



NEWSLETTER April 2021

Dear Grandmothers and Friends,
In this edition...
It was a fabulous turn-out for **Palm Sunday 2021**. Well done to ARAN for co-ordinating events around the nation.



Sr Brigid Arthur at Palm Sunday, Melbourne

We have a **new Home Affairs Minister** with the chance to do what others before her have failed to do.



Karen Andrews:
YOU CAN BRING THESE GIRLS HOME TO BILO TODAY

There are growing concerns for Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. And there are anniversaries to mark, 20 years down the track: Tampa, 'Children Overboard', SIEVX. It is so vivid in my mind..it seems like yesterday!



THE DUTTON LEGACY



© AAPIMAGE
Minister for Home Affairs (2017 - 2021) · Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs (2014 - 2018)

For seven long years Peter Dutton had his dead hand on the tiller of Australian immigration policy.

Relieved of his Home Affairs portfolio in the 30 March 2021 Cabinet reshuffle, it now falls to Karen Andrews MP to deal with Dutton's cruel legacy of breaches to Australia's international refugee and humanitarian obligations.

The human cost that can be attributed to Dutton's decision-making includes 7 deaths, thousands of occasions of mental torture, and the exposure of hundreds of children to inhumane suffering. (cont)

Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org

(continued from front page)

Dutton's 'God power' over the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum was exercised in a constructed climate of secrecy that reframed anything to do with refugee and border activities as 'on-water' and 'operational matters'.

Minister Dutton made an art form out of avoiding any discomfiting questions with the response: "It's been a longstanding policy of the government not to comment on on-water matters."

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection followed the Ministerial lead by repeatedly reminding journalists that the Government "does not comment on or disclose operational details where this would prejudice the outcome of current or future operations".

Monthly updates on Operation Sovereign Borders follow a well-established pattern. They reduce people desperately seeking safety and their legal right to asylum to numbers under the false brand of Illegal Maritime Arrivals (IMAs).

Each report ends with the same old duck-shove of responsibility: "The processing of refugee claims are matters for the governments of PNG and Nauru."

The screenshot shows a website page with a blue header containing the breadcrumb "Home > Operation Sovereign Borders > Releases". The main heading is "Operation Sovereign Borders monthly update: February 2021". The content includes a date "15-03-2021" and a summary of OSB activities. A left sidebar contains a navigation menu with "Operation Sovereign Borders" selected, a "Subscribe" section with links for media access, RSS, and email alerts, a "Media Enquiries" section with contact information, and a "Follow Us" section with social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

Home > Operation Sovereign Borders > Releases

Operation Sovereign Borders monthly update: February 2021

15-03-2021 - This statement provides an update on Operation Sovereign Borders (OSB) activities related to the on-water reception and processing of illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs).

The reporting period is from 1 February 2021 to 28 February 2021.

During this reporting period there were 13 IMAs transferred from a regional processing country to Australia for medical purposes or as an accompanying family member.

During this reporting period, OSB intercepted no illegal maritime ventures and returned no potential illegal immigrants.

No IMAs were transferred from Australia to a regional processing country.

Less than five IMA detainees, who arrived in Australia before 1 January 2014, were voluntarily removed from Australia. No IMA detainees were involuntarily removed from Australia to their country of origin, consistent with Australia's obligations.

No IMAs voluntarily returned to their country of origin from a regional processing country.

As at 28 February 2021, no IMAs in Nauru or Papua New Guinea (PNG) are in detention; all persons reside in community accommodation, with no restrictions on their movement in the community.

The processing of refugee claims are matters for the governments of PNG and Nauru.

Media enquiries:
Home Affairs Media: (02) 6264 2211

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It remains to be seen how **Minister Karen Andrews** will deal with this shameful legacy. She has an opportunity to succeed where her predecessors have long failed. To show care. To free the Biloela family from Christmas Island. To abide by international obligations. To create a permanent solution for thousands of refugees and their children who currently face the prospect of being forever stateless, hopeless and tortured. #

PALM SUNDAY 2021



More purple! More often!

Grandmothers turned out in force and fabulous purple for the 2021 Palm Sunday Rally in Melbourne.

Go to our website www.grandmothersforrefugees.org and check out more pics on the Gallery page.

Also, new fliers are available now. Ask your co-ordinator or download for printing from the website.



Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org



NEW TEES AND TOTES AVAILABLE NOW!

Order from <https://dastshirtautomat.com/grandmothers-for-refugees> or from our G4Rwebsite.

**Grandmothers
for Refugees
T-Shirt
measurements**

Size	SML	MED	LRG	XLRG	2XL	3XL
Width (cm)	47	52	56.5	62	64	68
Length (cm)	71	75	78.5	82	83.5	85

Grandmothers for Refugees advocates for compassionate welcome and safe settlement of all people seeking asylum. For every tee purchased, Das T-Shirt Automat will donate \$18 to Grandmothers for Refugees and \$9 for every tote.



Grandmothers For Refugees Tote
\$25



Grandmothers For Refugees Tee
\$40

*** Items are printed on demand to minimise waste, so the production process may take up to 2 weeks. You will receive a notification as soon as your order ships or is ready to collect from a storefront.

Items are also available for collection at three store locations in Fitzroy, Prahran and Kensington.

Your order generates a donation to Grandmothers for Refugees from our new supplier Das T-shirt Automat.

\$18 from every Tee sale

\$9 from each Tote sale

Thank you to Jenna at Das T-shirt Automat and to Julie Cattlin for her design and negotiating such a good supply arrangement for us.

