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Issue for January 2024

CRISIS SITUATION for refugees in PNG – bring them to safety IMMEDIATELY

Available to download at –

- <https://aran.net.au/resources/letter-writing/>
- <https://ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au/write-a-letter>



Included in this kit is the information you need to create your own letters or use the proformas

- Guide and Background notes prepared by ARAN's Letter Writing Network.
- Postal Addresses for MPs and Senators
- Email addresses for MPs and Senators
- A proforma letter that you can copy (and personalise) to send by post or email.
- A suggestion for a Letter to the Editor

Personalised letters are best –

- You might like to use the **AIDA** principle
 - **A - Attention** - grab the recipient's attention. Say something positive about the reader that is directed towards the focus of your letter. Stimulate the recipient's curiosity
 - **I - Interest & Information**- encourage the recipient to read on.
 - **D - Desire** - Getting the reader to want to do what you are seeking - in their interest to do so.
 - **A - Action**- inform the reader of the action you want them to take.

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Regards,  
The ARAN Letter Writing Network  
[austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

## **CRISIS SITUATION for refugees in PNG – bring them to safety IMMEDIATELY**

### **Why it is important to write on this issue NOW**

Since our October Letter Kit, things have become much worse. Port Moresby is one of the most dangerous cities in the world. In the riots in mid-January, businesses were destroyed and 16 people were killed. **There are still around 50 refugees and people seeking asylum in Port Moresby who are vulnerable and at risk.**

- On 22 November 2023, the refugees and people seeking asylum in PNG received a letter advising their weekly allowance to buy food and pay for electricity, medications, medical expenses etc was being cut off. Since then these people have been surviving on money raised by concerned Australians.
  - These people are only surviving because people are fundraising in Australia to help provide a bare minimum of support – this cannot continue indefinitely.
  - Several young men are in such serious mental health crisis with paranoia, they are not eating, and not listening to friends or allowing anyone to help them. We fear for their lives.
  - Many of the remaining men have severe medical or physical conditions, or both, preventing them from working and supporting themselves. Free health services are not available.
  - Some of the men have partnered with local women and have children also now at risk of destitution.
  - Media reports in July 2023 revealed rorts and significant corruption associated with Australian funding provided to support offshore arrangements in PNG and Nauru, and the Albanese government committed to setting up a Parliamentary Inquiry, but there has been no progress on this.
  - The Australian Government says that the welfare of the refugees and people seeking asylum is the responsibility of the PNG Government, but **Australia is ultimately responsible for these people. They MUST be brought to safety in Australia immediately.**
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### **Background Information**

Since taking office, the Labor Government has committed to dealing with the complex issue of those seeking Australia's protection by giving expression to the values of compassion, justice, human rights and fairness. The treatment of those still held in PNG is very far from these ideals.

Between 2012 and 2017, Australia detained thousands of refugees and people seeking asylum on Manus Island (PNG) in very poor conditions. The PNG High Court declared their detention unlawful in 2017, and the men were moved to community accommodation and given freedom of movement.

Around 50 men remain in PNG. Some have the possibility of resettlement in a third country (US, Canada or NZ) but this process has taken months, in some cases years, and there is no assurance they will be resettled any time soon.

However, at least 10 of the men have no pathway to permanent resettlement either because they are too ill to complete the application process, or because they have been refused settlement in the US, Canada or NZ.

Since 22 November 2023, the refugees and people seeking asylum have been moved to lower standard accommodation, and the accommodation providers say they have not been paid for over 12 months.

In October the PNG government threatened to deport those remaining PNG to Australia, unless further funding was provided. See Guardian article below.

Manus Lives Matters (Brigidine Sisters) have been co-ordinating donations from concerned Australians and are currently supporting 29 individual men and around 20 men who have married or partnered with local women, and around 33 children – all of these people are in urgent need of support.

