

RIGHTS COMMISSION CALLS FOR AN END TO DETENTION

The departing head of the Australian Human Rights Commission has called on the Government to abandon mandatory detention for asylum seekers.

Commissioner Catherine Branson also called for the implementation of a better system for dealing with genuine refugees who are still in detention because they have not been granted security clearances by ASIO.

She told the ABC the practice of indefinite detention of those who fail security checks was “inhumane”.

Humane solution

Ms Branson says Australia needs to find a humane solution to confirmed refugees stuck in mandatory detention because they have a negative ASIO assessment but cannot be returned to their home country because of refugee status.

“What I understand is that ASIO is not obliged to give these people who’ve come to Australia seeking asylum reasons for the finding that they are a security risk, and because they don’t know the reasons they don’t effectively have access to judicial review,” she said.

“The (immigration) minister, as I understand it, has taken a blanket decision that no-one with an adverse security assessment will live in the community. All three of these things, I think, must change.”

“It is important to understand that detention can be lawful, but nonetheless arbitrary because it can’t be shown to be necessary in Australia’s interests to maintain individuals in detention.

(Taken from ABC Lateline Programme 19/07/12 and ABC News 26/07/12)