

The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull M.P.
Prime minister
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

Dear Mr. Turnbull,

Your Minister, Peter Dutton, argues that punishing boat-arriving refugees, by preventing them from ever coming to Australia, is legal. It may be legal but it can never be moral.

Having kept 2000 people in a limbo of hopelessness and despair, for more than 3 years, the final crushing blow is applied "you can never, ever set foot on Australian shores", no matter that your wife and children might be here, or your parents or the only family you have left; your exclusion is a message to all people smugglers.

Pope Francis, in a speech last year, commented that: *It is violence to erect walls and barriers to block those seeking a place of peace. It is violence to push back those fleeing from inhuman conditions in the hope of a better future.* Your proposed legislation is an act of violence against people already persecuted and violated. The legislation is immoral because it can never be right to use people as objects, as deterrents and as means to send messages to people smugglers.

Australia is a prosperous country with a highly skilled intelligence force, a re-vamped border security structure and a sophisticated navy, weapons enough to control a great deal of people smuggling activity. It is time to re-think our harsh and punitive approach to asylum seekers.

In twenty years' time an Australian Prime Minister will stand in Parliament House and make an apology for our treatment of asylum seekers. Prime Minister I ask you to reflect on Pope Francis' words and reconsider your proposed legislation.

Yours sincerely