



What's in the June 2021 ARAN Update:

PLANS FOR REFUGEE WEEK

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

Push for assessment interviews by 30 June

Indefinite detention legislation

Time for a Home

NZ offer – an option for resolving the situation for those offshore

Concerns for Tamil refugees

Lack of income support

Permanent Protection and Family Reunion

Planning for 19 July Actions – 8 Years Too Long

NEWS FROM THE SECTOR & ARAN MEMBER GROUPS

Federal Budget impact for refugees and people seeking asylum

ARAN Network of letter writing groups 9 June

NRAAG Refugee-led Dialogue 8 July

RAR Human Rights videos

NEWS FROM THE ARAN COMMITTEE

ARAN member groups forum held 25 May

Send us your news and pictures



PLANS FOR REFUGEE WEEK

All around Australia events are being organised for Refugee Week (Sunday 20 – Sat 26 June). **Let us know your plans!** and we'll list your event on the ARAN website and promote on ARAN social media. Send information to info-pics@aran.net.au



CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

PUSH FOR ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS

You may have heard that the Federal government has suddenly advised a June 30 deadline for assessment interviews for refugee status. Some people have waited for years to have their case for refugee status considered, and now the government is rushing the process, with very short notice. This means that

people need legal advice regarding the preparation of their cases. [Listen to David Manne speaking on the issue](#)

Actions you can take:

Help the legal services to respond - [Donate to Refugee Legal, Refugee Advice and Casework Service](#) and [ASRC](#)

Phone or email Karen Andrews –Karen.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au See details at [ASRC Fast Track campaign](#)

Key messages:

- Everyone deserves the chance to present their case for refugee protection in a fair manner. That means having enough time to prepare, and access to legal support for an extremely complex process.
- Rushing this process will inevitably result in the wrong decisions being made - some people who should receive protection will instead be forcibly returned to danger.
- The Government should cancel their unfair plan to rush through over 1000 refugee protection interviews, and give people enough time to prepare their case with legal support.

INDEFINITE DETENTION

Indefinite detention of refugees is unlawful under international law, but Australia has quietly made it legal. [See Guardian article here](#)
See also Mike Secombe's [article in The Saturday Paper](#).

The Coalition Government with the support of the ALP recently passed legislation to allow it to indefinitely detain refugees who cannot be returned to their countries because they would be at risk of persecution to be detained indefinitely.

“...The Migration Amendment (Clarifying International Obligations for Removal) Bill 2021 targets refugees in immigration detention who cannot return to their home countries because of a risk of persecution or serious harm. While the new laws notionally provide protections against sending people to harm, the legislation actually gives the Minister a new power to overturn refugee status in breach of international law, and contains no mechanism to prevent the indefinite detention of refugees who cannot be returned...” see further detail in the [media release from Human Rights Law Centre](#).

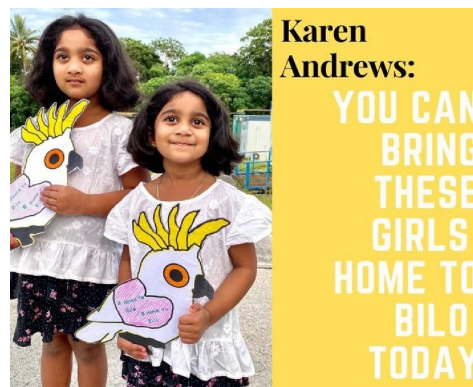
By-passing the Courts: The government has changed the law to dodge the implications of a Federal Court ruling last September in which a refugee – AJL20 – challenged his detention. The Court ruled that he had to be released

because detention had to be “for a purpose” – such as waiting for a determination of refugee status or awaiting deportation. Since he could not be sent back to Syria safely, the Court found that he had to be freed.

Although the government has appealed this decision to the High Court, it decided to override the court by changing the law. It did this despite a warning from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights – which is controlled by the government – that:

...if the measure resulted in the indefinite detention of individuals, this would represent a significant interference with their rights. For these reasons, there appears to be a significant risk that the measure impermissibly limits the right to liberty and the rights of the child, and has implications for the prohibition against torture or ill-treatment. THIS IS A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF RIGHTS – now legislated by the Australian parliament.

Indefinite detention is an outrage Call for Protection - Not Detention for Refugees - tell your local MP know that you oppose the detention of refugees and people who are seeking asylum. [Find contact details for your MP here](#)



BILOEA FAMILY still not home. Post this tile on social media – and also send to Minister Andrews: Karen.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au

FREE THE MEDEVAC REFUGEES

- #TimeForAHome

While many of the men held in hotels for over 12 months are now free, the campaign continues for the release of those who remain in the hotels and in Immigration detention.

We're taking the fight to Parliament! On 15 June at 11am we're calling on coalition partners, grassroots organisations and supporters to join us on the lawns of Parliament House - sending a powerful message to the government and all our elected representatives that it's #TimeForAHome. [Book a seat on the](#)

[bus to Canberra from Melbourne or Sydney here](#)

If you can't make it support the online actions [See details HERE](#)

Write to your local MP asking them to agitate for the release of refugees and people seeking asylum who have been held for more than 7 years in detention. All of these people have a right to freedom and dignity, and could be living in the community - like thousands of others. Continuing their detention is harmful, costly and entirely unnecessary.

