation with dozens of international aid groups. It has clean water and some electricity and schooling but is beset by infrastructure, sanitation and security issues.

Critics of Australia's offshore detention centres point to reports of assaults, sexual abuse and self-harm as well as the fact that people found to be refugees are stuck there indefinitely with Australia refusing to resettle them.

Mr Dutton restated that Australia was in "discussions with a number of third countries" in a bid to resettle people found to be refugees "but we have to provide an arrangement that is not going to provide a pull factor".

Mr Dutton, Mr Turnbull and Foreign Minister Julie Bishop are in New York for UN General Assembly Leaders' week, at which the estimated 65 million people displaced by conflict and persecution worldwide will be one of the top issues.

Mr Turnbull, in an apparent reference to the immigration tensions plaguing Europe, said in New York on Sunday morning Australian time that uncontrolled borders undermined public confidence in the acceptance of refugees.

"Our policy on border protection is the best in the world. We have established and maintained control of our borders," he said.

"We have one of the most generous humanitarian programs: over 13,000 coming in through the humanitarian channel at the moment, rising every year substantially. It's substantially increased up to 18,000 plus 12,000 from the Syrian conflict zone.

"But you cannot do that and, frankly, public opinion will not accept a generous humanitarian program ... unless the government is seen to be in command of its borders.

"You've seen around the world, the way in which uncontrolled migration flows start to destabilise countries and undermine support for migration, undermine support for multiculturalism."

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/nauru-and-manus-island-are-at-least-better-than-camps-outside-syria-immigration-minister-peter-dutton-says-20160918-griu9c.html>

## **21. Peter Dutton says getting women and children off Nauru is 'first priority'**

Australia's immigration minister says his government is 'working on' getting immigration detainees resettled but did not provide details

The Guardian

Ben Doherty

Tuesday 20 September 2016 14.17 AEST

The immigration minister, Peter Dutton, has said resettling women and child refugees from Nauru was a matter of "first priority" for his government but has not nominated a third country to where they might go.

With the Nauru detention centre mired in controversy over reports of sexual predation, physical violence, and self-harm, and Nauru resolutely refusing to allow people to settle permanently, Australia has sought a "third country" resettlement for refugees on the island for more than three years without success.

One Rohingya refugee has been resettled from Nauru in Cambodia at a cost to Australia of more than \$40m, and two refugees with family members in Canada have moved there.

New Zealand has made a standing offer to resettle 150 refugees a year from Australia's offshore detention camps, but this has been rejected by Australia because it would be seen as giving people access to Australia. The government's declared policy is that no person from offshore detention will ever be allowed to settle in Australia.

Speaking to Sky News in New York on the sidelines of a UN-sponsored international summit on migrants and refugees, Dutton said finding a resettlement country for the women and child refugees on Nauru – many of whom have been on the island for more than three years – was a key goal for government.

"Be assured the government wants to get particularly women and children out as a first priority from Nauru – we're working on that." However, Dutton declined to nominate a third country where people might be able to be resettled. "We're working with third countries to see what settlement options might be available. "We've had discussions over a long period of time with partners and I've not commented, not ruled countries in or out."

In a speech to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute last week, Dutton said Australia would maintain its offshore processing network and its "relationship in this regard with Nauru will continue for decades".

Last month the Guardian published the Nauru Files, more than 2,000 leaked incident reports from the island which included details of systemic sexual and physical violence against refugees and asylum seekers, privation and degrading treatment and epidemic rates of self-harm and suicide attempts.

Further disclosures this week show sexual abuse and self-harm continuing.

In New York Dutton reiterated the comments of the prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, arguing Australia's asylum policies were an example to the world in dealing with irregular migration.

"We have a good story to tell in Australia, we have been able to secure our borders and at the same time we've been able to bring a record number of refugees in through the right way."

"We are an island nation so we have the benefit of not having borders which are porous and that's the problem in Europe, trying to enforce those land crossing and regularise those crossing is difficult ... but nonetheless people seek to make the voyage across water in Australia, as they do across the Mediterranean to Europe so there are lots of lessons that can be learnt and I think people are very interested in the success we've had in securing our borders."

Australia's current refugee intake is 13,750 a year (rising to 18,750 in three years) and it committed in September last year to taking 12,000 additional refugees from Syria, and Iraq over an unspecified period, about 3,500 of whom have arrived in the year since.

