



Edmund Rice Centre

Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

June 2025 No.127

Dear Friends,

This is the 127th Edition of ERCJCE Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations, refugees and people seeking asylum and environmental justice.

As Edmund Rice people may we always remember and live by Blessed Edmund Rice's three main tenets: **PRESENCE COMPASSION & LIBERATION**

*There is a crack in everything.
That's how the light gets in.
Leonard Cohen*

After nearly 17 years as a volunteer I have decided to finish up my time at The Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education, so this will be my last Edition of Justice Updates.

Thank you to all the people who have supported me both past and present, it has been a privilege to work with you all and you have guided and taught me much.

Previous editions of Justice Updates are available at

<https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>

Peace & Blessings

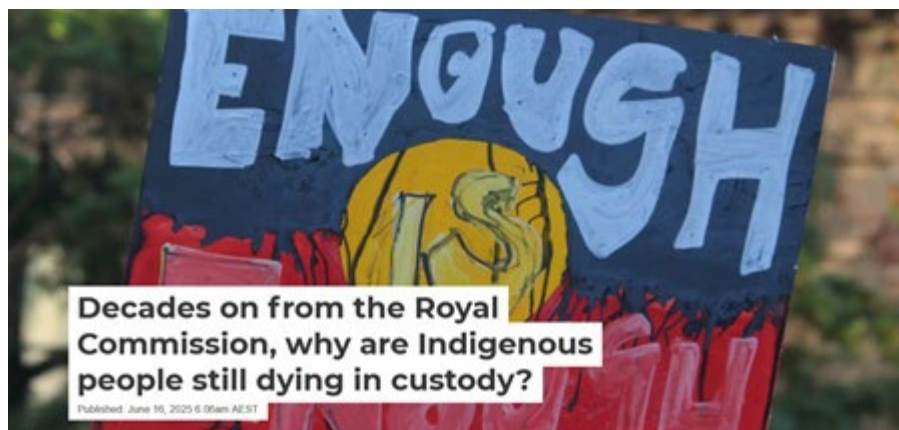
Marita
Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney

Dear friends of the ERC newsletter,
On behalf of the The Global Centre for Social Justice and Advocacy Leadership (formerly the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education) I wanted to thank Marita for the exceptional work she has done for over 127 editions and years of dedicated service to the Centre. The journey however does not stop with edition 127. We hope to continue our engagement with all of you with a new format newsletter which will be coming to you from The Global Centre. We hope to not only continue Marita's good work but also provide more information on the work of the The Global Centre.

Regards and best wishes.

'Alopi Latukefu
Director, The Global Centre for Social Justice and Advocacy Leadership

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that there may be articles in this publication with names and images of deceased people.



Rose Marinelli/Shutterstock

Decades on from the Royal Commission, why are Indigenous people still dying in custody?

Thalia Anthony and Eddie Cubillo, The Conversation, 16 June 2025

The recent deaths in custody of two Indigenous men in the Northern Territory have provoked a deeply confronting question – will it ever end?

About 597 First Nations people have died in custody since the 1991 Royal

Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

This year alone, 12 Indigenous people have died – 31% of total custodial deaths.

The raw numbers are a tragic indictment of government failure to implement in full the Commission's 339 recommendations.

We are potentially further away from resolving this crisis than we were 34 years ago.

Recent deaths

Kumanjayi White was a vulnerable young Warlpiri man with a disability under a guardianship order. He stopped breathing while being restrained by police in an Alice Springs supermarket on May 27. His family is calling for all CCTV and body camera footage to be released.

Days later a 68-year-old Aboriginal Elder from Wadeye was taken to the Palmerston Watchhouse after being detained for apparent intoxication at Darwin airport. He was later transferred to a hospital where he died.

Both were under the care and protection of the state when they died. The royal commission revealed "so many" deaths had occurred in similar circumstances and urged change. It found there was:

little appreciation of, and less dedication to, the duty of care owed by custodial authorities and their officers to persons in care.

Seemingly, care and protection were the last things Kumanjayi White and the Wadeye Elder were afforded by NT police.

.....
Reflecting on the 25-year anniversary of the royal commission in 2016, criminology professor Chris Cunneen wrote that Australia had become much less compassionate and more ready to blame individuals for their alleged failings:

Nowhere is this more clear than in our desire for punishment. A harsh criminal justice system – in particular, more prisons and people behind bars – has apparently become a hallmark of good government.

There are too many First Nations deaths in custody because there are too many First Nations people in custody in the first place.

At the time of the royal commission, 14% of the prison population was First Nations. Today, it's 36%, even though Indigenous people make up just 3.8% of Australia's overall population.

Governments across the country have expanded law and order practices, police forces and prisons in the name of community safety.

This includes a recent \$1.5 billion public order plan to expand policing in the Northern Territory. Such agendas impose a distinct lack of safety on First Nations people, who bear the brunt of such policies. It also instils a message

that social issues can only be addressed by punitive and coercive responses.

The royal commission showed us there is another way: self-determination and stamping out opportunities for racist and violent policing. First Nations families have campaigned for these issues for decades.

How many more Indigenous deaths in custody does there have to be before we listen?

