

2016 08 26 Refugee Action Coalition Media Release

**Close the Camps: Refugee Supporters to Take to Streets This Weekend Around the Country And Around the World**

National and international refugee-rights demonstrations will be held around the country and internationally this weekend. In the wake of the revelations of shocking abuse on Nauru, and the PNG government's decision to close the camp on Manus Island, the rallies will demand that all asylum seekers and refugees be brought to Australia from Nauru and PNG, and that all detention camps be closed.

The Sydney demonstration on Saturday 27 August, starts at 1pm outside the Sydney Town Hall, and will march via the Papua New Guinea Consulate to Circular Quay.

It will be addressed by a range of speakers including Nicole Judge, former Manus worker and whistleblower, Habiba Roshan, a Hazara refugee, Mark Morey, Secretary of Unions NSW, Ian Rintoul (Refugee Action Coalition) and Fr Rod Bower, the progressive Anglican priest whose church was recently the subject of an Islamophobic incursion by right-wing extremists.

In an unprecedented move, refugees on Nauru and Manus Island have directly appealed to Australians to demonstrate for their freedom, in video messages circulated by the Refugee Action Coalition Sydney. One video, containing appeals from both islands, has been viewed at least 30 000 times on social media (link below).

"It is a source of strength to us to know that there are people in Australia fighting for our freedom", one refugee on Nauru says in the video. Behrouz Boochani, the Kurdish journalist and writer on Manus said "We in Manus prison... are asking from you the Australian people to put pressure on the government at this important moment."

"With the PNG government announcing the closure of Manus, Peter Dutton is out of options. The government's policy is in tatters and more and more sections of the community are now in open opposition to offshore detention," said Ian Rintoul, Refugee Action Coalition Sydney spokesperson.

"There simply is no other choice than to bring refugees on Manus and Nauru to Australia. We are appealing to people to come out in force to demand an end to the horror in the detention camps."

Demonstrations will also take place in all national capitals, as well as at the Australian embassies in Tokyo and London (see list below).

More information: Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713; Nick Riemer 0481 339 937

**Speakers**

Nicole Judge (former Nauru and Manus worker and whistle blower)

Father Rod Bower (Gosford Anglican Church)

Ken Canning (*Aboriginal* activist)

Habiba Roshan (Hazara refugee)

Mark Morey (Secretary, Unions NSW)

Ian Rintoul (RAC, at PNG Consulate)

MC: Mark Goudkamp (RAC)

### **Details of other rallies**

Sydney: <https://www.facebook.com/events/266932076997739/?ti=cl>

Melbourne: <https://www.facebook.com/events/521484394717053/?ti=cl>

Brisbane: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1813808322182387/?ti=cl>

Perth: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1735011373427628/?ti=cl>

Newcastle: <https://www.facebook.com/events/276908372691641/>

Darwin (28th due to NT election)

Adelaide: <https://facebook.com/events/172811779808524/>

Hobart: <https://facebook.com/events/330312370643234/>

London (26th): <https://www.facebook.com/events/814326572002602/?ti=cl>

Tokyo: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1574975659473330/?ti=cl>

### **Video appeal**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SESlqxRquYs>

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