In 1980-81 Malcolm Fraser's Coalition government accepted 22,545 humanitarian entrants. In 2012-13 the Gillard Labor government accepted 20,019.

Australia, an island nation distant from major refugee-producing conflicts, has experienced a fraction of the irregular migration of other parts of the world.

At the peak of boat arrivals to Australia, 20,587 arrived in a single year, 2013, a figure surpassed in Europe in some single weeks. Europe in 2015 received 1.26 million people seeking asylum.

At the New York summit Australia's asylum regime has been criticised as setting a dangerous precedent. Boat turn-backs, offshore processing and regional resettlement were singled out.

The British-based Overseas Development Institute accused Australia of leading a "race to the bottom on refugee protection". The country's hardline policies of refusing entry and protection being adopted by countries in Europe and even countries in regions of the world traditionally receptive to refugees.

ODI cited the examples of Jordan refusing to welcome 70,000 Syrians stranded in the desert area of Berm and Kenya's plans to shut the long-running Dadaab refugee camp and repatriate its largely-Somali refugee population.

"We are seeing a worrying race to the bottom on refugee protection around the world," the ODI's Sara Pantuliano, author of the report, said in a statement.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/20/peter-dutton-says-getting-women-and-children-off-nauru-is-first-priority>

## 22. Malcolm Turnbull tells world leaders to follow Australia's asylum policies

Speaking at UN summit, the prime minister says security of national borders must come first if the public is to accept large migration flows

The Guardian

Ben Doherty

Tuesday 20 September 2016 08.24 AEST

Malcolm Turnbull has told world leaders at the UN that Australia's uncompromising border protection regime should be a model for other countries, and their populations would never accept large-scale migration unless they could create "order out of the chaos" of current migration flows.

He said domestic asylum policies must have security of national borders as a primary concern, and a perceived lack of control of migration would lead to dysfunction and internal division.

"Addressing irregular migration, through secure borders, has been essential in creating confidence that the government can manage migration in a way that mitigates risks and focuses humanitarian assistance on those who need it the most," he told a UN summit on refugees and migrants.

"This has had a direct impact on our ability to provide generous and effective support to refugees. Without this confidence, we would not have been able to increase our intake of refugees – the world's third-largest permanent resettlement program – by more than 35%.

"And we would not have been able to commit to welcoming 12,000 additional Syrian and Iraqi refugees, on top of this."

Resettlement of refugees assists less than 1% of the world's refugees displaced from their homelands each year – 86% of the world's 21.3 million refugees are hosted by developing countries, usually those close to the places people have fled.

Turkey has more than 2.5 million refugees living within its borders. Lebanon hosts 1.1 million, one in every five people in the country.

Australia's current humanitarian intake is 13,750 a year, a figure that will rise to 18,750 in three years' time.

Turnbull said Australia was a nation of migration and its diversity had been "an investment against marginalisation and extremism". "It helps our community unite against extremism, rather than be divided by it".

He welcomed the growing global consensus that greater cooperation was needed internationally to deal with mass forced migration flows.

"There is now stronger recognition that the international community must better share responsibility for helping those forced to leave their homes. All countries have a role to play and Australia is committed to playing a role that provides resettlement options to genuine refugees, that sees our multicultural society grow from strength to strength, and that supports international efforts to help the most vulnerable."

Paul Ronalds, the chief executive of Save the Children – the child welfare organisation that formerly worked on Nauru – condemned Turnbull's speech, saying he had failed to commit Australia to any meaningful action to address the global issue of forced migration.

"Instead Mr Turnbull promoted an isolationist 'deterrence-based' model to asylum seeker policy that the evidence has shown is extremely expensive, takes a heavy toll on those Australia should be aspiring to protect, compromises Australia's global interests and places the humanitarian burden on those developing nations who have been left to host the vast majority of people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution."

Ronalds said Australia could have used the global stage of the UN to announce a substantial increase in its resettlement program, and promote a regional framework for assisting forced migrants.

"Of course all this is to say nothing of the Turnbull government's continual failure to announce sustainable and humane solutions for those refugees and asylum seekers Australia has left to languish on Nauru and Manus Island.

"These people have waited long enough for an opportunity to begin rebuilding their lives and the need for a solution is urgent given their understandable despair and the harm they have suffered for years."

Australia's asylum regime is built upon three fundamental pillars: boat turnbacks, offshore processing, and regional resettlement.

The minister for immigration and border protection Peter Dutton, also in New York, has met the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, and the director general of the International Organisation for Migration, William Lacy Swing.