Read full article:

https://theconversation.com/decades-on-from-the-royal-commission-why-are-indigenous-people-still-dying-in-custody-258568?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2016%202025%20-



'Truth telling has never been more important than it is right now,' says Travis Lovett. Photograph:

Yoorrook/AAP Image

Walk for truth: hundreds of people join 486km trek from Portland to Melbourne for reconciliation

Sarah Collard, The Guardian, 18 June 2025

Yoorrook Justice commissioner walked from the site of first settlement in Victoria to state parliament to promote truth-telling about Australian history

Travis Lovett began his 486km journey with a single step and a long-held hope to bring the people of Victoria with him on a journey through the state's colonial past.

It's a traumatic past that Lovett has been peering into for the past three years through his work as a commissioner and co-chair on the Yoorrook Justice

Commission, the county's first formal, Indigenous-led truth-telling process.

"Truth telling has never been more important than it is right now, with the commission coming to an end," Lovett says. "That's what I've emphasised on this walk."

As he talks about his journey on Tuesday, the Kerrupmara Gunditjmara man is walking through Footscray on the second-last day of the Yoorrook commission's walk for truth. The walk will arrive at state parliament on Wednesday.

The public inquiry has heard from thousands of Australians through hundreds of public submissions and hearings investigating the injustices and inequities experienced by Aboriginal Victorians.

Lovett began walking on 25 May in Gunditjmara country in the coastal town of Portland – the first contact for Victorian settlement in the 1820s – through Warrnambool, Colac and Geelong and on towards Melbourne.

"What I'm most proud of about this walk is walking alongside our people ... [guiding] where we went and which areas of historical and cultural significance that they've wanted to highlight and share with all of society," he said.

.....
Reconciliation Victoria co-chair, Andrew Gunstone, says the sections of the walk where members of the public were able to join have helped people come together and allowed healing to begin.

"There's not a lot of knowledge about the impact of Portland on the history of Victoria but there were several hundred people [that] turned up that first day," Gunstone says.

"There's been a lot of excitement, a lot of community and it was really interesting to hear lots of people's different ideas about why they're walking for truth and why they're walking for reconciliation."

Read full article:

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/jun/18/walk-for-truth-hundreds-of-people-join-486km-trek-from-portland-to-melbourne-for-reconciliation?utm_term=6851d553d87ae7706e0771a7fcb56e9a&utm_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau_email



Displaced Palestinians, including children, crowd to receive hot meals distributed by charities in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, on May 6, 2025.

(Photo: Abed Rahim Khatib/Anadolu via Getty Images)

When the Starved Become the Starvers: A Jewish Voice on Gaza **John Kiss, Common Dreams, 11 June 2025**

The images from Gaza haunt me not despite my Jewish identity, but because of it—because I recognize in Palestinian faces the same hollow desperation my grandparents described in the faces of their neighbors.

The photographs are unbearable. Hollow-eyed children staring into cameras, their faces etched with a hunger that reaches beyond the physical. Families huddled in makeshift shelters, their possessions reduced to what they could carry. These images from Gaza pierce through my screen and lodge themselves in a place where other images have lived for decades—the

inherited memories of my grandparents' stories, passed down like sacred wounds.

All four of my grandparents fled the Nazi machinery of death. They carried with them fragments of lives destroyed: a photograph here, a recipe there, stories that began with abundance and ended with ash. They spoke of hunger as a weapon, of siege as strategy, of how systematically cutting off food, medicine, and hope could break a people's spirit before breaking their bodies.

I grew up believing that "Never Again" meant exactly that—never again would any people, anywhere, face the deliberate infliction of starvation and suffering. I believed that we, as Jews, would be the first to recognize the early warning signs, the first to cry out when others faced the machinery of dehumanization.

Today, I am ashamed.

"Never Again" loses all meaning if it only applies to Jewish suffering.

Not ashamed to be Jewish—that identity remains precious to me, woven as it is with traditions of justice, compassion, and repair of the world. But ashamed that a state claiming to represent Jewish values has chosen hunger as a weapon of war. Ashamed that siege has become a strategy. Ashamed that the descendants of those who cried out, "Let my people go" have become deaf to similar cries in Arabic.

This is not what my grandparents envisioned when they dreamed of a Jewish homeland. They dreamed of safety, yes, but not safety built on others' suffering. They dreamed of dignity, but not dignity that required stripping it from their neighbors. They imagined a place where Jewish children could grow up free from fear, but they never imagined that freedom would come at the cost of Palestinian children growing up with empty stomachs.

.....
The images from Gaza haunt me not despite my Jewish identity, but because of it. They haunt me because I recognize in Palestinian faces the same hollow desperation my grandparents described in the faces of their neighbors. They haunt me because I see in Israeli policies the same cold calculation that once sought to break Jewish spirits through systematic deprivation.

This is not Jewish. This is not what our ancestors dreamed when they prayed, "Next year in Jerusalem." This is not what it means to be a people chosen for the hard work of justice.

We can do better. We must do better. The children of Gaza deserve better. The memory of those who perished in the Holocaust demands better. The future of Judaism itself depends on better.

The photographs will keep coming. The question is whether we will keep our eyes open long enough to see ourselves reflected in them, and whether we will have the courage to look away from the mirror and toward the work of repair.

Read full article:

https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/jewish-voice-for-gaza?xrs=RebelMouse_fb&ts=1749656940&fbclid=IwY2xjawK4bS5leHRuA2FlbQlxMQBicmlkETFGZFFobVhwTlpBdTdDT093AR6oA4OV-VguGZsLYKG1mUzceN-grNMQDyaRY_zYfCd8-L5HDSTOFaeb9xzvtg_aem_OSXRkt8JAg4pqN21lIS8Uw



Palestinians carry sacks and boxes of food and humanitarian aid in northern Gaza this week. Credit: AP

As bombs rain down on Israel and Iran, Gaza's carnage continues **Tom Housden, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 June 2025**

With all eyes on Iran and fears rising of a wider Middle East war, Israel's bloody campaign in Gaza drags on.

