



Refugee Council
of Australia

8 February 2008

REFUGEE COUNCIL WELCOMES CLOSURE OF NAURU DETENTION CENTRE

The Refugee Council of Australia today welcomed the effective closure of the federal government's offshore processing centre for asylum-seekers on Nauru.

"Following the resettlement of all refugees from the island detention centre to Australia, the closing of the offshore processing facility represents the next step along the path to what will hopefully be the full dismantling of the Pacific Solution.", Paul Power CEO of the Refugee Council said.

"Not only has this policy of offshore processing and detention cost hundreds of millions of dollars, it has undermined Australia's international obligations and standing as a global leader in refugee protection, and operated most harshly against those asylum-seekers who were among the most vulnerable.

"It is also increasingly clear that the offshore processing elements of the Pacific Solution have not operated as a 'deterrent' for asylum-seekers who have no choice but to escape intractable conflicts and persecution in their home countries.

"The small numbers of refugees on Nauru who have been resettled in Australia, like generations of refugees and humanitarian migrants before them, have become valued members of their local communities, and are making important contributions to Australian society," said Mr Power.

"The Refugee Council will be asking the Immigration Minister, Senator Chris Evans, to continue his important work of establishing a fairer system for the processing of asylum-seekers, through ensuring that they have access to legal assistance, administrative and judicial review, as well as appropriate trauma care and support."

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The Refugee Council of Australia represents
non-government organisations and
individuals working with and for refugees
in Australia and around the world