



MEDIA RELEASE  
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### **ALHR condemns Federal Government's Migration Bill**

"The Australian Government's proposed migration changes contradict the Government's own rhetoric of several years ago", says Carla Klease, spokesperson for Australian Lawyers for Human Rights.

"The Federal Government's previous justification of the Pacific Solution was that countries of first asylum, through which refugees first passed, had the responsibility to provide protection.

"By this Bill, the Federal Government seeks to avoid its responsibility to admit refugees from West Papua who seek asylum from Australia first."

"It is critical to the effective operation of the Refugee Convention that countries of first asylum admit refugees from neighbouring countries regardless of the political circumstances between the two countries.

"The Australian Government's policy does nothing to enhance the protection of human rights in the region – it encourages, by example, the manipulation of international conventions designed to protect human rights to suit political purposes.

"The Pacific Solution was an unnecessary and expensive failure which should not be re-introduced.

"Offshore processing denies asylum seekers access to humane conditions, independent legal advice when making their claims for asylum, independent merits review of decisions made by the Department of Immigration and oversight by the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

"Without oversight and accountability that flows from these mechanisms, Australians cannot be certain that asylum seekers' claims will be processed fairly, swiftly and without political interference.

"The Bill is in clear violation of the Refugee Convention in several respects and should be abandoned in entirety."

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