Boat turnbacks, regarded by legal opinion as a breach of international law, have been successful in dramatically slowing the flow boats reaching Australian waters and shores. The last boat to reach Australian territory was in May this year.

But offshore processing and regional resettlements have been highly contentious.

The offshore processing centre on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island has been ruled illegal and unconstitutional, while it and the camp on Nauru have been beset by systemic reports of sexual and physical violence, cruel and degrading treatments, inadequate medical care, and epidemic rates of self-harm and suicide attempts.

Regional resettlement has resulted in just one person – a Rohingya man – being resettled in Cambodia at a cost of more than \$40m. A further 72 men have been resettled in PNG.

Australia's policies have been criticised by more than a dozen other governments around the world, several arms of the UN itself, the Australian Senate, the PNG supreme court and international human rights bodies.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/20/malcolm-turnbull-tells-world-leaders-to-follow-australias-asylum-policies>

## **23. Malcolm Turnbull and Peter Dutton tout Australia's immigration policy**

ABC News Online

By North America correspondent Stephanie March and political reporter Stephanie Anderson

First posted Tue 20 Sep 2016, 5:59am

Updated Tue 20 Sep 2016, 7:35am

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton have used a United Nations summit to encourage world leaders to look to Australia's strict border control policies as a way to give citizens confidence in accepting migrants.

The pair defended Australia's controversial immigration policy at an unprecedented United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York, aimed at finding a better international solution to deal with 65.3 million people displaced around the globe.

Mr Turnbull outlined his view of the problem to the group, saying that the "unregulated movement of people globally is growing fast".

"We need measures to create order out of the resulting chaos," he said.

He urged the fellow world leaders to look to the Australian example for a solution.

"Addressing irregular migration through secure borders has been essential in creating the confidence that the government can manage migration in a way that mitigates risk and focuses humanitarian assistance on those who need it most," Mr Turnbull said.

Human Rights Groups and UN representatives have repeatedly criticised Australia's immigration detention policy, that is currently keeping more than 2,000 people in centres in Papua New Guinea, Nauru and Australia.

After Mr Turnbull's speech Save the Children issued a statement criticising the Prime Minister, saying he promoted an isolationist deterrence based model to asylum seeker policy that evidence has shown is expensive and takes a toll on those Australia should be aspiring to protect.

Oxfam and the St Vincent de Paul Society have also called on the Government to increase its humanitarian intake.

Vinnies' National Council CEO Dr John Falzon also criticised the Government's approach to boat turnbacks.

"The boats haven't stopped — they've just been turned away to other dangers," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister at another United Nations leader's session, Mr Dutton also defended Australia's policies.

"Australia's recent history has seen extraordinary challenges to our sovereignty," he said.

"The way in which we've responded to these challenges has been critical to maintaining the confidence of Australians in our migration policy and practices.

"These policies and practices were not developed from a basis of fear, how could they be when one in four Australian residents born overseas and close to half of the population with at least one parent born elsewhere."

The comments coincide with news that another major service provider will not tender for a new contract at the Nauruan regional processing centre.

Connect Settlement Services, which provides welfare services to refugees and asylum seekers, has confirmed 100 staff will leave Nauru in December.

The company has declined to comment further on the decision, which comes less than a month after security service provider Wilson Security announced it would not seek a new contract after its current one ends in October 2017.

### ***Turnbull promotes multicultural policy***

Mr Turnbull used his speech to also defend the benefits of creating multicultural societies through migration.

"Diversity is an investment against marginalisation and extremism, it helps our community unite, rather than be divided," he said.

"At a time when global concern around immigration and border control is rising, the need to build community support for migration has never been clearer.

"Australia's experience bears this out."

Discussions on the migrant crisis will continue tomorrow in New York at a follow up summit convened by US President Barack Obama, where dozens of countries are expected to make pledges to significantly increase their humanitarian aid spending.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-20/australia-urges-un-nations-to-adopt-its-border-control-policy/7860160>

## **24. MEDIA RELEASE: Turnbull can't hide Australia's shame - Nauru fathers arrested following kids protest**

Tuesday September 20, 2016  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintou  
mobile 0417 275 713

Nauru's detention regime has plunged further into crisis with the announcement that Connect will not re-tender to provide refugee services on the prison island. But the announcement is just one small symptom of a dysfunctional regime.