Even as Israel carried out another wave of strikes on Iran on Tuesday, dozens of Palestinians were killed while trying to get aid, with witnesses reporting that Israeli tanks fired shells near a crowd gathered along a route used by aid trucks.

It was the deadliest in a string of incidents to have taken place over the past month near aid distribution centres, as Israel looks to sideline the United Nations as the key aid provider in Gaza. Health officials in Gaza say almost 400 Palestinians have now been killed near humanitarian centres since aid deliveries resumed in late May.

The latest incident took place near a World Food Program site in Khan Younis, but many of the deaths have occurred near centres operated by the controversial US and Israel-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. The UN has labelled their aid hubs "militarised distribution points".

Israeli gunfire and strikes killed at least 140 people across Gaza in the past

24 hours, local health officials said on Wednesday, as some Palestinians said their plight had been forgotten as attention shifted to Israel's campaign against Iran.

"People are being slaughtered in Gaza, day and night, but attention has shifted to the Iran-Israel war. There is little news about Gaza these days," said Adel, a resident of Gaza City.

"Whoever doesn't die from Israeli bombs dies from hunger. People risk their lives every day to get food, and they also get killed and their blood smears the sacks of flour they thought they had won," he told Reuters via a chat app.

"We are maybe happy to see Israel suffer from Iranian rockets, but at the end of the day, one more day in this war costs the lives of tens of innocent people," said 47-year-old Shaban Abed, a father of five from northern Gaza.

Medical staff said separate airstrikes on Wednesday on homes in the Maghazi refugee camp, the Zeitun neighbourhood and Gaza City killed at least 21 people, while five others were killed in an airstrike on an encampment in Khan Younis in southern Gaza.

In the Khan Younis incident on Tuesday, medics said at least 59 people were killed by Israeli tank fire near a World Food Program site, in one of the deadliest single events since hostilities resumed after the March truce.

The Israeli military said it was investigating the incident and regretted "any harm to uninvolved individuals".

.....
As Israel and Iran continue to trade fire, on Wednesday, Amnesty International accused both sides of "time and again" demonstrating "utter disregard for international human rights" and "committing grave international crimes with impunity".

"The world must not allow Israel to use this military escalation to divert attention away from its ongoing genocide against Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip", Amnesty secretary-general Agnès Callamard said.

Read full article:

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/middle-east/as-the-world-watches-israel-bomb-iran-gaza-s-carnage-continues-20250619-p5m8qt.html>



A naval force to escort humanitarian aid is an act of peace

Stuart Rees, *Pearls and Irritations*, 13 June 2025

In honour of a brave Gazan fisherwoman Madleen Kulab, the international aid boat of the same name was turned back to an Israeli port.

Naval ships from at least one Western government could have escorted that boat to the shores of Gaza, but they only watched, twiddling their thumbs in port, perhaps muttering something about respect for Israel's national sovereignty.

There is a different way of thinking and behaving. In the immediate future, the ships from several navies could be escorting flotillas bringing aid to Gaza. It should not be difficult to justify that intervention, to prevent genocide, to save lives, to relieve massive human suffering. The world's peoples cry out for such intervention. Why doesn't it happen?

Explaining the watch and wait passivity

For more than 70 years, under US influence, Western governments have treated Israel as exceptional, above the law, never to be held accountable, allowed to act with impunity. In the same breath, such governments mouth support for international law and for human rights, each claim bolstered by the so-called principle of respect for national sovereignty. That "respect" means intervention in another country's affairs could only happen as a last resort, even if today that might mean there would be no one left in Sudan or Gaza to be starved to death or bombed into oblivion.

Respect for international law is mouthed even as the US vetoes another UN Security Council attempt to enforce a ceasefire in Gaza, even as governments say that Israeli-imposed famine and slaughter is unacceptable. Such wringing of hands, a sort of feigned morality, is expressed in Orwellian terms: genocide is awful, but to stop it is intervention, hence governments are able to

simultaneously appear principled and unprincipled.

This wait-and-watch passivity towards the mounting death tolls in Gaza has been fed by politicians' cowardice when crafting policies. Not wishing to offend Zionist lobbies, let alone the US Government's and corporations' fondness for arms supplies to Israel, Western government leaders would need to find courage to offend bullies who are also murderers.

.....

Proposals to have a naval force escort any future humanitarian aid boats to the shores of Gaza will have to be bolstered by the sort of courage which motivated the crew and passengers of the Madleen, and will no doubt have to face the wrath of Israel and the US. But the violent, racist, colonialist — let's not mince words — ways of thinking of those governments have to be challenged, better still replaced, by a way of thinking which meets the goals of the UN Charter, a humanitarian challenge, not a legal one.

Of all the options open to peoples, a naval escort for boats carrying humanitarian aid to a beleaguered starving people would represent not an act of war, but a long overdue, life-saving intervention.

Can you hear the world's' peoples — not the governments — cheering such an initiative, applauding a way of thinking about policy to save lives?

Such intervention should have far more effect than placing sanctions on two religious zealots, those two political thugs in the Israeli Government.

