



Refugee Council  
of Australia

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **REFUGEE COUNCIL CONDEMNS HANSON'S COWARDLY ATTACK ON AFRICAN AUSTRALIANS**

The Refugee Council of Australia has condemned the attack by former politician Pauline Hanson on new arrivals to Australia from Africa.

In a media interview yesterday aimed at launching her third attempt at a political comeback, Ms Hanson said Africans were bringing diseases to Australia and were of no benefit to the country.

Chief executive officer of the Refugee Council of Australia, Paul Power, said Ms Hanson's comments were cowardly and baseless.

"Ms Hanson has clearly made no attempt to check the facts before rushing off to gain publicity for herself," Mr Power said.

"New arrivals are subject to health screening before departure to Australia and, in many cases, are given further health checks immediately on arrival here. There is no basis to Ms Hanson's claims that Australia is at risk of disease outbreaks.

"It is very sad that Ms Hanson chooses to vilify entire groups of people for her own political ends.

"Her suggestion that African Australians are of no benefit to Australia is contemptible. Clearly, Ms Hanson is entirely ignorant of the many African-born people who are making a very positive contribution to Australia as hard-working employees, in small business, in education and in community life.

"While Australia allows Ms Hanson free speech, she must understand that this freedom comes with significant responsibilities. It is an appalling abuse of this privilege to attack groups within Australian society with ill-informed comments which threaten community harmony and cause great distress to those who are unjustly vilified.

"The Refugee Council calls on all Australian political parties to join it in condemning Ms Hanson's comments."