



NEWSLETTER August 2021

Dear Grandmothers and Friends,
Warm wishes to all of you affected by Covid-19 restrictions and extended lockdown. We especially send good wishes to **Grandmothers NSW.**

Breaking News: AFGHANISTAN DISASTER
- see our **CALL TO ACTION** in support of Afghan refugees.

The High Court has rejected an appeal to hear further on **the case for little Tharnicaa** Murugappan. What next?

Some federal electorate boundaries have been moved in Victoria. What to do?

And 20 years on, we remember Tampa...



Le nonne per i rifugiati
Γιαγιάδες για προσφύγες
难民的祖母
جدات للاجئين



Grandmothers and Frogs

**You are invited to meet online with
Senator Kristina Keneally
Labor spokesperson on Home Affairs**

Tuesday 21 September 6.30-7.30pm



This is a special general meeting for all Grandmothers for Refugees and Friends of Grandmothers.

It is an opportunity to be informed on Labor refugee, immigration, and border protection policy as we move towards a federal election.

The event is free, but bookings are essential to enable us to send you any updates and the link to join the meeting. **Go to TryBooking** <https://www.trybooking.com/BTQBI> to register or hover your smartphone or ipad camera over this **QRcode>>>**



Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org

HIGH COURT REJECTS HEARING THARNICAA'S CASE: IT IS ALL UP TO MINISTER ALEX HAWKE NOW



12 August 2021: The High Court has refused a special leave request from lawyers for a four-year-old girl from Biloela who is seeking a chance to apply for a protection visa. Read in full [ABC News Report](#).

Angela Fredericks, a friend of the Murugappan family, said she was disappointed with Thursday's decision.

"We're incredibly disappointed by this news, however, at the end of the day no court can make a ruling on Tharnicaa's asylum claim," Ms Fredericks said.

"We're still hopeful with the fact that we did win the court's application around procedural fairness not being upheld.

"As a result of that, a brief is in front of the minister as we speak, and he still actually has the power to allow Tharnicaa to make an asylum claim. So, I guess our hope is that the minister – now that there is nothing before the court, which he previously said was stopping him – absolutely has the power to do the right thing here."

"Today the High Court declined to grant the Sri Lankan family formerly resident on Christmas Island special leave to appeal," Mr Hawke said in a statement.

"I note the High Court's decision follows a series of previous decisions by the Department of Home Affairs, Administrative Appeals Tribunal, Federal Circuit Court, Federal Court, Full Federal Court and High Court in relation to the family.

"The family has a number of other ongoing legal matters. It is therefore inappropriate for me to comment further."

CALL TO ACTION >>> Please contact Minister Hawke and URGE HIM to act humanely on your behalf and give this family the right to go back to Bilo.

Email: alex.hawke.mp@aph.gov.au

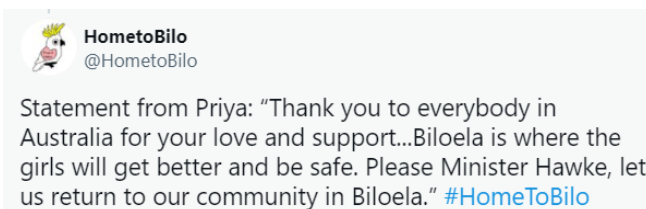
Call: (02) 9899 7211 Electorate Office

Write: PO Box 6022

House of Representatives

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Use the online form: [Contact the Minister \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)



Federal Immigration Minister Alex Hawke said due to "ongoing legal matters", he would not comment on Thursday's decision.



This month marks the 20th anniversary of the shameful refusal by the Australian Government to allow the Norwegian vessel “Tampa” to dock and unload its cargo of rescued asylum seekers. In the three months from 26 August to the federal election in November 2001, the Howard Government made decisions, passed legislation and engaged in propaganda which set the direction of refugee policy and resulted in 20 years of suffering for people seeking asylum, and 20 years of shame for Australians.

The Australian Refugee Action Network (**ARAN**) has developed an outstanding **Resource Kit of accessible materials and resources** to assist all grassroots member groups **to mark this anniversary with targeted action.**

What’s in the Resource Kit? Check it out here: [20 Years since Tampa | Australian Refugee Action Network ARAN](#)

From the Kaldor Centre, we recommend this excellent backgrounder and update: [The Tampa affair: 20 years on | Kaldor Centre \(unsw.edu.au\)](#)

The Tampa affair: 20 years on



Still to come in 2021...

Remembering ‘children overboard’ 8-10 October; Remembering SIEVX 20 October; Human Rights Day 10 December.

IS THERE NO END TO THIS SHAME?

Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org

Tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan

CALL TO ACTION.>>> You are urged to **contact your local MP** urgently to support the actions outlined below in this letter from Refugee Legal Executive Director, David Manne.

Dear Grandmothers,

The devastating takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban we are witnessing now carries deep distress and trauma for many of our clients and communities here. We continue to hear from members of the Afghan community of the fear, the distress and the dangers which grip the country now. We're receiving calls from people across Australia recounting harrowing stories of friends and family feeling trapped, and desperate to find a way out to safety.

Our thoughts are with them at this terrifying and traumatic time.

Together with partners, we stand in solidarity with the Afghan community and we call upon the Australian Government to urgently provide direct help and international leadership. They must act immediately to:

1. **Evacuate people at imminent risk**, including people who've worked with the Australian Government and organisations.
2. **Lift the humanitarian intake** and offer additional places to particularly vulnerable Afghans.
3. **Grant permanent protection** to Afghans here on temporary visas.
4. **Reassess cases of Afghans** refused refugee protection.
5. **Provide family reunion** visas for relatives at risk.

