

## RESEARCHERS AGAINST PACIFIC BLACK SITES PRESS RELEASE

18th September 2015

**'As if they had arrested a criminal from Daesh group'**, is how one witness described the harsh, cruel, degrading and inhumane punishment meted out to a 20 year old asylum seeker on Nauru.

This episode is the latest in the shocking brutalisation of one family on Nauru. The young man is the brother of Nazanin, a 23 year old woman allegedly raped on Nauru in May. Following the alleged rape the woman tried to kill herself twice. Although critically ill for weeks, it was not until she was on the verge of organ failure that she was finally medivaced, alone, to Australia.

On the day of Nazanin's second suicide attempt, her brother heard her scream and ran toward her. After being pinned down by two Australian officials, the young asylum seeker was then taken by Nauruan police and imprisoned in a cell for more than 30 hours where, he reported, 'passers by, including guards, urinated through the bars'.

The young asylum seeker and his ill mother remain in Nauru separated from the sister.

This instance is not isolated but is part of the systematic degradation and violence, especially sexual violence, meted out to detainees in Nauru and Manus Island.

As this media release goes out, reports are emerging of another brutal rape of a refugee on Nauru.

Researchers Against Pacific Black Sites has previously called attention to the harsh, cruel, degrading and inhumane treatment, tantamount to torture, enacted in the black sites that are Australia's off-shore immigration detention centres.

As Australia prepares to welcome refugees from Syria and to stake its claim as a good global citizen, we call on our new Prime Minister to attend to the asylum seekers we have incarcerated off-shore though they are not accused of any crime.

In a letter congratulating Mr Turnbull, men detained on Manus Island write, 'We are happy for them [those fleeing Syria] as they welcome, because we know the pain of them and understand them more than others'. They ask the Prime Minister to 'bring back the taste of freedom and living to us'.

Another 20 year old Syrian man detained on Manus Island for 27 months told Researchers Against Pacific Black Sites that he too was beaten and imprisoned. 'We are Alive Aylan. But I have been suffering for more than 2 years in worst living conditions. No one sees our pain. We are right here in Manus. We are dying here'.

Immediately after assuming the role of Prime Minister elect, Mr Turnbull pledged to run 'a thoroughly liberal government'.

How long can a government pledged to liberal principles countenance the harsh, cruel, degrading and inhumane treatment of people under their care?

Researchers Against Pacific Black Sites call on Prime Minister Turnbull to rise to the challenge of ending the cruel and degrading conditions for asylum seekers and refugees in offshore detention.

Researchers Against Pacific Black Sites: Professor Suvendrini Perera, Professor Joseph Pugliese, Janet Galbraith

Media Contact: Janet Galbraith 0418399646.