Help spread the word !

NZ OFFER – one option for RESOLVING THE SITUATION FOR MEDEVAC REFUGEES and THOSE HELD IN LIMBO OFFSHORE

Brief overview of the recent statistics

- * 179 still offshore (91 PNG 80 Nauru)
- * 1199 people transferred to Australia for medical treatment, including 192 under Medevac
- * About 150 still in detention here in Australia (Medevac and others)
- * Provision of support for those released – freedom, but no income, and no long term certainty
- * 940 people, have been resettled in US, with a further 258 provisionally approved but waiting to travel.

Those released have freedom, but no income and no long term certainty

There has been lots of action by DASSAN in Darwin - see photos of recent protests in Darwin [here](#) and Craig Foster's interview from Darwin [here](#)

There is an encouraging news report [here](#) which indicates the NZ deal is being considered. Email Minister Andrews and encourage her to make the deal with NZ: Karen.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au

Continue your support for the [#GameOver campaign](#)

CONCERNS FOR TAMIL REFUGEES

Over the last year a group CRAG (Combined Refugee Action Group in Geelong) has been working on a Country Information Report to raise awareness of the danger posed to Tamils who are due to be deported to Sri Lanka once COVID restrictions ease. The information being used by our government to make this decision is woefully out of date and does not consider the new government that has been in power since late 2019. A number of Tamil Asylum Seekers from Sri Lanka have been issued with "Pending Departure" visas and are expected by Home Affairs to return to Sri Lanka as soon as arrangements can be made in the current Covid situation. **Share CRAG materials and suggested lobbying**

strategy [see materials here](#)

The UN has released a report on this issue. [See UN Report here](#)

See [report here from Germany about these concerns](#)

LACK OF INCOME SUPPORT – people seeking asylum at risk of homelessness

Write to your local MP, the Prime Minister, Minister Anne Ruston and the Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said the budget was about the heart of Australia - write to Senator Rushton and Josh Frydenberg to ask 'Where is the heart in denying individuals and families basic income?' senator.ruston@aph.gov.au and Josh.Frydenberg.MP@aph.gov.au Sign and share the Mums4Refugees [petition](#)

PERMANENT PROTECTION and FAMILY REUNION

Many groups are working together with refugee led groups to build the campaign for permanency and family reunion. If you are interested in networking with other groups email austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com and we'll put you in touch with others.

The Human Rights Law Centre (HRLC) has produced the [Together in Safety report](#) which exposes the Australian Government's deliberate and systematic approach to keeping refugee families apart and forced to make an unthinkable choice between their safety, their health and being with the ones they love. HRLC calls on the Morrison Government to end this cruel policy.

Sign the petition [here](#)

PLANNING FOR 19 JULY ACTIONS – 8 Years Too Long

We anticipate groups all around Australia will mark this anniversary of cruelty with public actions and social media activity. Following our members forum on 25 May the **ARAN Committee is developing a resource kit to assist groups in their preparations for 19 July**. Look out for this kit immediately following Refugee Week.

NEWS FROM THE SECTOR & ARAN MEMBER GROUPS

Federal Budget impact for refugees and people seeking asylum

[RCOA's budget summary](#) shows the government's intent towards refugees and people seeking asylum:

* A cost blowout in onshore detention and compliance, with over \$1.279 billion spent in one year

* The continuation of the ceiling of 13,750 places for the Refugee and Humanitarian Program, with this cut from previous years to be maintained until 2024-25

* A welcome but unexplained increase in the allocation for settlement support next year following an underspend of settlement services funding for this year

* Increased funding to address the backlog within the Migration and Refugee Division of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal

* Funding to support refugee women and other migrant women's safety and social and economic inclusion if they are survivors of family violence

The Kaldor Centre also produced a budget summary - [See info here](#)

ARAN Network of Letter Writing Groups – next meeting 8pm on Wednesday 9 June. Email austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com if you would like to join. Topic for June: Social safety net for people seeking asylum, including those recently released from detention. Letter-Writing Kit is available at [here](#)

NRAAG (National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group)

National Refugee Dialogue in Sydney (and online) on 8 July 2021. If you know refugees who may be interested, please let them know about this important opportunity. [Register here](#). For more information email [NRAAG](#).

RAR Human Rights Videos aim to bring human rights down to the level of our everyday lives. See [RAR website](#). Please circulate these as widely as you can. They will be on YouTube so the link can be shared through emails. Use the hashtag #humanrightsmatter when you share.

FROM the ARAN COMMITTEE

The ARAN Committee hosted a member groups forum on 25 May for a discussion of ideas about actions for 19 July – marking 8 years since the recommencement of offshore processing, and all the associated harms.

We are keen to hear your ideas for future ARAN member group forums.

If you would like to share news from your group in the next ARAN Update please send us details including an image on the [ARAN Contact Page form](#) including the name of your group.

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