

TEACHERS SAY CLOSE MANUS AND NAURU, WELCOME REFUGEES

We, the undersigned teachers stand in solidarity with the family camp asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru who have been holding daily protests against their ongoing detention and offshore processing since the 20th of March.

There is no prospect of safety for refugees on Nauru. The mental health crises, sexual abuse, assaults in the community, discrimination and violence at school and permanent insecurity is intolerable and unnecessary for child and adult refugees.

Now it is clear that the detention of refugees on Manus Island is illegal. Amnesty International described Australia's detention camp there as “tantamount to torture”, after visiting the centre in November 2013. All asylum seekers and refugees on Manus can and must be immediately brought to Australia.

The discrimination of the offshore camps is stark; while some asylum seekers have spent 1000 days in detention on Nauru without a refugee determination, others who shared the same boat journey to Australia have been living in the community in Australia for nearly three years. The cost of running the offshore prisons alone could pay for half of the \$4.5 billion the Turnbull government won't spend on the last two years of Gonski.

As teachers we uphold the rights of all children to live in a safe environment, to have access to educational opportunities and not be subject to discrimination. As teachers, we embrace the opportunity to work with refugee students and colleagues, and we know that when given a proper welcome, refugees enrich school communities. We address justice and human rights in our classrooms, and we teach our students to stand up to bullying, abuse and lies.

We call on Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton to immediately:

- Close Manus Island and Nauru detention centres, and
- Bring all refugees and asylum seekers on Manus and Nauru to Australia for processing and resettlement.

Name	School/Institution	Email	Signature

Please scan and email to Teachers for Refugees l.m.honan@gmail.com by June 17th 2016