Read full article:

<https://johnmenadue.com/post/2025/06/a-naval-force-to-escort-humanitarian-aid-is-an-act-of-peace/>



Bishops' social justice commission calls for peace

3 June 2025

A Statement from the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service:

In the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are reminded we belong to one human family which is best nurtured by a world free of war and focused on peace building.

As Pope Leo XIV reminded us, the first words spoken by the risen Christ

were: “Peace be with you all.”

The peace of Christ, as the Holy Father stated, is “a peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally”.

We join with the Holy Father in expressing our concern about the “worrying and painful” situation in Gaza.

We support his appeal to “allow the entry of dignified humanitarian aid and to put an end to the hostilities, whose heartbreaking price is paid by the children, elderly, and the sick”, as well as the safe return of hostages.

We encourage all people of good will to study the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s 2024 Social Justice Statement [“Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World”](#).

In that statement, the bishops of Australia sought to offer a Gospel word to all who are committed to speaking the truth and working for peace and unity in a world scarred by violence, especially in Ukraine, the Middle East, Sudan and Myanmar.

The statement concluded “(it is) all the more urgent that all who believe in Jesus Christ work together with everyone of good will, all who love the truth, to show the world that there is a realistic way to peace, a genuine peace built upon speaking truth and building trust”.

We suggest three positive steps in building an ‘architecture of peace’: genuine dialogue, truth-telling and education.

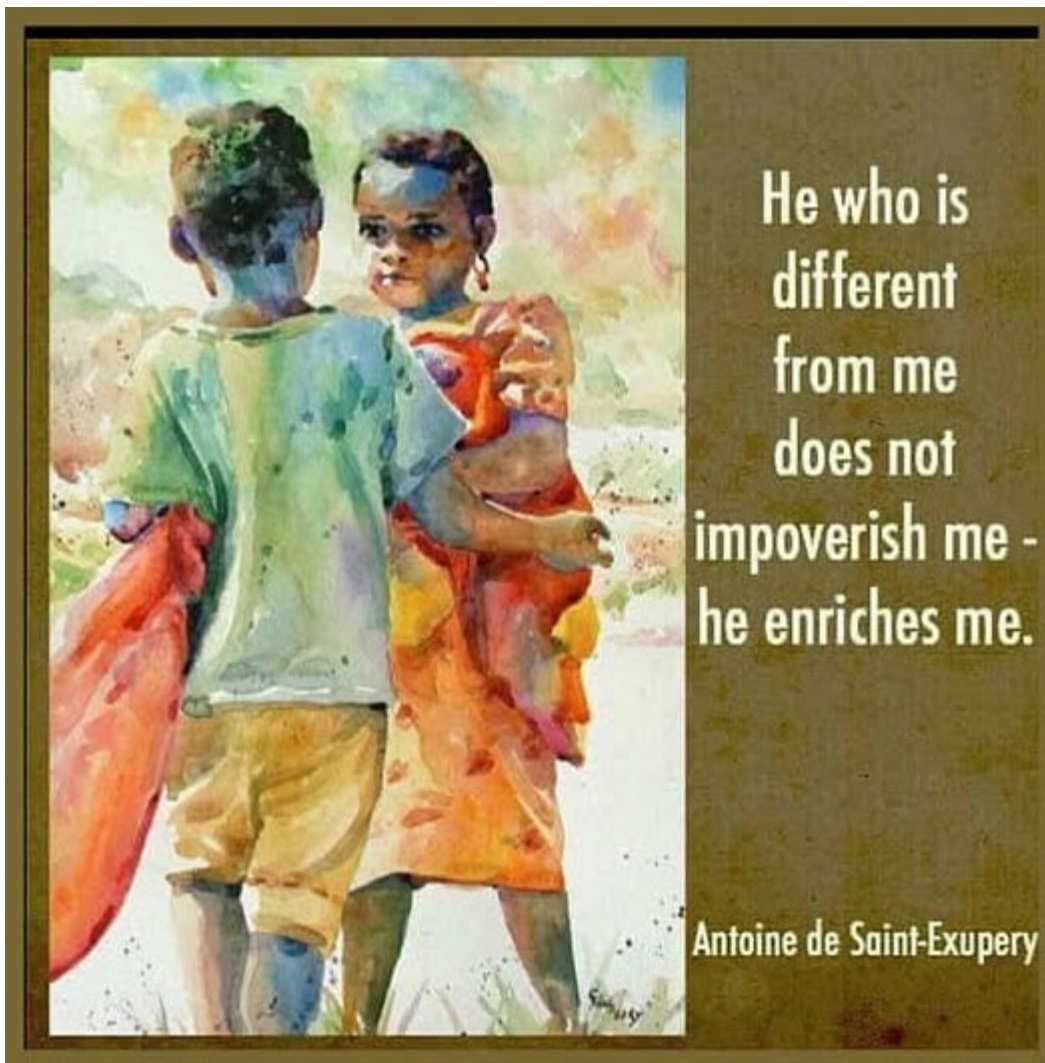
But before anything else, we should – as our 2024 Social Justice Statement encouraged – invite God to nurture peace in our hearts and discern how we can share that peace with our troubled world.

We prayerfully recall the words of Pope Francis last year: “Stop! Stop because violence will never bring peace.”

(Signed by commission chair, Bishop Tim Harris)

Link to statement:

<https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/bishops-social-justice-commission-calls-for-peace/#more-10236>



Sudan: The horrors intensify as millions are abandoned

Brenda Fitzpatrick, Pearls and Irritations, 19 June 2025

***A woman survivor of the current conflict in Sudan between two rival
militaries, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Force,***

each fighting for power since 2023, told UNICEF: “I could hear that little girl screaming and crying. They were raping her.”

