



Refugee Council of Australia

BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

6 September 2011

Welcome to the latest bulletin from the Refugee Council of Australia. We welcome feedback, ideas or information worth sharing. Please contact us at info@refugeecouncil.org.au.

Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia

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NEWS FROM THE REFUGEE COUNCIL

High Court scuttles Malaysia deal

The High Court's August 31 ruling against the Federal Government's deal with Malaysia to swap asylum seekers and refugees has emphasised the critical importance of legal protections for asylum seekers, even in circumstances where Australia is trying to expel them. The Refugee Council opposed the plan to transfer asylum seekers to Malaysia because of the very difficult circumstances faced by asylum seekers and refugees in that country and the lack of domestic legislation or practical measures to protect refugees. The phenomenon of asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat is unlikely to change appreciably until the Government focuses its attention on working with Asia-Pacific countries to bolster refugee protection standards in the region. The High Court clearly highlighted the unsatisfactory level of protection for refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia. This lack of protection for refugees and asylum seekers is a wider concern in South-East Asia and South Asia. Unless Australia shows genuine leadership in strengthening protection for asylum seekers and refugees in South-East Asia and South Asia, people will continue to flee persecution in this region and arrive in Australia by boat. RCOA's statement is at: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/news/releases/110831_High_Court.pdf

A summary of the judgement is available at:

<http://www.hcourt.gov.au/assets/publications/judgment-summaries/2011/hca32-2011-08-31.pdf>

The full judgement can be viewed at: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/HCA/2011/32.html>

More than 200 organisations call for humane asylum seeker policy

The Refugee Council of Australia has joined more than 200 organisations in an Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) statement calling on the Federal Government to pursue a just and humane approach to asylum seekers. More than 200 organisations are urging all political parties to stop playing politics with the lives of asylum seekers, end offshore processing and focus on policies that uphold our human rights obligations. Sign on to the statement by COB today (6 September) to be included in a full-page ad to be run in national newspapers later this week. Read the statement at www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/statements/110906_JS_offshore_processing.pdf

Edmund Rice Centre legal opinion says Nauru and PNG invalid

The Edmund Rice Centre has commissioned legal opinion in response to last week's High Court decision. The advice from Stephen Estcourt QC, a senior barrister specialising in migration law, confirms that the High Court's ruling is likely to render invalid the option for the Government to remove asylum seekers from Australia to Nauru or Papua New Guinea under section 198A of the Migration Act.

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/news/current.php#sep_erc

Manus Island deal opposed

The Australian Government returned to the Pacific Solution with the signing of a MOU with Papua New Guinea to establish an "assessment centre for asylum seekers" on Manus Island.

The RCOA wrote to Foreign Affairs Minister Kevin Rudd and Immigration Minister Chris Bowen expressing concern about the possible re-establishment of arrangements to detain asylum seekers on Manus Island. The MOU will be seen as Australia paying a much poorer neighbour to accept extra-territorial processing of asylum seekers to whom Australia has protection obligations and a return to the

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The Refugee Council of Australia represents
non-government organisations and
individuals working with and for refugees
in Australia and around the world

'Pacific Solution' which the Government repudiated in 2007 and shut down in early 2008. RCOA's media release is at: www.refugeecouncil.org.au/news/releases/110819_Manus_MOU.pdf

ACT takes lead on asylum seeker support

The ACT Government has launched a Services Access Card for asylum seekers to assist them to gain better access to ACT government services. Something as simple as not being able to understand your rights to access government services can lock many asylum seekers out of education opportunities, transport services and health care. This card goes some way to helping break down those barriers. The ACT Services Access Card – a first for any state or territory government – was developed by the ACT Government with input from the ACT Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Humanitarian Coordination Committee, a group which includes Canberra organisations working with asylum seekers (including several RCOA member organisations). The card is expected to be in operation later this year. The ACT Government will also launch an information campaign to promote awareness of the card among service providers. For more information, see RCOA's statement welcoming the launch of the card: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/news/releases/110905_Access_Card.pdf

Measuring Settlement: Report from the August Settlement Policy Network teleconference

The latest national Settlement Policy Network teleconference was held on the 17th August on the theme *Measuring Settlement: Exploring new research or refugee settlement outcomes and its implications for settlement services and policy*. Professor Graeme Hugo, author of the *Economic, social and civic contributions of first and second generation humanitarian entrants*, and Matt Jones, Senior Policy Officer, Research, Evaluation and Planning Section, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, presented an overview of two important new research reports. A copy of the report from this teleconference and a background paper can be downloaded at www.refugeecouncil.org.au/settlement/spn/110817_SPN_report.pdf. To be added to the SPN mailing list and receive notification of upcoming teleconferences, please email info@refugeecouncil.org.au.

Pilot project for unaccompanied humanitarian minors

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship recently referred to a new project that will be piloted in three states to provide targeted settlement support to 16- and 17-year-old unaccompanied humanitarian minors (UHMs) who arrive without identified carers and who have been assessed as capable of living independently (see: www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2011/cb169619.htm). The pilot will be conducted by the Centre for Multicultural Youth (Victoria, www.cmy.net.au), Multicultural Youth South Australia (www.mysa.com.au) and Multicultural Development Association (Queensland, www.mdainc.org.au), with the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia, www.myan.org.au) supporting the development and implementation of a national framework for the pilot. The aim of the pilot is to assess whether better settlement outcomes for these UHMs can be achieved by providing services that recognise their ability to transition to living independently while supporting them to achieve more stable housing, and better employment or education outcomes. The approach will aim to strengthen the ability of UHMs to manage their lives effectively in the Australian community, without full-time supervision. It is anticipated that the pilot will begin by the end of 2011 and, following an evaluation, may be rolled out nationally.