The daily protests in the family camp have continued since 20 March and escalated on Sunday night, 18 September.

Four men, fathers of asylum seekers and refugees were arrested by Nauruan police last Sunday night following a protest by children who put rubbish on the road and threw stone at a bus going along the road between the family compound RPC3 and the refugee camp, Anuiju.

Around 25 Nauruan police descended on the family compound to arrest the children but after determined resistance from pregnant wives and families in the RPC 3, and children chanting, "Stop Torture. Freedom Forever;" police left the children, but arrested four men. (Attached is a photograph of the Nauruan police car in Anuiju on 18 September.)

Refugee and asylum seekers who attempted to take videos or photographs of the police were threatened with arrest.

It is understood that the men were released on the Sunday night after they signed an undertaking at the police station.

"The incident points to the far wider issue of Nauru and offshore detention. In the guise of service providers, Connect has already been complicit in Australia's systematic mistreatment of asylum seekers on Nauru. Connect have often used the police themselves rather than protect refugees from the arbitrary and often brutal treatment of an unaccountable police force," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition

"But many refugees see the Connect decision as the end game that started when they were arbitrarily separated from family and other asylum seekers on Christmas Island in 2013.

"Despite Turnbull and Dutton's posturing in New York, the government will finally be faced with the need to bring all the asylum seekers and refugees to Australia. The sooner, the better."

Refugee groups in Australia will hold solidarity vigils and protests to coincide with 200 days of protest on Nauru on 5 October.

\*Sydney Solidarity with Nauru rally, Wednesday 5 October, 5.30pm. Town Hall.\* Supported by Refugee Action Coalition, Mums 4 Refugees, Teachers for Refugees, Doctors 4 Refugees, Australian Women Supporting Women on Nauru, Grandmothers Against the Detention of Children, People Just Like Us, Love Makes A Way.

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

## **25. PNG Government applies to dismiss asylum seeker compensation bid**

ABC News Online

By Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek

Posted Wed 21 Sep 2016, 3:33pm

The Papua New Guinea Government has applied to dismiss an application by asylum seekers on Manus Island for compensation and repatriation by Australia.

Lawyers for PNG's Chief Migration Officer and Immigration Minister will argue the men's application should be dismissed because it is not personally signed by them and is outside the court's jurisdiction.

The asylum seekers' lawyers want the court to enforce the judgment of the five-man bench of the PNG Supreme Court in April, which found the men were illegally detained on Manus Island and ordered the detention centre there be closed.

The PNG Government responded to the judgment by allowing the men to leave the centre and move around Manus Island.

They can only leave the province with special permission, usually to take up a job as part of a resettlement arrangement, and they are not given travel documents which would allow them to leave PNG.

The asylum seekers' lawyers argue this does not comply with the judgment, as their freedom of movement is still restricted.

They also say they are owed compensation for their years spent in illegal detention and should be sent back to Australia because they were forcibly brought to PNG.

The men's lawyer, Ben Lomai, said the Government's application was designed to delay a ruling in the case.

"Their application is vexatious and we should just simply go to [our] application for summary judgment," he said.

"But we're happy that both applications are going in now.

"Once their application is thrown out we will get on with our application for summary judgment."

The case is likely to be heard sometime in October.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-21/png-government-applies-to-dismiss-manus-island-compensation-bid/7865766>

## **26. Nauru refugee who set herself alight 'denied basic social support' in Brisbane hospital**

Queensland's anti-discrimination commissioner says treatment of Somali refugee Hodan Yasin, who suffered burns to 70% of her body, provides 'a test of whether we are a civil society'

The Guardian

Joshua Robertson

Thursday 22 September 2016 08.27 AEST

The plight of an isolated Somali refugee recovering from severe self-inflicted burn wounds in a Brisbane hospital provides a "test of whether we are a civil society", Queensland's anti-discrimination commissioner has said.

Professionals have raised concerns that Hodan Yasin, who suffered burns to 70% of her body and lost some fingers after setting herself alight inside Nauru detention centre, has been denied basic levels of social support over nearly five months of treatment.

They include the denial of a visit by a representative of refugee welfare services provider Connect Settlement Services, a lack of facilitated visits by representatives of the local Somali community, and no engagement of Queensland's only specialist trauma counselling service for refugees in detention.

Guardian Australia understands Yasin's only regular social contact in her native language is with interpreters liaising with medical staff or the Red Cross, which is providing some counselling to the non-English-speaking Muslim woman.