Armed soldiers are raping women, men, little girls and boys and infants as young as one year old. Over 220 cases of child rape have been reported in recent months. As in any conflict, this number will be far less than the reality, with millions displaced, reporting avoided due to shame and humiliation felt by survivors, medical services disrupted and no real accountability.

The extent of the sexual violence is such that it is at least condoned, if not actually encouraged by leadership. It has been reported time and time again since the conflict began. Sexual violence is being used as a weapon, a tactic of war and the pattern of attacks raises the possibility of genocide. The US issued a statement in early 2025 that, based on available information, genocide was being committed in Sudan. At times, perpetrators have committed attacks with particular cruelty, using firearms, knives and whips to intimidate or coerce, alongside derogatory, racist or sexist slurs and death threats. Women and girls are not just being left vulnerable – they are being actively targeted.

It is estimated that as of March 2025, 12.1 million women and girls — and increasingly men and boys — are at risk, and the entire population is being terrorised by sexual violence. The conflict has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions. The UN reports torture and tens of thousands of people, including women and children, being held arbitrarily in squalid conditions with no charges and no outside contact.

The campaign of sexual violence is taking place in the context of widespread famine. Millions are at risk. A week of not being able to find food can mean death. Many international NGOs are unable to operate within Sudan because of the dangerous conflict, so local volunteers have been running communal kitchens. But they need food supplies and resources because “never in modern history have so many faced starvation and famine as in Sudan today”.

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Will there eventually be some end to the current chaos and a sane return to compassion? Will there eventually emerge a new model of confronting poverty, human rights abuses and instability in states?

While suffering people wait, UN agencies and NGOs battle on with ever-diminishing resources. Cake stalls and community fundraising cannot make up for governments’ failure in moral responsibility. Agencies such as the WHO are being forced to make “terrible choices” between no longer responding to Ebola disease, emergencies or HIV/AIDS, or gathering data about impending pandemics.

In many neighbourhoods in the developed world, one baby raped by an armed man or one family dying of starvation would result in outrage and an

outpouring of compassion. Governments purportedly representing such neighbourhoods are abandoning millions of individual women, men, children and babies.

An American billionaire says decimating aid expenditure is “tough but necessary”. Tell that to the starving mother with barely enough strength to hold her emaciated baby. Or tell the sobbing violated mother, who could not protect her child, bleeding and terrified after they too were raped by armed soldiers, that now there is no-one to help. It is doubtful they would agree. Tough? Yes. Necessary? In whose universe?

Read full article

<https://johnmenadue.com/post/2025/06/sudan-the-horrors-intensify-as-millions-are-abandoned/>



Refugee Week 2025

Theme: Finding Freedom:Diversity in Community

The journey towards freedom represents the challenging path that many refugees take, escaping oppression and uncertainty for safety in a new place. For Refugee Week 2025, the Refugee Council of Australia will continue our three-year theme of Finding Freedom, with a focus on diversity in community to emphasise the vital role community plays in all our lives, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, language, disability,sexuality and age.

This Refugee Week, we celebrate the inclusive communities across Australia that open their arms to those seeking refuge, providing platforms for connection and a sense of belonging. In these new spaces, community is more than just a physical place or a group of people; community is a lifeline. It offers refugees safety, belonging, and the strength to rebuild.

Community is where people find the strength to solve problems together,where voices are amplified, and where aspirations find direction and support. It's a space where everyone can feel safe, valued, and empowered to

pursue their dreams without fear or judgment.

This Year

In 2025, we accentuate the importance of diverse communities and their ability to bring people together, showing that our differences make us stronger, more united, and capable of facing challenges, helping to support the refugee journey. We invite you to help us celebrate the powerful fellowship of community that provide solace and agency for all. For freedom should not be an ask, it should be a way of life.

What does it mean to be free?

To live without the fear of war, to have your basic human rights upheld, to live in equality and without the fear of persecution are just some of the examples of what freedom can entail. Everyday millions of people across the world embark on dangerous journeys for the sole purpose of finding safety and freedom. From Australia to nations across the globe, settling into a new environment after experiencing the perils of a refugee's journey can also provide the opportunity to live, to love and to dream.

Link to RCOA Refugee Resource Kit:

<https://www.refugeeweek.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/General-Resource-Kit.pdf>



Samad Abdul was taken to Manus Island after Kevin Rudd's 2013 declaration that boat-borne asylum seekers would never settle in Australia – and has been held in PNG ever since. Photograph: Mike Bowers/The Guardian

'We just sit here': the broken men Australia's offshore detention regime left behind in Papua New Guinea

Ben Doherty, The Guardian, 6 June 2025

Samad Abdul is among the last of more than 2,000 people who passed through the illegal system. Prevented from leaving PNG, he says his life is wasting away

Manus is closed. Detention is over, but we are detained still. We are here still, people are suffering a lot still. Every day we get worse, we are dying a little bit more. But nobody cares about us.”

Here on a dusty hill on the edge of Port Moresby is the ragged, desperate end to Australia’s illegal offshore detention regime in Papua New Guinea.

Samad Abdul was 23 when he arrived in Australia by boat seeking asylum.

He was on one of the first planes to Manus Island after Kevin Rudd’s 2013 declaration that boat-borne asylum seekers would never settle in Australia. He has been held in PNG ever since, first in the Manus Island detention centre, then in Lorengau and now in Port Moresby – free to come and go from the hostel where he lives, but not to leave the country.