Ministerial intervention statistics now online

Statistics about ministerial intervention in individual immigration cases is now on-line and will be updated every six months. It is the first time Ministerial Intervention statistics have been published. In May, the Government also released asylum seeker and refugee statistics. Between 15 September 2010 and 30 June 2011, the Immigration Minister finalised 2020 requests for intervention and granted 437 visas – a grant rate of 22 percent. The Ministerial Intervention Statistics Australia 2010-11 publication includes the number of requests for intervention received and finalised, the types of visas granted and the citizenship of people requesting and being granted visas through intervention. The statistics are on-line at www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics

UNHCR launches campaign on statelessness

The 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness was observed with the launch of a global campaign by UNHCR. Statelessness affects some 12 million people, excluding them from basic rights, education and health care. For more details on the UNHCR campaign, visit: <http://www.unhcr.org/4e5cec7b9.html>

Reporting refugees program launched in Canberra

The University of Canberra, Australian National University, the ABC and Canberra Refugee Support have entered into a unique arrangement giving journalism students the task of producing a radio program about refugees. Canberra Refugee Support is advising students on how to best report refugee and asylum seeker issues. The final segment will go to air on ABC Canberra in November. More details about the project can be found at:

<http://www.canberra.edu.au/monitor/2011/sept/uc-journalism-students-tell-refugees-stories>.

Australian Multicultural Council appointed

The Federal Government has appointed a 10-member Australian Multicultural Council (AMC) to create an overarching whole-of-government approach to multiculturalism. Five of the AMC members have direct links to RCOA member organisations – chair Judge Rauf Soulio (chair of Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia), deputy chair Gail Ker (CEO of ACCES Services Inc, Logan, Qld), Hass Dellal (chair of Centre for Multicultural Youth, Melbourne), Carmel Guerra (CEO, Centre for Multicultural Youth) and Peter Wertheim (Executive Director, Executive Council of Australian Jewry). A sixth member, Dr Tim Soutphommasane, is the son of refugees from Laos. The Prime Minister's speech about AMC is at <http://www.pm.gov.au/press-office/speech-australian-multicultural-council-launch-canberra>. Media release at: <http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/kl/2011/kl170764.htm>

Press Council complaint against West Australian upheld

The Australian Press Council has upheld a complaint by Kate Swanton about the accuracy and unfairness of a *West Australian* newspaper article about the transfer of asylum seekers from Christmas Island to Darwin. The story, published in March, claimed some asylum seekers were transferred following a riot. Ms Swanton also complained that the newspaper did not report the Minister for Immigration's denial that the people transferred were "the core group of troublemakers". However, a number of letters to the editor were published that relied on that assertion that troublemakers had been "rewarded" for leading the "rampage". The Press Council ruled the newspaper's coverage was unfair and unbalanced. The adjudication can be read in full at:

<http://www.presscouncil.org.au/document-search/adjudication-no-1502-the-west-australian-aug-2011/?LocatorFormID=677&FromSearch=1>

COMING EVENTS

Exhibition of multimedia works by Dinh Q Le: "Erasure"

Until Saturday 10 September, Sydney NSW

Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation presents "Erasure", a newly commissioned work by Vietnamese artist Dinh Q. Le. This is an interactive sculptural and video installation that draws on recent debates in Australia concerning refugees and asylum seekers.

Details: Wednesday to Saturday 11:00am-5:00pm; Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, 16-20 Goodhope Street, Paddington; for further details visit sherman-scaf.org.au

'Just Like Us' exhibition

Friday 26 August to Friday 30 September, Melbourne VIC

This exhibition will bring together film, photographs and objects and incorporate interactive and experiential elements, with materials and presentations sourced from people with refugee experiences and Victorian-based organisations and groups which support refugees. Opening night on 26 August will be attended by special guests Special Guests Julian Burnside QC and Ann-Mari Jordens.

Details: opening night 26 August from 6:00pm; Multicultural Hub, Melbourne; for further details visit www.justlikeus.org.au

Refugee Stories at Liverpool Library

Friday 26 August to Wednesday 30 November, Liverpool NSW

Hosted by Amnesty International Australia and Liverpool Council, this exhibition explores the realities of refugees from overseas and in Australia through the work of three different Australian photographers. Richard Wainwright's work shows the helpless and sometimes hopeful experience of refugees fleeing Chad. Hamish Gregory has photographed two refugee Afghan families who have moved to Australia in search of a new beginning and Ed Giles focuses on the experience of refugees living in Jordan.

Details: Liverpool Library Exhibition Space, Liverpool; for further details contact Jemma Stovell at jemma.stovell@amnesty.org.au.

Karen pregnancy classes

From Thursday 1 September, Hoppers Crossing VIC

These classes, open to Karen-speaking women at all stages of pregnancy, will be run by 'Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies' Childbirth and Early Parenting Educator Jodie Gregson who has years of pregnancy and childbirth class experience and Women's and Refugee Health Nurse Di Van Vliet. Sessions will cover topics such as pregnancy care, labour and birth, breastfeeding and post natal care.

Details: Thursday mornings 10:00am-11:30am; ISIS Primary Care, 117-129 Warringa Crescent Hoppers Crossing (meet at Reception Area and ask for Jodie or Di); for more information and bookings call (03) 8734 1400.

Multicultural Health Week

Monday 5 September to Monday 12 September, NSW

Multicultural Health Week is a week which celebrates diversity and the health of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. It reminds NSW health services, CALD groups and media the importance of providing equitable access to information and resources to Australians whose first language may not be English. This year's theme is 'Health Information in Your Language'.

Details: for further information and upcoming activities, call (02) 9816 0347 or visit www.multiculturalhealthweek.com.

Unsafe Haven: Hazaras in Afghanistan

Monday 5 September to Friday 7 October, Sydney NSW

Artist and University of Technology Sydney (UTS) graduate Abdul Karim Hekmat came to Australia from Afghanistan as a refugee in 2001. 'Unsafe Haven' documents his return last year and what he discovered about the daily life and continuing persecution of the Hazara people. Put together with the UTS Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre, Amnesty International Australia and the Refugee Council of Australia, the exhibition is intended to give insight into the plight of the Hazara and to challenge the view that Afghan asylum seekers are no longer in need of protection.

