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Dated: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Senator Marise Payne  
Liberal Senator for NSW  
Level 3, 2-12 Macquarie Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150

Dear Senator Payne,

**re: Evacuate the Asylum-seekers from Offshore Detention Centres**

I am U Ne Oo, now living in Ryde and the coordinator of the *Network for International Protection of Refugees* – a self-help and self-funded grassroots refugee rights campaign network -- focusing on the situations of refugees in Asia-Pacific region, including Australia. I've met you in Canberra parliament briefly on 2002 Senate Inquiry on Migration Zone Excision.

I am forwarding a copy of request letter to the Liberal Member Parliament for Bennelong, the Hon. John Alexander. I've made particular request that a bipartisan motions to be made to evacuate the asylum-seekers detained at Manus Island and Nauru. In the same spirit, I respectfully request you to help support such motion.

I would like to call your attention to the "Report Card" on Australian Government's scapegoating practices. In addition to my dire complaint on your government's scapegoating of the weak, I'd like to recall the statement I had made before you on July 2002. Excerpts:

"Now, here in this parliament, your very own government is using refugees and asylum seekers as pawns in its political agenda. The government exploited refugees and border protection issues to win the election. The government shows callous disregard for the lives of asylum seekers by intercepting and turning away refugee boats on the high seas. And, most importantly, the government has demonised and given inhuman treatment to refugees in order to sustain its political power. This is inhuman conduct committed on a grand scale by the Australian government, and it is much worse than what any human smugglers have done. I ask: don't you find that disturbing? I certainly find the Australian government's conduct inhuman, despicable and disturbing."

With your government's 4 years prolonged detention of these asylum-seekers, at the great, great expense of our tax payers, certainly is an unprecedented form of exploitation. Please, Senator, do make efforts to stop such terrible abuse.

In closing, I thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours respectfully and sincerely,



(U Ne Oo)

**Copy:**

1. Senator Marise Payne, Liberal Senator for NSW, Level 3, 2-12 Macquarie Street PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

# Statement calling for immediate action on offshore detention

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/media/open-statement-calling-immediate-action-offshore-detention/>

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017

We, as a coalition of organisations and community groups from around Australia, are writing to express our concern regarding the humanitarian crisis that Australia has created.

Successive Australian governments have managed and funded offshore detention camps on Manus Island and Nauru. The people detained there are clearly Australia's responsibility. This situation has reached crisis point, and immediate action must be taken.

Beyond the reports of physical and sexual abuse, including of children; inadequate medical attention; suicides and attempted suicides; even a murder; the extinguishment of hope has pushed people to the edge.

Many of these people have been recognised as refugees. We owe them protection and safety now.

Meanwhile, politicians are spending years engaged in lengthy negotiations as to the fate of these men, women and children. With the US resettlement deal in serious doubt, the most obvious and humane solution is to clear the camps and bring these people to Australia until a safe long term, appropriate outcome for them can be guaranteed.

We do not have years. Australia cannot allow another person to die or suffer because of our actions.

This is a crisis. We are calling on both major parties to form a bipartisan commitment to immediately evacuate the camps and bring these people to safety.

Signed,

The Refugee Council of Australia

Academics for Refugees