

Refugee Action Coalition
MEDIA RELEASE

PNG SUPREME COURT CHALLENGE TO MANUS ISLAND DETENTION CENTRE

This morning (Wednesday 18 March), 9.30am, the Supreme Court, Port Moresby, will hold its first directions hearing in a new challenge to the Manus Island detention centre.

The action will seek enforcement of constitutional rights under s57 of the PNG constitution; challenging the constitutionality of the detention centre.

It also raises issues of the breach of asylum seekers' human rights in detention – seeking redress for their inhumane treatment, torture and the denial of liberty.

“Asylum seekers on Manus Island have been systemically denied due process of law and been denied the protection of their rights under PNG law,” said Ian Rintoul, for the Refugee Action Coalition.

The action alleges that the conditions in the detention centre are sub-standard and inhuman.

The legal action is seeking the release of all asylum seekers in Manus detention and ultimately the closure of the detention centre.

The lawyer for 25 asylum seekers detained on Manus Island, Ben Lomai, will seek orders from the Supreme Court to gain access to the detention centre to take full statements from asylum seekers incarcerated there.

Initial instructions from the asylum seekers to Lomai layers take the Supreme Court action against the PNG government was obtained when 58 asylum seekers were held in Lorengau prison during the January mass hunger strike.

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713 or in PNG , Ben Lomai + 675 7154 1004.