Port Moresby is not safe for vulnerable people and especially those identifiable as foreigners. There have been regular accounts of violence and fear tactics used against the (ex-Manus) men. Many have been assaulted and robbed

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### **Sources**

Time Magazine: **State of Emergency Declared** in Papua New Guinea After Rioting and Looting Kills 16: <https://time.com/6554231/papua-new-guinea-riots-police-pay-protests/>

The Age and SMH: **Refugees in PNG face eviction**: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/refugees-in-png-face-eviction-as-australian-taxpayers-dollars-dry-up-20230927-p5e85k.html>

Guardian Australia: **PNG threatens to send refugees back to Australia**: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/oct/07/png-threatens-to-send-refugees-back-to-australia-unless-it-pays-up-to-48m-in-expenses>

Guardian Australia: **Refugees in PNG told they will be evicted** next week after Australian-sponsored housing bills not paid:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/17/refugees-in-png-told-they-will-be-evicted-next-week-after-australian-sponsored-housing-bills-not-paid>

RCOA: Refugee Council renews **calls for a royal commission into offshore detention contracts**: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/royal-commission-offshore-detention-contracts/>

RCOA: **Pain continues in PNG 10 years on**: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/pain-continues-in-png-ten-years-on/>

Australian Travel Advice: <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/destinations/pacific/papua-new-guinea>

ARAN - **Refugees Off PNG campaign** <https://aran.net.au/campaigns/offshore-detention/#offPNGNauru>

**Refugees still stranded in PNG** - Jason Siwat, Catholic Bishops Conference, PNG - YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ymp3SHQn97U>

## Who to write to:

We suggest you write to

- Minister for Home Affairs, **Clare O’Neil**
- Minister for Immigration, **Andrew Giles**
- Minister for Foreign Affairs, **Senator Penny Wong**.

*Plus your local member if Labor/Greens/Progressive Independent – if Coalition – then Labor Senators in your state)*

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## Addresses for your letters:

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### Canberra Postal Address for all **Senators**

PO Box 6100  
Senate,  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Canberra Postal Address for all **MPs**

PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

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Find **electorate** postal and email addresses for your local Labor MP here:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/senators\\_and\\_members/members](https://www.aph.gov.au/senators_and_members/members)

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### EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR ALL SENATORS - UPDATED JUNE 2023

NB - For your convenience - **LABOR PARTY SENATORS ARE LISTED IN RED**

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Email addresses for all **ACT** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au); [Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **NSW** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.ayres@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ayres@aph.gov.au); [senator.bragg@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bragg@aph.gov.au); [senator.cadell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cadell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.davey@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.davey@aph.gov.au); [senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au); [senator.hughes@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hughes@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.kovacic@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.kovacic@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au); [senator.oneill@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.oneill@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.payne@aph.gov.au); ; [senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au); [senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **NT** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au); [senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Queensland** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au); [senator.canavan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.canavan@aph.gov.au); [senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.green@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.green@aph.gov.au); [senator.hanson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.mcgrath@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcgrath@aph.gov.au); [senator.rennick@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rennick@aph.gov.au); [senator.roberts@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.roberts@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.scarr@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.scarr@aph.gov.au); [senator.waters@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.waters@aph.gov.au); [senator.watt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.watt@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **SA** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.antic@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.antic@aph.gov.au); [senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au); [senator.farrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.farrell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au); [senator.grogan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.grogan@aph.gov.au); [senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.liddle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.liddle@aph.gov.au); [senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au); [senator.pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pocock@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.ruston@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ruston@aph.gov.au); [senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.wong@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.wong@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Tasmania** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.askew@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.askew@aph.gov.au); [senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au); [senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.chandler@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chandler@aph.gov.au); [senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au); [senator.duniam@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.duniam@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.lambie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lambie@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckim@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckim@aph.gov.au); [senator.polley@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.polley@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.tyrrrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.tyrrrell@aph.gov.au); [senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au); [senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au)

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[senator.babet@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.babet@aph.gov.au); [senator.ciccone@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ciccone@aph.gov.au); [senator.henderson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.henderson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.hume@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hume@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au); [senator.paterson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.paterson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.rice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rice@aph.gov.au); [senator.stewart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.stewart@aph.gov.au); [senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.van@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.van@aph.gov.au); [senator.walsh@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.walsh@aph.gov.au); [senator.white@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.white@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **WA** senators - ready to copy and paste into “TO” section of your email:

[senator.brockman@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.brockman@aph.gov.au); [senator.cash@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cash@aph.gov.au); [senator.cox@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cox@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.dodson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.dodson@aph.gov.au); [senator.lines@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lines@aph.gov.au); [senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au);  
[Senator.Payman@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.Payman@aph.gov.au); [senator.pratt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pratt@aph.gov.au); [senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au); [senator.sterle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sterle@aph.gov.au)

NOTE: If you are sending an email be sure to **include** your **NAME** and **ADDRESS**

The Subject line could be - **CALL TO ACTION – CRISIS SITUATION for refugees in PNG – bring them to safety IMMEDIATELY**

**DRAFT SAMPLE LETTER** *We suggest you write to Ministers O’Neil, Giles, Wong – plus your local member if Labor/Greens/Progressive Independent – if Coalition – then Labor Senators in your state)*

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Dear . . . . .