Her mother was initially unable to receive updates on her condition via local community representatives, who, despite being approached by immigration department officials about providing moral support soon after Yasin's arrival in Brisbane in May, are yet to be cleared for visits. She has since been in direct contact with her mother and been visited by one member of the local Somali community.

Weekly visits by a spiritual leader and two cultural workers – as well as the transfer of a Somali nurse within the Royal Brisbane and Women's hospital to the burns ward – were also raised with officials but have not transpired.

Yasin, 21, has received two visits by an imam from Moorooka mosque, most recently during Ramadan several months ago.

The Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, which routinely receives referrals to counsel refugees in detention, confirmed it had not been referred in this case.

Kevin Cocks, the Queensland anti-discrimination commissioner said: "If these allegations are true, then this is not a matter of border protection. This is a matter of humanity, this is a test of whether we are a civil society."

"The law of reciprocity is the principle of treating others as one would wish to be treated oneself.

"I ask my fellow Queenslanders and Australians: would you want your daughter, sister, brother, mother or father if seriously injured and in hospital on a foreign land to be isolated and denied support from family and the Australian community in that country?"

The self-immolation of Yasin came days after the death of Iranian Omid Masoumali, who also set himself on fire in front of United Nations officials visiting Nauru.

The incidents prompted the immigration minister, Peter Dutton, to accuse asylum advocates of encouraging self-harm by detainees "believing that that pressure exerted on the Australian government will see a change in our policy in relation to our border protection measures".

Hussein Ahmed, the chairman of the United Somali Association of Queensland, said senior departmental officials had discussed access visits soon after Yasin's admission but cited concerns about her vulnerability to infection.

"The way they put it was they were very happy for us to give moral support but at the time it was not for her benefit due to her vulnerability," he said.

"They would let us know when it's the right time for community to support her emotional and psychological wellbeing."

Ahmed said he had not received any advice from the department since.

A spokesman for the Department of Immigration and Border Protection said Yasin had "received an exceptional level of medical care at every stage" and continued to receive "intensive treatment and support".

"The department takes advice from medical experts about restrictions on visitors, based on the condition of the patient and risk of infection," he said.

"Any staffing or counselling decision regarding patient care remain those of the treating hospital."

The spokesman said the department had been in "regular contact with a Somali community leader close to Ms Yasin and has engaged with wider Somali community in Australia".

While the department "carefully considers proposed visits of a compassionate nature", it had not received any visa application from Yasin's mother or other family members, he said.

Any visitors would have to satisfy Australia's visa requirements, "including health, character and genuine temporary stay requirements".

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/22/nauru-refugee-who-set-herself-alight-denied-basic-social-support-in-brisbane-hospital>

## **27. Nauru refugee denied emergency evacuation after suspected heart attack**

Australia not classing Afghan man's case as an emergency but doctors say he is suffering from acute coronary syndrome and 'requires urgent medical evacuation'

The Guardian

Melissa Davey  
Sunday 18 September 2016 10.44 AEST

An Afghan man detained on Nauru requires urgent medical evacuation for a heart condition, according to doctors, but his case has not been classed as an emergency.

The man was asked to write a will and has requested that if he dies, the Australian government care for his children and provide them with an education.

A cardiologist said the man was suffering from acute coronary syndrome and probably suffered a heart attack more than two weeks ago.

Dr Clare Arnott, a member of the asylum seeker advocacy group Doctors for Refugees, said the 42-year-old man first presented to hospital on Nauru two weeks ago suffering from severe chest pain.

Arnott reviewed the man's medical files following his admission and said the results from his electrocardiogram and cardiac enzyme test revealed his condition was "clearly very serious".

"He definitely has acute and unstable coronary syndrome," Arnott said. "His results are also consistent with having suffered a myocardial infarction [heart attack]. In any Australian tertiary hospital he would be taken to emergency and admitted immediately, and would receive a cardiac angiogram within 24 hours."

The angiogram, an X-ray of the heart to determine if the coronary arteries are blocked or narrowed, and which helps a doctor to determine whether angioplasty, a stent or coronary artery bypass surgery is required, is not available on the island. His medical files show that Nauru doctors advised "urgent overseas referral".

He said two weeks ago he signed two documents to say he would be willing to be medevacked to Papua New Guinea or Australia for treatment. He also claims he was told his sons could go with him. But he has not heard anything more since then.

