



29 July 2020

UPJ Press Release

July 24, 2020 marked a momentous day as Kurdish-Iranian journalist, Behrouz Boochani, who had been detained on Manus Island, was granted refugee status in New Zealand; a stark reminder of the many who remain in offshore detention.

This is a moment in history when the UPJ, the Assembly of Rabbis and Cantors and Netzer, our Reform Zionist Youth Movement, find it necessary to once again voice our concern that asylum seekers continue to languish in offshore detention.

The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the dangers to the health of detained asylum seekers.

Affirming that all human beings are made in the image of God, B'tzelem Elohim, those still in detention after many years are individual human beings who have hopes and aspirations and dreams and feel the same pain and suffer the same grief as each of us.

For too many, their applications for refugee status have not been processed as expeditiously as possible.

We ask the Australian Government to refocus its efforts on ensuring that, when Covid-19 circumstances permit, they are resettled whether in Australia or another country which will not persecute them. Their futures deserve to be given certainty as soon as possible, and in the meantime the Australian Government must secure fully their health, safety and basic human rights.

We invite others to join with us to forge a more compassionate, safe and secure future for all.

Rabbi Nicole Roberts,
Chairperson, Assembly of
Rabbis and Cantors
Australia, NZ and Asia

Lior Manuel Kalisse
Federal Mazkir (Chairperson)
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Brian Samuel OAM and
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