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ARAN
Australian Refugee Action Network

What's in the July 2021 ARAN Update

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

- Free the Refugees in detention. Hunger strike in MITA resumed
- Indefinite Detention
- Game Over - Accept the NZ resettlement offer
- Raise the Refugee Quota

NEWS FROM THE SECTOR & ARAN MEMBER GROUPS

- 20 Years of suffering 20 Years of shame since Tampa – Resource Kit
- ARAN Letter Writing Network
- Permanency and Family Reunion
- Electoral materials – CRAG
- US resettlement still an option
- RCOA Conference held online

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Documentary Batoor: A Refugee Journey
- Escape from Manus. Jaivet Ealom's amazing story of escaping to Canada
- Six Podcasts on the offshore detention policy

- **Send us your news and pictures**

Photos from 8 Yrs Too Long Actions

Actions were held across Australia (except where Covid lockdowns were in place)

From Hobart – 19 July - "Our action went well today; the march/vigil received good coverage from 7 news (Tasmania) including close up of posters and 3 of us got to speak. The large letter was handed to Senator Duniam's staff but he was far too busy to come to speak to us!"

Short video marking 8 years - https://youtu.be/OyIkKL5s9Wg produced by Canberra RAC.

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

Refugees

A group of Medevac refugees held at MITA (Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation) detention centre in Broadmeadows have re-started their hunger strike protest to demand their freedom. This second hunger strike began on Thursday 15 July, it follows the first hunger strike that began on June 17, and lasted 15 days. As at 28 July, 11 people are refusing food, and 3 are in the Northern Hospital. "We are very tired," said one of the hunger strikers.

Sign the RAC Vic Petition: Solidarity with Medevac Refugees - Free all indefinitely detained refugees now!

Loghman Sawari was only 17 when he was sent to from Christmas Island, to Manus Island. Eight years later, now 25-years-old Loghman is still waiting for the one thing he craves: freedom. Read his story here: https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jul/17/three-countries-eight-years-one-refugees-nightmare-odyssey-through-australias-detention-system?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Indefinite Detention is an Outrage

Hear more about the recent legislation enabling our government to detain people indefinitely. Recorded online forum on Indefinite Detention – Sydney RAC – view here: https://www.facebook.com/RACsydney/videos/326961345647323/ (note, forum starts at 3mins)

Let your local MP know that you oppose the detention of refugees and people who are seeking asylum, and urge them to speak up for the release of refugees from detention. Everybody needs a home. Protection – Not Detention.

Contact details for your MP

Accept the NZ Offer Now!

Since 2013 New Zealand has offered to resettle refugees while Australia continues over 200 on Nauru and in PNG. Send a postcard to the Prime Minister, Minister Andrews, Minister Hawke and your local MP. https://www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm Karen.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au Alex.Hawke.MP@aph.gov.au

Continue your support the #GameOver campaign

See resources and petition here

Raise the Refugee Quota

See petition here

NEWS FROM THE SECTOR & ARAN MEMBER GROUPS

20 Years of suffering 20 Years of shame since Tampa – RESOURCE KIT

26 August 2021 marks 20 years of suffering since the Tampa Incident, and the decisions that lead to offshore processing, years of suffering for thousands, and at least 14 deaths.

The ARAN Committee is preparing a Resource Kit to assist local groups to host discussions and share the story of the Tampa, and how the Tampa election set Australia firmly on the course on deterrence and punishment resulting in 20 years of suffering and shame. The Kit will outline the alternative responses which would have saved lives, years of suffering and the huge expense of cruelty. Look for the Resource Kit on the ARAN website Actions page from 5 August onwards: https://aran.net.au/actions/20-years-since-tampa/

ARAN Network of Letter Writing Groups

Next meeting 8pm on Wednesday 11 August - email austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com if you would like to join. Topic for August: Let's fully welcome refugees. Letter-Writing Kit is available at - https://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au/rar-groups/online-group/

Permanency and family reunion

A number of refugee advocacy groups are working together with refugee led groups to build the campaign for permanency and family reunion.
Contact C.Fleay@curtin.edu.au for information about monthly network meetings.

Find the Human Rights Law Centre report on family reunion here https://www.hrlc.org.au/together-in-safety and sign the petition https://www.hrlc.org.au/families-belong-together-petition

Getting ready for the Federal Election

We don't know when, but we can be sure - there will be an election. The Combined Refugee Action Group (CRAG) were very active prior to the last federal election, and feel confident their hard work played a part in the election of a more progressive candidate developed the Choose Fairness & Decency campaign, with electoral material highlighting the policies of different parties on refugee issues. See information available here and email combinedrefugeeactiongroup@gmail.com if you would like to find out more.

Resettlement in USA still an option

We have advice that the US is keen to fill the places available for resettlement, and it may be possible people to still apply if they have not done so already. Also, it is understood that people who were previously not accepted for the US have the opportunity to reapply. However, we know that while some refugees are thriving in the US, some have

What can you do?

- **Write to Ministers** Andrew and Hawke Karen.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au Alex.Hawke.MP@aph.gov.au to let them know you want assurances that refugees being resettled in the US from Australia, PNG and Nauru are provided with airfares, and housing and support in the US until they are able to get jobs to support themselves.
- **Donate to ADS-UP USA** - the volunteer group in the US which is seeking to assist refugees when they arrive.

USEFUL RESOURCES

'Batoor: A Refugee Journey' will premier at the Melbourne Documentary Film Festival featuring extraordinary footage Batoor took in the year he fled Afghanistan, eventually finding safety in Australia. See more background here.

Recommended read: Escape from Manus

Jaivet Ealom was born in Myanmar and now resides in Canada, where he has become a prominent spokesmen for the Rohingya community.

The powerful account of how one man escaped the prison of Manus Island. A true story of bravery and resilience. In 2013 Jaivet Ealom fled Myanmar's brutal regime and boarded a boat of asylum seekers bound for Australia. Instead of receiving refuge, he was transported to Australia's infamous Manus Regional Processing Centre. Drawing inspiration from the hit show Prison Break, Jaivet meticulously planned his escape. He made it out alive but was stateless, with no ID or passport. While the nightmare of Manus was behind him, his true escape to freedom had only just begun. How Jaivet made it to sanctuary in Canada in a six-month-long odyssey by foot, boat, car and plane is miraculous. His story will astonish, anger and inspire you.

https://www.penguin.com.au/books/escape-from-manus-9781761040214

Six Podcasts

https://wacfpodcast.com/ exploring the influences and shortcomings of Australia's offshore detention policy. Featuring prominent jurists, whistleblowers, human rights

RCOA Conference recordings

Can be found here

From the ARAN Committee

Send us news from your group for inclusion in the next ARAN Update info-pics@aran.net.au

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