The Australian Government urgently needs to work with the PNG Government to find permanent safely for ALL the individuals still in PNG. It is now more than 10 years since they were first held in detention on Manus Island under Australia’s off-shore processing system. They were released from detention in 2017 only after PNG’s High Court deemed their detention unlawful.

Australia’s treatment of these men has been shameful – in opposition Labor supported the Medevac legislation to bring those who needed medical treatment to be brought here. Labor has now been in power for nearly two years but those men are still there.

What is to become of those (identified by UNHCR) who are now so wretched that they cannot participate in any resettlement processes. How can they ‘pursue third country migration outcomes’? Reports are coming in that many of these men are suffering a severe medical/physical health crisis. We fear for their lives.

The plight of all the refugees and asylum seekers in Port Moresby is dire. Their situation was already perilous before the recent unrest in Port Moresby. Mainstream news has reported that financial support has been withdrawn for these 50 men abandoned by Australia. Accommodation providers in Port Moresby claim they have not been paid in over 12 months. This has resulted in services being cut, as well as food and medical care. They face eviction, homelessness and destitution. It is now only the donations of concerned Australians keeping these men alive.

Recent correspondence from the Department of Home Affairs states: *The former Government ended Australia’s regional processing association with PNG on 31 December 2021. The PNG Government independently manages individuals remaining in PNG on a permanent or temporary pathway, including providing ongoing settlement support and services and assistance to pursue third country migration outcomes.*

It is not good enough for the Australian government to look the other way. It may be years before resettlement options are available for some of these men. A number have no options for resettlement – anywhere. The welfare of all of these men is indisputably Australia’s responsibility. Australia set up all the conditions which brought them to this pitiful state.

**Those who wish to come to Australia must be brought here without any further delay, for urgent medical treatment, and to stay until safe resettlement options are found for them**

Australia’s offshore detention policy has been widely condemned internationally, so it is depressing to hear that people seeking asylum are again being held on Nauru. What are the plans for their safe resettlement? We notice the veil of secrecy - nothing is being reported in any media, mainstream or otherwise – a sure sign this is another chapter in Australia’s shameful treatment of people seeking our protection.

Since the election of the Albanese Government, Australia has made great gains in terms of foreign policy and standing for human rights. **I urge you to find a humane response to ensure the safety and welfare of those still held in PNG, and now also on Nauru.**

Yours sincerely

*Your Name*

*Your Address*

**DRAFT LETTER TO EDITOR - Please note – you need to use this as inspiration !**

**If newspapers receive the same letter from several people they will **not** publish any... so do make it your own.**

**Ideally 150-200 words only.**

**Also include:**

- Your complete address
- Date
- Subject line: e.g. Australia has abandoned the people it sent to PNG over ten years ago.

What is happening in PNG is an outrage. Around 50 people (almost all now recognized as refugees) who sought asylum in Australia over ten years ago, are living in poverty and fear. Even before the recent riots, Port Moresby was known to be an unsafe city with high levels of violence especially towards foreigners. How terrifying for these men already facing eviction and homelessness.

Australia handed over responsibility for the welfare of these people to the PNG Government in 2021, together with an undisclosed payment. However, service providers in Port Moresby state that they have not been paid in over 12 months. We know that rorts and mismanagement are rife in PNG. On 22 November 2023, the refugees were told their weekly allowance to buy food and pay for electricity, medications, and medical expenses was being cut off. Since then, they have survived on money raised by concerned Australian individuals.

Some of the refugees are managing to seek and pursue third country migration to New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The process is agonizingly slow, a drip feed of hope which can take years. About 12 of the 59 still there have been deemed by the UNHCR to be too ill to pursue any form of the resettlement process. At least three young men are in a mental health crisis with severe paranoia; they are already skeletally thin and are unwilling to accept food and basic care because of their mistrust after a decade of hopelessness. Their lives are at risk.

Australian policies have reduced them to a pitiful state. They ARE still Australia's responsibility. They must be brought here for urgent medical treatment.

Australia claims to have handed over all responsibility for the welfare of these people to the PNG Government in December 2021. Australian policies have reduced them to this pitiful state. They ARE still Australia's responsibility and those who are desperately ill must be brought here for immediate treatment. Their lives are at serious risk.