We are continuing to monitor the situation closely to identify what specific roles we can play to assist people and the Afghan community who are contacting us in desperate need of help.

And we will continue, together with partners, to press for immediate action by the Australian Government to respond to the unfolding crisis in Afghanistan.

Sincerely and in solidarity,

David Manne
Refugee Legal
Executive Director & Principal Solicitor



ALSO [Contact Your PM | Prime Minister of Australia](#)

Contact Home Affairs Minister Karen.Andrews.mp@aph.gov.au

Contact Immigration Minister Alex.Hawke.mp@aph.gov.au

Contact Opposition Leader a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au

WHEN COVID RESTRICTIONS EASE IN VICTORIA

Grandmothers and Friends are needed
at **The Park Prison Hotel**



Sundays at 3-4pm

Grandmothers for Refugees provide the core presence at the prison hotel site each Sunday afternoon.

Please join the action to support the men still inside and show them that they are not forgotten.

**Every Sunday 3–4pm
Swanston St and Lincoln Sq,
Melbourne**

CALL TO ACTION>>> During pandemic lockdown, you can continue to support the men in indefinite immigration

lockdown by emailing the Minister for Home Affairs, Karen Andrews at karen.andrews.mp@aph.gov.au

UN TO APPEAL FOR HUNGER STRIKER

The second hunger strike by refugees at MITA (Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation) centre in suburban Broadmeadows ended in early August. However, the impacts continue.

Kaveh, one of the hunger strikers, aged in his late 30s, remained hospitalised to be treated for gastrointestinal issues, with his body struggling to tolerate food after he took part in the month-long hunger strike protesting for his release, according to his lawyer.

Alison Battison, acting on his behalf, wrote to the United Nations on 22 July to raise concerns about her client's situation.

The United Nations' Office of the Human Rights Commissioner responded the next day, saying it would consider the appeal. It called for Kaveh to be placed in "community detention" as an "interim measure".

Private representations are still needed on behalf of the refugees in MITA. **Please do what you can to bring this matter to the attention of your local MP.**

From reporting by SBS

Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org

BOUNDARY CHANGES TO FEDERAL ELECTORATES CONFIRMED

New federal electoral divisions in Victoria came into effect from 26 July 2021.

What you need to do: **notify us** at info@grandmothersforrefugees.org of your new electorate so we can keep our membership lists up to date.

Visit the **AEC site** to check your status: [Names and boundaries of federal electoral divisions in Victoria decided - Australian Electoral Commission \(aec.gov.au\)](https://www.aec.gov.au/australian-electoral-commission/news-and-media/2021/07/26/names-and-boundaries-of-federal-electoral-divisions-in-victoria-decided)

The AEC will automatically:

- transfer you to the new electoral roll for your new electoral division, and
- notify you that your electoral division has changed.

For more, check out **Antony Green's Election blog** [2021 Federal Redistribution – Boundaries Finalised for Victoria – Antony Green's Election Blog](#) and

Well done to all those who were quick to claim their bumper sticker. If you missed out, contact your local electorate co-ordinator. But be advised - they are now in short supply.



Totes and Tees still on sale... Our website is the best way to place your order. Go to www.grandmothersforrefugees.org and scroll down on the Front Page. Or click [here](#).

Grandmothers for Refugees advocates for compassionate welcome and safe settlement of all people seeking asylum. For every tee purchased, Dai T-Shirt Automal will donate \$18 to Grandmothers for Refugees and \$9 for every tote.



Grandmothers For Refugees Tote
\$25



Grandmothers For Refugees Tee
\$40

Look out for us on social media>>>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/GrandmothersforRefugees/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/gmothers_adrc/

Instagram: [@Grandmothers4Refugees](https://www.instagram.com/Grandmothers4Refugees) • Instagram photos and videos

Now, for the last word in this edition, we invited Gaby Judd (**Grandmothers NSW**) to share her reflections from lockdown in Sydney...



Dear Sister Grandmothers

Greetings from locked-down NSW. Like yourselves, we are subject to another period of stay-at-home orders. Each day I wonder about the latest infection rates, where Covid has now spread and what new restrictions we will have today.

I'm living with wild hair, grocery items missing from my Coles deliveries, not being able to pop around to a friend's home for coffee, and not able to visit my grandchildren.

I remind myself that all these things are temporary and not so significant when compared to life for refugees in Australia and offshore. I think about the lives of refugees who remain in limbo on Nauru and PNG, those who suffer in locked detention centres and those subject to community detention orders.

They have either no visa or only a temporary visa. Many refugees are approaching 10 years of a life of uncertainty due solely to Australia's cruel refugee policy. With our public vigils on hold, as they may be for you, we are focusing on what can be done from the home. Hence our greater emphasis on letter-writing and the use of social media.

Remember to register for online events. Refugee online events are a great way to keep informed while at the same time keeping in touch with others in the refugee sector: they can help us to maintain focus and motivation.

I realise some of our generation are wary of using zoom: honestly, it's really not that hard, a grandchild or other family member can take you through the process! It's well worth it to keep our knowledge up-to-date and to be connected in this way.

So, keep at it, Grandmothers! Never doubt that you make a difference. Remember, when the Grandmothers was first formed in 2014 in Victoria, there were over 1000 children in locked detention, now there are none: what an achievement! I know that there is still a long way to go but don't ever give up, together we will get there!

Gaby Judd

Grandmothers for Refugees NSW



Visit our website today www.grandmothersforrefugees.org