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Manus Refugees Cannot Be Resettled In PNG

Peter Dutton is desperately trying to avoid the implications of the PNG Supreme Court ruling in April that the agreement between Australia and PNG was unlawful.

No amount of huffing and puffing or repeating the tired phrase that ‘no refugee from Manus will be resettled in Australia’ can alter the fact the asylum seekers were taken to Manus unlawfully.

“Peter Dutton is shamefully trying to avoid the decisions of the PNG Supreme Court. He has to face up to the fact that Australia has responsibility for those people that Australia illegally transferred to Manus Island,” said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

“The PNG Supreme Court hearing on Monday 22 August will determine the future of those who have been held unlawfully and systematically denied their human rights.

“Peter Dutton and Peter O’Neill will be required to accept the court’s rulings. People who were illegally taken to Manus Island cannot be forced to stay in PNG against their will.

“Lawyers acting for the asylum seekers and refugees on Manus will seek orders for the immediate, and unconditional release of all those on Manus, and for those who wish to go, to be returned to Australia.

“There is no durable or secure settlement arrangement in PNG. It is a joke that Dutton keep referring to resettlement in PNG. He should stop providing gratuitous advice to the Australian media and start to implement the PNG Supreme Court decision. It is increasingly obvious that Dutton has no grasp of the real situation that confronts the Australian government.

“People have been brutalised on Manus for over three years, and have been waiting since April when the court ordered that they be freed.

“For those who do not wish to go to Australia – some people have families in other countries - PNG and Australia will need to secure safe, acceptable third countries and provide travel documents in order for them to travel to that third country.

“Peter Dutton also needs to act immediately to release all the Manus asylum seekers and refugees being held in Australia.

“About Nauru, Peter Dutton also knows that the government’s own Moss review established the truthfulness of the incident reports that were reviewed in 2015. It is the Minister who can no longer be taken seriously.”

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