Details: UTS Tower Foyer, Level 4 (Entrance level), 15 Broadway, Sydney; for further details visit cosmopolitancivilsocieties.com/2011/08/26/exhibition.

Trivia night fundraiser for family of Ayen Chol

Wednesday 7 September, St Albans VIC

This night is in memory of Ayen Chol, who died in tragic circumstances, and to raise funds to support her family in this time of need. Organise a table of family, friends or colleagues and show your support for the family as well as having a great night out. All monies raised will be donated to the St Albans Main Road East Learning Centre, where Ayen attended, who have organised a collection for her family. There will be a raffle and auctions on the night so bring along some spare change. BYO food, drinks and alcohol.

Details: \$15.00 per head (tables of 10); 7:00pm-10:00pm; Errington Community Centre, Princess Street, St Albans; bookings essential though (03) 9313 8331 or csi@citywestwater.com.au.

Sydney Latin American Film Festival

From Wednesday 7 September, Sydney NSW

The Sydney Latin American Film Festival is a not-for-profit festival showcasing Latin American film and culture and supporting community programs in Central and South America. The Festival is driven entirely by a group of dedicated volunteers and all proceeds of the Festival go to community projects in Latin America. This year's festival will showcase films from Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela and Colombia.

Details: for further details including screening times and venues, visit www.sydneylatinofilmfestival.org.

Tree of Life performances

Thursday 8 and Friday 9 September, Casula NSW

Developed and performed by young refugees from South-Western Sydney, these performances share the joys, sorrows, terrors, relief and humour of their refugee experiences. The work represents the culmination of drama and storytelling workshops held over the last for months and is part of the

Treehouse Theatre's ongoing project to assist young refugees to honour their past and build resilience for the future.

Details: tickets \$20; 10:30am & 1:00pm on 8 September; 11:00am & 7:00pm on 9 September; Casula Powerhouse Art Centre, 1 Casula Road, Casula; to book tickets call (02) 9824 1121.

Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Colloquium on Ethics and Migration

Thursday 8 September, Fitzroy VIC

Hosted by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, this event will feature speeches by Bishop Christopher Prowse, Bishop of Sale, and the Hon Chris Bowen, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship on the theme 'One Human Family Across Borders'.

Details: 7:00pm-9:00pm; Central Hall, Melbourne Campus, Australian Catholic University, 24 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy; RSVP to adminassistant@acmro.catholic.org.au.

Fundraiser for Red Cross East Africa Drought Appeal

Thursday 8 September, Carlton VIC

The Church of All Nations African Family Centre program in Carlton is holding a fundraiser with all proceeds donated to the Red Cross East Africa Drought Appeal. Local band The Conch will perform

Details: \$30 entry includes donation, \$50 entry includes donation and two-course meal; from 6:00pm; The Clare Castle Hotel, 421 Rathdowne Street, Carlton; RSVP essential to Stephen Gianni on 0417 589 373 or (03) 9347 8171, or e-mail theclare@bigpond.com.

Book launch: 'Refugee to Resident'

Thursday 8 September, Ourimbah NSW

Professor Lyndall Ryan will launch Dr Ibtihal Samarayi's 'Refugee to Resident' story which captures the indignity and hopelessness associated with being a refugee and the resilience that humans can draw upon when suffering extreme duress.

Details: 3:45pm for 4:00pm; Co-op Bookshop, Shop 1, Student Amenities Building, Ourimbah Campus; RSVP by Tuesday 6 September to (02) 4362 2796 (ext. 84254) or ourimbah@coop-bookshop.com.au.

Ethiopian New Year celebration

Saturday 10 September, Moonah TAS

The Ethiopian Community Association of Tasmania is holding a celebration to mark Ethiopian New Year (the year 2004 in Ethiopian calendar). Delicious traditional Ethiopian food and drinks will be provided. There will also be an opportunity to enjoy an Ethiopian coffee ceremony.

Details: 2:00pm-11:00pm; Salvation Army Hall, 73 Hopkins Street, Moonah; for further details or to RSVP call Zenebe Woldemichael on 0403 286 181 or Zemenay Gebremichael on 0413 547 525.

2011 Iraqi Festival

Saturday 10 September, Annerley QLD

Hosted by the Romero Centre, this event will feature competitions, musical performances, kids' activities, poetry, exhibitions, food and dancing.

Details: 5:00pm till late; Mary Mac Hall, Annerley Road, Annerley.

2011 Eld Alfeter Festival

Saturday 10 September, Kelvin Grove QLD

Hosted by Saudi residents of Kelvin Grove, this festival celebrates the end of Ramadan. Come along and experience Saudi culture through food, display, dance, children's activities and more.

Details: 10:00am-2:00pm; Kulgun Park, Carraway Street, Kelvin Grove; for further details, contact Mohammed Algesayer on 0413 436 844 or kasdhm@hotmail.com.

Exhibition to help raise funds for the East Africa Drought Appeal

Until Sunday 11 September, Perth WA

Perth-based artist Nidia Hansen combines a perennial interest in biological patterns with her practice as a visual artist to create paintings for an exhibition titled 'Intrinsic'. The exhibition will feature her signature round, bold coloured organic shapes which are a characteristic of her Latin American roots. Nidia will donate 10% of the sale price of the paintings to the Red Cross for its East Africa Drought Appeal.

Details: 10:00am-4:00pm Monday to Saturday, 1:00pm-4:00pm Sunday; Atwell Arts Centre, 586 Canning Highway, Alfred Cove, Perth; for further details contact Nidia Hansen on (08) 9417 4580 or 0403 421 190, e-mail nidiahart@gmail.com or visit www.nidiahansenart.com.

