

## **MEDIA RELEASE: LOCALS join national [#KidsOffNauru](#) campaign**

In recent weeks Australians have been shocked to hear about the crisis for children on Nauru. People in our community will not look the other way – but are taking action for the 100 children and hundreds of adults who have been held on Nauru for over 5 years.

On ( date) people will gather at (place) at (time) to call for the immediate evacuation of all children and their families from Nauru, joining with hundreds of other groups across Australia.

In her first address to the human rights council the new UN Human Rights Commissioner Michelle Bachelet has described Australia's offshore processing immigration regime as "an affront to the protection of human rights". [Reported in The Guardian 11 September 2018.](#)

The Australian Government is disregarding our obligations under the UN Refugee Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There are almost daily reports of children who are seriously ill, many deeply depressed, and some have been diagnosed with the rare but serious child psychiatric disorder pervasive refusal syndrome, also known as resignation syndrome, which has been documented at high rates among asylum seeker children, especially in Sweden. Children suffering resignation syndrome effectively withdraw from life – refusing to eat, drink, toilet, leave their beds, speak, or even open their eyes. They are sometimes completely unresponsive to stimuli. [See report here.](#) See further reports and articles about the situation on Nauru see [here](#)

One 10-year-old boy had attempted suicide three times on Nauru. Doctors said he was at critical risk of killing himself, but it took a Federal Court order to eventually move him to Australia for urgent treatment.

On over 25 occasions since December 2017 the Australian Government has refused to bring desperately ill children and adults to Australia for medical treatment, except where the High Court has made an order. Doctors have requested around 50 medical transfers for children which are currently being blocked by Borderforce. That our government is wilfully putting children's lives at risk is truly shameful.

The practice of sending people offshore to Nauru and Manus Island must stop. We are destroying people by denying them human dignity, freedom and hope for the future.

Holding children in these arrangements is barbaric.

Australians believe in a 'fair go' for all. These children have not had a fair go they have been robbed of the childhood. **There is no justification for continuing this cruel and heartless policy** – we are calling for all children to be brought to safety by 20 November – Universal Children's Day.

The Australian Government could choose to do this today – we are calling on them to do so.

Further information see [Refugee Council of Australia report: Australia's Man-made Crisis on Nauru \(Sept 2018\).](#) Also see [www.kidsoffnauru.com/](http://www.kidsoffnauru.com/)

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