Events upcoming in 2021

Watch the Grandmothers website for details to be announced to mark these upcoming events.

Refugee Week
20-26 June

World Refugee Day
20 June

8 years too long
19 July

20 years since Tampa
26 August

Remembering 'children overboard'
8-10 October

Remembering SIEVX
20 October

Like birds on the water. That's how one survivor described the sight of over 300 bodies of fathers, mothers, and children, scattered over kilometres of ocean when the sun came up on October 20th 2001...

<https://www.sievxmemorial.com/about-sievx.html>



Human Rights Day
10 December

Online event 14 April 2021

Grandmothers for Refugees NSW

Live online with Jason Siwat

This online event is for everyone, please share with family and friends.

Wednesday 14th April 2pm-4pm



Jason is the Director of the Migrants & Refugees Desk, Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG and Solomon Islands. Jason has been working in the refugee and asylum seeker sector since 2014, as a Refugee Status Determination Officer with the government of PNG, then as a consultant caseworker, then as an outreach officer with Caritas PNG, before being given his current role this year. Jason is passionate about his role and doing his best to help all refugees and asylum seekers.

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: Apr 14, 2021 02:00 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

Register in advance for this meeting:

<http://bit.ly/2PI00bA>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Combined
Refugee
Action Group



Our friends at CRAG (Geelong) are alerting refugee friends and supporters to the urgent situation affecting Sri Lankan Tamil refugees, many of whom live in their local community.

Peter Coghlan writes: We are increasingly concerned about the disproportionate number of Sri Lankan Tamils having their visa applications rejected or delayed. CRAG has formed a Sri Lankan Task Group to research & take action on this matter as there are many Sri Lankan Tamil young people and families who are refugees or asylum seekers living in the Geelong region. Some are now awaiting deportation arranged by Home Affairs due to the rejection of their Visa applications and unsuccessful appeals to Courts.

As we continue to oppose the efforts to have our Sri Lankan Tamil friends sent back - as you would be aware, many will face great risk upon returning - we are also **taking every opportunity to inform politicians, organisations and the general public about the discrimination against Tamils by our federal government, and the deteriorating political situation in Sri Lanka**, since the Rajapaksa brothers (and other family members) gained power.

We have researched and compiled a comprehensive 'Sri Lanka Country Information Report', and a summarised 'Briefing Paper' in order to inform as many people as possible, particularly those who may have some influence on our government.



Sri Lanka Briefing Note MARCH 2021 P/No. 2 (MARCH 2021)



Sri Lanka REPORT

Getting to know you

Members are encouraged to learn about upcoming local events and to connect with others in your electorate. If you get in touch with the Executive at info@grandmothersforrefugees.org we will give you the contact details for your Federal Electorate G4R Coordinator.

Our website is the best way to stay updated on breaking news, events, and calls to action. Go to:
www.grandmothersforrefugees.org

Look for us also on social media

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrandmothersforRefugees/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/gmothers_adrc/

Instagram: [Grandmothers4Refugees \(@grandmothers4refugees\)](https://www.instagram.com/grandmothers4refugees) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

Supporting G4R activities



G4R does not run fundraising activities. However, **donations are always welcome** and may be made by direct funds transfer to our bank account:

Name: Grandmothers for Refugees
BSB: 083170
Account No: 83 813 3480

Thank you to those who sent us a donation last month, and to those who bought T-shirts and Totes because each purchase before the end of April generates a donation to Grandmothers for Refugees.

You can order tees and totes here <https://dastshirtautomat.com/grandmothers-for-refugees> or from our G4Rwebsite.

Finally...

During March / April, members of the G4R Coordinating Committee and the executive have been working on a 2021-22 election campaign strategy.

Co-ordinators have endorsed key objectives and are now taking these back to electorates for discussion and development of local action plans.

Our Principal Objective:

To reset Australia's refugee policy to provide welcome, protection, and safe settlement and to be fully consistent with the Refugee Convention and Protocols and International Human Rights obligations.

To reach this objective we aim for:

- **Immediate release from detention of all refugees and people seeking asylum.**
- **An end to mandatory detention of people seeking asylum, both onshore and offshore.**
- **Rights to apply for permanent protection and an end to all forms of temporary visas for refugees.**
- **Appropriate support for all refugees, people seeking asylum and their families living in community settings.**
- **Policies which assist refugees to reunite with their families.**

In our attitudes and actions:

- **We value and draw upon the diverse experiences of wise women elders constituting our grassroots movement.**
- **We build on the respect and visible presence achieved by Grandmothers for Refugees organising within federal electorates.**
- **We plan and act for change as we hear the expressed interests of refugees.**

Our main target groups are:

- **Electorate communities and the wider Australian voting public.**
- **MPs, Senators and electoral candidates.**
- **Political influencers including media.**

Our actions will include:

- **Political lobbying** – meetings with MPs, Senators and candidates, making local political connections, active engagement with independents
- **Community awareness raising** – keeping street vigils, being visible, using petitions, handing out flyers, street conversations, showing up and standing up at rallies.
- **Information sharing** – website and social media activity, monitoring sector activities and sharing news.
- **Advocating** – researching and writing submissions, submitting articles, arranging and turning up to face-to-face meetings, asking questions.
- **Networking** – forming alliances and coordinating message themes and action plans with key others in the refugee support network.

CALL TO ACTION: All members are encouraged to get involved in deciding how best your electorate can lobby for the change we all need.

There will be more to share from electorates in future newsletters.

With best wishes,

From the Exec,

Jean, Margaret, Jane, Linda, Gill

Contact us at info@grandmothersforrefugees.org

Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org