The persecution he faced in his home in Quetta, Pakistan, has been formally recognised. He has a “well-founded fear of being persecuted” in his homeland. He cannot be returned there and Australia has a legal obligation to protect him.

Abdul is now 35.

“How long should we wait? We need to know a solution,” he says.

There are 16 men housed at this hostel, in the suburb of Five Mile. A similar number are housed elsewhere in the capital. They are the final handful of more than 2,000 who have passed through Australia’s offshore processing regime in PNG.

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In January, the UN Human Rights Committee published two decisions that stated Australia retained responsibility for the welfare of those it sent into offshore detention on Nauru or elsewhere.

“A state party cannot escape its human rights responsibility when outsourcing asylum processing to another state,” committee member Mahjoub El Haiba said.

“Where there is power or effective control, there is responsibility,” he said.

“The outsourcing of operations does not absolve states of accountability. Offshore detention facilities are not human rights free zones.”

A spokesperson for Australia’s home affairs department said the government of PNG was responsible for the men who remained in PNG.

Questions to PNG’s Immigration and Citizenship Authority went unanswered.

In the oppressive heat of a Port Moresby afternoon, Abdul has questions of his own.

“How long do we wait? What will happen to us? We deserve answers.”

Read full article

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/jun/06/we-just-sit-here-the-broken-men-australias-offshore-detention-regime-left-behind-in-papua-new-guinea?>



Afghan refugee Khan Ali Safdary.

The lost childhood of Khan Ali Safdary

Dr Saba Vasefi, The Saturday Paper, June 7 – 13, 2025 No. 553

National and international human rights bodies have found that Australia violated the rights of Khan Ali Safdary, an Afghan refugee who arrived in 2011 as an unaccompanied child.

Khan Ali – a member of the systematically persecuted Hazara minority – was unable to pursue legal redress in an Australian court due to this country’s lack of federal human rights legislation.

Now 31, he has endured multiple forms of confinement, including more than seven years in closed detention centres across several states, as well as time in mental health institutions. In 2017, he suffered life-altering harm during his detention on Christmas Island.

“I’ve been to places where officials say human rights are a Western idea and deny them. But none treated me as cruelly as Australia,” Khan Ali tells *The Saturday Paper*.

“I wrote dozens of complaints to the government, but each was denied,” he says. “As a survivor of war, genocide and one of the most punitive and inhumane immigration systems in the democratic world, I want to understand how those meant to uphold the law can become its violators?”

On April 28, six years after Khan Ali submitted his case to the United Nations Human Rights Committee – under the Optional Protocol to the International

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – it has censured Australia for his arbitrary detention and the insecure conditions of his confinement.

The committee found that the prolonged nature of Khan Ali's detention was "unreasonable, unnecessary, and disproportionate" to any legitimate policy objective. It determined that Australia violated his rights by denying him meaningful judicial review of his detention and by subjecting him to conditions that inflicted grave psychological harm.

The UN has ordered that Australia provide Khan Ali with appropriate medical rehabilitation and compensation, respond within 180 days detailing how it will implement the ruling, and widely disseminate the findings.

"I want justice," Khan Ali says in Dari. "My case should be assessed under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, not the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights."

Alison Battisson, principal lawyer at Human Rights for All, who represented Khan Ali's case at the UN, says Australia's treatment of refugees in its detention regime – both onshore and offshore – and its refusal to provide permanent safety to certain groups of refugees, go against the core principles of the UN foundational documents and the Refugee Convention.

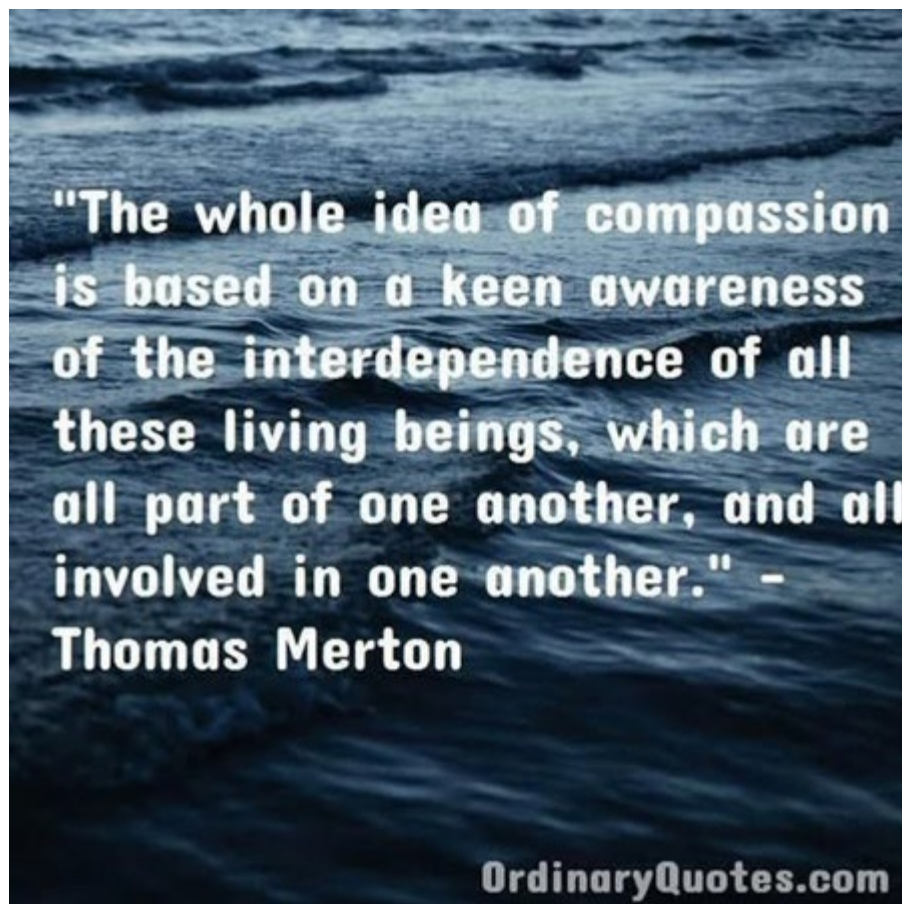
"I've been to places where officials say human rights are a Western idea and deny them. But none treated me as cruelly as Australia."