A spokeswoman from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection said the reports on Saturday that a man was unwell and had been referred to or required medevac were "untrue" and said no further comment would be made.

But a department spokesman later told Guardian Australia the man had been identified. When asked if the department would be retracting its comments that the reports were untrue, the spokesman said it stood by its original comments because Guardian Australia had inquired about a man requiring a medevac, an emergency transfer, rather than a medical transfer.

"There is a significant distinction between a 'medevac' and a 'medical transfer'," the spokesman said.

"A medevac is a medical emergency, requiring urgent transport by air ambulance, where a medical transfer is undertaken where the required treatment is not of an urgent nature," he said.

"The reports relating to a man requiring medevac from Nauru are false."

Arnott said the man's situation was an emergency and that in Australia he would have received emergency treatment.

She understood the man discharged himself from the hospital on Nauru because he was the sole carer to two sons in their early teens, one of whom has acute mental health issues and who has previously self-harmed and attempted suicide. The medical equipment and urgent treatment the asylum seeker requires was also unavailable in the Nauru hospital, Arnott added.

"It's not that he has refused medical treatment, it's that he is very worried about his children and needs to care for them," Arnott said.

"My understanding is that he has also been asked to write a will."

The man wrote a will asking the Australian government care for his children if he dies, and ensure that his children receive a good education. It is unclear if the will would stand up legally, but the man said he was scared of his children coming into the care of the government of Nauru.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/18/nauru-refugee-denied-emergency-evacuation-after-suspected-heart-attack>

## 28. Refugee waits for 'urgent' evacuation from Nauru three weeks after suspected heart attack

Canberra Times  
September 18 2016  
Adam Morton

An Afghan refugee sent to Nauru by the Australian government remains on the Pacific island nearly three weeks after a doctor advised he needed to be urgently evacuated to treat a potentially fatal heart condition.

The 42-year-old man, known by the pseudonym Abdullah, was taken to the Nauru Hospital on August 29 after suffering severe pain in his chest and numbness in his left arm.

Abdullah said the pain had him writhing "like a snake" on his bed in his home, a converted shipping container, before he was taken to hospital by ambulance.

He was told he needed to be flown to Australia or Papua New Guinea for treatment, but discharged himself because there was no one else to care for his sons, aged 12 and 13.

One of his sons has mental health problems and a history of self-harm. The children's mother died before Abdullah and his children travelled to Christmas Island and were transferred to Nauru in 2013.

Abdullah said he also chose to leave the hospital because he found the conditions intolerable. He slept in a corridor because of an overwhelming smell in a room he was sharing with another man.

After initially being told he would have to leave his children on Nauru if he was flown for treatment, he was later assured they could travel with him. That was about two weeks ago. He last saw a doctor two days ago. "I am still waiting," he said.

Australian-based cardiologist Clare Arnott, for Doctors for Refugees, said Abdullah's medical records suggested it was likely he had suffered a heart attack and his life would be in danger if not properly treated.

"The risks of inadequate treatment in this case are great – from irreversible myocardial damage to repeat infarction, life-threatening arrhythmia and death," Dr Arnott said.

"I would certainly recommend urgent transfer to a facility that can provide specialist cardiology care, echocardiography and coronary angiography with intervention."

Abdullah said that he was encouraged by officials based in Nauru to write a will leaving his children in the care of the Nauruan government in the event of his death, but refused. The will he signed said he wanted his children to be raised in Australia.

The Australian government has said no refugees who arrived in Australia by boat will be allowed to settle in the country. Refugees transferred to Australia for medical treatment are returned to Nauru once they have recovered.

A spokesman for Immigration Minister Peter Dutton referred questions to the Immigration and Border Protection Department. A department spokesman said it could not provide specific details on the medical treatment of individuals.

The spokesman said Australia provided significant support to Nauru to provide welfare and health services for refugees, and that people requiring treatment not available on Nauru may be transferred to Papua New Guinea to get the care they needed.

"Where appropriate medical services are not available in a regional processing country, transfer to Australia may be considered," he said.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/refugee-waits-for-urgent-evacuation-from-nauru-three-weeks-after-suspected-heart-attack-20160918-grisrn.html>

## 29. Nauru support workers to leave before Christmas after decision not to retender

Connect Settlement Services the latest contractors to withdraw from Australian immigration detention regime

The Guardian  
Helen Davidson and Ben Doherty  
Monday 19 September 2016 14.52 AEST

The company contracted to provide support for refugees and asylum seekers on Nauru will leave the island before Christmas, after deciding it would not retender for the contract.