7th Lecture on Human Rights presented by David Marr

Tuesday 13 September, Armidale NSW

Hosted by Armidale Sanctuary Humanitarian Settlement, this event will feature an address by Walkley Award-winning journalist, author and social commentator David Marr on the topic 'Australia and the boats ten years after the Tampa: How old fears still feed the politics of panic'.

Details: \$10 entry; 6:00pm for 6:30pm; The Hoskins Centre, The Armidale School, Armidale.

Community Information session on humanitarian family reunion

Wednesday 14 September, Parramatta

Hosted by the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic, this free event will provide details about family reunion under the humanitarian program. Speakers will include Michaela Byers, Registered Migration Agent, and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Attendees will have the opportunity to make a free appointment to see a solicitor at the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic.

Details: 6:00pm-8:00pm; Jubilee Room, Parramatta Town Hall, Church Street, Parramatta; registration essential to (02) 9685 9529 or lawrsvp@uws.edu.au.

2011 Outer East Refugee Health Forum

Thursday 15 September, Ringwood VIC

This free informative forum will showcase local projects across the community that support refugee health and wellbeing. Presentations will include healthy mothers healthy babies, schools, settlement support, training and employment opportunities, and English language support, among others. This forum is open to anyone working or interested in refugee health and wellbeing. Lunch and refreshments provided.

Details: 9:00am-1:30pm; Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood; RSVP by Friday 9 September to gloria.morrison@oepcp.org.au; for further details contact Meg Scolyer on (03) 9871 2608 or mscolyer@each.com.au.

Western Sahara film night

Thursday 15 September, Sydney NSW

The Australia Western Sahara Association in partnership with the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts is hosting a screening of 'El Problema', a documentary filmed (clandestinely) over four and a half years by Spanish directors Jordi Ferrer and Pablo Vidal inside the occupied territories and based on extensive testimonies from Saharawi human rights activists and others. Professor Emeritus Stuart Rees, AM, Director Sydney Peace Foundation at the University of Sydney, will introduce the documentary.

Details: tickets \$10.00 (\$5.00 concession); 6:00pm for a 6:30pm start to 8:00pm; Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, The Auditorium, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney; for further details visit www.awsa.org.au.

Clinical practice and new developments in the treatment of refugee survivors of torture and trauma

Thursday 15 September and Friday 16 September, Carramar NSW

This two-day workshop aims to provide clinicians with additional skills for clinical practice in the treatment of refugee survivors of torture and trauma. It was significantly revamped in 2010 and now includes the latest information on neuroplasticity and the link between the brain and psychotherapy. It will discuss the strengths and limitations of well known treatment modalities when working with refugee clients, as well as more innovative approaches such as Biofeedback and Neurofeedback. Suitable for clinicians only.

Details: \$249.00 per person (\$149.00 for students) includes training pack, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea; 9:30am-4:30pm; 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; registration essential through www.startts.org.au.

Eid celebration

Friday 16 September, Adelaide SA

Hosted by the Afghan United Association of SA, this event to celebrate the end of Ramadan will feature an art exhibition, live music and a theatre performance by the Afghan Performance Group. Light refreshments will be provided.

Details: 12:00pm-2:00pm; MRCSA Hall, 59 King William Street, Adelaide; RSVP by Wednesday 14 September to admin@meccsa.com.au.

**Foundation House two-day retreat: Spirituality and Human Service Practice
Friday 16 September to Sunday 18 September, Boronia VIC**

This two day weekend retreat is designed for human service practitioners interested in engaging intentionally and reflectively with spirituality and practice. The retreat will provide a space and a place for case discussion, critical reflection on practice and gentle and respectful exploration of diverse spiritualities, theologies and world views. It will also provide participants with the opportunity for spiritual nurture through a range of meditative and contemplative practices.

Details: \$380.00 includes meals, accommodation and a copy of the book 'Spirited Practices, Spirituality and the Helping Profession' (\$350.00 without the book); Janssen Spirituality Centre for Interreligious and Cross Cultural Relations, Boronia; for registration enquiries phone Georgia on (03) 9389 8914 or e-mail pdregistrations@foundationhouse.org.au.

**Fitzroy Ball: fundraiser for refugee support
Saturday 17 September, Carlton VIC**

This event aims to raise funds for the Refugee Support Program at the Fitzroy Learning Network. The event will include a three-course dinner including drinks, quality raffle and auction prizes and performances from Vox Congo, Melbourne Ukulele Kollektive, acoustic duo Lily and King and DJ Whiskey Houston. Spicks and Specks' Alan Brough will be MC and Denise Scott will be celebrity auctioneer. Guest speaker will be Kon Karapanagiotidis, founder of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

Details: 7:00pm-12:00am; San Remo Ballroom, 365 Nicholson Street, Carlton North; to purchase tickets call (03) 9417 2987 or book online at www.trybooking.com/Booking/BookingEventSummary.aspx?eid=11513

**X for Unknown: SIEV X Memorial designs
Wednesday 21 September to Sunday 20 November, Darling Harbour NSW**

In October 2001, Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel (SIEV) X sank en route to Christmas Island, drowning 353 people. Nineteen powerful designs by students for the National SIEV X Memorial mark the 10th anniversary of this tragedy.

Details: free entry; open daily 9:30am-5:00pm; Australian National Maritime Museum, 2 Murray Street, Darling Harbour NSW; for further details visit www.anmm.gov.au.

**Peace Day celebration
Wednesday 21 September, Werribee VIC**

Hosted by the Karen community. Light refreshments provided.

Details: 6:30pm; Werribee Baptist Church, corner of Heaths and Derrimut Roads, Werribee; for further details, contact Thamay Paw on 0433 089 874 or (03) 9734 0400, Moses Chitlu Wyn on 0419 156 555 or (03) 9389 8949, or Reginald Shwe on 0407 820 652 or (03) 9389 8951.