Read full article - Subscribers only

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/law-crime/2025/06/07/exclusive-the-lost-childhood-khan-ali-safdary>

Non-Subscribers

If you would like a full copy of this article, please contact me before June 27: mmcinerney@edmundrice.org.au



Marine heatwave found to have engulfed area of ocean five times the size of Australia

Graham Readfearn, The Guardian, 5 June 2025

World Meteorological Organization report says record heat in 2024 was driven by climate crisis and intersected with extreme weather events

Almost 40 million sq kilometres of ocean around south-east Asia and the Pacific – an area five times the size of Australia – was engulfed in a marine heatwave in 2024, a World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report has revealed.

WMO scientists said the record heat – on land and in the ocean – was mostly driven by the climate crisis and coincided with a string of extreme weather events, from deadly landslides in the Philippines to floods in Australia and rapid glacier loss in Indonesia.

The region was 0.48C hotter than the average recorded between 1991 and 2020, the WMO's State of the Climate report stated.

Satellite measurements showed sea levels were rising almost 4mm per year – “significantly higher” than the global average of 3.5mm, the report said.

The WMO secretary general, Prof Celeste Saulo, said ocean heat and acidification had combined to “inflict long-lasting damage” to marine ecosystems and economies.

“Sea-level rise is an existential threat to entire island nations. It is increasingly evident that we are fast running out of time to turn the tide,” Saulo said.

The report said extreme events that coincided with 2024’s heat included:

- Extreme rainfall in the Philippines in January and February causing flooding and landslides, killing at least 93 people.
- Early-season heatwave in Australia resulting in record August temperatures across the country’s centre.
- Major flooding in Singapore and Malaysia, displacing 137,000 people and killing six.
- Flash flooding in March on the Indonesian island of Sumatra and major flooding in north Australia at the start of 2024.
- Rapid glacier loss in the west of New Guinea island, Indonesia, where the report said total ice loss could occur by 2026 or soon after.
- The Philippines struck by 12 tropical cyclones – double the average – with damage estimated at US\$430m.
- Australia’s snow season ended “abnormally early”.

Ben Churchill, the WMO director for the region, said: “This is a message for stronger climate action. This report shows we’re seeing things we have never seen before.”

The report found that in January, April, May and June last year, almost 40 million sq kilometres of the region’s ocean surface experienced moderate to strong heatwaves.

Read full article:

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jun/05/marine-heatwave-found-to-have-engulfed-area-of-ocean-five-times-the-size-of-australia?utm_term=684140e7dbfeefddc32e7cfefa2ebaad&utm_campaign=AfternoonUpdateAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=afternoonupdateau_email



There were false claims that renewable energy was to blame for the recent blackout in Spain. Photograph: NurPhoto/Getty

Images

Climate misinformation turning crisis into catastrophe, report says

Damien Carrington, The Guardian, 19 June 2025

False claims obstructing climate action, say researchers, amid calls for climate lies to be criminalised

Rampant climate misinformation is turning the crisis into a catastrophe, according to the authors of a new report.

It found climate action was being obstructed and delayed by false and misleading information stemming from fossil fuel companies, rightwing politicians and some nation states. The report, from the International Panel on the Information Environment (Ipie), systematically reviewed 300 studies.

The researchers found climate denialism has evolved into campaigns focused on discrediting solutions, such as the false claims that renewable energy caused the recent massive blackout in Spain.

Online bots and trolls hugely amplify false narratives, the researchers say, playing a key role in promoting climate lies. The experts also report that political leaders, civil servants and regulatory

Climate misinformation – the term used by the report for both deliberate and inadvertent falsehoods – is of increasing concern. Last Thursday, the UN special rapporteur on human rights and climate change, Elisa Morgera, called for misinformation and greenwashing by the fossil fuel industry to be criminalised. On Saturday, Brazil, host of the upcoming Cop30 climate summit,

will rally nations behind a separate UN initiative to crack down on climate misinformation.

“It is a major problem,” said Dr Klaus Jensen, of the University of Copenhagen, who co-led the Ipie review. “If we don’t have the right information available, how are we going to vote for the right causes and politicians, and how are politicians going to translate the clear evidence into the necessary action? Unfortunately, I think the [bad actors] are still very, very active, and probably have the upper hand now.”

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Measures to fight climate misinformation include regulation to improve the moderation of content by social media companies, as with the EU Digital Services Act, and requiring fossil fuel companies to make standardised declarations of their emissions. Jensen said some legal cases against purveyors of climate misinformation were already under way. In the longer term, improved climate education would enable citizens to identify misinformation.

