

2016 05 05 Refugee Action Collective Media Release

Hundreds to mobilise in Brisbane to #BringThemHere

Two people have now self-immolated in the space of a week in the island detention centre of Nauru. Hundreds of protesters will be flocking to King George Square this Friday night at 5pm to demand freedom for refugees and an end to the cruel policies of offshore processing and mandatory detention. The High Court of Papua New Guinea only last week declared the Australian-funded detention centre on Nauru was illegal.

“These offshore camps have seen detainees violently attacked, sexually abused, tortured and even murdered. These asylum seekers must be brought to Australia immediately for permanent settlement and protection,” stated Tim Arnot of the Refugee Action Collective.

“The self-immolation of Omid and Hodan on Nauru show these camps must be shut down and all those people locked inside brought to Australia for immediate settlement. Hodan was only in Brisbane two weeks ago but was deported to Nauru. These camps must close and all those locked up must be brought to the Australian mainland and given permanent residency.”

This Friday’s rally comes a week after 200 people gathered in the same place demanding these centres be shut down. The Facebook event has over 400 people confirmed to attend and has reached over 4000 people’s Facebook feeds.

Callously, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has blamed refugee advocates, and not himself, his policies or his government, for the self-immolations.

“The fact that more people have been killed in these offshore detention centres than resettled in Australia is an indictment of the whole detention regime. We hold Immigration Minister Peter Dutton and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull personally responsible for the atrocities that have taken place there. Blood is on the government’s hands.”

An overnight poll hosted by ABC indicates over 80% of the 1300 participants support bringing the asylum seekers to Australia for processing. Yet so far the government has maintained denying these people who have already suffered so much from being processed and settled in Australia.

“Without action or pressure, the Australian government will continue to deny these people seeking asylum their legal right to do so, and will continue to destroy their lives. We need as many people out in the streets to demand freedom and justice for all these asylum seekers.”

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