**Exchange and Trade: Exhibition of photography and calligraph
Wednesday 21 September to Wednesday 12 October, Sydney NSW**

Featuring works by Danny Kennedy and Jomakhan Jafari.

Details: opening night 4:00pm-8:00pm; gallery open 10:00am-4:00pm Wednesday to Saturday; Mori Gallery, 168 Day Street, Sydney.

**Law In Action: Free excursion for new and emerging communities
Friday 23 September, Werribee VIC**

Organised by Wyndham Humanitarian Network Legal and Consumer Issues Working Group, this event will involve a free excursion to Melbourne Magistrates Court and Parliament House of Victoria. Only 25 places are available, so RSVP as soon as possible.

Details: 10:00am-3:30pm; depart from Kelly Park, Synnot Street, Werribee; RSVP to Jenny Dunstan on (03) 9742 4013 or jennyd@werribeecc.net.

**2011 Peace Festival
Saturday 24 September, Hobart TAS**

This event will include traditional food, music, performances, cultural crafts and an international bazaar.
Details: 12:00pm-4:00pm; Mawson Place, Hobart Waterfront.

Tree of Life performance

Monday 26 September, Kirribilli NSW

Developed and performed by young refugees from South-Western Sydney, these performances share the joys, sorrows, terrors, relief and humour of their refugee experiences. The work represents the culmination of drama and storytelling workshops held over the last few months and is part of the Treehouse Theatre's ongoing project to assist young refugees to honour their past and build resilience for the future.

Details: tickets \$20; 7:00pm; Ensemble Theatre, 78 McDougall Street, Kirribilli; to book tickets call (02) 9929 0644.

Western Sydney Financial Health Forum 2011

Wednesday 28 September, Canley Vale NSW

A free forum for community workers and leaders about helping people in financial distress. Presented by ASIC and the Western Sydney Financial Health Network. Refreshments and lunch provided.

Details: 8:45am-3:00pm; Cabra-Vale Diggers Club, 1 Bartley Street, Canley Vale NSW; for further information or to register please contact Gregory Mowle on (02) 6250 3815 or Lisa Summers on (02) 9911 5586.

STARTTS Clinical Master Class Evening: Clinical implications of ethnic cleansing and genocide

Wednesday 28 September, Carramar NSW

This master class will feature presentations by Dr Sotheara Chhim, Executive Director of the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation in Cambodia, on trauma treatment approaches for survivors of the Khmer Rouge genocide; and Dr Shakeh Momartin, Clinical Psychologist and Researcher at STARTTS, on post-traumatic stress disorder and depression amongst Bosnian refugees. The master class will also be broadcast live through www.startts.org.au.

Details: free if attending in person, \$5.99 to watch the live broadcast; 6:00pm-8:00pm; 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; registration essential to (02) 9794 1900 or linda.joseph@sswahs.nsw.gov.au.

VLGMIN 2011 Forum: The role of Local Government in Settlement and Multicultural Affairs

Thursday 29 September, Clayton VIC

Hosted by the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network (VLGMIN), this forum aims to examine the roles of the three tiers of government in relation to settlement provision; systemic interagency coordination of settlement services; and the role of local government in managing community relations at the municipal level as issues arise from local diversity. Keynote speakers include the Hon. Nicholas Kotsiras MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship; Cr Bill McArthur, President, Municipal Association of Victoria; and Eugenia Grammatikakis, Convenor, VLGMIN. Register early as places are limited. Registrations close on Friday 23 September.

Details: 10:00am-3:00pm; Clayton Theatre, Clayton Community Centre, Cooke Street, Clayton; register online here; for further details contact Eugenia Grammatikakis on (03) 9518 3625 or Biljana Komnenovic on (03) 9239 5265.

Conference: People of African Descent - Recognition, Social Inclusion and Capacity Building

Friday 30 September, Sydney NSW

This conference will showcase contributions, explore issues and canvass strategies for the way ahead. The conference will be open to government agencies, service providers, academics and the general public.

Details: registration starts at \$100; 9:00am-05:00pm; The Sebel Hotel, 350 Church Street, Parramatta; for further details e-mail info@africanwomenustralia.org or visit www.africanwomenustralia.org.

Amnesty International Human Rights Conference

Thursday 6 to Saturday 8 October, Brisbane QLD

Celebrate 50 years of Amnesty International at their Human Rights Conference in Brisbane this October. Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General will be delivering an address to the conference on the state of the world's human rights. Come along and hear amazing personal stories, take part in robust discussions with top international speakers and learn about new ways to defend human rights.

Details: Royal on The Park Hotel, Corner of Albert and Alice Streets, Brisbane; for more information visit hrc.amnesty.org.au

National Social Inclusion Forum

Friday 7 October, Melbourne VIC

This national forum is themed 'Building Inclusive Societies: Multiculturalism, Citizenship, Identity'. The forum will bring together international, federal, state and local government policy makers and service providers, NGOs, community sector agencies, and academics to explore issues around multiculturalism and how such understandings can inform policy development and program improvement. The forum breakout sessions will focus on migration and cultural diversity, education, media and youth. This event is auspiced by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation at Deakin University in partnership with the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria and in collaboration with a number of other key organisations.

Details: Melbourne Town Hall and the Immigration Museum; for further details and to register visit www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/ccg/events/conferences/11-ibis/index.php

Freedom from persecution? The question of Afghanistan

Friday 7 October, Sydney NSW

Continued conflict and protracted displacement in Afghanistan poses in sharp relief the question of how to guarantee freedom from persecution in the world today. In a global political system that generates radically destabilised countries, where political authority and legitimacy is absent, persecution becomes systemic. The aim of this conference is to reflect on broader questions of freedom from persecution, and how it may be promoted. Hosted by the Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Details: 9:30am-5:30pm; University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), Broadway, Sydney; for further details contact James Goodman at james.goodman@uts.edu.au or visit cosmopolitancivilsocieties.com/2011/08/26/day-conference-freedom

Halala the City of Newcastle

Saturday 8 October, Newcastle NSW

This event, presented by the Hunter African Communities Council, will celebrate cultural diversity through the arts. Highlights will include performances from Fode Mane-Jamo Jamo Arts, Chakras Performing Arts, Berias Masseur, Hunter School of Performing Arts, modern indigenous dance, Zoe Barrett and traditional cultural groups from Burundi, Congo, Liberia and South Africa.

