

MEDIA RELEASE

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CALLS TO RELEASE THE 15 REFUGEES HELD IN DARWIN

Everyday a large group of Darwin citizens gather outside a six-foot fence at the back of the Mercure Airport Resort to express solidarity with the “Darwin 15” – refugees transferred from Nauru for medical treatment in Darwin. For most, the treatment has not been received. They have less freedom of movement and worse facilities than in Nauru. In all, most of them have been in detention for 8 years with no end in sight. According to the United Nations, indefinite detention is a form of torture.

The Australian Government has begun to release refugees awaiting medical treatment into community detention in Sydney and Melbourne – but not the Darwin 15. Why are the Darwin refugees still locked up?

Recently colleagues visited refugees in detention at the facility adjacent to the Mercure Airport Resort. They observed that meals were prepared by the Mercure and it appeared Mercure staff were involved in providing services. They observed that Serco guards were applying arbitrary and harsh rules and directions to the refugee families.

Anglicare NT is deeply concerned by the confused messages coming from the Mercure Airport Resort and from Accor Hotels about their involvement. We are also concerned that this is happening on NT Airports land. We are keen to hear from both organisations what they are doing to advocate for people in their care and on their land.

The ongoing detention of the refugees while they wait for medical treatment is ultimately a decision of the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Peter Dutton. We call on the Mercure Airport Resort, Accor Hotels, NT Airports and the NT Government to let Mr Dutton know that their ongoing, cruel and indefinite detention of the Darwin 15 is not acceptable and to call for the immediate release into community detention.

FOR COMMENTS OR INTERVIEWS

To arrange interviews with Dave Pugh CEO, please contact Anglicare NT Media team.

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