



## Special Edition NEWSLETTER August 2020

### Breaking News >>> Baby Isabella and her mum, Huyen, are freed from detention.

Late on Wednesday afternoon (26/8/20), we received this message from our dear friend and refugee advocate Pamela Curr:



*Something wonderful happened today- Huyen and little Isabella released from Mita today on Bridging Visa- don't know how or why- unexpected as are most detention decisions but **this little family of three went home together today**. Isabella Born in detention is free after two and half years.*

*Pamela*

*Image from SBS online*



We rejoice with everyone – not least our own Grandmothers and FROGs – who has advocated, written letters, pleaded for compassion and agitated for this little girl who has been held in detention since her birth in March 2018. Many of us joined a Winter 2019 rally outside the MITA gates.

We then read stories to symbolically empty chairs – highlighting the very real separation of detained children from their families and nurturing communities. With the release of Isabella, it now means Kopika and Tharunicaa are the only children remaining in detention in Australia.

*In learning the news Priya states: "I'm so happy to hear that Isabella, Huyen and Paul can live together as a family. They have had a very difficult time in detention, every day is hard in detention. But today is a good day for them. I am waiting in hope that the government will make a similar decision for my family, so we can rejoin our community in Biloela."* © Scoop Media

### Call to action: Write to Alan Tudge MP c/- Parliament House, Canberra 2600

- ✓ Thank him for signing off on the release of Isabelle and Huyen.
- ✓ Ask him to now use his power to do the same for the Biloela family.
- ✓ Ask for a commitment to never again lock up refugee children or their families.

Visit our website today [www.grandmothersforrefugees.org](http://www.grandmothersforrefugees.org)



## Who will represent you on the new Coordinating Committee?

**Grandmothers for Refugees has decided to make a change that will give members more input to the way Grandmothers for Refugees works.**

### What's changing, and why?

The August 2020 meeting of the Planning Committee resolved to expand the group to allow for wider representation. We believe this would be best done by representation based on federal electorates.

This change is in response to feedback to an earlier proposal that we cluster neighbouring electorates to increase our impact and improve representation. Quite frankly, the clustering option didn't turn out to be practical as a basis for representation. So, the simpler way to go is to enable every electorate to join a more representative Coordinating Committee.

Meeting by Zoom rather than travelling to a central location makes this possible. It's a good outcome from the coronavirus that has forced us to think differently – and learn new IT skills!

In summary:

- Commencing September 2020, the **Coordinating Committee (CC)** will be the key meeting space within which Grandmothers for Refugees share information, deliberate, co-ordinate actions and guide and support the Executive.
- **Membership of the Coordinating Committee** is open to every electorate, plus the Executive.

This carries an expectation that members of the Coordinating Committee will bring in knowledge, ideas and reports on local activities, and take back information and calls to action to be shared with local members.

**We want more voices, more ideas, more energy.**

### How this will work in practical terms.

We understand that, in some areas, our movement is not strong in numbers and not all members meeting regularly. That should not put anyone off from joining this effort to increase our impact – even one active member in an electorate can be an important local influence.

### **The role of CC members:**

- To bring** issues and actions raised in their electorate to the Coordinating Committee
- To participate** in discussion about issues and actions that will inform the decision making of Grandmothers for Refugees
- To feed back** to their electorate the discussion and any decisions/requests made at the Coordinating Committee
- To volunteer** as appropriate and convenient to participate in occasional specific interest groups.

**Coordinating Committee meetings will be held online**, currently on the third Tuesday of the month (via Zoom) - to maximise participation and remove the requirement to travel which has, in the past, been an impediment to non-metropolitan inclusion.

### What we need local members to do is **nominate your representative for the Coordinating Committee.**

- **Your CC representative does not need to be the Electorate Coordinator.**
- **If there is more than one nomination from any electorate, we will put you in touch with one another and ask you to meet**, and then advise the Executive as to who your electorate representative will be.
- Please **nominate your representative by 15 September** by emailing [info@grandmothersforrefugees.org](mailto:info@grandmothersforrefugees.org) .



I invite you  
to my

## Calling Party

on Tuesday  
1 September



Love  
I'm looking at you  
From the window  
I wanna tell you  
I love you  
How beautiful you are  
And you're always in my head  
Sending my gratitude  
And love to you  
I believe there are  
Many cars for us  
I feel I'm lucky  
To have you in my life  
I've been through many difficulties  
I've seen unimaginable things  
But that suffering  
Provided me the opportunity  
To meet some wonderful caring people  
Who saved my life  
And helped me to be alive  
I wanna say thank you  
For all your favor and goodness

Moz

Join the [#ShameAlanTudge](#) Calling party on [Tuesday 1 September](#).  
Go to [Facebook](#) to register – or just turn up! You don't have to stay long.  
Just enough time to Call (02) 6277 7790

### Why party? Why now?

A legislative amendment about to go to the Senate would give Border Force and security guards the right to confiscate refugees' mobile phones.

Moz has been in detention in PNG for 7 years and in the Mantra Hotel since November 2019. He says: "My phone is my lifeline." Refugees need their phones to stay in touch with their lawyers – access to legal advice is a right. Their phones are the means to stay connected to their family and friends here and their families back home. Having a mobile phone is a safeguard against deterioration in mental health.

Minister Tudge makes statements claiming that immigration detainees – including refugees – use their phones for illegal purposes. Police and courts can deal with those sorts of things. It does not require a blanket ban power wielded by immigration security guards.

These are the views Mr Tudge needs to hear. He will hear it more loudly and clearly, the more of us who join the Calling Party of 1<sup>st</sup> September. **CALL TO ACTION>>> Make the Call.**



### We are now on Instagram.

I expect many of you use Instagram to stay in touch with family and see all those wonderful pics of the grandchildren. Look for

[Grandmothers4Refugees](#) and sign in to stay connected.

### @HomeSafeWithUs

Thanks to those who have offered to **home host a refugee** – our viable alternative to indefinite immigration detention.

If you can offer a welcome and a room, please email us to register your interest:

[info@grandmothersforrefugees.org](mailto:info@grandmothersforrefugees.org)

New email address? New phone number? Want to unsubscribe? Notify us on  
[info@grandmothersforrefugees.org](mailto:info@grandmothersforrefugees.org)

Visit our website today [www.grandmothersforrefugees.org](http://www.grandmothersforrefugees.org)