Details: tickets \$20.00 (families \$60.00, groups of 10+ \$17.00 each); 7:30pm; Hunter Theatre, Lambton Road, Broadmeadow; for further details call Shakila Kader on 0409 153 912; to book tickets call (02) 4952 3355 or visit www.hspa.nsw.edu.au.

Run for Refugees 2011

Sunday 9 October, Melbourne VIC

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) is seeking runners to take part in Run for Refugees, an annual fundraiser which forms part of the Melbourne Marathon. Runners seek sponsorship for their participation in the marathon, with all funds raised directed towards one of the 23 programs ASRC delivers to provide asylum.

Details: for further details and to sign up, visit run4refugees2011.gofundraise.com.au.

NEW RESEARCH, STATEMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

A New Approach: Breaking the Stalemate on Refugee & Asylum Seekers

The Centre for Policy Development report, *A New Approach*, addresses the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees in Australia. Authors John Menadue, Arja Keski-Nummi and Kate Gauthier outline policies for the fairer treatment of people seeking asylum and questions whether mandatory detention deters asylum seekers from journeying to Australia by boat. The full report is available at: <http://cpd.org.au/2011/08/a-new-approach-breaking-australia%E2%80%99s-stalemate-on-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/>

Sudanese people in the Sutherland Shire oral history project

The Sydney Institute of TAFE Sutherland College Oral History Project records the efforts of the Sutherland Shire community in supporting the settlement of Sudanese people in the area. This oral

history project includes the histories of Sudanese and non Sudanese community members. Accessible at: <http://oralhistory.sydneyinstitute.wikispaces.net/>

Report on Women's Experience of Income Management in the Northern Territory

During May and June 2011, Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) documented women's experiences of Income Management in the Northern Territory with the aim of ensuring that the views of women living with Income Management are heard in public policy discussions. The ERA surveyed and held discussion groups with 168 women, including a number from refugee backgrounds. The report is available for download at: www.equalityrightsalliance.org.au/projects/womens-experience-income-management-northern-territory

2011 review of the Australian Standard Classification of Languages

The Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL) is designed to provide a classification of language for statistical and administrative purposes. The classification is researched through census population and housing data analysis as well as other data resources. The updated version can be viewed at:

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1267.0Main+Features12011?OpenDocument

Launch of the Pacific Rim Human Rights Database

The online Pacific Rim Human Rights Database was launched on the 17th of August by The International Network (TIN). The database seeks to record human rights violations in the Pacific Rim region and is publically available to stimulate public debate on human rights. Incidents may be reported by members of the public and are reviewed by the TIN team. The database is available online at: www.theinonline.net/humanrightsdatabase

Research project: Unlocking crises of protracted displacement for refugees and internally displaced persons

The Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford has published three case studies of protracted displacement – Central America, Somalia and Iraq – as part of a project that seeks to assist policy makers in unlocking conditions of protracted displacement, the scale and dimensions of which demand an urgent global response. Find out more about the project and to download the case studies go to: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/international-institutions/unlocking-crises

Health and settlement experiences of men from refugee backgrounds

A La Trobe Refugee Research Centre SettleMEN study has followed a cohort of 233 recently arrived men from refugee backgrounds living in urban and regional areas of South East Queensland, with the aim of documenting in depth their health and settlement experiences. A final report from this study by Ignacio Correa-Velez and Sandy Gifford is available from:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/larrc/news-events/news-items/final-report-on-refugee-mens-health-and-settlement-released>

OPPORTUNITIES

Grants available under DIAC Diversity and Social Cohesion Program

DIAC is now inviting applications for project funding under the Diversity and Social Cohesion Program (DSCP) 2011-12 for both the DSCP Grants and Multicultural Arts and Festivals Grants. For further information please visit <http://www.harmony.gov.au/dscp/> Applications must be lodged by Friday 23 September 2011.

Women's Leadership Course

Multicultural SA is pleased to announce that a Women's Leadership Course for women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is planned to commence later this year in Adelaide. This course will be free to participants, and will be jointly funded by TAFESA, Multicultural SA and the Office for Women. Training will be delivered by TAFESA at the Adelaide City Campus, and successful completion will result in attainment of the Certificate IV in Frontline Management. For further information contact Nancy Labbozzetta on labbozzetta.nancy@agd.sa.gov.au. Closing date is Friday 1 October 2011.

Innovation award nominations open

The UNAOC-BMW Award for intercultural Innovation is an annual to identify highly innovative initiatives that are advancing cross-cultural understanding among different communities and cultures around the

world. By encouraging new intercultural methods and approaches, the Award is unique and offers very promising and inspiring results. The 2011 application guidelines can be found by visiting www.unaoc.org/unaoc-bmwgroup-award/

Spectrum Seeds for Growth funding opportunity

Do you have an idea for a project? Want to run a community event? Want to develop leadership skills amongst your community? Get in now for Spectrum Seeds for Growth Funding. Seeds for Growth provides the opportunity for community groups from migrant/refugee backgrounds in the North/West to start their own projects to support their community. Applications due Monday 19th September. If you have an idea you want to discuss or need help with applying, contact Willow on (03) 9496 0277.

New support group

The Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council (AGMC) Inc. is pleased to announce the creation of a new Multicultural Social Support Group. This group has been established to fill a void that has existed for many years in communities that are not represented by individual cultural groups. For further information please call 0466340412 or email contact@agmc.org.au.