According to sources on Nauru, representatives of Connect Settlement Services informed all employees – including Nauruans and expatriate staff – and refugees at a meeting on Monday.

A CSS spokesman confirmed the company would leave Nauru and would not tender for any further contracts but declined to comment further.

It is understood the employees were told the services required on Nauru were beyond the capabilities of a settlement agency. The agency is believed to have consistently raised concerns about insufficient mental healthcare and child protection services on the island.

Some senior CSS executives are believed to have flown in for the meeting.

It is not known who will take over on 7 December when the CSS contract ends. The organisation took over after Save the Children left in early 2015.

CSS is the latest in a string of offshore processing contractors to withdraw from the controversial Australian regime.

Ferrovial, the Spanish giant that owns the detention centres' major contractor Broadspectrum, announced in April it would abandon offshore detention when its contract ends in October 2017. It had originally intended to leave Nauru and Manus in February but the Australian government unilaterally exercised an option to extend its term by eight months.

Broadspectrum was forced to change its name from Transfield Services last September, after the owners of its parent company withdrew permission for it use the Transfield name, saying they wanted to distance themselves from offshore detention. Broadspectrum was then sold to Ferrovial at a significant discount.

Earlier this month Wilson Security announced it would also leave offshore detention "in line with Broadspectrum's future intentions ... and will not tender for any further offshore detention services".

Last week an excoriating report from the Australian National Audit Office said the Department of Immigration and Border Protection had wasted millions of taxpayer dollars on offshore detention because it failed to comply with commonwealth procurement standards.

The report identified "serious and persistent deficiencies" in the department's management of the contracts, including "significant skill and capability gaps" among staff and "persistent shortcomings" in areas ranging from record keeping to the ability to assess value for money.

"Procurement is core business for commonwealth entities and the deficiencies have resulted in higher than necessary expense for taxpayers and significant reputational risks for the Australian government and [the department]."

Shen Narayanasamy, the human rights director at GetUp and director of No Business in Abuse, said the Australian government now had no major entity publicly willing to operate its offshore detention camps, or the resettlement programs in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

"The global business world has spoken: the reputational, financial and legal risks facing any entity involved in the abusive offshore regime are simply too great. Despite the estimate of \$5.6bn in Australian taxpayers' funds to be spent propping up this regime, no company wants a bar of it."

Narayanasamy said the Australian government's offshore detention policy had failed and all of the people held on the islands must now be brought to Australia to be properly processed.

"The camps are officially in chaos. The government is throwing billions of dollars at this problem but it doesn't make it go away."

Nauru and the offshore detention centre on PNG's Manus Island have been plagued by controversy, as well as allegations and instances of assault, abuse, trauma and mental illness.

The United Nations, other national governments, numerous international human rights bodies and dozens of doctors and staff members from inside the camps have condemned the offshore processing regime and called for the Australian government to end the practice.

On Thursday the Australian immigration minister, Peter Dutton, told a Canberra-based thinktank the offshore processing relationship with Nauru would last "for decades".

He later acknowledged problems with the camps but defended the system and again criticised asylum seeker advocates.

“Our detractors do no service to anyone by trading in false hope and speaking in disingenuous terms,” Dutton said. “Their entreaties to a different approach offer nothing but a holiday from history and ignore the fundamental reality that secure borders require policies that are tough and fair.

“If they are not tough they will not be fair to those desperate people waiting in camps. And they will not be morally fair to those who will again be lured to the murky depths by the siren call of people smugglers.”

On Monday Guardian Australia revealed incident reports written by CSS staff on Nauru in the early months of this year containing continuing allegations of sexual abuse and assault, and incidents of self-harm.

Last month Guardian Australia published the largest single leak of documents from inside the Nauru facility. The Nauru files contained more than 2,000 incident reports written by guards, health and other support workers who detailed widespread trauma and allegations of mistreatment, and provided primary evidence of multiple instances of abuse, including against children.

A spokeswoman for the immigration department confirmed CSS's contract expired on 7 December. The department would “work collaboratively with Connect Settlement Services in transitioning settlement services on Nauru”, she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/19/nauru-support-workers-to-leave-before-christmas-after-decision-not-to-retender>

### **30. Newly leaked Nauru reports detail harrowing accounts of sexual abuse and self-harm**

Exclusive: Incident reports from early 2016 describe child refugees attempting suicide and the terror felt by a woman who says she was bundled into a car and raped by two men

The Guardian  
Paul Farrell  
Monday 19 September 2016 11.01 AEST

Read the documents: <https://www.scribd.com/document/324190212/Nauru-incident-reports>

Child and adult refugees held on Nauru under Australia's offshore detention regime are continuing to report allegations of sexual abuse and engage in self-harm, new leaked documents reveal.

