



# QPASTT

Queensland program of assistance  
to survivors of torture and trauma

## **QPASTT position statement regarding detention of people seeking asylum**

QPASTT's vision is for people from refugee backgrounds to live lives liberated from the harms of torture, trauma and human rights injustice.

QPASTT strongly affirms that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights)<sup>1</sup>, and that “Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” (Article 14, Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

QPASTT does not support the prolonged and indefinite detention of people seeking asylum, as it contravenes their human rights, is harmful to their mental and physical health, causes ongoing trauma, and contributes to greater risk of self-harm and suicide. It also has a detrimental impact on their families, friends and communities both in Australia and overseas.

Over the years, QPASTT has supported people seeking asylum who are in detention or living in the community. We have heard their stories, we have witnessed their desperation and hopelessness, and also their strengths and resilience. We have seen the values and capabilities that refugees and people seeking asylum have to offer to the community.

We support “an effective and sustainable response [that] must involve the option of resettlement in countries – including Australia – which offer the opportunity for refugees to become integral members of society, to live in security and to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of their new homes.”<sup>2</sup>

QPASTT advocates for cessation of held detention and the subsequent release from detention of refugees and people seeking asylum.

20 September 2021

---

<sup>1</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

<sup>2</sup> VFST, Statement regarding people transferred by Australia to the refugee processing centres of Papua New Guinea and Nauru (1<sup>st</sup> September 2016): [https://www.foundationhouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/VFST\\_Statement\\_Nauru\\_Manus\\_1\\_September\\_2016.pdf](https://www.foundationhouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/VFST_Statement_Nauru_Manus_1_September_2016.pdf)