Theatre Production - calling for expressions of interest

The International Performing Arts Network (IPAN) is calling for expressions of interest from people in Sydney's refugee communities to participate in a storytelling theatre workshop in mid-September. This workshop is an important part of the process of developing IPAN's upcoming theatre production LUCKY, a play about a young man's quest for a better life, which will be presented at New Theatre, Newtown, in October. Workshop participants will contribute to the development of LUCKY and get a unique insight into the theatre making process. People with an interest in the performing arts and/or sharing their stories are encouraged to register their expressions of interest with Jasmine De Carlo on 0434 501 697 or ipanproductions@gmail.com

Australian Human Rights Commission photo competition

The Australia Human Rights Commission has launched a new photo competition with a category for under-18 year olds and over-18 year olds. The competition theme is the right to education and will see Apple iPod shuffles awarded to a selected winner each month with an overall winner receiving a \$500 Apple voucher at the Commission's Human Rights Awards in Sydney on 9 December. A selection of the best photos will be showcased on the Commission's website and Flickr page. For details on the competition guidelines and how to submit your photo, go to www.humanrights.gov.au/PhotoCompetition2011

Abstracts sought on contributions of Arab expatriates

The League of Arab States (LAS) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are preparing a study to enhance more knowledge about the role of Arab expatriates in promoting positive contributions to socio-economic development and political transitions in their homelands. Interested applicants are invited to send their abstracts (500 words maximum) to Mrs Samiha Mohei Eldine samiha.mohey@las.int and Ms. Reham Hussain rabelmohsen@iom.int no later than 15 September 2011. Applicants should also submit their CV along with the abstract.

Call for papers: Freedom from persecution? The question of Afghanistan

The Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) is holding a one-day conference on Friday 7 October to consider the question of how to guarantee freedom from persecution in the world today. The aim is to reflect on broader questions of freedom from persecution, and how it may be promoted. Papers are invited from academics, NGO workers and civil society activities on the conference themes. If you would to participate, please contact the coordinating director, James Goodman, at james.goodman@uts.edu.au. For further details, visit cosmopolitancivilsocieties.com/2011/08/26/day-conference-freedom

REFUGEE ISSUES IN THE MEDIA

A busy person's digest of some recent media coverage of refugee issues:

(Inclusion in this summary does not imply that RCOA agrees with the article's content or vouches for its accuracy)

People-smugglers tell asylum hopefuls to send children

People-smugglers are trying to exploit likely exemptions to the Gillard government's Malaysia Solution, telling potential boatpeople that unaccompanied children will not be deported from Australia. Meanwhile, the Refugee Council of Australia rounded on the Immigration Department over its internet campaign. (The Australian, 3 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/people-smugglers-tell-asylum-hopefuls-to-send-children/story-fn59niix-1226107026021>

Malaysian police set for swap

A high-level delegation of Royal Malaysian Police will arrive on Christmas Island today, as the first boatload of 54 asylum seekers set to be deported to Malaysia is also due to arrive. The Malaysian government is pushing for the first transfer of asylum seekers, probably a small group of 10 and 20, to take place next week, and possibly as soon as Sunday. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 4 August)

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/malaysian-police-set-for-swap-20110803-1ibre.html>

Deporting children 'cold and heartless': UN

The United Nations children's agency has described the Australian government's intention to deport unaccompanied children to Malaysia as "cold and heartless". On another occasion, the head of the Refugee Council of Australia says it is still not clear what type of accommodation the asylum seekers who are being transferred from Australia to Malaysia will be provided with. (The Australia Network News, 5 August) <http://australianetworknews.com/stories/201108/3286018.htm?desktop>

Asylum swap deal 'trashes rights'

The Greens yesterday accused the Gillard government of failing to disclose the number of asylum-seeker children in detention and of "trashing" Australia's international human rights obligations by its refugee swap deal with Malaysia. Of 148 signatory states to the UN refugee convention, only Australia used a policy of mandatory detention for asylum-seekers without visas, Refugee Council of Australia's Paul Power said when presenting his submission. (The Australian, 5 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/asylum-swap-deal-trashes-rights/story-fn59niix-1226108572276>

Malaysians ask own officials to reject children swap

The Malaysian Bar Council has called on its government to refuse to accept any unaccompanied children seeking asylum under the swap deal with Australia. (ABC New Online, 8 August)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-08-05/malaysian-bar-council-on-asylum-seeker-swap/2826654/?site=sydney>

Smugglers warned as Malaysia deal falters

Immigration Minister Chris Bowen has warned people-smugglers and would-be boatpeople against exploiting a High Court injunction halting the transfer of asylum-seekers to Malaysia. Mr Bowen today reaffirmed his confidence in the legality of the Malaysian deal, as the government pushes for a swift resolution to a legal challenge against the policy. (The Australian, 9 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/high-court-turns-malaysia-deal-into-one-way-traffic/story-fn59niix-1226111469044>

Australia set to send detainees to PNG

Manus Island looks set to be reopened as an asylum-seeker detention centre after Papua New Guinea gave support in principle for the move. The development comes after the High Court of Australia extended an injunction preventing the transfer of the first asylum-seekers from Australia in a swap deal with Malaysia. (Canberra Times, 11 August)

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/national/national/general/australia-set-to-send-detainees-to-png/2255162.aspx?storypage=0>

Discord over Australia-PNG asylum plan

The Australian Government has offered assurances about how asylum seekers will be treated when they are sent to Papua New Guinea. On Thursday, new PNG Prime Minister Peter O'Neill confirmed he has approved the re-opening of the Manus Island detention centre to accept asylum seekers from Australia. (Radio Australia, 12 August)

<http://www.radioaustralianews.net.au/stories/201108/3291789.htm?desktop>

Asylum children arrive in legal limbo

Babies and children arrived yesterday on the fourth asylum-seeker boat to reach Australian waters since the Malaysian refugee swap deal was struck, with more than 250 boatpeople now stuck in legal limbo. (The Australian, 13 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/asylum-children-arrive-in-legal-limbo/story-fn59niix-1226114111847>