The new incident reports, seen by the Guardian, include a harrowing account of the alleged rape of a refugee, who refused to report the encounter to Nauruan police. The reports also tell of children stubbing out cigarettes on their arms, trying to jump off buildings and attempting suicide by other means.

The reports make reference to “ongoing, significant risks” to children held on Nauru between January and March this year. The leak follows the Guardian's publication of the Nauru files, incident reports revealing the trauma and abuse inflicted on children held by Australia in offshore detention.

Peter Dutton, Australia's immigration minister, has sought to diminish as “hype” the 2,116 leaked reports that contain accounts of self-harm, abuse and sexual assault in the offshore centre up until October 2015, although he said the government would investigate them. In interviews he said: “There are some that are legitimate and there are others that aren't and others that have been found not to be substantiated,” and: “Some people do have a motivation to make a false complaint.”

A caseworker wrote in March that a woman reported that she had been waiting for a bus when she was grabbed, pushed into a car, driven away, then raped by two men. She was dropped at another location and, according to the report, told “that if she told anyone they would kill her”. She repeatedly told the Nauru police force she did not wish to make a statement.

The report said the caseworkers had recommended that the woman be encouraged to speak to the police and were continuing to provide support to her.

In another report a refugee said she had been spat on and repeatedly sexually harassed at a restaurant she managed in the Nauruan community. The woman told a caseworker how “on numerous occasions” men of Nauruan appearance requested that she “engage in sexual intercourse with them in exchange for money”.

“[The woman] reported that on two different occasions the men appeared in the restaurant's kitchen, wrapped their arms around her with force and tried to kiss her.”

She said other staff and customers had come to her aid. As the men, who appeared to be intoxicated, left they continued “using abusive language, spitting on her and throwing rocks towards the restaurant”.

The woman reported “that she has been afraid to report the harassment to Nauru Police Force ... she stated that one of the main reasons behind the closure of [the restaurant] was the ongoing sexual harassment by clients.”

The caseworker wrote that staff would monitor her wellbeing and assist her in submitting a police report if required.

The new reports include a number of serious allegations of self-harm by children. In one report from February, a child refugee under 15 tried to jump off the balcony of his home in an attempt to kill himself. His father stopped him. The caseworker said he had “provided practical support and advice to [the father], including advising him to remove all sharp objects from the home in an attempt to minimise further risk of harm.”

In another report from that month a refugee girl aged under 10 had disclosed “thoughts of walking in front of moving traffic”. She told the casework manager that the reason for this “related to the lack of activities available in Nauru and her dislike of school. [The girl] also stated she was experiencing difficulty sleeping and intense feelings of fear, which she identified commenced upon her entry into detention.”

A refugee reported to a caseworker that her brother, a child under 18, had “self-harmed by burning his arms with cigarettes and cutting his wrist with a knife”. There had been between five and seven episodes of self-harm, she told the caseworker.

A spokesman for Australia’s immigration department said: “Refugees living in the community are encouraged to report all incidents, including alleged sexual assault, to the Nauru Police Force.”

“While law and order in the Nauruan community is a matter for the government of Nauru, the department and its service providers offer significant support to assist with providing information and encouraging victims to undertake appropriate action stemming from reported incidents.”

“The Australian federal police has also deployed officers to work alongside the NPF and build their capacity to investigate complex and sensitive incidents. This project is achieving positive results and is providing valuable skills to local officers.”

The immigration minister did not respond to requests for comment.

It is three years since the first two refugee children arrived on Nauru, on 18 September 2013.

The leaked documents are incident reports filed by caseworkers for Connect Settlement Services, which provides support to refugees in the community on Nauru. They were filed between January and March 2016 and are a small sample of hundreds of other reports filed during this period.

It is the first time documents from CSS have been published. The company has operated largely without public scrutiny since it began providing services on Nauru. This year it took on an expanded role, providing support services to refugees in Cambodia.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/19/newly-leaked-nauru-reports-detail-harrowing-accounts-of-sexual-abuse-and-self-harm>