

## Children Out of Detention

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### **Australia must not slam the door shut on children**

The Government is trying to change refugee policy to force all asylum seekers arriving by boat out of Australian territory and into detention centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. ChilOut is against this outrageous proposal as it would mean children back in detention again, with no Ministerial discretion to house families in community detention in Australian cities, as is the case today.

ChilOut spokesperson Dianne Hiles said, "if passed, the new legislation would mean all asylum seekers arriving by boat – even on the Tasmanian coast - would be forcibly moved thousands of kilometres to Nauru. What a cruel and ridiculous waste of taxpayers' money."

While they are processed, children and families would again be detained in the offshore detention centres. If found to be refugees, they would be sent to other countries. Meanwhile the Australian Navy would stop any boats from West Papua entering Australian waters and force them back to Indonesia.

"When a child asks for our protection, should we slam the door and send her away? If Parliament lets the Prime Minister get away with this, Australia will be breaking international law, which requires that we allow anyone to seek asylum here who asks. Australia can't pick and choose those we allow to ask for protection," Ms Hiles said.

"Under the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which Australia agreed to abide by in 1990, we have a legal obligation to refrain from depriving children of their liberty.

"ChilOut calls on the Cabinet to recommit Australia to adhere to international law and the human rights treaties to which Australia is a party.

"ChilOut calls on all Government Members and Senators to tell their leader NO to children back in Pacific Solution detention centres," Ms Hiles said.

**CONTACTS: Dianne Hiles, 0425 244 667; Alanna Hector 0417 177 530**

**Charman Nasiri 0413 970 686 (Afghan refugee formerly detained in Nauru) after 5pm.**

**Other ex-detainees' contact details available on request.**

[www.chilout.org](http://www.chilout.org)