JUST AUSTRALIA

asrc Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

National Council of Churches in Australia

Refugee Action Collective

Stop the Construction of the Christmas Island Detention Centre[1]

To the Honourable Members of the House of Representatives and Senators of the Parliament of Australia

We, the undersigned, are alarmed at the recently released plans for the new immigration detention centre currently being built on Christmas Island. In particular we are deeply concerned that the plans:

(a) are for a maximum security prison facility – including electric fences, 24-hour surveillance, microwave detectors and individual surveillance of all detainees – intended to house people who have not been charged with any crime;
(b) provide for children to be imprisoned in this maximum security facility, in direct contravention of a commitment made by this Parliament in 2005 that children will only be detained as an absolute last resort; and
(c) are inconsistent with the findings of numerous Parliamentary Inquiries, the opinions of medical professionals, mental health experts, international human rights bodies, lawyers, scholars, refugees and members of the community about the negative impact of such detention facilities on the lives of everyone who is held in them.

Therefore, we call all Members of the House and Senators to:

(a) affirm the commitment of the Australian Government to:
    (i) transparency and accountability in governance; and to
    (ii) the rule of law; and the recognition of human rights and the inviolable right of every individual to be treated with dignity and respect;
(b) demand an immediate halt to the construction of the Christmas Island Immigration Detention Centre;
(c) demand accurate information from the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and his Department, and from the Prime Minister, and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, about why construction has begun on this Detention Centre, and who can or will be interred there;
(d) demand an immediate end to the mandatory, indefinite and judicially non-reviewable detention of refugees and asylum seekers;
(e) re-affirm the Parliament's commitment to ensuring that Australia's immigration system will not permit the detention of children.

NAME (BLOCK LETTERS)	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE

Mail petitions to: Refugee Action Collective, Victoria, PO Box 578, Carlton South, Vic 3053 by May 31, 2007.

[1] An early edition of this petition was circulated with the heading, "Stop the Construction of Australia's Guantanamo Bay"