Malaysia vowed to improve refugee lot

Immigration Minister Chris Bowen says assurances Malaysia would improve its treatment of asylum seekers was a crucial factor behind the government's controversial people-swap deal, legal documents show. (AAP, 15 August)

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/malaysia-vowed-to-improve-refugee-lot-20110815-1itnx.html>

Voters say 'no' to PM's asylum deal

A majority of Australians believe asylum seekers arriving by boat should be allowed to land in Australia and have their refugee claims assessed here, according to an opinion poll commissioned by The Age. (The Age, 16 August)

http://www.theage.com.au/national/voters-say-no-to-pms-asylum-deal-20110815-1iuvj.html?from=age_sb

Detention costs soar to \$772m

The cost of running the immigration detention network has exploded under Labor, with a five-fold increase in management expenses over the past two years and a spike in detainee violence. (The Australian, 17 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/detention-costs-soar-to-772m/story-fn59niix-1226116310796>

Report says malaria on Manus endemic

Manus Island, where Australia wants to open an immigration detention centre in PNG, has an endemic malaria problem, health authorities say. There were 10,525 diagnosed cases of malaria in 2009 on Manus Island, which is home to 65,296 people. (The Age, 18 August)

<http://news.theage.com.au/breaking-news-world/malaria-on-manus-endemic-report-20110818-1izo0.html>

Doctors blast asylum policy

The federal government has affirmed its commitment to the mandatory detention of asylum seekers, as the leading doctors' group last night slammed the policy as "inherently harmful to the physical and mental health of detainees". Refugee Council of Australia chief executive Paul Power said the incidence of self-harm "is beyond anything we have previously seen in Australia", and the policy was "profoundly stupid and counterproductive". (The Age, 18 August)

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/doctors-blast-asylum-policy-20110817-1iy9d.html>

Barbed wire the preferred solution in PNG

The governor of Manus Island says any Australian-funded refugee processing centre should be a secure detention centre rather than an open facility. The arrival of an Australian delegation in Papua New Guinea, which consisted of officials from the Immigration Department, came as the chief executive of Manus's only hospital said malaria was endemic to the area. (The Australian, 19 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/barbed-wire-the-preferred-solution-in-png/story-fn59niix-1226117740782>

Australia's PNG refugee deal slammed

Refugee advocates say an Australian government deal to send asylum seekers to Papua New Guinea is policy driven by polling. The Refugee Council of Australia's Chief Executive Paul Power says it's bad policy. (Australia Network News, 20 August)

<http://australianetworknews.com/stories/201108/3298121.htm?desktop>

Australia's PNG asylum seeker plan under fire

Australia's plan for Papua New Guinea to process asylum seekers was Saturday criticised by rights groups as inhumane and a breach of the country's human rights obligations. The Refugee Council of Australia also attacked the proposal as "Australia paying a much poorer neighbour to accept extra-territorial processing of asylum seekers to whom Australia has protection obligations". (Agence France Presse, 20 August) <http://www.thesundaily.my/news/117762>

Plea for asylum policy rethink

Prominent business and union leaders have endorsed a new strategy on asylum seekers that would have mandatory detention phased out within two years and Australia's intake of refugees significantly increased over five years. (The Age, 22 August)

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/plea-for-asylum-policy-rethink-20110821-1j4vq.html>

Malaysia condemned for deporting Uighurs to China

A human rights group criticised Malaysia on Tuesday for sending a group of ethnic Uighurs back to China and urged an end to such deportations over fears of mistreatment and even torture. The UN refugee agency also said it had sought access to the 11 people deported on August 18 as well as five others still in custody in Malaysia but had been denied by Malaysian authorities. (AFP, 23 August)

<http://www.mysinchew.com/node/62641>

Limit to asylum seeker protection

The Commonwealth has argued in the High Court that the only protection Malaysia must provide to asylum seekers transferred from Australia is not returning them to a place where they face persecution. The full bench of the High Court will make its decision next Wednesday on whether to allow the transfer of asylum seekers under the controversial deal - six weeks after it was signed. (The Age, 24 August)

http://www.theage.com.au/national/limit-to-asylum-seeker-protection-20110823-1j8g7.html?from=age_sb

Notorious people smuggler arrested in Indonesia

Indonesian police have arrested notorious people smuggler Sayyed Abbas Azad and are now considering whether to extradite him to Australia to stand trial. The head of Indonesia's anti-people smuggling task force says Sayyed Abbas Azad was detained in the early hours of yesterday morning. (ABC News, 25 August)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-08-25/notorious-people-smuggler-arrested-in-indonesia/2854624/?site=sydney>

Australia's asylum plan draws sharp criticism

An accused human trafficker says that Australia's plans to deport asylum seekers to other Asia-Pacific countries will fail to deter others because they are in genuine need of protection. (VOA News, 26 August)

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/Australias-Offshore-Asylum-Plans-Doomed-Warns-Accused-Human-Trafficker-128453518.html>

Asylum seekers branded a risk by ASIO appeal to UN

Almost 40 asylum-seekers who have been denied visas after ASIO declared them threats to national security will today appeal to the UN Human Rights Committee in a bid to end what they say is cruel and unusual punishment. (The Australian, 29 August)

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/asylum-seekers-branded-a-risk-by-asio-appeal-to-un/story-fn59niix-1226124022587>

Laws on people smuggling challenged

A County Court judge is considering whether to allow a review of Australia's migration laws, that could challenge the offence of people smuggling. Victorian Legal Aid lawyers appeared in court today on behalf of 12 Indonesian men, who are facing mandatory jail terms. (ABC News, 30 August)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-08-30/laws-on-people-smugglers-challenged/2862194/?site=melbourne>