Jensen also said more research was needed as the studies to date were overwhelmingly on English-language misinformation and western nations, with, for example, just one study out of the 300 focused on Africa.

Read full article:

[https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jun/19/climate-misinformation-turning-crisis-into-catastrophe-ipie-report?](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jun/19/climate-misinformation-turning-crisis-into-catastrophe-ipie-report?utm_term=68547c0d7a62f5807f98da8e24434f6c&utm_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau_email)

[utm_term=68547c0d7a62f5807f98da8e24434f6c&utm_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau_email](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jun/19/climate-misinformation-turning-crisis-into-catastrophe-ipie-report?utm_term=68547c0d7a62f5807f98da8e24434f6c&utm_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau_email)

REFLECTIONS

**We pray for the fragile ecology of the heart
and the mind. The sense of meaning. So finely
assembled and balanced and so easily overturned.**

**The careful, ongoing construction of love. As
painful and exhausting as the struggle for truth
and as easily abandoned.**

**Hard fought and won are the shifting sands of
this sacred ground, this ecology. Easy to desecrate
and difficult to defend, this vulnerable joy, this
exposed faith, this precious order. This sanity.
We shall be careful. With others and with ourselves.**

Amen.

Leunig 2004

When I talk to you: A cartoonist talks to God



Looking behind, I am filled with gratitude.

Looking forward, I am filled with vision.

Looking upward, I am filled with strength.

Looking within, I am filled with Peace.

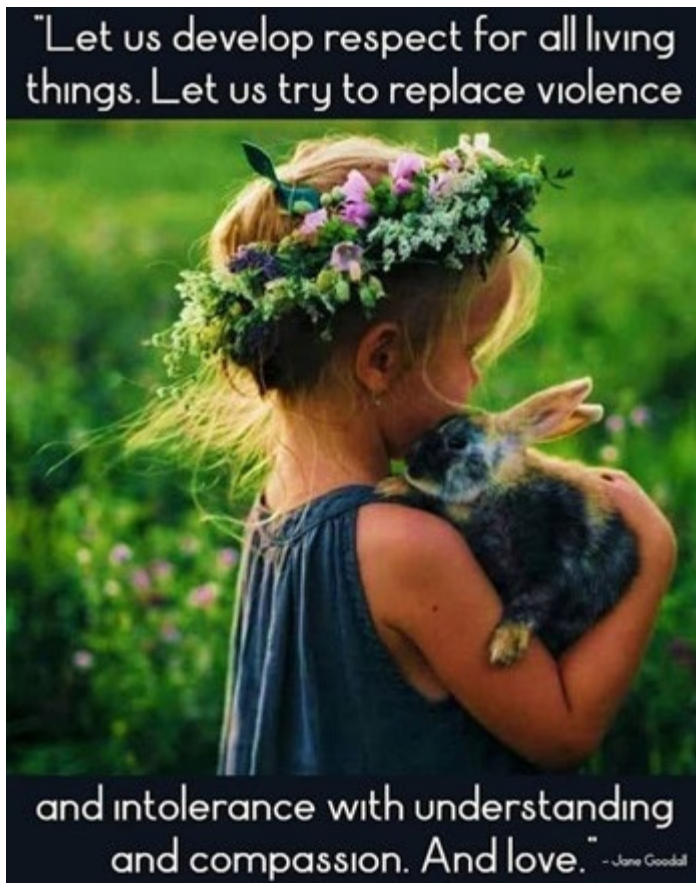
May the stars carry your sadness away,

May the flowers fill your heart with beauty.

May hope forever wipe away your tears.

And, above all, may silence make you strong.

Queio Apache Prayer



Pace - e - Bene Nonviolence Inspirations

"For me, meditation isn't just sitting still; it's about consciously inhabiting my heart space. The mind can be swayed by negativity, but the heart, in its pure essence, guides you towards compassion and understanding."

Azim Khamisa, Peace and Purpose Newsletter

"All too much violence exists in the world and our societies. Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect. Above all, they need the witness of men and women who embody a different and non-violent way of living. From local and everyday situations up to the international order, whenever those who have suffered injustice and violence resist the temptation to seek revenge, they become the most credible agents of non-violent peacebuilding processes. Non-violence, as a method and a style, must distinguish our decisions, our relationships and our actions."

Pope Leo XIV, 30 May 2025

"The mechanism of hope in our hearts must have a thousand springs, almost all of them unknown to us." Jacques Lusseyran, And There Was Light

“I believe that order is better than chaos, creation better than destruction. I prefer gentleness to violence, forgiveness to vendetta. On the whole I think knowledge is preferable to ignorance, and I am sure human sympathy is more valuable than ideology.” Kenneth Clark,
Civilisation

“Democracy has always been waged. In this environment, public protest becomes both more necessary and more risky. Those in power may deploy tactics from the authoritarian playbook—stoking fear, marginalizing dissent, and justifying repression. History shows that when movements stay grounded in nonviolence, discipline, and solidarity, they can expose these tactics for what they are: desperate attempts to cling to control.”

Daniel Hunter and Eileen Flanagan, "Streetwise & Steady: A Workbook for Action Peacekeepers or Event Marshals"

“Safety and security don’t just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear.”

Nelson Mandela



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

The Edmund Rice Centre wholeheartedly supports and endorses the
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART
and urges all Australians to get behind this wonderful statement.